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**From the Faculty Perspective: Factors that Influence the Development of Organizational Culture
Within a new School of Education**

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**From the Faculty Perspective: Factors That Influence the Development of
Organizational Culture Within a New School of Education**

by

Emily Addison

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Masters of Arts degree in Education

Faculty of Education

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Abstract

This study examines the process of organizational culture development within a new school of education, focusing on the various factors that influence culture as perceived by faculty. The research is situated within a mid-sized university in Canada.

From the data analysis emerged the following factors that participants saw as influencing culture: leadership; other members of the organization; programmatic influences; the mission statement, goals, and conceptual framework; organization structure and size; physical space and location; resource and financial considerations; the fact that everything was new; workload and time constraints; the wider university; other external influences; and the field of study.

The significance of the study is threefold. One is that it contributes to a sparse body of literature regarding the development of culture in educational organizations. Secondly, it informs organizations of considerations to be made in regards to the development of culture, and finally, the study informs the research locale.

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Dedication

This study is dedicated to the members of the school of education in which the study took place. The work arose out of my being inspired by the incredible work of so many within the research locale and my interest in gaining a deeper understanding of how such a culture develops.

It is only with my ongoing interest in making a positive difference that this study came about with my wanting to contribute to informing the local context as well as the wider education community. It is my humble hope that this study will be of positive use.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful people could change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

(Margaret Mead)

Abstract

For those involved in launching a new school, university, or department, such a process can be both challenging and rewarding. Attending to infrastructure and programming details when everything is being done for the first time and when many members of the organization are new requires a lot of effort and commitment. However, in addition to addressing more tangible details, consideration also needs to be given to culture as it can have a marked impact on programming, individuals, and the organization as a whole.

The purpose of this study is to examine the process of organizational culture development within a new school of education and in particular, to focus on the various factors that influence culture as perceived by faculty. The research is situated within a new school of education located at a mid-sized university in Canada. Data from various faculty members (i.e., director; tenure-track; limited term appointment; and part-time faculty) were collected before the third year of the teacher education program began through the use of semi-structured interviews with questions being both emergent as well as constructed from the literature review and conceptual framework.

From the data analysis emerged the findings of the study which focused both on defining the culture of the organization as well as examining how various factors influenced the development of culture. Factors that participants saw as influencing culture included: leadership; the other members of the organization; programmatic influences; the mission statement, goals, and conceptual framework; organization structure and size; physical space and location; resource and financial considerations; the fact that everything was new; workload and time constraints; the wider university; other external influences; and the field of study.

The significance of this study is threefold. One is that it contributes to a sparse body of literature on particular factors influencing the development of culture in educational organizations and it helps to address the question of what happens in an educational organization when everything is new and there is no established culture. Secondly, the study informs educational organizations of considerations to be made in regards to the development of culture, and finally, the study informs the research locale.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the study

Culture - we are surrounded by it. We participate in culture, we shape culture, and we are affected by culture on a daily basis. We are, in fact, part of many cultures including our families, organizations in which we learn, work, play, and volunteer, as well as our larger communities, regions, and countries in which we live.

As a fundamental component of our lives, culture can be studied in many contexts, through various approaches, and by asking a wide array of questions (Martin, 2002; Meyerson & Martin, 1998; Schein, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1984; Smircich, 1983). This study explores a small component of culture, focusing on the development of culture within a new school of education. In the launching of a new school or post-secondary academic institution, there are many details that members of the organization need to manage. These vary from ensuring that infrastructure is put into place to developing, implementing, and reviewing programming; all within the steep learning curve associated with doing everything for 'the first time' and working with a new group of people (Chan & Ledbetter, 1999; Foley, 1996; McGhee, 200). However, while infrastructure and programming are being put into place, culture is also developing, shaping the organization and how it will function (Brady, 2004; Flathmann, 1996; Goldsmith, 1998; Gruenert, 2000; Ritter, 2002; Stine, 2000; Vazquez, 2001). It is this early development of culture within a new organization responsible for teacher education that is the focal point for this research. As one of my thesis committee members stated so well:

If organizational culture can be described in layman's terms as an established way of doing things, what happens in a new institution when there aren't necessarily established ways of doing things?
(Paraphrased from M. Barlosky, personal communication, February 21, 2005)

In addition to providing understandings regarding the development of culture in a relatively new organization, this study also provides insights into the construction of culture in educational organizations generally. While some different factors may be at work in more established organizations, many of the factors explored in this study have the possibility of being relevant in other contexts. This study provides an opportunity to examine processes that influence culture in a setting where everything is new. In such a circumstance, when history bears lightly on this new culture and when the promise of the future seems clear, participants are both aware and reflective about the cultural characteristics that have shaped them. Given the great influence that culture has on organizations, programs, and individuals (Angelides & Ainscow 2000; Blackwell, 1996; Brady 2004; Gaziel, 1997; Goulard, 1996; Gmelch, 1993; Hermanowicz, 2005; Kettlewell, 1996; Kwan 2002; Leonard & Leonard, 2003; Morgan & Morgan, 1992; Sckerl, 2002; Sergiovanni, 1991), it is imperative that we understand the various factors that are at work so that we can take those into account and improve the experiences of participants within education organizations and the teaching/learning that occurs within those spaces.

1.2 Researcher background and initial impetus for the research

In determining a topic for my MA thesis, I have drawn from a longstanding interest in notions of culture focused through a few particular critical experiences. For instance, while in high school I was introduced to the fiddle music and dance halls of Inverness County, Cape Breton. Being raised in a bedroom community north of Toronto which, in my mind n has relatively little sense of community, I was captivated by how the local music culture in Inverness County created a strong sense of community for some individuals. This later led to my researching the perceptions and values of dance halls in Cape Breton which included, in part, a focus on culture (Addison, 2001).

In addition, I was involved in developing and launching a new school of education a few years ago. It was during this time that I observed how, while the program and organization were being developed, that the organizational culture seemed to grow around us. It was through these personal experiences that I decided to focus my energies on understanding the process of culture development in the unique situation of this new educational organization.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to develop a deeper understanding in academia regarding the emergence of organizational culture within a new school of education through an investigation of factors that act as agents of influence on the culture.

To this end, the following three research questions were developed out of the literature review presented in Chapter 2 and are examined in further detail in Chapter 3:

1. As perceived by faculty, what defines the culture of the school of education under study and how well established is that culture?
2. As perceived by faculty, what are the factors that influence the process of culture development in this setting?
3. As perceived by faculty, how do those factors influence the process of culture development in this setting?

1.4 Organization of the thesis

The thesis is organized into six distinct chapters followed by a reference section as well as appendices. To begin, chapter 1 provides an introduction to the study. Chapter 2 further contextualizes the research by reviewing relevant literature. Organizational

culture is defined and the ways in which organizational culture affects organizations, programs, and individuals is discussed. The literature review also examines similar studies to this research and uses those sources to identify possible factors of influence on culture resulting in the development of a conceptual framework. Chapter 3 orients the reader by outlining the study design and method used to address the three main research questions. The methodological approach to the research is stated and the researcher's self-positioning is provided. Study location, subjects, instrumentation, data collection procedures, and data analysis are addressed as are ethical considerations and issues of trustworthiness.

Chapter 4, the results section, involves the presentation of a number of salient themes that emerged from the data analysis. This includes both an examination of how the study participants defined their organization's culture as well as examining what was said regarding the factors that influenced culture. Discussion of the findings continues in chapter 5 where broader conclusions and explanations are examined, relating these to the literature. Chapter 6 concludes the main components of the thesis by addressing final questions around the limitations of the research as well as the contributions of the research to the wider academic and practical community.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

The following literature review presents a synthesis of relevant research and theory. Its purpose is to situate the thesis, providing a strong base from which to construct the study while identifying gaps, looking at both substance and method, and reflecting on quality of the literature. As stated by Fink (1998), "A literature review is a systematic, explicit, and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating, and interpreting the existing

body of recorded work produced by researchers, scholars, and practitioners [on a particular issue]" (p.3).

A methodical approach was taken to conduct the review in order to identify the most relevant literature with a focus on current publications. The review draws upon publications within the context of post-secondary education and the field of education generally, as well as theories and concepts within organizational studies at a broader level. This is due in part to the fact that there is relatively little research on organizational culture in relation to new schools/universities/departments (Flathmann, 1996; Ritter, 2002; Stine 2000). Further, key theories and concepts relating to organizational culture have tended to emerge from a more established research base in the corporate sector. This being said, literature specific to the education sector is the predominant focus of the review.

After conducting an extensive search for relevant literature, I found many more theoretical papers and practitioner publications than actual empirical studies on organizational culture in relation to schools, universities, and colleges. Indeed, many of the empirical studies were published as MA theses or PhD dissertations often without follow-up publication in journals. Therefore, although the literature review draws upon some empirical studies, there are also references to theoretical papers and occasional practitioner resources written by academics in the field of education organizational studies.

The literature review addresses a number of topics relevant to the study. Included in the review are: (a) an examination of the concept of organizational culture focusing on educational organizations in particular; (b) an examination of the effect that culture can

have on organizations, programs, and individuals; (c) a discussion of studies that have informed my work; and (d) an examination of possible factors that influence the development of culture. Also included in the chapter is the conceptual framework which arose from the literature review.

2.1 Examining the concept of organizational culture in the context of education

Emerging from the fields of anthropology and sociology (Wood, 1998), culture has been of interest to researchers and practitioners in organizational studies since the 1980s (Martin, 2002). With the concept being used by managers in the corporate sector, culture has been one of many lenses through which organizational studies can be conducted (Martin, 2002). Schein (1992) suggests that the study of organizational culture can answer various questions and explain concerns we have about our lives in organizations.

If we understand the dynamics of culture, we will be less likely to be puzzled, irritated, and anxious when we encounter the unfamiliar and seemingly irrational behavior of people in organizations, and we will have a deeper understanding not only of why various groups of people or organizations can be so different but also why it is so hard to change them. (p. 4-5)

Martin (2002) also identifies the study of culture as a way to address questions in organizational studies not recognized through other approaches.

When organizations are examined from a cultural viewpoint, attention is drawn to aspects of organizational life that historically have often been ignored or understudied, such as the stories people tell to newcomers to explain 'how things are done around here', the ways in which offices are arranged and personal items are or are not displayed, jokes people tell, the working atmosphere (hushed and luxurious or dirty and noisy), the relations among people (affectionate in some areas of an office and obviously angry and perhaps competitive in another place), and so on. ... A cultural observer is interested in the surfaces of these cultural manifestations because details can be informative, but he or she also seeks an in-depth understanding of the patterns of meanings that link these manifestations together, sometimes in harmony, sometimes in bitter conflicts between groups, and sometimes in webs of ambiguity, paradox, and contradiction. (p.3)

This section of the literature review examines some definitions of organizational culture and then explores various concepts and terms related to those definitions, leading to a definition which I developed to guide my study.

2.1.1 Some initial definitions of organizational culture in an educational setting

The literature on organizational culture is vast and complex. It is thus important to define the term 'organizational culture' because how one characterizes the key concept in a study exposes one's perceptions and assumptions, helping to give structure to one's data collection, analysis, and conclusions. However, even in terms of defining 'organizational culture', there is no single definition agreed upon by academics (Angelides & Ainscow, 2000; Gruenert, 2000; Martin, 2002; Sckerl, 2002; Stine 1999). Kuh and Witt (1988) state there are as many definitions for the term as there are academics in the field. Therefore, many studies have either highlighted a few definitions from other academics and/or provided their own definition. Of note is that when researching organizational culture within the field of education, the terms 'organizational culture' and 'school culture' are seen as synonymous.

In research on how principals perceive their role regarding the creation and maintenance of secondary school culture, Brady (2004) provides an example of a researcher referencing other academics' definitions without providing his/her own. Brady defines school culture by stating that:

Myerson and Martin (1998) described organizations as cultural entities, an approach shared by Willower and Smith (1987) who defined school culture in terms of 'shared norms and values, beliefs and patterns of activities' (p.88). While the aforementioned definitions provide a starting point for discussion, Barth (2002) developed a particularly adept definition of school culture: 'A school's culture is a complex pattern of norms, attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, values, ceremonies,

traditions, and myths that are deeply ingrained in the very core of the organization. It is the historically transmitted pattern of meaning that wields astonishing power in shaping what people think and how they act (p.7).

A key concept arising from this definition is the idea of organizations as 'cultural entities' which seems to suggest that culture is a living thing. Further, some key words appear in this quote (e.g., beliefs, patterns, norms, attitudes) that also appear in other definitions of organizational culture.

Sckerl (2002), in her work on the way in which college culture relates to organizational effectiveness and change efforts, uses a similar approach to Brady (2004) by referring to one definition in particular, that given by Kuh and Whitt (1988), and then stating that Kuh and Whitt's definition is aligned with that of many other academics (Cameron, 1985; Cameron & Ettington, 1988; Chaffee & Tierney, 1998; Masland, 1985; Tierney, 1988). Similar terms to those used in Brady's definition appear within this definition and the notion of a collective or group also is also evident.

For the purpose of this study culture was defined as 'the collective, mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs, and assumptions that guide the behaviour of individuals and groups in an institute of higher education and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions on and off campus' (Kuh & Whitt, 1988, pp. 12-13). This definition is consistent with the definition of culture ... (p.6)

In her work on the relationship between school culture and school improvement, Schoen (2005) goes beyond collating others' definitions by providing her own definition based upon the literature. Here, schools are seen as each having a unique culture onto their own and that culture encompasses those involved with the school.

School culture describes the holistic activities and 'ways of being and doing' of those who work in or participate on a regular basis within a school. It is an organizational approach, which sees each individual school as having a unique and distinctive ethos or personality,

comprised of the collective expressions of members of the school organization (p.13).

One last example is Hermanowicz's (2005) definition of organizational culture as it relates to his work on classifying university and departmental culture. In this case, Hermanowicz relies on his own definition of the term rather than borrowing from the literature:

In this work, culture refers to the meaning of membership in a school. It captures what life is like on the inside of departments by representing people's experience and interpretation of educational organizations. The value of examining institutional cultures—and how they may be classified—lies in *identity*, both institutional and individual: we glean how people construct institutions and establish meaning in them (p.26).

The definitions above were chosen for their relevance as well as the fact that they resonated with my understanding of organizational culture. They suggest many similar ideas addressed below but they also all relate back to a very basic but effective definition organizational culture, that being "the way we do things around here" (M. Barlosky, personal communication, February 21, 2005; Cunningham and Grasso, 1993; Flathmann, 1996).

In examining the definitions above as well as others, it becomes evident that academics have resorted to similar terms with which to describe culture. Words such as 'norms', 'values', 'beliefs', 'practices', and 'artifacts' are used repeatedly by various academics (Angelides & Ainscow, 2000; Brady, 2004; Craig, 2004; Flores, 2004; Gruenert, 2000; Leonard & Leonard, 2003; Ritter, 2002; Ruhl, 1996; Sckerl, 2002; Sergiovanni, 1984; Smircich, 1983). Many of the terms link to Schein's (1992) identified three 'levels of culture': (a) artifacts (i.e., 'what's going on here?'); (b) espoused values (i.e., 'why are you doing what you are doing?'); and (c) basic underlying assumptions (i.e. 'are the identified

espoused values really explaining the artifacts?). Schein (1992) argued that the essence of culture can be found within the basic underlying assumptions, suggesting that cultural research needs to ensure it addresses assumptions and not just artifacts and espoused values. However, other academics used Schein's terms as components of a broader definition or use other constructions and terms within their definitions and even Schein (1992) uses different words such as philosophy, rules of the game, and climate to describe culture. From these various definitions, I have drawn words with which to base my definition of organizational culture presented in section 2.1.7.

2.1.2 Boundaries as they relate to culture

In examining definitions of organizational culture there is often reference to, or an underlying assumption that there are, boundaries defining cultures (Herrmann, 2002; Schein, 1992). The boundary is referred to as the 'organization', 'school', 'institute of higher education'; even terms such as 'community of teachers and/or learners' identify a sort of boundary (Brady, 2004; Flores, 2004; Hermanowicz, 2005; Ruhl, 1996; Sckerl, 2002; Schoen, 2005; Stine, 2000).

The fact that cultures have boundaries is significant as there are perimeters, raising the notion of inclusion and exclusion; who is a member of the culture and who is not (Hermanowicz, 2005; Schein, 1992; Sckerl, 2002). However, in their discussion of boundaries, Martin (2002) and Herrmann (2002) suggest boundaries are actually more permeable and flexible than some academics have previously acknowledged and that a culture's boundary does not always directly align with that of the organization's boundary. For example, Herrmann (2002) notes that in the study of one new high school the boundary was expanded in some ways to include the wider community and that "the school became a mirror image of the community" (p. 56). The notion of boundary has

been incorporated within my definition of organizational culture and also within my interview questions in finding out how the culture of the school of education under study is defined.

2.1.3 Culture as a variable or as a metaphor

As previously stated, the definition of organizational/school culture that academics use in their research sheds light on the lens through which they study culture. At one level, this relates to whether culture is viewed as 'a variable' or as a 'metaphor for organizational life' (Smircich, 1983). Viewing culture as a variable involves considering culture as something an organization 'has'. Often research with this perspective relates the idea of a 'strong culture' to productivity and profitability in a situation like a corporate setting (Martin, 2002; Wood, 1998). However, culture as a metaphor involves the researcher perceiving culture as something an organization 'is' which involves looking for deep meaning to understanding the lives of those within the culture (Martin, 2002; Wood, 1998).

Many academics do not seem to consciously position themselves in relation to either view of culture, but their studies shed light on their understandings and it is important to understand the positioning of the researcher. In the definitions provided above, many academics seem to bring to their work a perspective of the concept of culture as a metaphor, although Brady's (2004) definition clearly acknowledges culture as a variable when he addresses the 'power' or effect that culture can have on individuals. In my research, although I recognize the effect that culture can have as a variable, I very much see culture as something an organization is. For me, the notions of 'the organization' and 'organizational culture' proper are interchangeable in that you cannot have one without the other. Grant's (1988) comments seem to echo some of these same

understandings with the suggestion of culture creation in relation to the school being 'alive':

Schools are no longer simply institutions, but viable living organisms, human creations with unlimited possibilities. A group of people making up a school is seen to be actively devising solutions to commonly held problems. Their solutions and collective understandings are then passed on to new members, subtly changing in their process. (p.19)

2.1.4 Integrative, differentiated, and fragmented positions

Another consideration relating to the perspective of the researcher relates to whether the researcher views culture from an integrative, differentiated, or fragmented position (Martin, 2002). Each of these perspectives involves the researcher carrying certain assumptions about what culture is prior to beginning the research process.

In an integrative study, the researcher assumes that there is consensus and little to no ambiguity within the organization being studied (Martin, 2002). At a basic level, this is reflected in some definitions of culture where there is reference to the individuals in a culture having a collective understanding, shared way of doing things, or set of standard operating procedures (Brady, 2004; Craig, 2004; Goldsmith, 1998; Gruenert, 2000; Hermanowicz, 2005; Ruhl, 1996; Sckerl, 2002; Schoen, 2005; Silver, 2003). The differentiation perspective involves inconsistency where, for example, a leader may say one thing and do another, or where there is consistency within sub-cultures but not within the overall organizational culture (Martin, 2002). Fragmentation is the last perspective and it involves ambiguity, where individuals align in different ways on different issues (Martin, 2002). These perspectives do not necessarily relate to the actual culture being studied (e.g., whether the culture is shared among everyone or whether it is very fragmented) but rather, how the researcher views the concept of culture which therefore affects the way in which research is conducted and data are analyzed.

Within this study, for the most part I approach culture from an integrative perspective. However, rather than considering occasional deviations from consensus as 'regrettable shortfalls' as is seen in a purely integrative perspective, I view deviations as the realities of any culture as being potentially enriching.

2.1.5 Different approaches to describing culture

There is little doubt that individual schools, universities, and departments each have a culture(s) that is unique to that particular organization (Grant 1998). Various ways in which to describe culture emerged from the literature. One approach used to describe organizational culture is to provide a description based upon the data collected, not making reference to an outside standard or measure. However, in some cases judgments are made on culture with two approaches that I want to highlight.

In the first approach, some academics have used categories whereby they identify or reference a variety of 'types of cultures' and then decide into which category their organization's culture fits based upon their data. For example, a few studies in higher education adopted categories such as collegium, bureaucracy, corporation and enterprise or hierarchical, collegial, anarchical, and political (Middlehurst, 2004; Sullivan, 2000). In addition, Dawson's (2003) research on cultural change in schools described three cycles: fragmented, project, and organic schools. These categories, although potentially helpful in describing the culture, pigeon-hole the culture into a description that might not always address the complexities of the situation.

In addition to the approach of defining categories, there is also the tendency by some academics to describe culture as either 'good' or 'bad', providing a different kind of

approach. For example, a number of academics talk about 'positive' and 'toxic' cultures (Leonard & Leonard, 2003; Peterson, 2002; Peterson & Deal 1998). Even terms such as 'better' and 'worse' (Schein, 1992) or the notion of 'healthy' and 'strong' cultures, (Dawson, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1991) imply a form of judgement. This notion of 'good' and 'bad' culture also exists throughout cultural change literature as there is an assumption that a school's culture must be improved to something better, otherwise, why change it (Brandt, 1992; Kettlewell, 1996; Wisniewski 1996)? Even papers discussing different categories of culture (i.e., collegial vs. hierarchical) expose underlying assumptions on what type of culture is better than another (Dawson, 2003; Middlehurst, 2004; Sullivan, 2000) and other papers describing culture generally end up attributing positive or negative connotations to the culture under study (Angelides & Ainscow, 2000; Flores, 2004; Hofman, Hofman, & Guldemon, 2002).

Although I touch upon this notion of 'good' and 'bad' culture briefly when discussing the literature concerning the effect of culture, I do not consciously impose categories on the culture which I am studying. As with many studies, references to particular characteristics or judgements that could fit into a box emerge in the findings, but I do not position myself as trying to decide whether the culture under study is something like 'corporate' or 'political' as my focus isn't on categorizing cultures but rather describing one in relation to how it develops.

2.1.6 Culture as it relates to climate

Within literature in organizational studies, climate is a term that often emerges in discussions of culture. Climate is described in a number of ways such as being "a metaphor for the health of a school" (Sergiovanni & Starrat, 1993, p.84), as being "the enduring characteristics that describe the psychological character of a particular school,

distinguish it from other schools, and influence the behaviour of teachers and students” (Sergiovanni & Starrat, 1993, p. 82), or the feeling that someone gets as his/she walks into a school (Angus, 1996). Direct comparisons to culture are also made. Sergiovanni (1991) stated that:

Climate is concerned with the process and style of a school’s organizational life rather than its content and substance ... School culture, by contrast, is more normative than school climate in the sense that it is a reflection of the shared values, beliefs, and commitments of school members across an array of dimensions that include but extend beyond interpersonal life. What the school stands for and believes about education, organization, and human relationships; what it seeks to accomplish; its essential elements and features; and the image it seeks to project are the deep-rooted defining characteristics shaping the substance of its culture. (p. 218)

Although some academics claim that organizational culture and climate are two different concepts, often terms and ideas raised in the defining of climate align with what others use in defining culture. For example, the ‘psychological character’ of a school used by Sergiovanni and Starrat (1993) to describe climate also suggests culture in that there are values and assumptions that would be part of that character. Sergiovanni and Starrat (1993) also talk about differences in schools where some cultures are open or healthy and support learning whereas others are closed and hinder learning. This relates directly back to culture and the assumptions and behaviours of members within that culture and to the discussion of school cultures being ‘good’ or ‘bad’. Indeed, some academics even see climate as a component of culture (Ritter, 2002) or as meaning pretty much the same thing. Within this study, climate is treated as a part of culture because if we go back to the most basic definition of culture ‘it’s the way we do things around here’, the way in which things are done relates to the tone set, how people treat each other or feel in their environment.

2.1.7 Identifying a definition for this study based upon the literature

Given the literature examined in relation to the concept of organizational culture, a definition has been developed for this particular study that encompasses key recurring themes and the other considerations noted above.

Organizational culture is defined as the shared beliefs and values among individuals within an institution as well as a shared way of doing things (practices and activities) of the organization.

I want to qualify this definition by noting two particular points: (a) among researchers in the field, there is little agreement on how to define organizational culture so there will always be academics who would disagree with any definition that I chose to use (Martin, 2002); and (b) I am aware that there are always multiple perspectives or ways of looking at culture and my approach is simply one.

2.2 The effect of organizational culture

Why is organizational culture important within an educational context and why do academics spend time studying the development of school and university culture? These questions can be answered through examining literature regarding the effects of organizational culture. Prior to exploring the effects, it is important to situate the understandings within a recognition of the considerable amount of time that teachers and students spend within schools and their schools' respective cultures. White-Hood (2002) states that an elementary school is the place where "... students, parents, teachers, and staff members ... spend 180-200 days each year, 7-10 hours each school day, and some weekends" (p. 47). This is quite the time commitment! Although there is no similar reference to the time commitment within faculties/schools of education, through my first-hand observation of three teacher education programs, the time commitment of faculty members in a faculty of education is significant and individuals

spend much time within their particular organization's culture. If this is the case, the culture cannot but have an impact in various ways.

2.2.1 Effect on educational organizations and their programming

Many academics note that school culture has a direct bearing on school effectiveness (Blackwell, 1996; Goulard, 1996; Kettlewell, 1996; Leonard & Leonard, 2003; Sckerl, 2002; Sergiovanni, 1991). For instance, some studies claim that certain cultures (e.g., collaborative, developmental) lead to more effective organizations than other cultures (e.g., hierarchical, rational) (Gmelch, 1993; Kwan 2002; Morgan & Morgan, 1992). In 1992, Morgan and Morgan quoted a superintendent who stated:

It's amazing how isolated certain teachers are, and how isolationist our schools have become, with people closing the classroom door and doing their own thing. The most effective schools are those that break the isolationism and find ways and means of getting teachers to talk about teaching... Those who make it happen are those who take every opportunity to create dialogue... (p.7)

This quote suggests that certain schools are more effective than others based upon the culture that exists in those schools which aligns with other work linking general organizational culture to effectiveness (e.g., productivity within a corporation) (Bate, 1984; Geisler, 2005; Jones, Jimmieson, & Griffiths, 2005; Lee & Yu, 2004; Martin 2002; Schein 1992).

Within the literature, school culture was also noted as affecting programming (e.g., overall structure of a program) and curriculum (e.g., what is being taught and how the content is being taught) (Blackwell, 1996; Brady 2004; Kettlewell, 1996; Walker, 1990; Wiles, 1999). Part of this was shown in relation to how the culture influenced an educational organization's ability to make real organizational or programming changes (Angelides & Ainscow 2000; Edmonson, et al., 2001; Sckerl, 2002; Sergiovanni &

Starratt, 1993). For example, in discussing the reform of the University of New Mexico's College of Education, Blackwell (1996) links the changes made within the culture to an improvement in the B.Ed. program in terms of developing more of a learning community and developing consistency and cohesion in the programming rather than it being very fragmented and pieced-together.

2.2.2 Effect on faculty/teachers

Organizational culture in educational institutions greatly influences individuals including faculty members and teachers. Culture shapes teacher/faculty attitudes, morale, commitment, approaches to teaching, learning in the workplace, and identity (Angelides & Ainscow, 2000; Flores, 2004; Hermanowicz, 2005; Hofman, Hofman, & Guldemon, 2002; Nir, 2002; Sckerl, 2002; Sergiovanni, 1991; Womack & Loyd, 2004). For example, in her (1995) work on the restructuring of a university journalism department, Riddle found that fatigue and frustration arose when faculty members were not able to understand the organizational culture as it changed with restructuring. Flores (2004) examined new teacher development in the workplace and found that culture, along with leadership, had a great effect on new teachers' ability to learn. Flores talked not only about culture creating a common purpose but also its effect on new teachers who were looking for emotional support and acceptance. In some cases, organizational culture has also been linked to teacher/faculty/administrative office staff turnover due to dissatisfaction in the workplace (Grant, 1988; Johnsrud, Heck, & Rosser, 2000).

2.2.3 Effect on students

As the recipients of educational programming at an elementary, secondary, or post-secondary level, students are not immune to being affected by organizational culture. Indeed, the literature recognizes that students are affected both academically and

personally by culture (Dawson, 2003; Gaziel, 1997; Grant, 1988; Harlander, 1998; Henry, 1993; Hofman, Hofman, & Guldemon, 2002; Womack & Loyd, 2004). In his work on the changes in one high school's culture over time, Grant (1988) quotes one borderline student who compared her experience at Hamilton High to another local school "[If I were at the other local high school, [I] would do homework... [I] would be an entirely different person than [I] am today. I would work probably twice as hard as I do because I would get pushed to my limit academically, athletically, and socially" (p.111). This quote reflects both the academic and personal effects of culture on students.

In terms of the effect culture has on student achievement, academics make general statements that positive cultures effect student achievement in positive ways without providing concrete evidence (Dawson, 2003; Gaziel, 1997; Hofman, Hofman, & Guldemon, 2002; Womack & Loyd, 2004). However, when describing non-academic effects on students, researchers are more specific. For instance, Harlander's (1998) MA/PhD work looked at how the culture of an institution of higher education for men supported or inhibited the development of socially responsible leadership in its students. Henry (1993) also published a comparison of cultures in two private schools – one being a Waldorf school and the other being a 'fairly traditional Episcopal school', noting how the different cultures socialized students regarding certain assumptions and understandings about the world. Here, Henry suggests a link between hidden curriculum and organizational culture, a link confirmed much more openly by Sergiovanni (1991) where he stated that culture was a "powerful socializer of thought and programmer of behaviour" (p.108).

2.2.4 Other possible effects

There are a few other effects of organizational culture that I will briefly discuss. In his research on the changing culture of one high school, Grant (1988) reflected on how school culture affected the wider community because as the school improved, the housing prices in the surrounding area increased. This could be extrapolated into an understanding for my research whereby the culture of a school of education could provide positive effects for the university and wider local community by, for instance, attracting the interest of more students. Also, given the power of school for socializing students, the culture of schools on a large scale has the ability to influence society (Davies, 1994; Epp, 1996).

Given all of the effects of organizational culture touched upon within this section, it is evident that organizational culture has influence at many levels (e.g., individual, program) which is of particular interest to my study as it validates the need for understanding organizational culture and how it develops.

2.3 Examples of studies that inform the research

As referenced throughout this chapter, there are a number of publications that inform this study whether they relate to school/department culture generally (Flathmann, 1996; Foster & Goddard, 2003; Lee, 2002; Rhul, 1996; Sckerl, 2002), the creation of new schools (Guetschow, 1997; Herrmann, 2002; Johnson, 2000; McGhee, 2001; Reel, 2001; Ritter, 2002; Schill, 1992; Swainy 1998), new school opening and culture (Stine, 1999; Stine, 2000; Vazquez, 2001), or school culture change (Kettlewell, 1996). In this section, I highlight three studies/sets of studies that have examined new school/university start up and culture. These studies were particularly chosen to provide examples regarding the positioning of other academics within the immediate field, to

examine various research approaches used by other academics, and to highlight the type of findings that appear within closely related studies regarding new schools and school culture change work.

2.3.1 An example of research on the emergence of culture in a new high school

Through her examination of emerging culture within a new US high school's first year of existence, Stine's (1999) PhD dissertation is a key resource that informs my study and speaks to my research questions, conceptual framework, and methodologies. Using a case study approach, Stine's overarching research questions examined the emergence of culture generally and focused on the role of the principal and the external environment on influencing culture. To conduct the study, she focused on one school with data collection occurring during part of the first year of the school being open.

Stine conducted approximately 40 one-hour interviews with a variety of stakeholders (e.g., district administrators, principal, department chairs, teachers, and a few students) to explore notions of culture emergence in a new high school. As well as using open-ended interview questions arising from the theoretical framework, Stine also used follow-up probing questions and collected participant observations as well as key documents.

Through the findings and conclusions, Stine provided valuable information on the launching of the school. However, I question whether Stine analyzed the processes she was describing in regards to how they related to culture development. For instance, Stine spent much time describing the community and district school board history, claiming but not explaining how the external environment had a great influence on the culture. Later references were made to the influence of the leadership and the external environment as well as various other possible influences on the culture such as the

architecture of the school. However, I was still left with a feeling that the research was lacking in certain areas. For instance, Stine described in detail the hiring process for teachers as well as the results of those hiring practices (i.e., a younger staff that were connected to the community), but she didn't address how this hiring might have influenced the culture. Stine also described the school start-up mostly from an observer's perspective rather than using the powerful voices of the study participants in her descriptions and analysis even though she had collected those voices. Relatively few quotes were used to bring the actual experiences of those involved in the culture to light. However, this research informs my study and provides me with direction through the occasional suggestions of factors that influence culture. Stine also noted the paucity of literature on new school openings and culture.

2.3.2 An example of research on the emergence of culture at a new university

In order to provide an example of a study with an institutional context closer to my work, I've highlighted Goldsmith's (1997) PhD dissertation on culture creation within a new university. Using a methodological approach similar to Stine where data were collected through interviews, participant observation, and use of written materials, Goldsmith examined the beginnings of a new campus of California State University.

Although Goldsmith's title (i.e., *Creating culture at a new university: Expectations and realities*) and literature review suggest that he is interested in culture creation at a new university, the way in which he states what he is looking at does not reflect this interest: "In this study, I ask what happened as the new university was created; how and why did it come into being; how did expectations influence experiences; how do participants characterize the organizational culture; and how have participants reconciled the promise with the reality?" (p.7-8). From the beginning, the study seems to be somewhat

flawed and reminded me to focus on the purpose of my research and then develop the questions I would ask related to that purpose.

Goldsmith describes in detail the start-up of the university. Historical, social, economic, and political contexts are provided, key events are described, and descriptions of some of the experiences for individuals are described, but not in relation to the culture of the university. Given that the purpose of the study was to look at culture creation, the extensive background information in the findings section didn't seem that pertinent. Later, Goldsmith provides a thorough description of the organizational culture including the use of Martin's three perspectives as presented in section 2.1.4. He then claims that three themes spoke to the development of culture creation: vision, leadership, and trust. Within these, Goldsmith talks specifically about a few different factors that influenced the culture (although not using the term factor) such as the hiring of staff. It was from this type of analysis in Goldsmith's work that I drew concepts and ideas for my own research.

2.3.3 Examples of research on culture change in teacher education programs

The third example is a set of three papers that were published in a 1996 issue of Teacher Education Quarterly. All three papers, along with similar articles in the same issue, focus on US colleges of education that underwent reform - essentially a change in culture along with a change in organizational structure and programming. Kettlewell (1996) speaks generally to the reform process undertaken by five colleges of education while the other two papers (Blackwell, 1996; Wisniewski, 1996) speak of colleges that were part of the same network. Publications regarding culture change in organizations have been of significant use in constructing the literature review as the development of culture in a new organization seems to share similarities with the processes of culture

change. There is much more written about culture change within the school and university contexts than there is written about new organizations and their culture.

Each of the three papers highlighted in *Teacher Education Quarterly* is theoretical in nature, describing and then theorizing the process of reform rather than conducting and reporting on an empirical study. Although culture is only mentioned once or twice in each paper, the authors each refer to the culture as what they are trying to change and it is implicit in what is written.

When talking about the process of culture change, each paper talks about at least one person, if not more, recognizing a need for change – a conscious decision being made to effect change. For instance, Blackwell (1996) described the culture of her/his college as being very isolating, students making public complaints, faculty refusing to teach courses, and describing the faculty as they “thrived on turf and internecine warfare internally” (p.20).

The three papers go on to describe how restructuring, or changing the culture occurred. Wisniewski's (1996) paper provides a descriptive account of change whereas Kettlewell's (1996) presents strategies or approaches to consider. Each paper provided a number of considerations for my research given that each suggests ways of changing culture. For example, Blackwell (1996) discussed how changing physical space in terms of where offices and departments were located resulted in changing the communication patterns of faculty; Wisniewski (1996) discussed the process of developing a plan for change with faculty and how a few faculty left but for the most part the plan helped focus the faculty towards the future; and Kettlewell (1996) talked about the Dean being in a symbolic role and needing to 'lead by example'. Although these papers were accounts

of experiences rather than empirical studies, they brought forward a number of possible factors of influence for me to consider.

2.4 Factors that could possibly influence organizational culture

Given that the purpose of this research is to study factors that influence culture development, this section examines relevant resources which identify possible factors. However, it should be noted that although some publications are empirical studies and link culture with one or more factors, many of the papers are theoretical in nature and suggest possible factors without providing empirical evidence for the statements made. Often this includes not explaining how a certain factor influences culture but rather just stating that it does. Some sources also do not address culture explicitly but rather imply culture when discussing possible influences on the organization in a more general sense. This being said, the vast majority of the publications relate to the field of education and all provide insight and enrich the foundation upon which the conceptual framework for this study is based.

2.4.1 Leadership

In identifying factors that may influence organizational culture, leadership is the most common factor that is discussed in the literature (Angus, 1996; Berry, 1997; Brady, 2004; Carsten, 2003; Craig, 2004; Flores, 2004; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986; Oliver, 1972; Peterson & Deal, 1998; Wood, 1998). Schein, a pioneer in the field of organizational culture, has focused much of his work on the relationship between leadership and culture and states that leaders "...create and modify cultures. Culture creation, culture evolution, and culture management are what ultimately define leadership..." (1992, xv).

Brady's (2004) work on secondary school principals' perceptions of their role in relation to school culture illustrates the importance of leadership when Brady talks about the role of the principal as a 'symbol' in promoting cultural cohesion. Craig (2004) also talks about the role of the leader, but from a higher education perspective, identifying the importance of the leader in "align[ing] people, policies, structures, and practices to focus on a compelling vision..." (p.87) and Kettlewell (1996) comes to similar conclusions through focusing on teacher education programs.

Sometimes, academics suggest that educational leaders influence culture through modest day-to-day practices such as positive personal interactions with staff (Peterson & Deal, 1998; Rooney, 2003; Stine, 1999). However, there is also the notion of power that is recognized in the role of the leader, with Sergiovanni (1991) noting that:

[Principals] are, for example, in control of the communications system of the school and thus can decide what information to share and with whom. Further, they control the allocation of resources and are able to reward desirable (and sanction undesirable) behaviour... (p.108)

Some leaders are aware of their effect on culture and make conscious decisions that involve nurturing organizational culture (Schein, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1991; Stine, 1999). For instance, Kettlewell (1996) provides a summary of the experiences of five Deans of Education who all decided that they wanted to change the culture of their organization. In each case, the Deans purposefully took a number of steps to restructure their College of Education and therefore change the culture. However, educational leaders are not always aware of how they influence the culture of their school, university, or department. Although school principals in many jurisdictions receive training prior to taking on a permanent administrative position, Gmelch and Miskin (1993) note that most university department chairs don't receive any leadership training. This could be the case for other leadership positions within a university bringing into question whether university leaders

always have the theory to support the nurturing of culture. Still, books are published on topics such as 'how to change your school's culture' (Deal & Peterson, 1999) and 'how to pick the right leader for your school' (Gilvar, 1992) and so the practitioner material is available as long as those in leadership positions know how to access the information and are interested in doing so.

In literature, specifically about new schools/universities, founding principals and administrative leaders are especially identified as important in shaping culture (Goldsmith, 1997; Stine, 2000; Vazquez, 2001). Schein (1992) relates this to leaders imposing their values and assumptions on an organization and then if those values and assumptions are accepted, they become what shape the organizational culture for a long period of time. In Stine's (1999) work on the launching of a new high school, she noted the role of the principal as a symbol in shaping the culture:

The principal was a symbolic figure through his actions, a figurehead for the community to look to who was known in the district where connections were extremely important. This figurehead orchestrated carefully each phase of the planning, developing, and opening a new high school, much in the same way a conductor develops, coordinates, and finally conducts an orchestra. Each movement is symbolic and essential to the whole. (p.168)

As demonstrated, leadership seems to have played a significant role in the development and ongoing shaping of school and university culture. However, leadership does not work in isolation (Stine, 1999) and there are often constraints put on leaders both internally and externally such as decision-making power and budget limits (Stine, 1999) which can reduce or enhance their role in influencing culture.

2.4.2 Other members of the organization

As well as the influence of leaders within schools, departments, or universities, other members of education organizations also influence culture with teachers and faculty

being of particular interest to a number of academics. Gruenert (2000), Stine (2000), Wisniewski (1996), Peterson and Deal (1998), and Goldsmith (1997) all acknowledge the influence that individual teachers or faculty members can have on school culture. Indeed, even though much literature emphasizes leaders as having the most influence, Patterson and Patterson (2004) note that teachers may have the opportunity to influence culture more as they tend to stay at the same school for a long period of time whereas principals are often rotated to different schools after a limited number of years.

The importance of teachers and faculty is further noted in that principals and university administrators sometimes hire strategically to identify individuals who will 'fit' well within the desired school culture or even counsel certain individuals out of an organization (Byrk & Schneider, 2003; Foley, 1996; Goldsmith, 1998; Gruenert, 2000; Leonard & Leonard, 2003; Lilly, 1996; O'Neil, 1995; Stine, 1999; White-Hood, 2002). For example, Lilly (1996) states that:

...when we hire new Faculty we always include the College mission statement in the recruitment advertisement and ask applicants to address the mission in their presentation of qualifications. This helps to ensure that while we have considerable diversity in ways of knowing and doing among faculty, we share a common commitment to improvement of teaching and learning as our reason for being. (p.38)

Scott's (1995) comments regarding new faculty also reflect the importance of individual characteristics. Although she was not speaking to organizational culture, Scott (1995) noted the extreme challenges that new faculty face when they begin their first full-time university position given things like the uncertainty of expectations placed on them and the pressures of research. If it were the case that new faculty generally experience an intense amount of stress, they would bring this to the culture of the organization as well as the vibrancy that new teachers generally offer. Imagining a new school with all first-

year teachers looks quite different than a new school with teachers who have each been teaching for over ten years!

As well as teachers and faculty influencing culture, other members of the organization are also perceived as having an effect. In Foley's (1996) description of tasks that a principal should take care of when opening a new school, she noted the importance of hiring administrative office staff who not only possessed unique talents but who would also contribute to school-wide goals. However, only one publication made direct reference to the influence of students (Clark, 1970) and it seems rather lacking that there is not more research on the effect of the student body given its relative importance within schools and universities. In any event, knowing that other individuals beyond the leaders can influence culture, this was a possible factor included in the conceptual framework.

2.4.3 Guiding fundamental documents

Along with the influence of individuals, the development of guiding fundamental documents such as a mission statement, set of goals, articulated vision, or conceptual framework are identified as influencing organizational culture. This is especially evident in change literature where concepts such as a common vision or mission statement are identified as being key to successful change in organizational culture (Craig, 2004; Crissman, Spires, Pope, & Bell, 2000; Stine, 2000; Wisniewski, 1996; Brandes & Stuber, 2004). For instance, Craig (2004) notes the need to "align people, policies, structures, and practices to focus on a compelling vision" (pg.87) resulting in culture change within post-secondary institutions. The importance of these factors is also seen in literature regarding new schools, universities, or departments (Froman, 1999; Stine, 1999). In developing a new college of education, Lilly (1996) states that "The first and most

important task for the new College was to determine our mission and core beliefs ... that guide teaching, research and service" (p.36) and in launching a new elementary school, Foley (1996) asked her teachers to support certain commitments to excellence as well as having them write down their visions for the new school.

In an opposing view, Patterson (2001) suggests that goals and mission statements can be perceived as rhetoric and that universities should work with the minimum requirement for these types of documents to satisfy internal and external demands. However, Patterson also acknowledges that goals help to clarify the essence of an organization. In addition to Patterson's concerns, both Brandes and Stuber (2004) and Grant (1998) raise caution about not letting these ideas simply be 'another document on the shelf'.

Declarations alone are not sufficient, of course. Speech acts to remind us of ideals and to symbolically bind the community but it only has substantive meaning if it finds expression in face-to-face interactions and is reflected in interpersonal conduct. (Grant, 1998, p.197)

Therefore, although these guiding fundamental documents are perceived by some as influencing culture, there is still some debate regarding the effect of guiding fundamental documents.

2.4.4 Program design

There are few references to the influence of program design (including curriculum) in the literature. In Kosnik and Beck's (2003) research on faculty contribution to community building in teacher education, the researchers acknowledge that the cohort design of the program resulted in students and faculty getting to know each other more than would be possible in certain other program models. Extending this notion, stronger relationships and understandings among individuals has the possibility to greatly affect organizational culture. A different sort of effect from programs was cited within a secondary school

context where Oliver (1972) claims that a three-semester rather than two-semester school year results in teachers thinking about alternative approaches to teaching as well as students considering alternative selections in courses, thus changing the thoughts and behaviours of the organization's members.

Program design and curriculum are also seen as having an effect on culture change. According to Riddle's (1995) work on the reorganization of a journalism department, major changes in the program not only directly relate to changes in the culture, but also affect things like staff allocation, funding, and office location, all of which are other possible considerations for influencing culture. Kettlewell (1996), Wisniewski (1996), and Blackwell (1996) also note that changes in curriculum or programs relate to changes in culture.

Given that the definition of culture is focused on the concept of shared beliefs, values, and ways of doing things (practices and activities), and the fact that so much time of new educational organizations is focused on the programming at an infrastructure, as well as curriculum level, this is a factor to be explored in more depth – especially since there seems to be little definite research on the topic.

2.4.5 External influences

As much as internal factors influence the culture of an organization, external forces also come into play (Stine, 1999). Whether it is the larger institution or system, the wider community, the government, or society, each can influence culture. Although Young (2004) spoke in terms of governance in teacher education, the following quote touches upon the external influences that affect faculties and schools of education.

Faculties of Education are organizations nested within a complex environment of competing interests, demands and expectations. This environment may be conceived of here as consisting of three primary, but overlapping, spheres of policy initiation and implementation. One sphere is the public policy arena of the state – national and provincial governments, school boards and the like. Another is the university system with its preoccupations of knowledge production, preservation, dissemination and application, the latter perhaps most noticeable in the professional schools, including Faculties of Education. A third is the arena in which teachers and professional teacher organizations attempt to influence the content and structure of teacher education programs and their practical efficacy. (p.1)

There are many ways in which external factors such as the wider university or district school board might influence culture as seen in the literature. For example, Morgan and Morgan (1992) note that one principal had worked very hard over a two year period to come to a collaborative decision with their staff and then someone at the board office had simply reversed the decision, undermining the school's efforts at developing more collaborative practices. Universities are also perceived as influencing departmental culture in a post-secondary setting with Lee (2002) noting that smaller universities have more of an influence on the culture of academic departments than larger universities.

In addition to the larger institution or system influencing an organization's culture, the wider community is also seen as influencing culture. In fact, Stine (1999) focuses strongly on the connection between community and a new high school's culture, discussing the fact that a school is dependent on the wider community, is influenced by community history, and mirrors the community. We see this effort to bring the community into the school through involving parents as well as other community members (Chan & Ledbetter 1999; Foley, 1996). However, a more unusual influence of community members is provided by Kettlewell. In discussing the restructuring and culture change of a College of Education in the US, Kettlewell (1996) talks about bringing partners to the table to be part of the restructuring process. However, one of

the reasons that she states that the K-12 teachers were invited to the meetings was that it helped keep participants “on their best behaviour and help[ed] maintain focus on the agenda” (pg. 53). Whether it is seen as meaningful contributions to the culture or something slightly less direct, the wider community obviously carries some influence.

Government and society also influence the culture of organizations. For instance, accreditation of post-secondary programs, occurring at either a provincial or national level depending in which jurisdiction a university is located, influences the governance of universities (Axelrod, 1989; Gerbic & Kranenburg, 2003; Goldsmith, 1998; Young, 2004). This includes often creating pressure on the whole organization or specific departments (Harvey, 2004; Salter & Tapper, 2002) which cannot help but affect the organization and influence the culture even in terms of creating a bureaucratic burden (Harvey, 2004). In addition, the wider society influences school/university culture as the larger beliefs and assumptions of society are often reflected in the institutions of a society (Angus, 1996; Clark, 1970).

2.4.6 Physical and administrative structures

Physical and administrative structures also influence culture. One focus regarding the physical nature of the organization relates to size with a smaller sized school or university reflecting a tighter community (Byrk & Schneider 2003; Oliver, 1972; Sckerl, 2002). For instance, Kosnik and Beck (2003) note the “...need to create smaller schools so teachers can work together, and teachers and students can get to know each other and share a common school culture” (p.100). However, the actual physical space also influences culture. Space can reflect beliefs and priorities of the culture (Deal & Peterson, 1999; Stine, 1999) and it also helps to define what activities are possible within a school or university (Oliver, 1972; Stine, 1999). In wanting to change the culture

of a College of Education, Kettlewell (1996) talked about changing the location of faculty offices in order to change informal conversation patterns. Changing school structures can also influence attendance and morale of staff as well as student morale and behaviour (Hickman, 2002).

In addition to physical structures, the administrative structure is also a possible factor of influence. Lilly (1996) talked about the administrative structure as an important component to examine during the first years of an institution: "...We have also created staffing models and governance structures in the College which reflect our beliefs in community and collaboration" (p.37). It is clear that different types of governance or decision-making structures can help to define organizations and their culture (Stine, 1999; Sullivan 2000).

2.4.7 Early events and activities

In new organizations, early events and activities were seen as important in helping to define organizational culture. This possible factor is somewhat self-explanatory in that school culture can be perceived as traditions and rituals that develop over time with the early years of an organization helping to define those traditions and rituals. Early events or activities are recognized as important to the organization (Foley, 1996) to the point where, in launching a new school, White-Hood (2002) 'systematically built a community' in part by organizing specific events such as a new school rally and monthly stakeholder meetings. Other academics also talk about events such as opening ceremonies, a special teambuilding workshop for teachers in the summer, community meetings, providing flowers to all teachers on the first day of school, and having a big Christmas celebration as important early events (Carsten, 2003; Foley, 1996; Stine, 1999; White-Hood, 2002). Early crises and conflicts can influence the development of culture in

terms of how the leader and the rest of staff respond to those crises and conflicts and the repercussions of those responses (Vazquez, 2001).

2.4.8 Discipline

The discipline of a university department is a factor that was only mentioned within one publication that I examined (Lee, 2002). However, Lee provides a strong case for discipline influencing culture. In a study of 429 institutions, examining 4,202 departments, Lee found that discipline affected a department's goals regarding undergraduate education generally as well as affecting a faculty member's degree of commitment to students and learning. Another effect of discipline was its ability to mitigate the influence of the larger institution on a department's culture. For instance, the culture of education departments was seen as being less affected by the university than the culture of business departments. Although this is only one study upon which to base a possible factor, I found Lee's arguments intriguing and seemingly well founded, resulting in discipline being considered as a possible factor of influence for this study.

2.4.9 Other possible factors

One additional factor for consideration is whether the organization under study is new. For example, when a new school or university is being launched there is excitement and exhilaration as well as stress that does not necessarily exist in the same way within well-established organizations (Martin, 2002; Oliver, 1972). This sense of excitement and/or stress could be a factor influencing the culture. However, whether this is a legitimate factor to take into consideration or whether the concept is somehow intertwined with others such as the administrative structure and it being new is unclear.

The concept of whether individuals are conscious of culture is another possible factor. Often culture is taken for granted with individuals not being aware that they exist within a culture unless they are a new member in which case practices would stand out (Craig, 2004; Knight & Trowler, 2000). However, in some cases plans are developed and models or instruments are used to help in the process of culture change (Brandt, 1992; Hall, 1997; Sckerl, 2002).

Barriers to culture also exist, the most prominent being time and energy constraints. Often terms such as 'not enough time', 'high workload', and 'exhaustion' were mentioned in the literature as being barriers in some way to the organization (Goldsmith, 1998; Leonard & Leonard, 2003). However, developing and changing culture takes time (A99) as do aspects of certain cultures such as a culture being collaborative (Gruenert, 2000). These constraints were not included in the conceptual framework as they seemed to relate back to other factors already identified (e.g., administrative structures could involve a high workload).

Still, there are other possibilities for factors such as organizational culture being linked to the identity and image of an organization (Hatch & Schultz, 1997) and Stine (1999) even noting the importance of the name of a school in reflecting the values of the community.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

As defined by Miles and Huberman (1994), a conceptual framework is the "current version of the researcher's map of the territory being investigated" (p.20). Given my interest in examining how a new school of education's culture develops as well as the fact that the literature gave rise to a number of possible factors that could influence culture, a tentative conceptual framework was developed. (I use the term "factor" to

describe each of the various influences on the culture. This is not a term that others have used in their research but rather, they simply refer to whatever each factor is directly.)

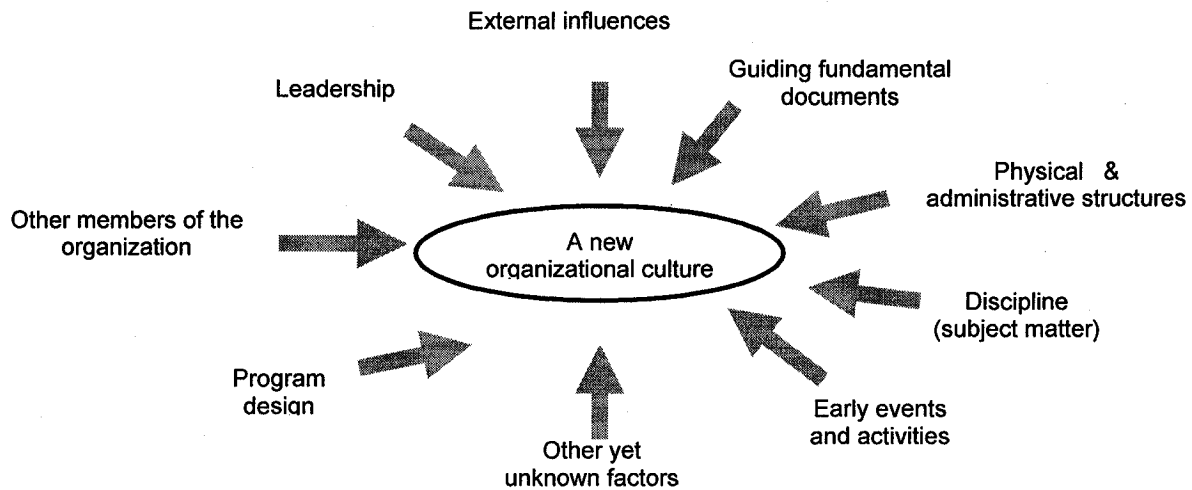


Figure 1: Conceptual framework: Possible factors that influence the development of culture in a new educational organization

The use of a conceptual framework suggests a structured or deductive approach as the framework influences the study including the selection of the data collection instrument(s). However, while I use a structured design, I also incorporate emergent aspects to the research. For instance, included in the conceptual framework is a category for "other yet unknown factors" because it is quite possible that there could be more factors identified by the study participants that had not addressed in the literature. Also, throughout the data collection and analysis process, I did not assume that all factors listed in the framework would necessarily arise in the data collection. Therefore, although there is structure within the framework, there is also flexibility for emergent ideas.

There are a few other observations regarding the conceptual framework that should also be noted. One is that through the figure, we are able to determine that factors are influencing culture but we are not able to determine how they do so. This is in large part due to the small amount of literature that spoke to how the various factors influenced culture as well as the fact that it would have been hard to represent the 'how' component in a visual format. Another observation regarding the figure is that some of the factors illustrated in the conceptual framework could have potential sub-divisions resulting in a more complex set of factors (e.g., the factor regarding other members of the organization includes individuals such as faculty, administrative office staff, students, and others). In developing the conceptual framework, it was anticipated that the framework would evolve through the data analysis process and that a modified version of the framework would emerge, illustrating a deeper understanding of culture development.

There are some final observations to be made regarding the literature as it relates to the conceptual framework and study generally. Probably most importantly is the great variety in approaches taken to research regarding culture in educational organizations. Even in terms of the definition of organizational culture, there is no agreement and then works published vary from accounts of experiences to empirical studies that take various approaches such as both qualitative and quantitative studies, using different instruments, and following different timelines. Although I found many publications that were useful in developing a literature review for the study, there were fewer empirical studies and more of the accounts of experience or advice type pieces. This leaves much room for research to be conducted. In addition, while certain factors such as leadership were well represented in the literature, others such as discipline had very little research to reflect their influence. Studies often begin by looking at one or two factors or if they were more unstructured, they seemed to end up focusing on one or two factors. In this way, my

study addresses a need within the literature to look at a number of possible factors simultaneously, especially in relation to new educational organization culture of which there is particularly little available research.

Chapter 3 - Research Context and Method

The following chapter describes the research context and method used to conduct the study. The purpose of providing such information is that it allows the reader to situate the findings within the context of the study, to assess the trustworthiness of the study, and to permit the replication of the research if the reader so wishes.

3.1 Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this research is to acquire a deeper understanding of what influences culture when launching a new educational organization. The motivation of this study, initially emerging from personal interest in culture and experiences in a new school of education, has been further focused through the literature. Given the power culture can have on educational organizations, their programming, and individual members (Angelides & Ainscow, 2000; Blackwell, 1996; Brady 2004; Dawson, 2003; Flores, 2004; Gaziel, 1997; Goulard, 1996; Grant, 1988; Harlander 1998; Hermanowicz, 2005; Hofman, Hofman, & Guldemon, 2002; Kettlewell, 1996; Leonard & Leonard, 2003; Nir, 2002; Sckerl, 2002; Sergiovanni, 1991; Walker, 1990; Wiles, 1999; Womack & Loyd, 2004), I was deeply interested in exploring how culture developed so that it can be taken into account in new ways within education organizations. The ability to look at a very new culture allows for a great opportunity as participants in the culture can look back on their experiences in a relatively clear manner as compared to those who have been

living within a culture for a number of years. There is much to be learned regarding various influences on culture through examining new cultures.

This study focuses in particular on investigating factors that influence the development of organizational culture within a new faculty or school of education. The study is further focused to examine culture through the perception of faculty members at one specific school of education (see section 3.5). Three research questions guide the research:

1. As perceived by faculty, what defines the culture of the school of education under study and how well established is that culture?
2. As perceived by faculty, what are the factors that influence the process of culture development in this setting?
3. As perceived by faculty, how do those factors influence the process of culture development in this setting?

Although the main focus for the study is centred on examining the factors that influence the development of culture, the first question is fundamental to the research. In terms of identifying factors of possible influence, it was deemed necessary that an understanding of the culture of the organization be established in order to situate the understanding of factors of influence that would emerge in the data analysis.

Questions two and three directly address the purpose of the study, examining the reasons that organizational culture might take a certain form. Not only is the intent of the research focused on identifying various factors that influence the development of culture but it also looks more specifically at how those factors influence culture.

3.2 Epistemological considerations

This research is clearly situated within the constructivist paradigm (Creswell, 2003). I assume, along with many other researchers within the field of organizational culture, that culture is a lived experience in which reality is socially constructed, perceived, and internalized by the members of the organization (Martin, 2002). In defining socially constructed knowledge claims, (Creswell, 2003) stated that:

Assumptions identified in these works hold that individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work. They develop subjective meanings of their experiences – meanings directed toward certain objects or things. These meanings are varied and multiple... (p.8)

Indeed, the ontological perceptive that best aligns with the research relates to reality being local and specifically constructed (Brewerton & Millward, 2001). Associated with this, the epistemological stance adopted for this research emphasizes the honouring of knowledge constructed by study participants as well as the subjective relationship between the researcher and the subject being studied (Brewerton & Millward, 2001; Creswell, 2003). As viewed through a constructivist paradigm, researchers bring their own perceptions to their research and are subjective. Researchers therefore 'position themselves' within their study in order to contextualize their findings for the readers (Creswell, 2003; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

This study adopts a qualitative methodology where an examination of multiple meanings or representations of human experiences develops understanding of the topic being researched (Creswell, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). In defining the type of study, I am hesitant to pigeonhole my work into any one definition as labelling a study can be tricky and not always effective (J. Ahola-Sidaway, personal communication, March 02, 2006). The research draws upon various types of studies such as the research being situated within a bounded system characteristic of a case study (Creswell, 2003) or the fact that it

is examining a particular phenomenon as occurs in phenomenological studies (Holstein & Gubrium, 1998; Schwandt, 2000). The study also links to what Merriam (2002) identified as a basic interpretative qualitative research whereby:

...the researcher is interested in understanding how participants make meaning of a situation or phenomenon, this meaning is mediated through the researcher as instrument, the strategy is inductive, and the outcome is descriptive.....data are collected through interviews, observations or document analysis. These data are inductively analyzed to identify the recurring patterns or common themes. A rich, descriptive account of the findings is presented and discussed, using references to literature that framed the study in the first place...[and]...a researcher might draw upon concepts, models, and theories ... to frame the study (p.6&38).

The study methodology is guided by a conceptual framework derived from the literature review. Therefore, the study itself is situated within a deductive stance, but the data collection instrument and analysis process are developed in such a way that there is a definite emergent quality to the study where new concepts are sought and welcomed.

3.3 Self-positioning

Given the knowledge assumptions adopted for this study, it is important that I define the perspective from which the study has been conducted (Creswell, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Schwandt, 2000). I am a graduate student in my mid- to late-twenties, having previously attended two universities prior to the University of Ottawa, one of which being the university under study. During this time, I completed a degree in geography while also completing a concurrent B.Ed. degree with a different affiliated university. I also worked for the school of education under study, helping the director develop the organization and B.Ed. program prior to the program beginning as well holding an administrative support position in the first year the B.Ed. program was offered.

One concern that could be raised is that there is the opportunity for me to bring bias to the research because of my relationship with the organization. However, given the constructivist paradigm in which I situate myself and my research, it is assumed that researchers are by nature subjective and that no research is value-free. Therefore, in describing my relationship with the organization, I've situated myself within the research and through the methodologies used (Creswell, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; O'Leary, 2004). This aligns with Martin's (2002) statement that most researchers who study culture situate themselves and their research from a subjective rather than objective stance. However, given that there can be the perception of inadvertent collusion or seeing what one would expect to see in the data (O'Leary, 2004), I attended closely to this concern and have attempted to bring a critical stance to the research throughout the whole process including ensuring the presence of multiple perspectives in the analysis.

It is also important to note that there are advantages to having an 'insider' relationship with the research site and it is not uncommon for the researcher to be an 'insider' when researching organizational culture (Martin, 2002; Warren, 2000). By being a previous member of the organization, I bring prior knowledge of the B.Ed. program and terminology specific to the organization which was helpful during data collection and analysis. Also, building a rapport and gaining the trust of participants is seen as an asset in the data collection process. My relationship with the organization allowed me to work from the previous rapport and trust that I had already developed (Fontana & Frey, 2000).

3.4 Study location

The site that was chosen for data collection was a new school of education within a mid-sized university in Canada. This site was chosen for a number of reasons: (a) it is one of

the few new faculties/schools of education in Canada; (b) the relative proximity of the study location was an advantage for data collection accessibility; and (c) I had developed a prior relationship with the organization which allowed for relative ease in access to the site and an understanding of the institutional context.

In May 2002, the province granted the university approval to establish a consecutive B.Ed. program, effectively launching the program and school of education into official existence. Prior to that time, there had been a history of teacher education in the community with a normal school training teachers between 1908 and 1973. In 1973 normal schools across the province were closed when preparation of elementary teachers became a degree program to be conducted by universities. Local educators continued to be involved in teacher education with the introduction of a concurrent B.Ed. program being established in 1974. This program was housed at the local university but was administered and governed by a partner university. The concurrent program is running at the same university as the new school of education but the programs and their organizations are separate. For example, there are different faculty and administrative office staff for the two programs; the programs do not share office space (although they were in very close proximity for the first year of programming); and there are different partnerships with the district school boards within which teacher candidates are placed. The concurrent program is still administered by a separate university and accepts students into their program right from high school whereas the new consecutive program is administered by the local university (through the school of education) and is a one-year program completed after a B.A. or B.Sc. The local university of which the school of education is a part has been historically known as a small arts and science undergraduate university with a strong focus on teaching and has only recently grown to be a mid-sized university with over 7000 students. The university is unique as it has only

one faculty for all of its degree programs, undergraduate and graduate alike. Therefore the school of education was defined as a 'School' being situated within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences rather than being its own 'Faculty'.

The university hired the director for the school of education in September 2002. The director had previously been one of the few full-time professors for the concurrent B.Ed. program of which she had been a faculty member for 21 years. She was also the director of the concurrent program from 1989-1998. During the 2002-2003 school year, the director along with an assistant (myself), a program secretary, a part-time student employee, worked closely with both an internal Arts and Science Steering Committee, an external Steering Committee of education partners, and a team of course framework writers (on short contracts) to design the institutional structures for the school of education as well as to design the consecutive teacher Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) program. Faculty and permanent administrative office staff were hired in spring 2003 through committees chaired by the director and composed of Arts and Science colleagues including the Dean of Arts and Science. Tenure-track faculty began their positions on July 1st, 2003 with other faculty and administrative office staff beginning at intermittent dates throughout the late spring and summer.

At the time of data collection (August 2005), the school of education had completed two years of offering the consecutive B.Ed. program, this being just one full cycle as the part-time program takes two years for teacher candidates to complete. An in-service Additional Qualification course was offered for the first time in May 2005 and the school of education is in the early stages of developing a graduate degree program. However, at the stage of data collection the efforts of faculty and administrative office staff had been primarily directed towards development and delivery of the B.Ed. program. With an

initial faculty and administrative office staff of one director, four tenure stream, four Limited Term Appointment (LTA – 10 month full-time contract), and 14 part-time faculty along with two permanent and two contract administrative office staff to support 115 full-time and 60 part-time teacher candidates, the program grew both within its second year and third year to the point where upon data collection, numbers for the third year were at one director, five tenure-stream, 11 LTA, and 38 part-time faculty along with five permanent and two contract administrative office staff to support 287 full-time and 155 part-time teacher candidates.

Within this study, the school of education is being presented as a new organization nested within a well-established larger institution (i.e., the university). Therefore, the notion of the school of education as a new institution can be contested. It is certainly not an organization starting completely from scratch as it is part of a university founded in 1964. However, given that the school of education is currently located in its own facilities at a distance from the main university campus and has certain structures arising from its professional programming that do not exist in other parts of the university (e.g., extensive school partnerships, links with provincial federations, accreditation through the provincial governing body, a legally mandated external advisory committee), the school is being described as a new organization. Its being situated within the larger institution is only one layer of being situated within a local community, a provincial system of education, and a given historical and political context.

3.5 Participants

This study examines the perceptions of faculty regarding the development of culture within a new school of education. I recognize that by focusing on faculty perceptions to the exclusion of other individuals in the organizational culture (e.g., administrative office

staff, students, education partners, university administration), this limits the breadth of perception regarding the culture. However, given the rich and complex data available from just the faculty, it was decided that focusing on a particular group would best allow for deep and contextualized analysis rather than not allowing for a common enough experience from which to theorize.

Faculty were chosen as the participants for the study because, along with administrative office staff, they arguably invest the most in the organization given that they are employed by the university and spend much time within the school of education culture. The faculty are also the main group responsible for shaping and delivering the program as well as defining the mission statement, conceptual frameworks, and philosophical principals of the organization.

A purposive approach was used to identify ten possible participants (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003; Goldsmith, 1998). This particular approach was chosen over other sampling techniques as it aligned with the constructivist knowledge assumptions as well as the nature of the study previously outlined. In identifying possible participants, I selected a set of individuals that reflected a variety in experiences relating to the type of academic position held (i.e., director; tenure-track; limited term appointment; or part-time appointment); the number of years of involvement with the school of education (i.e., one; two; or three); gender; and prior experience.

Ten possible participants were approached to be included in the study and all ten agreed to participate. At the time of data collection, the ten individuals were holding the following positions: director; 4 tenure-stream; 2 LTA; and 3 part-time positions. The numbers of years in which members had been involved with the school of education

varied with the director having been involved with the school of education for the longest period of time – three years including the planning year. In regards to the other participants, three participants had been minimally involved in the initial planning year as well as being faculty members during first two years of program delivery and were returning for the third year; three participants had been involved in the first two years of program delivery with one not returning for the third year; one participant had only been involved in the first year of program delivery; and two participants had only been involved in the most recent year of the program delivery and were returning for the third year of the program. In terms of gender, six participants were female and four participants were male and in terms of prior experience, faculty came from a variety of backgrounds including the following: recently finishing a doctoral degree; recently retired as a teacher or school administrator; or having moved from a full-time position with a district school board into a full-time position with the school of education. Some of these individuals had teaching experience with other universities but only one individual had taught full-time at another university (other than the director) with others having taught part-time undergraduate or continuing-education/in-service courses, or no post-secondary at all. It is important to note that only the director had been in a tenured faculty position and that the good majority of faculty members had little to no prior experience with the particular university under study.

3.6 Instrumentation

The data collection instrument employed in this study was a semi-structured interview guide, a common data collection instrument used in studies investigating organizational culture within a post-secondary institutional setting (Martin, 2002). Indeed, interviewing is recognized as one of the most common instruments with which to collect data for a qualitative study in the field of education as well as within other social sciences (Fontana

& Frey, 2000). Interviewing involves a guided conversation where the researcher uses questions and prompts to collect data from the participants who are viewed as meaning makers (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Warren, 2000).

For this study, a semi-structured interview approach was used in which a set of questions were developed from the conceptual framework with the objective of eliciting open-ended, in-depth responses (Brewerton & Millward, 2001). These were then elaborated and followed up through prompts and additional questions (Creswell, 2005; Fontana & Frey, 2000). The order and exact wording of the questions changed slightly from interview to interview in order to facilitate the train of thought and responses of participants. However, overall the questions and question order remained relatively consistent (Fontana & Frey, 2000).

Focus groups were considered as a data collection method because they would have allowed for a larger number of individuals to participate in the study (e.g., various focus groups could have each contained a specific stakeholder group such as faculty, administrative office staff, or students) (Tierney & Dilley, 2000) as well as providing an opportunity for identifying group constructed knowledge and similar/different beliefs among members of the organization (Brewerton & Millward, 2001; Madriz, 2000). However, given the interest of exploring individual perceptions in detail, it was decided that interviews would be used as comments made by individuals could be followed up one-on-one at a pacing and in a direction appropriate to each individual. The possibility of using a focus group after the initial data analysis to gain faculty perspectives on the initial research findings was also considered, but given the possible sensitive issues raised through the data collection process, it was deemed necessary to maintain participant confidentiality to ensure as open a dialogue as possible with the participants

as well as to get the depth of information possible from each person (Marshall & Rossman, 1999).

The interview guide contains three main sections of questions as well as introductory and concluding questions (see Appendix A). The introductory questions were used to develop a comfort level for the participants and to gain background information on each participant through which to situate the analysis of the data (Merriam, 1998). The questions then proceeded into the first main section that addressed the participant's perceptions of the school of education's organizational culture. From there, the questions moved into the second main section in which participants were asked to identify factors they perceived as influencing the culture and explain how those factors had influence. Once participants exhausted their personal list of factors, a third set of questions was used to address other factors from the conceptual framework that the participant hadn't already mentioned. The purpose of asking questions in this order was that it first allowed participants to come up with their own set of factors and then it asked participants entertain the idea of other factors and comment whether those factors also affected their organization's culture. The questions at the end of the interview left room for participants to talk about any further factors of influence that they had thought of as well as to add additional comments.

The interview guide was used without a pilot test being conducted. Although the relative value of a pilot test is recognized, the decision was made not to use a pilot test for a number of reasons: (a) the instrument was developed based upon the literature review including examining tools that were used in related studies suggesting that the design of the instrument would have been strong (Carsten, 2003; Goldsmith 1998; Ritter, 2002; Ruhl, 1996; Schoen, 2005; Sckerl, 2002; Stine, 1999); (b) careful consideration was

given to the development of the instrument such as ensuring that all interview questions addressed the overarching study questions; (c) the instrument was refined through the suggestions of a number of faculty and graduate students; (d) data collection needed to be completed within a tight timeframe and conducting a pilot test would have meant missing the data collection window; and (e) given the nature of the semi-structured interview, clarification and follow-up questions were possible where required if the initial questions needed some refinement.

3.7 Data collection procedure

In order to begin the process of data collection, permission to conduct the study at the school of education was sought and obtained. This led the way for potential participants to be contacted through a scripted email which was sent individually to each participant in early July letting them know very briefly about the study and that a letter would be arriving in the mail to elicit their participation in the research. The letter of introduction explaining the study and the request for participants (see Appendix B) was mailed out at approximately the same time as the email and by late July, many of the ten possible participants who had been approached confirmed their willingness to participate in the research. Follow up contact was made via a scripted phone message to those who had not responded to the invitation and eventually contact was made with each individual: all confirmed their willingness to participate.

Data collection occurred during two weeks in mid-August 2005 with the exception of one interview that was conducted in early September due to that participant's schedule. Mid-August was specifically targeted due to fact that I wanted to collect data on the early years of culture development and interviewing participants prior to September 2005 meant that the data would be centered on the first two years of B.Ed. program delivery.

This covered the first complete full academic cycle of part-time programs as well as two academic cycles of the full year program. Mid-August was also assumed to be one of the easier times for faculty to participate in the study because most would be back from summer holidays but would not be engrossed in the extreme busyness of day-to-day teaching and meetings that occur while the B.Ed. program is underway.

As a practice recommended by Warren (2000), interviews were scheduled at a time and location convenient to the participants. Most participants decided to be interviewed in their office or in a meeting room within the school of education's facility, but three participants were interviewed at their homes as it was easier given their schedules. In booking interviews, participants were made aware that the interview would take approximately 90 minutes. Generally, I had a maximum of two interviews on any given day so that I would limit the possibility of interviewer fatigue. Interview times and locations were confirmed a few days ahead of the interviews.

In meeting with participants for the interview, I began by thanking them for their participation and by talking briefly with them to set the tone of the interview. I then revisited the purpose of the study, providing participants with a reference sheet outlining the overarching research questions and definition of culture I was using (see Appendix C). I also discussed the fact that the study had been granted ethics approval and had the participant read and sign the informed consent form (see Appendix D).

After confirming that it was acceptable to record the interview, I set up the recording equipment. I was familiar with my equipment and used two separate recording devices to ensure that no data would be lost due to technical difficulties. Best practices to ensure clarity of recordings such as limiting the amount of background noise during the

interview and careful microphone positioning were used (Baum, 1995; Seidman, 1991). Although a few academics make the point that recording an interview can set a different tone regarding the conversation and some participants may be uncomfortable with being recorded (O'Leary, 2004), this was not considered as having an inadvertent impact on the data collection of this study as most faculty were familiar with interviews and recording through prior research and teaching experience. Also, the ability to record and re-listen to interviews greatly enhanced the ability to analyse the data as compared to writing notes so the advantages seemed to far outweigh any possible negative effects (Silverman, 2000; Warren, 2000).

During the interview process, I was aware of my role in developing trust and rapport with the interviewees both to support the data collection process and to show the interviewees that their participation in the research was valued (Fontana & Frey, 2000). Interview skills such as careful listening and use of the echo strategy were used to facilitate data collection (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Spradley, 1979). The questions were generally followed in the order that they appeared on the interview guide but prompts and follow up questions were added where deemed necessary and sometimes questions were asked out of order to facilitate data collection. In a few cases, questions in the interview guide didn't seem to provide as pertinent information as other questions so they were left out as interviews continued. Generally, the interviews took approximately 60-90 minutes. During this less intense part of the year, faculty were still very busy preparing for year start-up. Therefore, I generally found that although I would have liked to have explored ideas and concepts further, time constraints of the interview necessitated keeping on schedule.

At the end of the interview, the participants were again thanked for their contributions towards the research and were told that a transcript of their interview would be provided to them in approximately one month for additions, changes, and withdrawal of comments. September was spent carefully transcribing and re-listening to each interview in order to ensure that I had accurately represented the conversation verbatim. At the end of September, transcripts were mailed to participants along with a letter regarding the transcripts (see Appendix E). Participants were asked to read and return the transcripts if they had any changes to be made. When I did not hear back from all participants, I followed up with a script email reminding participants that I would begin analysis so if they wanted to make any changes, to please let me know. Most participants had no additions, changes, or withdrawals to their transcripts and those who did have comments only made a few very minor changes.

3.8 Data analysis and representation

The strategy used for this study was content analysis whereby coding of the data and the subsequent thematic analysis allowed me to interpret meaning from the interviews (O'Leary, 2004). Within the content analysis, various steps were followed as roughly outlined by Creswell (2003) "[Data analysis] involves preparing the data for analysis, conducting different analyses, moving deeper and deeper into understanding the data, representing the data, and making an interpretation of the larger meaning of the data" (p. 190).

After the data were transcribed and member-checked, the first step taken was that each transcript was read in its entirety and general comments were made to reflect on the overall meaning of the interviews (Creswell, 2003; Miles & Huberman, 1994). This included developing a list of salient themes starting with the possible factors that were

identified in the conceptual framework but moving well beyond those to include other emerging themes as well; especially in regards to defining the culture as there were no start codes for that component of the study (Creswell, 2003; Creswell, 1998; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Silverman, 2000). Each transcript was then re-read with key words and ideas being highlighted as well as specific notes being made on parts of the text where it was found helpful to further understanding (O'Leary, 2004). Due to the inductive component of the study, emergent themes were still being sought during this second reading of the text.

Prior to beginning the process of data analysis, I had assumed that small sections of interview text would fit neatly into one of the many identified themes. However, upon beginning the process of data analysis, I very quickly realized that a section of text could often fit into more than one theme. The text was therefore manipulated electronically with sections being copied and grouped under the various theme headings as a way of coding the data (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 2002). Upon completion of this process, I focused on the individual themes and related text, looking more closely for sub-themes, commonalities, contradictions, and alternate interpretations in what was said by the interview participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Creswell, 2003; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Merriam, 2002; O'Leary, 2004). Part of this process involved making further notes as well as occasionally producing visual displays (e.g., diagrams and tables) as a method of trying to understand the data in alternative ways (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This analysis was checked by my thesis supervisor as an external individual to support trustworthiness through her examination of the raw data in comparison to the findings of the study and her reflection on the relative strength of the argumentation.

After completing some analysis and reflection, I organized the representation of data in two sections and began writing the findings. As noted by Marshall and Rossman (1999), "Writing about qualitative data cannot be separated from the analytic process. In fact, it is central to the process..." (p. 157) and I was always very much aware of my responsibility as the researcher in deciding what would be included in the presentation of the findings and how that would be done (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The first section of the results includes the description of the culture as perceived by the faculty and the second section looks at the various factors as defined by the faculty, discussing the meanings clustered around the various factors. Quotes that were used as illustrations of themes or comments sometimes included bolded text, delineating words that were emphasized in the speech of participants. Findings were also presented in the discussion section of the thesis whereby the factors and their interconnections were discussed on a more holistic level.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Several steps were taken to ensure that the study was conducted in an ethical manner, the most fundamental being that an ethics proposal was submitted and approved by the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Committee prior to data collection commencing, demonstrating that the study aligned with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (Creswell, 2003).

Prior to the interview, participants were provided with information to make the participation process transparent without providing too much detail that might allow the participants to develop prepared responses therefore affecting the data collection (Schram, 2006). Part of this transparency, as well as assurance of ethics, was that participants were provided with a letter of informed consent and each participant had the

opportunity to read the form and follow up with any questions. Only participants who signed the form (all participants) were included in the data collection process (see Appendix D) (Creswell, 2003; Schram, 2006; Warren, 2000).

Other considerations in assuring ethical research included the fact that I carefully monitored the interview process to minimize discomfort for the participants (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Warren, 2000), participants had the opportunity to complete a member-check on their interview transcript to add, clarify, or remove any comments they made, and participants were reminded a number of times that their involvement was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time (Creswell, 2003; Warren, 2000). Also, although I recorded the interviews on two recording devices, the back-up recordings were destroyed and the one full copy is securely stored in my supervisor's office for five years as stipulated in the ethics proposal (Creswell, 2003; O'Leary, 2004).

One additional ethical consideration that should be mentioned is the concept of anonymity. The option of full confidentiality was possible in the study, but an option was also provided on the consent form whereby participants could choose to remain completely anonymous or to have their position (i.e., director; tenure-stream; LTA; or part-time) and number of years with the organization (i.e., one; two; or three) disclosed in the presentation of the data. Providing this option was approved both through the research proposal and ethics proposal and was important because in presenting the data, the ability to associate a comment to some sort of understanding of the voice could bring deeper meaning of the text to the reader. Also, maintaining complete confidentiality without being able to disclose position or number of years with the organization would have meant having to withhold the presentation of certain data as, for

example, so few people were involved in the development year of the organization that a quote referring to that time would automatically refer to a very small group from which the comment would have come. As mentioned, all participants were given the choice of complete confidentiality or disclosure of that limited information and all but one participant agreed to limited disclosure. Names are not used to refer to participants and personal identifying information does not appear in quotations used in the presentation of the data, a recommended practice by both Creswell (2003) and Fontana and Frey (2000). However, in the case of the director, in referring to her position, her positional identity is automatically disclosed as she is the only person holding that position. However, the researcher took particular care when including information about possible sensitive issues with the understanding that some information is being provided about those individuals and in some cases, the position or number of years may not be associated with comments.

3.10 Trustworthiness

Given that the study is qualitative in nature and is situated within a constructivist context, I focused on addressing issues of trustworthiness rather than more traditional, positivist concepts such as validity and reliability (Lincoln, 2003). In defining trustworthiness, it is sometimes hard to know which indicators to use (O'Leary, 2004). Some academics discussing trustworthiness on a more holistic level while others divide the notion of trustworthiness into various criteria (Kvale, 2003; Lincoln, 2003). In this study, a variety of steps were taken to ensure trustworthiness.

As a key component of developing trustworthiness within the constructivist paradigm, I made transparent my relationship with the research context and acknowledged how my own positioning could influence the study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003; Lincoln, 2003;

O'Leary, 2004). Related to this, my relationship with the organization being studied had the possible effect of strengthening trustworthiness as an assumed sense of trust for the participants already existed (Fontana & Frey, 2000). The locale of the research is also carefully described to set the context for the reader.

Trustworthiness was supported through the careful development of the data collection instrument, ensuring that the interview questions were clear and that they linked back to the research question, literature review, and conceptual framework (Martin, 2002). Participant selection followed a research-based practice (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003; Goldsmith, 1998), confidentiality was maintained (Creswell, 2003; Fontana & Frey, 2000), and the right of participants to withdraw from the research were all included in the study design (Creswell, 2003; Warren, 2000). Also, during the process of data collection, research-based interviewing skills were used to ensure effective interviews (Kvale, 2003).

Regarding data analysis, accurate transcription of the interview was a priority as the analysis was dependent on the quality of transcription (Kvale, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Member checks were then conducted to ensure that the conversation was properly noted and that participants didn't have anything more to add (Lincoln and Guba 1985). In addition, the analysis was examined by my thesis supervisor as a way of confirming the trustworthiness of the analysis (Creswell, 2003). This was completed by my supervisor examining the raw data and comparing it to the findings to see if there was consistency as well as her examining the strength of the argumentation put forward in the findings and discussion. And finally, regarding the presentation of data, a rich, thick description of the findings are presented using multiple voices of the participants (Creswell, 2003).

Chapter 4 - Results

The findings of this study are presented in the following two chapters. Chapter 4 addresses the results through focusing on the presentation of themes emerging from the data analysis while chapter 5 discusses overall study conclusions and puts forward a proposed visual representation of the development of culture. The first half of chapter 4 (section 4.1) addresses study question one: that of defining the culture of the school of education through faculty perceptions as well as identifying the extent to which the culture is established after the first two years of the organization offering programming. This is followed by section 4.2 which addresses the main interest of the study: examining the factors that influenced the development of the school of education's culture. In both cases, the narratives of the participants feature prominently in the presentation of findings as their voices speak best to their experiences and perceptions.

4.1 Defining the culture of the school of education

In determining the most effective way in which to present the findings regarding participants' perceptions of the school of education's culture, I focused on key characteristics that emerged from the interviews. While the data collection process involved my asking a number of questions to ascertain how interview participants defined the culture of the school of education (see Appendix A), organizing the results by overarching themes ended up being the most logical way in which to present the findings.

This first part of the chapter is divided into sections each focusing on a characteristic, or set of characteristics that resonated throughout the participants' perceptions of the school of education's culture. Although common characteristics were grouped together

into distinct sections, there is still much overlap between sections. Where possible, counter arguments are encouraged and highlighted to demonstrate the variety of perceptions held by participants and to enrich understandings. Furthermore, in choosing quotations to illustrate the various characteristics, I tried to avoid selecting remarks that alluded to factors that influenced the development of culture as this is addressed in the second half of the results section (i.e., section 4.2). However, in some cases, this dilemma was unavoidable and so there are occasionally recurring concepts raised in sections 4.1 and 4.2. Also included in section 4.1 are sub-sections regarding who was seen as part of the culture and to what degree the participants saw the culture as being established.

4.1.1 A spirit of collaboration, partnership, and horizontal organizational structure

In defining the culture of the school of education, notions of collaboration, strong partnerships, and horizontal organizational structures were perspectives clearly held by the study participants. Moreover, these notions featured so prominently and are linked to so many of the other characteristics that it seemed to be the most logical place to begin defining the culture under study.

Prior to providing specific examples demonstrating the ways in which participants perceived these characteristics as being enacted within the organization, it is worthwhile to reflect on some of the related words employed by participants. These included terms such as 'deep collaboration', 'a spirit of collaboration', 'teamwork', 'cooperation', 'sharing', 'inclusive', 'working together', and there being 'many opportunities for dialogue and conversation'. Frequent comments included statements such as "people [are] willing to share their expertise" and "[...] very few things [...] people did alone." Furthermore, a few of these terms were used not only to describe the overall culture but also to describe

individuals within the organization. For instance, one participant remarked that “[...] the core team members are collaborative negotiating kind of people.”

Decision making was one area within which participants provided examples of the collaborative culture as well as alluding to the horizontal structure of the organization.

For example, one tenure-track faculty member stated:

People have decision making power. They come to the table; those are the people that get to make decisions [...] you can give feedback actually even online so [...] it's very inclusive in that way [...]

Another participant noted that faculty can contribute in a significant way at meetings.

The other thing about this community is that it is a community of **active** participation. That people are **deeply** engaged, **deeply** committed, and expected to participate. So there are times [when] we don't hear voices that we actually ask for voices. '[example name], what are **you** thinking about this?' That happens quite often [that we] go around the table. We just pause, say 'you know, we haven't heard from everybody's voices, we **need** input from different perspectives' and people don't pass on those.

For participants, this ability to be engaged in the decision-making process and to have the opportunity to shape the organization and the B.Ed. program was seen as of great value; some participants even cited this as one of the reasons that they accepted a position with the school of education.

Student voices were also recognized as being included in the decision-making process. For instance one part-time faculty member noted that “part-time [students] and full-time students had access and an opportunity to **evaluate, to review, to offer comments**, to be listened to, and to participate in a **dynamic** way with whatever was happening at the school of education” and still other interview participants noted things like students being on ‘all committees’ or involved in hiring faculty.

In relation to decision making, oftentimes participants talked about the number of meetings that were held. On more than one occasion, references were made to there being too much time spent in meetings - especially during the first year of the program. However, when these comments were made, there was often also acknowledgment of the valuable decision making and development that occurred at those meetings. For example, the whole-day retreats focusing on topics like developing a shared mission or direction seem to be fondly remembered by participants. In this way, collaboration was talked about as occurring even within the first few faculty meetings.

Collaboration and sharing was also very evident through participants' discussions regarding the development of B.Ed. courses. One faculty member commented:

We have a **common syllabus** for every section. We talked and argued and battled it out at the table until we **all** came to an agreement and it was a happy agreement. And to me, that's the **kind** of level of collaboration I'm talking about [...] I'm talking about very heavy decision making... you know, one [being] able to express themselves directly and explicitly and state their opinions and support and then also be part of making those decisions.

It was also noted by a participant that, at least in the Primary-Junior level of B.Ed. courses, there were monthly meetings where faculty would talk about what was happening in the various courses, what was overlapping, and where various topics should be taught. This type of collaboration was recognized by another faculty member:

I think there is a real effort being made here to have curriculum delivered in a **more** similar fashion than I've experienced [at other universities] [...] There isn't too much to differentiate between different professors offering the same course. That doesn't mean that everybody's going to do it identically the same. We're not producing robots here. **But** we are trying to ensure that there is an overall course theme and that theme is tied into course materials and professional development activities and the kind of the **concepts** we're talking about when we actually see students in practice working in the field. And that's a real difference between this School of Education and [...] others I've worked at [...] the opportunity and the **belief** is here that that's the best way to work together.

These examples, and others, illustrate the efforts made to collaborate within the B.Ed. program, reflecting the fact that cooperation was seen as natural for many individuals.

As well as notions of collaboration applying to general decision making and course delivery, a number of participants remarked how that collaboration and partnership with external partners, and most specifically the local teaching community, was important. This was a belief that the director talked about extensively. For instance, the director spoke strongly to the valuing of that same partnership in terms of how the school of education recognizes the contributions of the educational community.

[...] the certificate that we give to our Associate Teachers is a large certificate that says 'Leadership in Teacher Education'. It doesn't just say 'Thank you for being an Associate Teacher'. [The presentation of these certificates] is accompanied [by] a **very** large event. Our largest event of the year. And teachers, secondary teachers and elementary teachers have told us how important this event is [...] the public valuing of that role.

Although not all interview participants talked about the importance of collaboration with the local teaching community, there were comments made by some of the other participants that resonated with the director's comments. For instance, one part-time faculty member commented:

I think it comes first as an articulation through leadership [...] But the other thing is I think everyone who's involved with the program has had a hand in cultivating or advancing those partnerships. So it's not just part of the leader's vision, it's also very much part of the way in which it is carried out by the participants in the culture [...] That you're trying to involve the associate teachers, you're trying to involve the principals with the schools. For example, we have lots of meetings with those [partners] because we know how critical they are in terms of supporting the placements.

Also, one LTA faculty member provided a perspective illustrating the power of the local teaching community in making a difference in the program:

If an Associate Teacher calls tomorrow and says 'I just had a really negative experience and I don't know what's going on. You really need to clean up X, Y, and Z.' **That** change can be in place tomorrow [...] So it's not like there is this really distant 'yes, we'll put that to committee and perhaps someday in year seventeen, we'll take a look at adapting the program that way.' We're **so far away** from that [...] If a principal calls and says '**Look** - this is the way I see this [...]', **that change can be in place by the end of the week** [...] that team can be scrambled and that decision can be made and by Friday, and it's Wednesday today, we could have that new policy in place that could better support teacher

candidates or better support associate teachers or better support schools or whatever.

In terms of collaboration with other external partners, a few additional organizations or groups were occasionally mentioned by participants. One LTA faculty member referred to the importance of the Teacher Education Advisory Committee which includes representatives from the province, teacher federations, district school boards, and students among others; a part-time faculty member mentioned local community groups as well as another university; an LTA faculty member referred to a partnership with the local community college; and the director mentioned the relationship with the provincial ministry as well as with the wider university. However, in talking about the partnership with the wider university, participants stated that the link with the rest of the university was the school of education's 'weakest connection' and a few wished that there had been more collaboration with the wider university. For instance, in talking about the other teacher education program located at the university but run by another university, one LTA faculty member talked about the disappointment of not having a stronger connection.

I actually think that it was unfortunate that we didn't do more with the [name of the other program] folks and I think it would have been nice to have more collaboration so we would know more about their program and sharing of expertise.

As is evident in these examples, the collaboration with external partners was noted by some interview participants but did not feature as prominently as the collaboration within the organization.

In addition to participants focusing on concepts relating to collaboration and partnership, there was much discussion regarding the horizontal organizational structure of the school of education. Although only one interview participant used the term 'horizontal

structure', a number of comments from various participants reflected this notion. For example, one tenure-track faculty member stated that:

[...] the whole idea of hierarchy is incredibly stringent in the larger universities in [name of the province] and in the United States and we don't have that so much here so I think it **is** different and I think when we talk to people who are coming in, they say '**wow**' time again [...] how much decision making power, how much flexibility there is.

The director also talked about this concept of a 'downplay of hierarchy', focusing on consensus decision-making and delegating through channels such as course coordinators, year coordinators, and office personnel. She also highlighted the fact that students sit on committees and that there is strong support for the student association. A comment from one LTA faculty member speaks to the idea of a horizontal organization by noting that official titles were of little importance in the school of education:

I see [faculty member's name] who is [the participant tries to come up with one of the position titles that the faculty member holds]. Yeah, I don't know what [her/his] title is and it **doesn't matter** and that just goes to the whole thing [...] If I call [her/him] up tomorrow and say '[faculty member's name] I **really really** need you to help me with this [...] thing that I know you can help me with', [s/he] is going to say yes and is going to give me [her/his] best effort. So, you know, I **don't know** what [her/his] official title is because we **don't work within titles**.

One further example illustrated this same kind of focus as related to the relationship between faculty and administrative office staff. Although two interview participants mentioned that a few faculty occasionally held a hierarchical attitude toward administrative office staff, in responding to my question regarding the clarification of who the LTA faculty member was talking about at one point during an interview, the LTA faculty member commented: "Oh ... ok ok... See I don't separate them [...] I don't separate faculty from [administrative office] staff. I just saw us all **as** staff." This demonstrates this faculty member's deeply-seeded notions of horizontal structures among faculty and administrative office staff as was also suggested by some of the other participants.

Although the concepts presented above flow from comments made by the majority of interviewees, collaboration, partnership, and horizontal organizational structure were not without challenges from some participants. As already mentioned, a few participants acknowledged the large amount of time that collaboration took in terms of very long meetings. Another issue, more directly linked with hierarchy, was presented by a faculty member who spoke in positive terms about collaboration and its existence in the culture while still noting that:

I didn't really realize the structure in terms of sort of pecking order and I think there is a real pecking order in the university in terms of who's got tenure-track and who's this and who's that. And I think that became more and more apparent [...] when you're trying to create a collaborative culture which there was for the most part, then you shouldn't have a pecking order and you shouldn't have a hierarchy of positions.

And indeed, there was one participant who didn't comfortably use the same kind of language around collaboration, partnership, and horizontal structures that the other participants had used. Although s/he used the terms 'collegiality' and 'team spirit' at one point, many of her/his comments called for more structure and hierarchy. This participant made comments that seemed to suggest that hierarchy was a given: "Well you have a very high number of part-time, transient types, who are not vested in the same way and fair enough." Although this participant may not have meant to devalue part-time faculty in relation to them being 'transient' or not 'vested in the same way', comments from least two of the part-time faculty contrasted this comment by highlighting their feelings of deep commitment to the school of education. In conclusion, although this participant didn't articulate the same kind of perception of the school of education's culture as the other participants, the view seemed to resonate among the other interview participants that a spirit of collaboration, partnership, and horizontal organizational structure was part of the culture.

4.1.2 A sense of community, caring, and support

In identifying community, caring, and support as another category for defining the culture of the school of education, there is a definite relationship with the previous section on collaboration, partnership, and horizontal structures. Indeed, the words 'collaboration' and 'partnership' link strongly to notions of community. However, evidence in the data directed towards a separately-defined set of characteristics as part of the culture. They are examined here.

In this section, common terms that seemed to relate to each other included 'community', 'ethic of care', 'welcoming', 'friendliness', 'person-oriented', 'team spirit', and 'family'. As one participant noted:

That brings to my mind another word which I just **avoid** often because I think it's overused and that's the notion of community which I bring up because [...] by being overused it loses any meaning at all. But I **would** use it now to say that there was a sense of community in the place with us coming together [...]

This same participant also made the argument that for her/him, the culture was like a family:

There are a number of instances where people demonstrate that they **cared** about me and I tried to do things to demonstrate that I **cared** about the people that I work with as well [...] that is something that **marks** the [school of education] as being a **different** sort of place from other more well established faculties of education or institutions [...] the metaphor of a family is **much** more appropriate at a place like [the school of education] than it is at a place like [name of another university].

For the director, this sense of community or caring was seen as being shared among faculty. In responding to a question as to whether the culture was established or not, the director responded in the following manner:

I think it's actually **quite** well established. We just had a meeting a week ago [for the] new faculty orientation and the faculty said that they **feel** the differences [...] **'What a wonderful place to work'** they say and they feel it as soon as they walk into the office. They are greeted, welcomed, valued, acknowledged. People **always** try to make time for other people here.

And indeed, in the conversations that I had with participants, there were a number of references to times when faculty and administrative office staff demonstrated a sense of community or caring for each other. For instance, a few participants mentioned how certain individuals would offer others places to stay or would try to help each other out regarding personal aspects of their lives. The director was often mentioned in terms of her caring way of being as were administrative office staff mentioned for their warm and welcoming contributions. Social events at various faculty homes featured prominently in discussions including references to the Viking feast at the director's house in the first year.

[...] lots of laughter, lots of good times. I mean, [the Viking feast] to me is an instance of, you know, **here** we were **exhausted** by that December and **yet** we could still come together and laugh and really show that we basically loved and cared for one another in a way that is hard to match in many places.

In addition, there were references by more than one faculty member to the practice of giving each other hugs after not seeing each other for a while and a few participants mentioned that conversation often included asking how each other's families were.

Community and caring also featured prominently in the conversations regarding student interactions with their peers and with faculty. For instance, more than one faculty member described the importance of the orientation day as setting a tone for the year.

I think of orientation day when [the teacher candidates] come in and we're all sitting on the stage and we're introduced and [the director] will ask them '**how many of you had to quit your jobs to be here?**' and those kinds of cool questions. We get that immediate connection with students and the students get to meet us because we present ourselves. And we come back for a BBQ. So that day I think is an important one.

Convocation, the development of a yearbook by students, the organization of a talent show, and consolidation week at the end of the year were also talked about fondly by some faculty as being important parts of the year. One participant talked about a

network of support for candidates with the faculty advisor being the core individual while another participant said that s/he expects students to call her/him at home. Still another talked about the period of time when students would go out on their long placement as a mourning period for many faculty because of the loss of the close connection with students. One additional quote illustrates this sense of community and caring relating to students:

[...] great things like the lovely lounge up front in the lobby. Students always there having their lunch, someone's got a guitar [...] Other students playing the piano [...] People sitting outside [...] the carpooling that went on among the students. Some of it was just logistics but it was about 'we've got to make this work for one other'.

In addition to the sharing of perceptions regarding a caring, supportive, and community-oriented culture, there were also comments that challenged these concepts. For instance, the director noted that one of the tenure-track faculty had left, relating this to the stress that it put some faculty under and how this related to culture:

[...] and so I think that there is a very strong **desire** of all the people in this community **to** work as a community. And I think that when we are not working, if there is one person who is sort of, whatever, look like they are circling **out** of the community, it's actually very **very** distressful to others. **Very** distressful. And that did happen this year and that person has left on her/his own volition. And that was very difficult. People are still trying to make sense of that and how it went, where it went wrong. And if something else could have prevented that. But I think they ended up feeling that the person was not **right** for the culture. Was not **willing** to give **to** the culture what the culture is asking its members to give. And then therefore, if that person had stayed on, they would have separated themselves from that person. So that was a really interesting situation for us.

However, the director also noted that at challenging points in time, faculty seemed to return to some of these characteristics to define themselves and to almost use a script to articulate who they were and what they believed in as a collective:

It's interesting to me how people have, from the beginning, and continue to use phrases that reflect their construct **of** the community where they say things like 'well, we help each other, that's just **who** we are.' And sometimes even if I think 'I'm not sure we're helping everybody as much as **we should at this particular moment**', then somebody inheritably comes out with the phrase **like** that which is

one of the faculty's phrases. And then, you know, people who may not be participating or trying to move something forward really sort of come on board.

Still others also talked about some challenges or dissenting views. A good number of participants expressed concern that with the growing size of the School of Education that the connectedness, community, and supportive nature would be lost. This included a few participants noting that they saw less 'togetherness' during the second year in things like the second annual December social event not having the same tone of community as the first. And again, there was one faculty member who did not use much of the same kind of language (e.g., saying that there was relatively little out-of-work socializing among faculty) and another who spoke more to concerns threatening notions of community and caring. However, for others, these assertions seemed to resonate.

I conclude this section with a quote by a part-time faculty member that seemed to encompass a lot of these ideas. When I asked this individual what s/he thought a new person would think coming into the culture, s/he stated that:

Well they certainly would not be on their own. That's the first thing they'd feel. They'd feel that they were part of a team [...] That 'boy am I ever glad I'm here.' [...] There's an atmosphere of support of sharing [...] it's **well** established [...] it's positive. The second thing is the **closeness** to the students. They would quickly realize that [...] there is a real sense of an affinity, of a sense that you really are going to be close to your students [...] And those are the two **strong** features that I think a new person would recognize.

4.1.3 A valuing of the individual

The valuing of individuals was another characteristic that resonated among the participants; all participants had a fair number of comments addressing this theme.

As evidence of this valuing of the individual, one part-time faculty member commented that:

If [the culture] believes in the value of the individual, that's conveyed **immediately** by the way that they greet someone, answer questions, and deal with them. I was watching [the program secretary] one day when I was in [the office] and a student teacher arrived and immediately she knew who he was, she knew his background, she knew what he had done for the summer. There was this [...] warmth is the word that I used earlier [...] there's a real sense that these are individuals who care about the people who are in the building.

Indeed, this same tone resonated throughout all of the interviews. Many participants talked about the focus of energies being on the student and that the faculty were very student-centered. Participants talked about focusing efforts on the personal development of students, finding out who they were as individuals as well as teachers. For instance, one LTA faculty member stated that:

The goal here is one of self-discovery. The goal here is one of self-refinement. The goal here is one of self-negotiation. Working with myself [as teacher candidate] to better understand **who** I am [...] We **must model** that in **every facet** of what we do, the program represents **that exact same** perspective [...]

The program itself was referred to as reflecting a sense of valuing of the individual. Many faculty talked about the great importance of small classes so they could work closely with their students, the value of the one-on-one tutoring in the supporting readers placement (i.e., a component of the B.Ed. program whereby teacher candidates tutor two students at risk in reading from September-December twice a week), the strong focus on students with special needs, the fact that the practicum course allowed for 'building identity and maintaining integrity' (the title of the course), and that the program included the development of an extensive professional teaching portfolio.

However, the valuing of the individual didn't focus solely on students but also included other members of the organization. For instance, one participant stated that one of the reasons that s/he took a position at the university was not only because s/he had the impression that students wouldn't just be a number, but that s/he would not feel like a number either. In fact, there were an assortment of examples regarding the valuing of

faculty and administrative staff which included references to faculty getting to know each other from the very first meetings, the importance and valuing of different voices at the discussion table, and the director recognizing individuals and their accomplishments at every opportunity. The following comment by one faculty member illustrates the valuing of the individual through talking about the flexibility in meeting the needs of others:

[A new tenure-track member] the other day said 'I can't believe how [a certain person is] bending over backwards to help people with timetabl[ing] to meet their personal needs. **Where I was before, [...] 'I don't care if you have a bomb in your house**, here's your schedule and don't tell me that you want Thursday off or whatever' [...]. I think that's absolutely true, there's an incredible level of flexibility here that you don't necessarily see [elsewhere].

The director also spoke to the valuing of individuals within the wider teaching community.

There are practices such as sharing food with our associate teachers [...] those are being challenged because of budgetary constraints but, while I'm here anyway those practices will continue because again, it's a way of valuing people as persons. Recognizing that if we have them [for a meeting] from three to five o'clock or five thirty, that some people won't stay for a five o'clock dinner if the meeting's over because they [have] their family responsibilities [...]. But others will stay and are grateful to have that food so that when they go back to their families, in fact they've eaten and they can carry on with the rest of their night. So I think that practices also involve a **very strong** respect for the kinds of, the busyness of others' lives. Respect the person as well as the professional.

In concluding this section, I return to the valuing of the individual and its relationship to the importance of community. Although these do not necessarily always co-exist in a culture, a quote by one tenure-track faculty member nicely ties these together.

I guess sort of embedded in this [...] was the belief in the individual but at the same time a belief in the value and inherent **worth** of the **collective** as well. So you have those two things sort of balanced out within the school [...] In other words, wanting to see success on an individual level and on a collective level.

4.1.4 Flexible, empowering, energizing, and dynamic

Interview participants also talked of a 'flexible', 'empowering', 'creative', and 'dynamic' culture. Often times, terms such as 'excitement', 'innovative', 'creative', 'invigorating',

and 'groundbreaking' were used to describe faculty experiences of working at the school of education. From examples regarding the decision-making power that people had to the interest in finding creative solutions to problems, many participants seemed invigorated and empowered. When asked how s/he would describe the culture, one tenure-track faculty member stated:

Empowered. Oh, I'd say energizing [...] it's that combination of incredibly cutting-edge stuff going on and the energy that **comes** from that and the **people** energy. It's just a really positive place to be. We're laughing a lot, we're talking together a lot. There's **always** problems, we know that, but generally there are creative solutions to problems. So kind of like a [...] dynamic, innovative, energizing kind of combination.

Still other faculty mentioned their and others' excitement at building something new. For a few participants, this was even a main reason that they decided that they wanted to work at the school of education.

This was definitely a very specific choice [...] the newness of the program was particularly attractive to me. It allowed for flexibility. It **allowed** for a **refreshing**, new dynamic which is **really** something that I quest after.

In talking about the culture relating to these terms, the director was identified as sharing these characteristics. Participants described her as having a 'youthful personality' and as being 'open', 'bubbly', 'enthusiastic', 'energetic', 'vibrant', and 'innovative'. In addition, faculty and students were referred to using some similar terms.

Some dichotomy arose at certain points where a few participants seemed to long for some structure and stability. For example, one participant stated that "we all need routine" and that "[students are] not able to cope with [...] ambiguity" while another participant stated that "[name of a colleague] has worked in a number of institutions and **because** [s/he] has, [s/he] does have a good idea about **how things can work**. That **can create** tension because, that can turn into 'how things **should** work' but it doesn't often turn into that conversation." However, as well as occasional calls for more

structure, other faculty alluded to there being structure amongst the flexible and dynamic nature of the culture. For instance, one part-time faculty member talked about how the local school community 'knew what was going to happen' in terms of how the program would turn out given the director's long history in the community and a number of other faculty spoke about the flexibility in the culture being different from what occurred in other places and suggested that it was quite important to those in the organization.

4.1.5 High standards, commitment, strong work ethic, and a willingness to take risks

Although it might seem all too common for members of an organization to use the following terms to describe their organization, faculty articulated their culture as one of high standards, commitment, and a strong work ethic all the while providing examples to illustrate these statements. Along with these characteristics, participants also talked about the culture as one where people were willing to take risks.

As a starting point for this set of characteristics, I want to introduce the idea of risk-taking. A few faculty talked about how they knew that a new program would be a challenge and that it was one of the reasons that they applied to the school of education. For instance, one part-time faculty member said "If you didn't have a challenge [little laugh] it wouldn't be exciting right?" while another LTA faculty member matter-of-factly stated that "nothing that is new will ever be successful without people putting themselves on the line every time they try something." It was also acknowledged that some faculty were taking a drop in salary and that it was a big change in their respective careers. Risk taking was even highlighted in terms of the students as they were coming to a new, unproven program, therefore demonstrating that there was a shared notion that people in the school of education were willing to take risks.

The culture, as described, seemed to assume active participation and engagement by its members; faculty, administrative office staff, and students were all expected to work hard. For instance, individuals were able to affect change by attending meetings but if “you snooze, you lose”. Terms that were used which were associated with strong worth ethic and commitment included ‘drive’, ‘passion for the work’, ‘deeply engaged’, and as having ‘a spirit of initiative’. One participant stated:

One [memory] that comes to mind is you on the floor in your office with slips of placements all over doing practicum placements at probably 10:30 at night on a Sunday night. I mean those are images that I have from my first year at [name of the university]. Myself working 7 days a week, just being there **all** the time and a complete **devotion** to the place [...]. My **feeling** about the [name of the university] school of education is you know, people working **tirelessly**. Just **every ounce** of what they had because they really totally committed and believed in that.

It seems as though participants recognized that people were hired in part if they had some of these characteristics such as dedication and the willingness to work hard. In describing her/his colleagues, one participant stated that:

[These are] people who will **go** the distance as far as initiative is concerned. And I think **that** is at least a part of [the director's] personality and everyone around this program carries this same kind of character trait. It is **never** heard around here where someone says ‘that’s a good idea, someone should do it’. It’s almost always ‘that’s a good idea. Let’s get on it!’ As a team, we’re ready to go on those kinds of good ideas as opposed to expecting someone else to come and do it or expecting someone else to **lead** it.

And as well as the commitment and hard work of the immediate organization’s members, even external partners were assumed to be committed and were given tasks, for example, provincial partners being involved in long, full-day working meetings during the initial development of the program.

A belief in high standards also existed within the culture of the school of education. As stated by one tenure-track faculty member:

I find this school of education tends to be fairly rigorous compared to other Faculties of Education. And although at the time, the students may think that it's too much work [...] I think they really do get their money's worth from this program [...] obviously there's fairly high standards to get into the program and I think they definitely, students just don't jump through the hoops here, they have to work for their marks.

From realizing the huge responsibility towards society and the high ethical and moral standards expected in a classroom to just wanting to be the best or prove something, high standards were mentioned by a number of participants. Another tenure-track faculty member stated that:

We **want** to put this place on the map. We **want** it to be the legacy [...] what drives this place is to want to be that, do good work and get the gold star [laugh]. We all want the gold star.

Still other participants made comments regarding trying to attain status and establish a reputation; being able to play ball with the bigger places and having the best graduates. However, from another perspective, another tenure-track faculty member stated that "[the devotion was] not to prove to anybody but to ourselves that we could do it, we could make it work, prove to one another. Perhaps we were just proving it to ourselves." More than this, a few faculty had talked about the 'desire to make an impact' or make a difference for students. Both faculty and administrative office staff were recognized by a few participants as being of very high quality and it was noted that a part-time faculty member had received the university teaching award. There was evidence of real effort in supporting these high standards as well. For instance, one faculty member talked about how two faculty members supported a student in putting a paper in for publication that she had written as a course assignment.

Along with this hard work ethic, risk taking, and high standards were concerns of some faculty. One part-time faculty member talked about how everyone was an overachiever and how it carried possible dangers for workaholism. This same faculty member

suggested that perhaps this was a reason that a few faculty members had left. Still others talked about not being able to sustain the intensity of the work, people being stressed and strained, that there was a workload issue or a frenzy, and that there was need to put an extra day in the B.Ed. program with so much going on but that there wasn't an extra day in the week. So, although these characteristics seemed to apply to many of the members of the organization and it was part of the culture, there were possible problems identified with these characteristics.

4.1.6 Shared beliefs regarding teaching

In addressing the culture of the school of education, it seemed appropriate to have a section that focused on some of the beliefs that participants shared regarding teaching. Some of these have already been mentioned as characteristics of the culture generally and it seems obvious that they would be reflected in the participants' beliefs about teaching if they were part of the wider cultural characteristics. In addition, a few new concepts are also discussed which didn't necessarily appear more generally in the other cultural characteristics.

The following quote by the director addresses the valuing of individuals as well as the hard work ethic related to teaching. When asked if there were common beliefs and values shared by the school of education, the director stated that:

I would say there are. One of those [beliefs/values] is that **every** child has the right to learn and **every** child can learn and that it is up to us as educators to find the approaches that will enable the child to learn. I would say that that is a very deep belief. Also, the belief in the purpose of education to meet human potential and to continue to carry our societies forward. That there is a belief in teaching as a vocation. As a commitment to...humanity. I think those underline the people who work here. The [administrative office] staff **as well** as the faculty. Even our office personnel [...]

A part-time faculty member also addressed some of these same ideas by stating that:

We are **not** churning out a factory of teachers. We are trying to evolve each teacher to **become** a teacher but **becoming** a teacher isn't something you do in one or two years. It's a lifetime commitment and it's an emotional, physical, and spiritual commitment to the idea of the love of learning and the love of working with younger people who want to learn [...]

And finally, although others also talked about these ideas, one more example from an LTA faculty member discussing the development of an individual included the following comments:

[...] **people here are very much focused on helping others to understand themselves as teachers** which is **very different** than training people to **be** teachers. Anybody can **be** a teacher but not everybody can be a **good** one. And to be a good teacher, it means by definition you need to understand **who you are** and what it is that allows **you** to work in such a **challenging** environment. And so [...] **fundamentally** this is a human enterprise [...] we recognize exactly that these are intimate experiences. They're experiences of the heart and the only way you can **access** that is in a small group or a small one-on-one environment. You **can't manage that** with 400 people at a time saying 'hey, we're going to look at your hearts now and we're going to try to see if we can understand better who you are.' It's not the kind of thing that you can **do** as a group.

There is a sense within these quotes that education matters deeply to the participants, that education is about the 'human enterprise', that learning is a life-long process where everyone is valued, and that education involves making a difference. In fact, in talking about the hiring of administrative office staff, the director noted that if the applicants to office positions don't talk about how education matters in their opening comments, they have already lost points in the interview process.

Related to a few of the previous statements, a large number of participants talked about the focus of teacher education being on developing the identity of the teacher candidates in the program. This included references to the importance of reflection and the B.Ed. students making shirts saying 'reflect this', the significance of the portfolio in developing identity, and the fact that the practicum course was entitled 'building professional identities and maintaining personal integrity'. As one part-time faculty members stated:

I do believe that the essence of teaching is knowing yourself and discovering who **you** are and making sure that you're aware of your **own** needs and what you can contribute and **how** you can contribute. And I think the students who are leaving the school of education are given the opportunity to reflect and examine one's self. And that self reflecting model I believe is shared [among] the faculty here.

This focus on developing identity is even reflected in the fact that some participants talked about faculty ongoing conversations as to 'what graduates from the school of education should look like' (i.e., what their beliefs might include; what expertise they may have).

Still other shared beliefs regarding teaching were mentioned. For instance, the director and one LTA faculty member talked about the valuing of constructivism by the members of the culture. One participant even gave an example of a faculty member who seemed to have shifted towards a more constructivist practice given the culture:

I know of an instructor who tried to bring their **text** [and] the same **technique** with them from another faculty of education. And [s/he] eventually abandoned that approach because it was very much a lecturing, read the text and we'll lecture on that same sort of material. And that really isn't part of the culture here. Very **much more** of a constructivist culture at this school of education which by definition meant that the teacher candidates would need to be discussing, having a conversation, exploring their **own** personal contribution to the understanding.

Other faculty talked directly and indirectly about using alternative approaches to teaching. Two faculty talked about experiences and understandings regarding alternative elementary or secondary schools whereas others talked about unique aspects of the B.Ed. program in terms of differences to other programs. A few faculty also talked about the integration of research and theory into practice.

Beliefs about teaching were not without some challenges or differing points of view. For example, one faculty member noted that the limited number of hours for P/J arts had been an issue for some faculty, another faculty member talked about the focus on literacy but questioned whether there was enough of a focus on technology, while a few

other participants talked about the need for a bigger focus on assessment within the program. However, as part of the culture, there were at least in some of these cases, references to discussions among the faculty to try to sort out these issues. For instance, in regards to the assessment issue, one tenure-track faculty member stated:

So let's spend the day talking about our assessment practices. What do we believe about assessment? How are we going to make sure that it's happening in our program?' I mean we did, we spent a whole day on that last spring. What do we believe in? How do we show that in our program? What can we do better in terms of our assessment practices right here in the program as models and everything so that we're meeting our values.

Therefore, although faculty might not have shared all of the same beliefs, there seemed to be some fundamental agreement as well as the willingness to debate and negotiate other beliefs, with this being a cultural identifier.

4.1.7 Shared beliefs regarding social justice and sustainability

Social justice and sustainability were concepts that many participants identified as important to the members of the culture.

With regards to social justice, a number of faculty mentioned the concept directly or talked about related ideas. For example, the director talked about the rights of children to learn, the purpose of education to meet human potential and to carry societies forward, as well as a commitment to humanity. Both she and a part-time faculty member talked about the history of student activism at the university. Still, other faculty talked about teaching being a heroic activity and there being an ethical context to teaching as well as acknowledging the extreme difficulties for some students in high school and how the school of education was trying to make a difference in this regard. As one participant stated:

You know, a lot of the things that I **see** [in the school of education] are things I **believe** in and are part of **my professional** life. I believe in and I've always

believed this in teaching that the two critical things are personal growth and social **change**. And I **see both of those in** [the school of education].

However, in mentioning social justice, one faculty member stated that although some faculty shared these beliefs, not all did in the same way:

Education is **fundamentally** an important thing in society and has the **potential** for social change. I **purposefully** haven't talked about social justice and equity as fundamental beliefs. I think they were amongst **some** people. I don't think that **my understanding of** social justice was, which comes from a critical pedagogy background, was necessarily shared amongst everybody **in** the same kind of way.

These comments highlight the notion that shared beliefs or values can vary within the overall concept as it seems to have done for social justice.

The belief in sustainability seems to play out in a somewhat similar manner to social justice. In the following quote, the director defines sustainability and discusses how the shared understanding of its importance initially came about among faculty and administrative office staff. With reference to the first few meetings of the faculty during the inaugural year of the program, she commented that:

We talked about what values we wanted to have in common and what we did have in common [...] then we had this very explicit conversation and along with community, the **other** main thing that came out was sustainability [....] sustainability was taken [...] to mean commitment to global sustainability, environmental sustainability, social sustainability, economic sustainability, both **locally** and **globally**. And so we bring that **also** to our community. We want this community to be a **sustainable** community in terms of our ways of working together, **finding** ways in particular to do problem solving [...]

This shared notion of sustainability also emerged in different forms within the interviews with other participants. For example, a number of faculty referred to the program or the culture of the school needing to be sustainable and how, for example, high work load makes that difficult. And still others talked more about ecological sustainability and needing to pay attention to how we treat the environment.

Some challenges to the notion of sustainability also emerged. For example, one part-time professor stated that, in relation to environmental sustainability:

A few of the students have mentioned to me, 'how many pieces of paper does it take to produce a teacher at [the school of education]?' and I feel that if we want to be a sustainable program, you need to look at the idea of killing thousands of trees to make it happen.

Another participant also talked about the fact that s/he thought that sustainability ran more strongly through the first year of the program than the second. However, even the fact that the participants were raising the concept of sustainability means that it is part of their mental image of the school of education at some level. The director also talked about whether sustainability was part of the culture in terms of not just talking the talk but also walking the walk.

[...] there was a strong impetus in the first month around [sustainability] and then everybody was just so deeply involved in trying to get their own courses up, their research, all those kinds of things [...] it came up again at the end of last year, the second year [...] 'what are we doing around sustainability and is this still core value? If it's not, that's ok but if it is, we shouldn't just talk about it, we should be doing something about it.' So it's been interesting to see if we do feel strongly enough about sustainability to add that extra to each of our ways of being.

4.1.8 Negative views regarding the culture of the school of education

Given that so many of the comments relating to the culture of the school of education carried what I might consider a positive tone, I thought it advisable to include a section that highlighted some of what I would consider negative perspectives held by participants even though some of these have been highlighted already. Negative issues linked to culture were occasionally mentioned with the most evident being one faculty member talking about the culture as being 'unhealthy' but working towards being healthy through the development of more structures.

As well as the contrasting examples provided in the prior sections such as some issues around hierarchy, a concern emerged that the culture was stressful. Comments such as

there being 'way too much work', 'people being exhausted', and that there were 'eighteen hour work days in the first year' emerged from some interviews. Again, a few participants linked stress to the fact that certain faculty might have left the school of education. However, within these more negative comments, there was still a positive perspective held by most faculty. For example, in describing the culture, one tenure-track faculty member said that:

I would say the first year was stressful, busy, I would say unorganized initially. [...] But I guess I'd like to stress rewarding. I found the first year really rewarding just because I knew coming in that we were going to experience this and it actually wasn't as bad as I thought.

Occasionally within the interviews, participants referred to negative experiences or perceptions relating to one or two individuals. For example, there was occasional mention of one or two people hurting other individuals because they seemed to think that they knew more than everyone else or that there were slips in conversation. However, others in the organization seemed to try to correct for these. The director stated that "When people flare, others really respond. They see that as an alarm and try to figure out 'how can we regroup here.'" In addition, one tenure-track faculty member said:

[...] we often have gatherings that include families. We **always** have gatherings that include both faculty and [administrative office] staff [...] I think that what happens in lots of settings beyond educational settings is that [...] they know each other as a work person and it allows you to be angrier at that person, blame that person for a lot of things and so on. I think it's less possible when you understand the **whole** person so when we come together and when we start to talk about our kids and talk about our spouses or **be** with our spouses, or talk about going skiing, or play games or whatever we're doing, just throwing the frisbee around, that it changes the dynamic. It allows us to see each other as whole people and it really does make it a lot harder to not like people. You know, **really** hard not to like people because they're this whole. Even if I don't like something they did, I go 'well that's whatever, bad day.'

Indeed, when I prompted certain participants in follow-up questions regarding conflict, there was a positive outlook on conflict. For example, participants tended to talk about

there being disagreements or problems to be solved rather than there being conflict. A few acknowledged that there was conflict but that this was inevitable, that there really was very little, and that conflict can be constructive if it is respectful. The following example provided by the director included the notion of conflict around student workload but also referred to how the experience turned into a learning opportunity for the school of education:

[...] [the university] is also known externally as a place where there are student activists and that is something that we **also honour and encourage**. In our very first year of existence, there was quite a **large** piece of paper, large letters **posted**, very publicly on the bulletin board [...] **very unhappy** about some things [...] these sorts of camps then arose with the students. Those who were **shocked** by this approach of doing things; [those] who just thought it was the **only** way to do things [...] it didn't take very much conversation with the whole faculty for them **to** take it seriously and to say, 'this is about workload [...] let's look into those truths that they are telling us and let us **help** them also learn to act in **appropriate** ways for these kinds of things.' If this comes to a point where it seems that the only way they can get attention is to post a letter on a bulletin board, then something's **really** wrong within the culture. Their voices need to be heard **long** before that. And that actually became really quite a very **strong** learning for us all.

4.1.9 The members of the culture and what form the culture takes

In defining the culture of the school of education, it was important to get a sense of who the participants perceived as being part of that culture. In addition, what emerged from the interviews also included a focus as to the form of the culture; whether the culture was the whole of the organization or whether it had a different form such as small groups of different sub-cultures without as consistent organizational culture.

In defining the culture, the following reference from a part-time faculty member speaks to the various types of individuals seen as part of the organizational culture. When asked about who s/he saw as part of the culture, the participant responded:

Well let's talk a little bit internally. Obviously there are the full-time faculty and the part-time faculty and the administration. But in addition to that, [...] there are

people in roles similar to those who were absolutely critical [names a few positions such as the administrative office staff] [....] All of the part-time students, the full-time students [....] So within the school itself there are incredibly diverse number of roles within the culture. And then outside, all of us connect to the culture of the schools, with the Boards of Education, with people outside, resource people that come in, guest speakers, [name of a teacher union] [....] Ministry people come in [...] So what happens, [is that] you've got a number of roles within the school itself that define the culture but you've [also] got all of those connected to external roles as well.

In terms of groups to which this respondent referred, certainly all participants that were asked this question saw the various faculty members as part of the culture and many also explicitly included the administrative office staff and students in the culture. For instance, participants talked about administrative office staff being present at retreats and setting office tone whereas students were mentioned as being the focus of efforts and engaging with the program and the faculty. In regards to other individuals or groups being included in the culture, the lines were less clear. In talking about who was part of the culture, the director included individuals such as the physical resources employees, financial services, liaison, and associate teachers. Others also spoke to this directly or indirectly by, for example, mentioning the great influence of the associate teachers. However, whether those individuals had influence as external partners or were actually part of the culture seemed to be somewhat unclear from the participant responses.

In terms of the form of the culture, most faculty seemed to speak to the culture applying to the organization and its members as a whole although a few faculty talked about smaller groups existing within the organization. For example, in talking about the valuing of research and needing to get research done, one tenure-track faculty member focused that part of the culture on a "small 'we all'" as being those faculty with research responsibilities. In addition, a few faculty also talked about natural groups forming around things such as what one taught, one's position, and how one thought. Still however, there was note made by one tenure-track faculty, and echoed within the

faculty, that there was more of a sense of a whole within the school of education than in other places in which the participants had prior experience.

4.1.10 The level to which the culture is established

As a final perspective to bring to the definition of the school of education's culture, I examined whether participants perceived the culture as being established given the short history of the organization and program.

A number of participants believed that the culture was still emerging. One faculty member talked about a research focus that was 'shared but not lived yet' while others talked about unsettled organizational questions like the changing size of the organization, the unknown permanent location, and turnover rate of faculty as not necessarily allowing for enough consistency for the culture to become established. The following comments illustrate one participant's views on this subject:

It's an emerging culture. There are things here that are [the director's] that she has established as part of the culture and I always ask myself 'would they be here if she wasn't here?' because that is a good indicator of an established culture to me [...]. I think we don't have a firm culture yet. I think that it's developing. I think that there **are** things that we would want to maintain. However, there are lots of things that are still in a visionary stage [...]. The director's] going to make herself recede ever so slowly out of this program [...]. as that happens, if the speed with which that happens is appropriate, I think we **will** have a culture that's sustainable.

However, others perceived the culture as being established. For instance, when asked how established the culture was, the director responded "You know, it was not created in a void [...]. I think that [there] is a really strong way of operating already. I think that is **very** well established." Other participants agreed with the director. One faculty member talked about how some things hadn't shifted from day one while another stated:

In any school whether be it a high school or a public school or at a university, there is a culture that is developed very quickly. And, that's not to say that it becomes rigid and codified because it **does** change. A culture of a school **does** change [...] But there is something that happens fairly quickly that congeals.

Indeed, the fact that participants seemed to identify so many shared concepts suggests that the culture was established fairly early on in this organization.

And finally, a third perspective mentioned by a few participants was the notion that culture is always changing; this being somewhat separate but yet related to the notion of a culture being established. As the director stated: "[...] culture for me are living things [...]" and one tenure-track faculty member noted, regarding the school of education:

I think culture is always changing, continually changing and if they don't then that's a problem. Some of the key tenets or values of that culture I would hope would never go away. The caring and the commitment and the sense of family. But some of the others sort of the culture of frenzy I would hope would change for **everybody's** sake and health.

4.2 Perceived factors that have influenced the development of the culture

This second half of chapter 4 focuses on the factors that participants perceived as influencing the development of the school of education's culture. Each factor is presented with summaries of comments as well as specific quotations reflecting the thoughts of participants. Conflicting or opposing points of view are also presented to provide additional perspective.

4.2.1 Leadership

In examining various factors that influenced the development of the school of education's culture, I begin by examining the role of leadership as it was a main focus for many participants. As a few faculty stated, 'leadership is critical here', 'strong leadership definitely directs the kind of culture that you have', and 'leadership can make or break

any organization'. Among a few participants, leadership was mentioned as the most important factor with the following statements addressing the role of the director in relation to culture:

She lives it, she just lives it. She lives the culture [...] the culture is who she is.

[...] **she is** our visionary and she is the person who got this program up and running. It just wouldn't be here without her, period, **period, period, period.**

Her, not only what she **did** and **said** but her whole manner and way of being **epitomized** the culture of the place in many ways.

Indeed, when discussing leadership, the focus of interview participants was almost exclusively focused on the role of the director. Therefore, although other faculty seemed to share certain leadership roles, this particular section focuses on the role of the director as leader.

One way in which the director shaped the culture of the school of education was through her beliefs and values as well as how she enacted those beliefs and values in her actions. The director herself emphasized her belief in consensus decision-making as well as getting many different individuals involved and having a voice. The following description from an LTA faculty member speaks to this belief, addressing the director's efforts in involving others in the process of developing culture:

[The director] was creating culture. That's what she did [...] she did that certainly through her modeling, through her leadership, through the vision that she had for the [school of education]. But she **also** tried to make it a shared vision by getting input from anyone in terms of policy and procedures. To my mind, that was her **job** - was to create culture and I think that she did a magnificent job of it.

This effort by the director to be inclusive was echoed by a number of other participants and didn't seem to be in conflict with the fact that it was the director's role to hold a certain amount of power for things like specific decision-making. For instance, one tenure-track faculty member commented:

I mean, as a leader she would need to obviously take charge, hold the reins, move things forward and do things that might not please **everybody**. But she **did** make an effort to at least **get** everybody on board as much as possible [...]

Reflections such as these reveal the director's role in influencing the horizontal nature of the organization and the development of a sense of being inclusive and collaborative. Interview participants also expressed further associations between the director and other cultural characteristics such as valuing individuals and the local teaching community which speaks to the director's influence on the culture.

The director's general personality was also identified as a major influence on the culture. Throughout many of the interviews, common statements kept arising such as '[The director] is always open', '[The director] models a caring for us as whole people', '[...] her energy, her enthusiasm [...]', '[The director] really goes out of her way, if you do something, to make you feel good about it', and '[the director] has a very youthful kind of radiance and ambiance around her and energy about her.' These same personality characteristics were also reflected through specific examples of the director's actions such as the director calling faculty at home to see how they were doing or inviting faculty out to different events. Some interview participants occasionally referred to the director's behaviour as modeling, suggesting that the director was setting a tone for the culture through her actions. Given these comments and the fact that so many of the characteristics mentioned above link to the characteristics of the culture as defined by the participants, the influence of the director's personality is apparent.

Still, there are other ways in which the director was seen as influencing the culture. For one, the director's connections to the local university and teaching community were noted as significant by a number of participants. One part-time faculty member expressed her/his views in the following manner:

Without [the director's] previous background [...] it would be **really** difficult for the school of education to engage itself in the way it has by **encompassing** so many professionals working in elementary schools and secondary schools and board offices such as consultants and coordinators.

This quote doesn't speak directly to culture but it does touch upon the ease in which partnerships were made with the local community which were perceived by participants as being a characteristic of the organizational culture. The role of the director in selecting the other members of the organization was also seen as important. In addition to being deeply involved in hiring those who came to work for the school of education, the director influenced the culture by attracting certain individuals to the organization. At least three participants mentioned the director was one of the reasons that they wanted to work with the school of education. For instance, one participant stated that:

I've known [the director] for years and years and years and always respected her **tremendously**. And when this opportunity came up, because of the respect that I had for [the director], I was just absolutely delighted to participate in the project from the beginning.

As will be discussed shortly, the other individuals who are members of the organization also influence culture so it's significant that the director attracted certain individuals to the organization.

Culture was also something to which the director paid attention. While it seemed as though other members of the organization had not necessarily thought of the development of culture during the first two years of the program, the director's comments clearly demonstrated her awareness:

[...] Because the leader of the institution sets a **very** strong tone and reinforces practices and culture, **really, that** is the person that should be **tending** the culture most [...] cultures for me are living things. They need the same kind of **nurture** and attention that **all** living things need and I look at organizations that way [...] I do think it's a responsibility of the leader to keep the culture of the organization strong.

Given that the director was talking about nurturing the culture, I asked her how she did this and she stated that:

I try to have conversations with **everybody** on an ongoing basis of whatever their responsibilities happen to be [...] to find out, to **really closely** observe, do I detect problems that they're having [...] I also bring a very **strong** belief in ongoing professional development for **everybody** and I see our human potential as only growing as we continue to invest in our **own** learning. And so I think that is something that I **encourage** people to take risks and I **support** them in not just financial, that's part of it but also as far as I can in terms of how long the day is. Mentally and also give them space [...] and then celebrate. I think celebration is critically important and celebrating the **wonderful** things that are happening.

Therefore, even in the perception of the director, she was influencing the culture in various ways. In this way, the development of culture is an additional responsibility for the director - something that she needs to engage and devote energies to in addition to the other responsibilities of starting a new school.

4.2.2 Other members of the organizational culture

In addition to the director influencing the culture of the school of education, other organizational members were also perceived as having influence. Occasionally particular individuals were mentioned when discussing the culture but it was more common for participants to talk about how members generally embodied the culture as well as identifying three particular groups as influencing culture: faculty; administrative office staff; and students.

As suggested in some of the quotations included in the description of the culture, participants talked about how the members of the culture shared certain characteristics such as being 'collaborative', 'caring', and 'energetic'. These shared characteristics that were carried within individual participants defined the culture. For instance, participants talked about the willingness of many faculty to work hard to accomplish what needed to be done, to share and follow certain visions of the director, and to be interested and

willing to participate in negotiating solutions. From the shared notion of the valuing of the individual to the suggestion of the shared belief in constructivism, faculty shaped culture by having shared beliefs, values, and practices.

In some cases, certain faculty members were perceived as influencing culture more than others. One tenure-track faculty member said that “I’d like to **think** that the tenure-track faculty have influenced culture in that they are the ones involved with the decision making probably the **most**.” In addition, a few other participants including one part-time faculty member talked about how some part-time faculty didn’t necessarily contribute as much to the culture. However, some part-time faculty were mentioned as having great influence relating to different tasks that they took on and one part-time faculty member noted that s/he was comfortable with the culture “because I helped shape it.” The following quote from a tenure-track faculty member nicely sums up a few of these issues regarding role vs. personal interest as well as mentioning other groups that influenced culture.

There were some [part-time faculty] that would come in and teach a course and that’s **all** they did. They had full-time jobs [elsewhere] and [...] didn’t have as much influence in the developing school culture. But other than that, **every other person** did and I would say that, speaking **both** of faculty and [administrative office] staff and then the kinds of students we got.

These references and others also speak to the notion of organizational founders and the importance that certain participants attributed to those who had been involved during the initial years as opposed to coming into an established culture and fitting into what was already present.

As well as contributing to the characteristics that described the culture of the school of education, occasionally faculty were mentioned in challenging the overarching cultural characteristics. For instance, there was reference to a few people who were “hurt by a

couple of individuals who **really** seemed to think that they knew more than everyone”, a few faculty members that might have sometimes looked at the [administrative office] staff as “just secretaries in the front office”, that there was a “certain competitiveness with a few people”, and that occasionally there was alienating terminology used by faculty. However, participants seemed to perceive this type of behaviour as being the exception.

Two final ways in which participants talked about faculty influencing culture was through the process of discussing who was hired as well as the turnover rate of faculty. In regards to hiring, the majority of participants talked about the importance of the people that the director hired as having ‘common values’, ‘having like minds’, or who were ‘innovative’, ‘enthusiastic’, and ‘energizing’. One participant noted that the director set the cultural norm by hiring people with those characteristics who in turn hired others with similar characteristics. Given that these characteristics were identified in the hiring process, it clearly links back to shared values. Participants also noted that additional faculty needed to be hired due to some original faculty leaving and enrolment increasing in the second and third years. For instance, one participant noted that there were so many new people in the second year that different kinds of pressures were created while a few other participants lamented about people leaving, noting that the institutional memory/stability couldn’t develop as well when there was high change-over. The term ‘revolving door’ was used by one participant and although this understanding may not have been shared by all, it suggests the importance of stability in hiring and retaining faculty to support culture.

In addition to the influence of the director and the faculty, most participants identified the administrative office staff as influencing culture through the tone they set in the office. For instance, one LTA faculty member commented that:

Office staff just **really** did a tremendous job [...] There was always that warm, welcoming feeling. Again professional but a fun, happy, a sense of humour that was used, the helpfulness that was there [...] There was always a smile on people's faces and I think **that** had a definite impact on the culture because they're the first line people that you see.

The terms used in this quote as well as in other comments reflect some of the key characteristics of the culture such as 'caring', a 'sense of community', and 'supportive'.

In addition, another faculty member noted that this same influence applied to all schools:

It's the same at any school. When as a parent, community member, or visitor to the school you walk in and you've got somebody who greets you in a friendly, positive manner, your first impression of the school is much more positive.

Although not identified by many participants, a few other ways in which administrative office staff influenced culture were occasionally mentioned. The director in particular pointed out that the office manager did a lot of nurturing of culture while an LTA faculty member talked about the administrative office staff making significant contributions relating to policy development. However, what seemed to come across most in terms of administrative office staff contribution was the staff setting the tone of the office.

In exploring the influence of various groups of individuals, students were also recognized as playing a part in the development of culture. They were talked about as having a voice in meetings and being involved in decision making on issues such as hiring, programming, and assessment. Other influences such as organizing a talent show or the yearbook were noted by various participants who highlighted the contribution of students towards the development of culture. A few participants made reference to the fact that the director made sure the students had a voice, suggesting that the power to contribute to the culture was in part granted by the director and/or faculty. However, this does not lessen the impact of the students as perceived by faculty.

There were other ways in which students influenced the culture. Students were mentioned as singing, playing guitar or piano in the atrium which reflects back to the notion of community in the description of the culture. In addition, there was reference made to the students being the image of the school with one faculty member stating that the students set the tone and were the face of the program in the local schools:

[...] during that critical first year, I think [the students] helped establish the face of the culture of the school in a way that was really really significant. [That was] the first message that went out from the School of Education. Was the quality, and the energy, and the enthusiasm, the diversity of the of the student body.

But more than this, some faculty talked about the type of students that the school of education attracted and how that influenced the culture. A few participants mentioned that the part-time program attracted a different kind of student who was more mature and who had rich life experience. One set of comments by a participant illustrated this well:

I think students make this program what it is and we attract a certain kind of student; a student that is willing to take risks and willing to explore the edges, the parameters of education and of teacher education.

When I followed this comment up by noting that the participant was talking about program and asked whether the students had influenced culture, s/he stated:

That's so funny ... in every way [...] **they are** these risk takers, they are a certain breed of student that come here. They're risk takers, they are interested in human development and the needs of the learner and individualization of things [...] they just make this place live and breathe and they do embody those things [...]

I then responded to the participant's comments about there being a certain kind of student by asking whether s/he saw the students as different from those in other programs:

YES, I do! One of the reasons why is because we have a part-time program so we have **so** many people who come into this program with masters degrees, with **doctorates**, with years and years of experiences within the educational community [...] I mean, 52 year olds, 53 year olds getting their **Bachelor** of Education. And then everything right down to the 23 year old, 24 year old [...] And so the diversity of the group in and of itself leads to that sort of **valuing** of the individual [...] I just believe that it's different [...] We also, because of the part-time program, have people who are not necessarily very wealthy [...]

They're very strong students too. We have the highest turn away rate in the province so we're picking the best of the best and when I say that, I mean people who are really **are** exceptionally wonderful [...]

This set of comments not only speaks to the impact of the students based upon the overall student population but again speaks to many of the characteristics identified as part of the culture such as the valuing of the individual, of high standards, and of social justice as seen in section 4.1.

As a final comment regarding how other members of the organization influenced culture, I wanted to briefly touch upon issues such as gender, ethnicity, and sexuality are implicit in establishing culture. One tenure-track faculty member raised this in relation to there being a middle-class feel within the organization and then very briefly mentioned notions of race, class, gender and sexuality. Another faculty member talked about similar issues by noting that the faculty that were hired were "more or less white Anglo-Saxon" and this individual thought that it might be good to have a more diverse population as it would influence culture (although, when asked, the individual wasn't quite sure in what way the influence would occur.) Another faculty member talked about how there were a lot of women in the faculty and associated this with the sense of femininity in the culture. And finally, a part-time faculty member noted that although there were issues of homogeneity in the student population even with efforts to have diversity, that there is "a **real** focus on ensuring our students are prepared to **deal** with the issues of diversity [...]"

4.2.3 Programmatic influences

Through discussions with the interview participants, another factor that was addressed as influencing the development of culture was the teacher education program. The impact of the program was often referenced in an unconscious way; however, when asked, participants definitely acknowledged the connection between programming and

the development of culture. As one part-time faculty member noted, "[...] you couldn't have one without the other. They were [...] **very** closely connected [...]" This notion of the close alignment between culture and program was expressed by other participants including the director. For instance, when asked whether the program had an influence on the culture of the school of education, the director stated:

Absolutely, absolutely. It is through the B.Ed. program right now because that is our **major business** at the moment [...] So the major way we enact the culture and change the culture is through the B.Ed. program interactions.

One way in which the program influenced the culture of the school of education was through the pragmatics of a teacher education program. A few faculty members mentioned the practicum component in particular and how it required the partnerships with local schools to be developed. For instance,

We can talk about the practicum course as an example because obviously for a practicum course to be successful, it is really critical for those partnerships to exist [...] all of those people at the school level were critical to the success of the teacher candidates that I was working with [...] If you don't **have good** contacts with your schools, you don't have a good program.

This need for partners to create a successful program seems to have supported the cultural characteristic of valuing partnerships and collaboration with the local school community.

There are a number of other ways, including the timetabling and year structure for the program, in which the B.Ed. program influenced the organizational culture of the school of education. For example, one tenure-track faculty member noted that in the first year, there was an hour-long lunch break built into the timetable which gave time for the community to come together. This faculty member thought that it was a loss that the same lunch break didn't exist in the second year but noted that there was at least still time for faculty to have faculty meetings during Tuesday and Thursday mornings when

students were out on their tutoring placements. Another faculty member also touched upon this same idea of timing by noting that the rhythm of the year influenced culture given that there were busy times and not so busy times when people were more or less stressed or may have had more or less time to communicate. This time to communicate in relation to developing culture was also mentioned by another faculty member "[...] in order to have a culture that **continues** to function, you need people to take the time **casually**, informally to talk. Formally to talk. Meet with each other, **feel** that issues that have been discussed and decided on are implemented."

Another way in which the program shaped culture was through the decision that there would be a common syllabus for each course. No participant mentioned how the decision for a common syllabus came about, but the common syllabus was mentioned by a number of participants as serving a number of roles. One was that it resulted in faculty regularly meeting to discuss their courses and problems. It also seemed to naturally set up a belief that there were core understandings that students should know coming out of teacher education, with one tenure-track faculty member stating "I think things tend to flow pretty smoothly here because people tend to be on the same page when it comes to the courses and the ways of teaching the courses."

It was also mentioned by a few participants that there were conscious efforts to develop programming as a way to influence culture. One example unrelated to the school of education involved a participant with previous experience in the elementary school system. S/he noted that in a school where s/he had worked, the school administration had set up like-grade preparation periods for the particular purpose of encouraging teachers in similar grades to talk more and to build collaboration within the school. The one B.Ed. program example provided by a few participants also spoke to efforts on using

programming to influence culture through centering on the introduction of cohort groups for the third year of the program in response to the loss of community feeling and the supportive nature of the program as it got larger.

I think that size affects culture and I particularly saw that from first year to second year when we grew that the program grew enough so that the students **didn't** know everybody. They only knew the people in their classes. And **this** year it's so big that we actually **designed** the program so that there are cohorts so you travel with the same people to class because we knew that five hundred people don't get to know each other like that [finger snap]. It's just not going to happen. **Not going** to happen. So we need to build, imbed some structures that allow them to have cohorts for example.

Several participants acknowledged the reciprocity of culture and program. For example, literacy was mentioned as being valued and this was linked back to the supporting readers tutoring placement and the special needs course. This relationship between program and culture was also noted by one part-time faculty member more generally:

Yes, it's mutually enforcing [...] if you believe that an emphasis on individual student needs is critical, which we do, and it's part of our culture and it's manifested in our action in how we teach our courses and how we prepare our teacher candidates [...] of course, it's symbiotic kind of relationship isn't it? It's not a matter of just you believe those, you espouse those, that have to be carried over in practice.

As a final comment regarding the influence of programming on culture, the following statement by the director speaks to these links:

Any structures always [influence culture]. So the fact that there were no electives in the program [...] in itself is a very interesting structure that says 'in the amount of time that we have, we feel that there is a commonality that needs to pervade what we do.' And in fact may have influenced the culture from the people coming together as community members. Rather than say spinning off and doing their own electives. 'You know. I'm here to teach this elective about whatever' [...] Instead, 'I'm here as a member of this B.Ed. program.' So the conversations are around the components of what is a common activity.

4.2.4 Mission statement, goals, and conceptual framework

The mission statement, goals, and conceptual framework were seen by most participants as influencing the culture of the school of education. When asked about the

role of the mission statement, goals, or conceptual framework, one common theme among participants was that these were shared documents or statements that were developed collaboratively. For instance, the director pointed that within the first month, "we talked about the conceptual framework and about values" and many other participants referred to working together to develop and revise the mission statement and goals. One participant said that these documents were "still unfolding and they're not set in stone". The ability to negotiate and to contribute to the documents seemed important to some.

In addition to the belief regarding the impact of such documents, there were a few doubts regarding the value of the mission statements and goals. One faculty member noted that it was more the process of going through the development of the mission statement and goals that was important rather than the end product. In addition, another faculty member stated:

I think that the mission statement, the goals, the conceptual framework [...] never has any impact unless it is accepted and inculcated with people [...] it's up on the walls and it doesn't mean anything unless people **really** accept it as a **meaningful** representation of **who they are** as an individual [...] **Now**. Do they have an impact? The answer is **yes** because they do represent [...] the [awareness/experience] of the people who are leaders here at the school of education and those people who are participants in the education process.

This notion of the mission statement, goals, and conceptual framework needing to be enacted seemed of importance to this participant and was addressed by other faculty when they talked about how this enactment was accomplished. There was mention of the principles being articulated throughout the courses and the accreditation process, and of them continually being in the forefront of discussions. As stated by one tenure-track faculty member:

There was a new faculty orientation and in their binder are all of those pieces [...] I had an email from one of the new faculty just the other day saying 'these principles are awesome. This **totally** explains to me where you guys are coming

from, the seven principles, and it just makes me feel like I belong [...] Well, of course they [feel as though they belong] because we hired them.

It was noted by another faculty member that if these principles, mission statement, goals, and conceptual framework are not brought to the forefront on a regular basis they "tend to become woven, sometimes buried within all the other stuff that goes on." In this case, however, they still seem to be on the minds of participants and are seen as an influence on the organization's culture.

4.2.5 Organization structure and size

Although this factor was initially defined as 'physical and administrative structures' within the conceptual framework, here notions of organizational structure and size were seen as a separate set of influences on the development of culture.

Almost all participants discussed the fact that size influences organizational culture. As one LTA faculty member noted, "size **always** has an impact on organizational culture. It **always** does. And anyone who tells you different is just lying right?" Generally, the impression held by participants was that a smaller organization was better in that it allowed people to really get to know each other in a way not possible in a big university, that there were fewer levels of bureaucracy in smaller places than naturally developed in bigger places, and that a smaller organization allowed more people to have input. It was also noted that the more people there are, the more likely it is for groups to naturally form and the harder it is for people to keep informed, remain focused on supporting individuals, and maintain 'that collaborative culture'. In addition, the small size of the organization was seen as a catalyst for people needing to pull together:

There's a sense of **commitment** and **working together**, collaborating, and things that you **develop** and **need to develop** to sustain a small place. **Everybody** has to [...] pull their weight and **throw** everything in [...]

Despite suggested advantages of a larger institution relating to more opportunities being possible with more people (e.g., being able to offer more in-service courses) as well as faculty not having to be on so many committees because there would be more people to spread the responsibilities around for the most part, a larger institution was not seen as an advantage to culture. This final example reflects some of the pragmatics of a larger institution in providing strain on the organization's culture:

It grew a little bit last year and now it's growing in leaps and bounds [...] When you only have so many rooms [...] and so many hours of the day, it's a lot easier when there are less people to fit it all in. Once your numbers start growing then somebody gets squeezed into a rotten time slot, somebody gets a bad room, we have to share resources, we don't have enough equipment. All those things factor into 'it's not working the way it used to'. And then you have more personalities involved [...] You may not get to know everyone in the program [...] It's just, it's going to **push** this program with some of its concepts. It's going to **push** it hard to really make it work.

In addition to size, organizational structure was seen as influencing culture. For instance, the horizontal organizational structure was a focus for participants. As one part-time faculty member stated "Structure impacts culture, there's no doubt about it. If you are going to run a highly autocratic organization, you don't delegate to committee. And there are gazillion committees." Although this horizontal organization is a result of other factors like the director's influence, the structure itself also influences the culture. It reflects the shared decision making, the valuing of the individual and various voices, of collaboration and partnership. It also seems far-reaching within the organization as participants noted that there are numerous committees with delegated responsibility, that students were involved in making program/organization decisions, and that there was room made for voices from the teaching community. Even the structure of faculty council was important as stated by the director:

[...] although we follow parliamentary procedure, it is a **much more** open debate [...] a place for **dialogue**, **not** just decision making [...] That is not true in many other faculties of education. So the amount of dialogue [becomes] a way of

being [...] is it a real structure? Well it's the structure of the meetings [...] The minutes are distributed to **all** faculty, part-time **as well as** full-time. **Not** just to people who happened to be at the meeting. That may be true for most places but again, there's acknowledgement of the role of our part-time faculty here which I think is unusual.

As well as participants perceiving that structure of the organization influenced the culture in a positive manner, they also spoke of some frustrations regarding the structure. For instance, one participant noted that there weren't varying degrees of tenure-track faculty such as professor emeritus and full tenured faculty; everyone was at the assistant professor or lecturer level with the exception of the director. Although the comment didn't directly relate to culture, the participant felt that this created issues around mentorship but also meant the faculty had to draw on each other's strengths. It was also noted that the initial lack of infrastructure put a strain on individuals and that there were some tensions around the understanding that there were different roles to be played by various individuals within the organization. And finally, it was noted that the director was doing too much of the leadership work in terms of being taxing on her health as well as the organization. One participant noted that there were individuals hired to fill critical roles relating to the practicum (after the first year) whereas another focused on the need for an associate dean to provide some more administrative support.

4.2.6 Physical space and location

The physical location of the school of education as well as the actual building were also identified by most participants as having an influence on the development of culture.

In terms of the physical space of the building, most participants had positive comments regarding its influence on the culture. For instance, the fact that the offices and

classrooms were all in close proximity was seen as a community builder in terms of facilitating collaboration and communication. One LTA faculty member mentioned that:

[We were in a] small building and our classrooms were right next door to each other. So I think the physical structure **really impacted** a great deal on the culture. And the fact that we were just down the hallway from one another; we could zip into the office area [...] if we were spread out in other buildings more, we would have been so much more isolated and we didn't have that at all.

This notion of close proximity was even talked about as something one couldn't escape if one wanted to. For instance, one tenure-track faculty member noted that, office structure resulted in certain practices:

The fact that all of our **offices** were in the same space, we couldn't **help** but bump into each other [...] The physical structure enabled the particular culture that developed and also **constrained** us from doing things. In other words, if you wanted to just come in and sit and do your own work and maybe your **research** for example, you couldn't. It was **impossible**. There were **always people there** [...] [The director] would sometimes just come and see me in my office and see [name of another faculty member] there and [name of another faculty member] and she'd say 'ok, we're going to have a meeting'. 'Oh my god, not another meeting.' But it was because we were right **beside** one another.

In addition to everything being in close proximity within the building, aesthetics were mentioned by a few faculty as being important. For instance, one participant talked about school of education bulletin boards being put up and how that made an impact in marking the facilities as an education building while another faculty member talked about the atrium being an excellent place for students to collect and the outside area of trees and grass being a great place for gathering. However, there were also frustrations associated with the space that seemed to influence culture. For instance, one part-time faculty member thought that, other than the atrium, there weren't nice social spaces. A participant also noted that some faculty were stressed because they had to share offices and this was echoed by at least one part-time faculty member. It was also mentioned that there wasn't enough space for classes and that this was somewhat stressful for faculty.

In addition to the actual building, participants talked about the location of the building as influencing the culture. The fact that the school of education was close to downtown along with the nursing program while most of the rest of the university was at a distance was referred to a number of times as isolating. Comments made by study participants included that there should be more communication with other faculty on main campus, that there was a feeling of dislocation, that the education students didn't connect to the university, and that it was a problem to be physically isolated from the library. However, others saw the location as having both pros and cons or as being an advantage. The location was noted as allowing for the development of a 'culture of community' because it forced a sense of team, it focused student and faculty interactions on each other rather than other aspects of the university, and that there was an ability to build one's own little identity or slightly different culture. A comment made by the director speaks to both of the advantages and disadvantages of location:

Our physical location has **clearly** had a very strong impact. We are in an aesthetically beautiful setting and are **very** lucky to be in this setting with strong ownership by the faculty [...] The fact that we are **isolated** from main campus has had some [...] positive and some negative influences. The positive ones are that we have had to invent ways of doing things and ways of being because they don't exist in this physical site. And it has had us go internally to our own expertise and then to reach out as much as we can to others for theirs. The negative side is that I don't think that others **feel** how much this is a part of the larger institution [...] In some ways **ideally** we've been here for these several years and now **ideally** we would find ourselves situated on main campus. There would be big drawbacks in terms of the space that we have but I think that we know how to do that problem solving well enough now that we can tackle that [...] something that I hope does not happen is our isolation as has happened to practically every faculty of education in the province.

4.2.7 Resource and financial considerations

Although not included in the initial conceptual framework, a factor of influence that emerged through discussions with the participants was the role of resources and financial considerations. Often comments made by participants involved the feeling of

needing more money or resources but occasionally, especially in relation to technology, there were a few comments regarding the positive contributions of technology on the culture.

One way in which participants identified money and other resources as influencing culture was in the way in which these factors influenced the pragmatic decisions regarding the program and what was able to be accomplished. For instance, when one tenure-track faculty member said that the organization was financially and resource starved, I asked how money and resources influenced culture. Her/his response to this was:

It influences the level to which we can have cutting edge practices in our teaching which is part of culture because that is how you embody culture [...] because we don't have as **much** money as we need, we don't have those kinds of resources and space available to us. We don't have the luxury of releasing faculty to do X or Y while something else happens. It's those kinds of things. We don't have enough money to do lots and lots of things and I think that that is a **stressor** right? It's a stressor for everyone [...] It makes us grumpier. If we're grumpier then we're not, it's just not as positive.

Here, we see that the perception is that programming is being compromised which relates back to culture. However, this response also gets at the fact these constraints caused stresses which also influenced culture. This same topic came up a few other times in conversation when one faculty member mentioned that s/he didn't have a computer until November of the first year which was frustrating and another faulty member talked about how there was 'one crappy photocopier' for everyone and how that created chaos. Even the director made a comment that spoke to this in that budgetary constraints could influence the future of the dinner meetings with local teaching partners which she identified as demonstrating a valuing of those partners.

Financial and other resources were also related to perception of the organization. For instance, a faculty member touched upon this when I asked whether physical or technical resources impacted culture. Her/his response was:

Very much so. When you visit other faculties that are part of a larger campus, they're not isolated, and they have smart wired classrooms and everything [....] All of that impacts how we think about who are, **how** we fit into that technological world, how we perceive ourselves, and how we project ourselves to our students [...]

Although this relates to identity and image, perception influences the development of culture and so in this way, money and resources play a role in the development of culture as well.

One other way in which financial considerations in particular were raised by participants was in relation to salaries. This wasn't necessarily directly related to culture but it is worth mentioning. A few LTA and tenure-track faculty noted that some individuals left good paying jobs for lower paying positions within the School of Education given that they might have been in high paying administrative or teaching positions within a district school board. Even one part-time faculty member noted that the pay was not the reason that individuals were involved in the organization "None of us were really getting financial remuneration that was very high. So the motivation wasn't anything to do with financial gains or power." If there were a sense from some faculty that remuneration was an issue, and anecdotally there were a few individuals leaving the organization in part due to this reason, this would obviously influence culture given a sense of relative worth compared to other positions/faculty members and not being able to retain contributors to the culture.

The role of technology as a resource was also commented upon by interview participants. As already mentioned, technology was sometimes seen as a point of

frustration. However, one participant noted that technology was useful in creating culture while students were out in their practicum placements. "I know that many of my students **regularly** sought assistance, comfort, companionship, and comradeship using WebCT throughout the times when they were **not** physically together." This view of technology as a communication tool was not shared by all participants as, for instance, one participant said students hated WebCT because it was a flat learning experience. However, technology is perceived by some as supporting the development of culture in regards to a sense of community.

As a final point regarding this factor, one faculty member mentioned that the school of education was built at a time of constraint for the larger university and so this may have influenced the financial and resource situation of the school of education. The perception of at least one other participant was that the university wasn't providing enough funds: "I think that the university seems to expect [the director] to do everything on a shoe string." However, another commented on the budgetary constraints of the university and seemed to suggest that there was an effort by the university to make the program possible which in itself is an accomplishment during tight times.

4.2.8 The 'newness' factor

The fact that the school of education was new was seen by participants as influencing the culture of the organization. This might seem redundant but a few participants mentioned this in terms of there not needing to be a reworking of relationships/structures. For instance, the director noted that: "[Being new has] opened possibilities certainly because we didn't have camps that had to be somehow undone. It was **very** helpful that that didn't exist. **Very very** helpful." The newness factor also related to the negotiation of roles and policy. One LTA faculty noted that individuals

were still trying to identify where they fit within the organization which meant increased conversation as well as flexibility in roles:

[...] because [the program] is new, everyone is just negotiating their way through those roles, through the responsibilities that they hold. And so that **often** means that there is conversation [...] around what needs to be done and **how** it should be done and **who** would be best able to support that effort or initiative. So it is very much dynamic. It is **not** a situation where people are working on the same task, "I've been the program manager for project X for 15 years and so I know **everything** about it."

This pliability or flexibility in the culture given its newness was also put forth by two faculty members in the following comments:

I think a culture is established within the first year [...] that's why cultures are **so difficult to change**. It's so easy to walk into an institution that's been going for a while and get absorbed by it and **every** school that I've taught in has its own culture [...] But the **real danger** is that those things become rigidified, codified, immutable. It happens so quickly without even thinking about it and then once they're established, my goodness, it takes a long time to change things.

I think if you're **ever** going to capitalize on [...] bringing something together that everyone believes in and **participates** in and **shares** in developing, when something **new** you've got a better chance of doing it than when something's been **established** for 30 or 40 or 50 years. I use my experience [at another university] where it's **very** difficult to affect change where you have people on faculty who have taught similar courses for 20 years, 30 years. It's very different than here where you have a person who's taught a course for **one** year. So the opportunity is **here** and the **belief** is here that that's the best way to work together. How long you can continue that depends on a number of variables. But right now the time is right for that approach.

In addition to providing flexibility in starting new, another way in which participants perceived the newness of the organization influencing culture was that it created a sense of pride and excitement. The idea of the first class always being the first class and having a 'hey we did it' mentality was mentioned in a variety of ways. The ability to build something from scratch seemed to excite faculty. So, therefore, even in terms of helping to develop a positive tone within the organization, the fact that everything was new influenced the culture. Related to this, other influences regarding the organization being new were also mentioned. For instance, some participants noted that the newness of

the organization attracted certain people who enjoyed risk taking and excitement which meant that there were some shared values or interests in this regard.

The new program attracts student teachers but **also** faculty who are interested in **new** beginnings. So both [faculty member name] and [faculty member name] are new tenure-track faculty. Why are they here? Because it's a new program [...] the **culture** is innovative **because** it's **new**. It's all what we create as we go. Our practice is our policy.

The newness of the culture also was seen as a factor for encouraging collaboration. A few participants made this link by talking about how there was a sense of needing to pull together to accomplish things and that one of them had seen that same type of collaboration in another new school situation. In addition, some participants associated the interest in high standards being related to the fact that the organization was new.

As one tenure-track faculty member stated:

There's always a sense in starting something new that you have a reputation that you have to build, and sustain and get out there. And, you know, if it fails the first year perhaps nobody would come the second year [...] there is a] need for success in the beginnings of a new program.

And finally, the fact that the organization and B.Ed. program was new raised issues of identity for various participants (e.g., there hadn't yet be an identify for the organization formed).

Some negative aspects regarding the fact that the organization was new were also mentioned. Because everything was new and everything had to be developed from scratch, some participants associated this with a high amount of stress stemming from the large amount of work that needed to be done. For instance, the director noted that it took a huge amount of her own personal energy because she had to, in part, get people to understand and enact their own authority and to be self-confident and have ownership. Other participants simply talked about the heavy workload, addressed in the

following sub-section, and still others talked about the disorganization and how that was stressful.

Given all of this, the influence of the newness factor could still be debated. As noted by two participants: “there was a concept in place before it actually emerged” and “it was not created in a void [...] you don’t build something out of nothing.” Also, as is seen in some of the discussions regarding other factors, aspects of the wider university, external factors, and what different members of the organization brought to the culture suggest that the culture of the organization didn’t arise out of a vacuum. However, many participants described the organization and culture as new and perceived this newness as a factor of influence amongst the others.

4.2.9 Workload and time constraints

As yet another emerging factor, workload and time constraints for both faculty and students came up frequently with the interview participants. This, along with the financial and resource considerations, was the only factor that reflected more of a negative, rather than positive or indifferent, tone regarding the influence on culture.

The primary concern that participants raised with workload and time constraints was that individuals were being overworked which caused stress that was not sustainable. In raising this concern, participants noted how this worked against the culture such as the workload making people grumpy, there was less time for communication, people were overwhelmed and therefore were short with each other, and that the huge amounts of work might have been one of the reasons that certain individuals left the organization. As one part-time faculty member noted:

The unfortunate thing is that some of them left because when you have a small program, some of them perceive it to be too much work. That's not necessarily the reason they left but if you have a small group of people, it puts pressure on all of those people to do a million things. And if they don't want to [...] commit that kind of 150% then they may go elsewhere to a place where they don't have to do that.

These aspects of workload reflecting on stress were also very evident in the following comments regarding how people treated each other:

I'd say **generally** it was with **respect**. **However**, when people are stressed, they're short with one another. **I was**. Maybe [they] didn't give each other the **time** that the other people demanded and needed and deserved. I think the **intentions** were always to interact with one another from a place of caring; a place of respect and decent human relations. That is overall my memory and my experience. However, I also have memories of people snapping at one another, being at loose ends and being short and frustrated and I did that too in meetings. I remember being **exhausted** and **tired** and just wanting things to move forward and **move on** [...] In that first year by February, I went back and counted and on average we had eight hours of meetings a week and it was just **too much** with the workload that we had. So I think that there was this **real** desire, **honest** and sincere desire among **everybody** to **work** together, to be respectful, to **be** decent but as I said, the conditions didn't always allow for that unfortunately. But everybody seemed very forgiving of one another. I think what helped is that we were **all** in that boat.

Even students were noted as having relatively high levels of stress regarding their own workload. Two participants noted that there was a critical moment in the first year regarding a student posting a public note about there being too much work and another faculty member made the following comments regarding his/her interactions with students at the start of the first year of the program.

I noticed that [...] there was way too much work, there were way too many projects and [the students] were just being overwhelmed. So in the beginning, I thought 'what do these people need? What they need is somebody to give them a big hug and say 'it will be ok'. So there is an emotional sort of support happening in the beginning [...]

Given all of the comments regarding workload and time constraints, there were varying opinions. For instance, one tenure-track faculty member noted that the first year wasn't as stressful as s/he had actually thought it would be and that the second year had more of a positive tone because people had time for things like research. It was also noted by

another tenure-track faculty member that large amounts of work actually supported the development of collaboration as well as s/he perceived as more negative impacts:

When we **were** all working so hard, we tried to draw upon one another [...] to help each other out. And so the amount of work in an ironic way facilitated the development of some of those positive aspects of the school of education. But then the stress and tension and the **anxiety**, that flip side, **also** was an **effect** of being overworked [...]

So it seemed as though, given the positive and negative influences of workload and time constraints, that some balance was still being looked for to make the organization sustainable.

[...] if we're talking about sustainability on **all levels** from recycling all the way up to how do we create a culture of sustainability to sustain ourselves and our work, that we never really addressed clearly [...] workload [....] Basically we **could not** sustain the **level of work** that needed to be done if the workload remained at the level that it did **for** the tenure-track people. And I would say for **everybody**, **everybody** but particularly for tenure-track people.

4.2.10 The wider university

Given that the school of education is located within a university that had been established for a period of time and it was noted in the conceptual framework that the larger institution can have an influence on faculties and departments, this possible factor was explored as part of the study. And indeed, all participants saw this factor as influencing the culture, although in differing ways.

One of the main ways in which the university was perceived as influencing the culture of the school of education was through its own culture. For instance, the director noted that the university was "the right kind of place [for a school of education] because the culture already existed that **valued** students and **valued** teaching." A number of characteristics relating to the larger institution were mentioned such as the strong attention to the individual student, the support of student activism, and that the university

had a small college environment where everyone was considered as an individual. Repeatedly, comments such as 'a [name of the university] atmosphere' or 'a fit with [name of the university]' were mentioned. The school of education was seen as picking up some of those characteristics, ways of operating, or 'breathing' a bit like the larger university. Even pragmatics relating to the university's values were seen as influencing culture such as the university not having large lecture halls so there couldn't be really large classes.

Another way in which the university was seen as influencing the culture was through previous connection of a few members of the school of education to the university and in particular the director's connection to the other teacher education program. For instance, when asked whether the wider university influenced culture, a number of faculty talked about how the director brought practices such as the professional teaching portfolio, the focus on teacher identity, and the commitment to social justice from the other teacher education program with which she had worked. Still other influences were mentioned by faculty. For instance, the university was seen as attracting faculty to the school of education, the good reputation of the university was mentioned as helping the school of education, and the control of certain things by the university such as the finances or the gym were also mentioned. In addition, the university was alluded to in terms of putting pressure on tenure-track faculty to publish and there was frustration from a few faculty regarding the university not recognizing the contributions made through committee work. These concerns relate back to culture in that if faculty were under stress and the university wasn't showing recognition for things that the school of education valued, tensions could arise.

Still, to some, the university was perceived to have little impact or connection to the school of education. One participant related this to the location and being at a distance from the main campus of the university. However, it was also noted by one participant that s/he wasn't aware of other university issues until s/he attended a few meetings for the director so maybe perceptions were also influenced by the type of contact that the various faculty had with the wider university.

4.2.11 Other external influences

In addition to the university influencing culture, other external influences were also perceived by interview participants as being important. This not only included the contributions of the local history of teacher education and of the current local teaching community, but also of provincial bodies, of political considerations, and of broader historical socio-political considerations.

The previous history of teacher education within the local community and the university was seen by a few participants as influencing culture. This didn't date back to the era of normal schools prior to 1970 but rather related to the local schools being used to having teacher candidates and the familiarity with the director and the university making the transition to the new program smooth:

[...] If a different director had of been given the task of organizing this school, **many** of the cultural concepts would likely be quite different. But her contact, her energy, her enthusiasm, her ability to go out and hire faculty and get people looking at things from this perspective is **directly** attributable to her [...] the people she's hired to work here, they like the way things have been done with the [university] graduates who previously were concurrent students. They **liked** that [...] the thinking out in the community with the practitioners is '**we're** going to get what we used to get with [other teacher education program]. We **like** that. We understand it. We know who's working there [...]

In addition to the historical perspective, the local teaching community was seen as influencing culture. For instance, the director mentioned the importance of recognizing the associate teachers and also noted that the appreciation and celebration event was co-sponsored by the local district school boards. As stated by the director, "the surrounding educational community [...] were accustomed to being partners." The local teaching community was also seen as having an impact because, as referred to in the first half of this chapter, an individual teacher or administrator could call with a concern and new policy could result within one week. And finally, in relation to the local teaching community, teachers and administrations were seen as being given voice, along with provincial representatives, on the Teacher Education Advisory Committee and at other meetings. This was mentioned as being important as it connected the program with real life teaching scenarios and in reinforcing the value of partnerships.

Interview participants also noted the role of accreditation and the impact of the provincial governing body on the program and the culture. Accreditation was recognized as encouraging the revising of documents such as the mission statement and guiding principles as well as for pushing for high standards and emphasizing certain values such as the relationship between theory and practice.

So accreditation, the mandate and expectations from the [provincial governing body] that we follow [...] the professional standards and the framework upon which accreditation was based influenced the culture [...] but **not necessarily** in a negative way in terms of the high standards that we wanted to reach or maintain or exceed. The **success** that we wanted to have. That was bound up with some of these external expectations and it certainly put pressure [...] [the director] always talked about how we can use accreditation to our **best** advantage.

However, another participant valued diversity and thought that the standardization emerging from such requirements might limit certain aspects of the culture.

Expanding a little wider yet, the provincial government and the general political tone were also identified as influencing culture. For instance, the current government was credited for providing more money through grants. The participant who mentioned this stated that it wasn't a culture builder but s/he talked about how the monies allowed for the school of education to release teachers for program meetings in order to get input from the school community. This suggests that the government funding made it possible for there to be further reinforcement of the value of partnerships and collaboration through involving those voices in meetings. The provincial ministry was also mentioned in terms of dictating some of requirements for the teacher education program and impacting the organization through things like the grade 10 literacy test being a way for initially pitching the literacy component of the B.Ed. program. These influences didn't all relate directly back to the development of the organizational culture but they were seen as having some impact on the organization which would influence culture through things like program design.

Larger than the provincial influence was the historical socio-political context as identified by participants. For instance, the larger context of teacher education internationally was mentioned by one participant as potentially influencing the culture given a perceived push to prepare teachers in terms of skills and techniques over other things such as socio-cultural issues. The participant didn't expand further on these comments but another participant talked about this same idea by pointing out that there's a push in society towards standardization and that the school of education had to be aware of these external influences. In addition, one faculty member also articulated the fact that historically, teacher education was not part of university learning and so it can be viewed as being "purely professional programs that aren't intellectual, that aren't academic, and aren't as rigorous perhaps as other kinds of programs" resulting in a feeling of needing

to prove something. Although these larger historical and socio-political contexts were only mentioned by a few faculty, they seem to speak to an influence on the culture.

4.2.12 Field of study

The field of study specific to the school of education, that being the fact that the school of education's focus was on the subject of education rather than something like engineering or biology, influenced the culture of an organization. A key way in which it was perceived as doing so was through the core values implicit within the field of education. Participants talked about how education was very people centered, that there was a focus on individual students and growth, and of the idea of improving society. One faculty member talked about how the goals of a school of education (e.g., self-discovery, refinement, negotiation) were different than those of a school of business. The director also noted that the focus of the members of the culture was on teaching and how that emerged in discussions and expectations:

Many people who are on this faculty have received teaching awards and they **pride** themselves on their teaching [....] When we wrestle with **programmatic** issues and **approaches** to teaching and **common** assessment policies, **everybody** knows that we are speaking as exemplary teachers coming together [....] I think for all of us, [the school of education] is becoming a place that we see our own teaching in terms of who these candidates are becoming and we have this conversation, I would say, three or four times a year. 'Who is the [name of the university] B.Ed. graduate? Is this person recognizable? What do we want them to be recognizable for and is that happening?'

This is not to say that individuals in other fields of study do not value teaching and do not make that a focus, but because the 'business' of the school of education is teaching and learning, this quote and others speak to how the core understandings and values in a field of study can and do inform the development of culture.

In addition to these core understandings, participants noted other ways in which the field of study influenced culture. As already mentioned, the fact that teacher education is a

professional program was seen as putting certain pressures on the organization such as an additional focus on rigour. In addition, one participant noted that there were high expectations regarding the requirements needed to be hired into a school or faculty of education because both field or teaching experience well as the research experience are required. And finally, another faculty member touched upon education as being a multidisciplinary field and that people hired within a school of education could have degrees in a variety of fields of study such as math, science, and business.

4.2.13 Other possible influences

There are still other possible influences that emerged within the analysis but for which I am not convinced warrant a distinct section. In particular, these related to the influence of early activities and events as well as notions of identity and image. I will briefly discuss these here as examples of other influences that may or may not be significant factors in the formation of organizational culture.

Early events helped to define the culture of the school of education. One type of event or activity that was mentioned often by participants were the social activities, both among faculty and administrative office staff as well as with students. These events were perceived as resulting in a variety of outcomes from getting to know people socially to reinforcing a sense of team and caring among individuals. Another set of events that participants talked of often were the number of meetings and retreats that were held. Some faculty talked about there being too many meetings, but most talked about the results of those meetings and in particular, the retreats. Out of these meetings came discussions regarding theoretical, "who-are-we", value-based ideas as well as solving problems; all relating to the culture of the organization.

There are certain **threads** that run through the entire school that were probably pretty carefully thought out during those meetings and developed together [...] under [the director's] leadership.

These meetings were also mentioned in terms of being teambuilding opportunities and even being opportunities for comradeship and discovering the person. Other individual events or activities were raised by participants as having influence on the culture. As one final example, the first day of the first year of the program was an event that was mentioned as being significant:

Being in [the main lecture hall at the university], all of these students sitting in their seats a bit nervous and not knowing what's happening. Especially in the first year. They were probably thinking 'What have I done? I'm taking a risk doing my professional training at a brand new program.' [The director] just had a way of making everybody feel 'it's going to be ok' and also making them feel **very proud** of the fact that they were there by saying things like 'You know, that we had this many applicants, **you** got in and **you're really special** and you need to know that' [...] She **brought** to the School of Education, and particularly evident in moments like **that** - a sense of togetherness. A sense that we **care** about you.

In addition to early events and activities, image and identity of the organization, program, and students is another possible influence on the culture. This was already reflected in a number of the sections with reference to things like the practicum course focusing on identity, the purpose of education being to refine self-identity, perceptions of a professional program influencing the feeling of needing to prove something, perceptions in the teaching community supporting the development of partnerships, and the importance of administrative office staff in setting the first impressions when people arrive at the school of education. However, further to this, notions of identity and image were mentioned a number of times. Many participants referred to 'what we want the school of education graduate to look like' being discussed often with the characteristics of the graduates resonating with the characteristics of the culture, wanting the graduates to be 'constructivist' in their approach, to be 'innovative', and to be 'student centred'. In addition, the external representation of the school of education was seen as important.

A few faculty talked about how it was viewed as an incredibly challenging program and one participant stated:

It's mutually enforcing [...] if you believe that an emphasis on individual student needs is critical which we do and it's part of our culture and it's manifested in our actions [...] those things then become reflected out in the community and it's symbiotic kind of relationship isn't it? [...] when you get feedback out of the community that that is effective, that reinforces what you are doing in the school so it's kind of back and forth.

However, as a challenge to this idea, one participant noted that the identity of the school of education didn't influence culture because most people were not aware of the identity.

The reasoning for not including these possible factors in the list of factors is that in some ways, they appear within other factors and in other ways, they are simply reflections of the culture and reinforce what is there already. However, as will be discussed in the next chapter, there is much mutual reinforcing of cultural characteristics and much overlap throughout the factors.

Chapter 5 - Discussion

Chapter 5 builds upon chapter 4 by looking at the three study questions from a more holistic approach - making sense of the data, examining it in relation to the literature, and theorizing to draw broader conclusions. The chapter first examines how the culture of the school of education is defined by participants in relation to the literature (relating to research question 1; see section 3.1) and then addresses the factors that influenced the culture (relating to research questions 2 & 3; see section 3.1), providing a suggested visual representation to illustrate the development of culture in new institutional settings.

5.1 Defining the culture

As an introductory comment, the study results were striking in the consistent way in which participants defined the culture of the school of education. Again and again, common themes were identified and elaborated upon independently by participants. As my thesis supervisor noted, 'it was as if they were all sitting in the same room'. Given that I situated my study within an integrative rather than differentiated or fragmented perspective (Martin, 2002), I was looking for consistency in the culture as with other literature such as Brady (2004), Craig (2004), Goldsmith (1998), Gruenert (2000), Hermanowicz (2005), Ruhl (1996), Sckerl (2002), Schoen (2005), and Silver (2003). However, even when there was inconsistency in views, comments still related back to the identified themes. Consistency of the participant responses speak to the shared culture regardless of whether some aspects of the culture were 'shared but not lived yet' as stated in passing by one study participant.

This 'shared but not lived yet' reference also speaks to the definition of culture used for the study as being 'the shared beliefs and values among individuals within an institution as well as a shared way of doing things (practices and activities) of the organization' (Brady, 2004; Hermanowicz, 2005; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Martin, 2002; Schoen, 2005; Sckerl, 2002). Within the themes presented in the definition of the culture, there were definite shared beliefs and values as well as examples of shared practices and activities aligning with those beliefs and values. There wasn't always full agreement on the characteristics but for the most part, agreement did exist and is evidenced throughout section 4.1 in examples such as faculty talking about how the culture was collaborative and then providing examples of how collaboration played out within the culture (section 4.1.1).

As a representation of this consistency, faculty used a similar language or sets of words relating to various themes of the culture. One intriguing comment made by the director (section 4.1.2) related to how, even when the culture did not necessarily reflect a certain cultural characteristic (i.e., community/support), the faculty would still use certain key terms to describe the collective experience with the effect of redirecting or bringing people on board. In this way, the use of internalized words seemed to be an influence on the development of culture – a way of directing thought and reinforcing practice as well as a sustaining factor. This wasn't identified directly by participants or wasn't readily seen in the literature, but is worthy of note as a possible additional influence.

Many overlapping concepts emerged in defining the culture. For instance, a sense of collaboration, partnership, and horizontal organizational structure related closely to a sense of community, caring and support; these also related to the valuing of the individual. The overlap of the themes is not surprising as they describe a culture which is a whole. Figure 2 reflects a collective representation of the culture as described by faculty members in chapter 4. In the figure, there is a boundary around the culture with faculty, administrative office staff, and students clearly part of the culture. However, the boundary is also somewhat permeable with various external individuals at close proximity. This corresponds with other educational organization literature that defines the cultural boundary around the school but also sometimes as allowing for some permeability (Brady, 2004; Flores, 2004; Hermanowicz, 2005; Herrmann, 2002; Martin, 2002; Ruhl, 1996; Sckerl, 2002; Schoen, 2005; Stine, 2000). Each of the characteristics within the boundary is identified in sections 4.1.1 to 4.1.8 and they all contribute to the definition of the culture. Although not shown within the visual representation as there would be lines everywhere, there would be connections between the characteristics to show their close relationships.



Figure 2: Representation of the school of education's culture

Participants repeatedly distinguished the school of education, program, and culture as being different from other organizations which is illustrated in a number of quotes included in section 4.1. From having a horizontal organizational structure to resembling a family, cultural characteristics were seen as being different from other places, students were seen as distinct, and the program was perceived as being unique (Schoen, 2005).

Whether the culture or program were really that different from other faculties and schools of education may be questioned given that the participants generally didn't have exhaustive experiences with other faculties from which to speak. However, it is the perception of being different that is important because having a sense of being special could encourage certain behaviour such as more efforts in certain directions or a willingness to take risks, therefore influencing culture.

As a lens through which to examine the description of culture, it is worth considering Clark's (1972) notion of organizational saga. Clark defined saga as both the "collective understanding of unique accomplishment in a formally established group" (pg. 178) and as "a unified set of publicly expressed beliefs about the formal group that (a) is rooted in history, (b) claims unique accomplishment, and (c) is held with sentiment by the group" (1972, pg. 179). Within Clark's organizational saga, there is a sense of pride and identity as well as the assumption that the particular organization of which one is part is unique. Such a saga is apparent within this study where participants repeatedly defined themselves as different or special, sharing these beliefs publicly through the research. The saga is also apparent through the consistency of comments regarding the definition of the school of education's culture and the participants' experiences within the organization. Clark's initiation stage of saga development is discernable as there was no established culture at the school of education with the founding leader initiating the process of building the organization. However, in addition, the fulfilment stage is already occurring as faculty reflect a common 'buying into' the saga and sharing of cultural perceptions. The fact that there is a shared saga or shared perception of the culture of the organization seems to bode well for the organization as common understandings are key to things like strong relationships and effective decision making.

It is also worthy to question the other side to such a high degree of coherence in culture. In discussions with my committee members, it was noted that so much cohesion sometimes makes it difficult to see or value other perspectives. References throughout the findings noted the valuing of individuals and shared decision-making where a variety of opinions seemed to be perceived as important. However, perhaps the noted distressful moment around one faculty member leaving the school of education illustrates what happens when there is much cohesion with one person not fitting in. Although we only have one perspective on this particular moment in the organization's history and there could be other reasons for the person leaving, it sounded as though the individual didn't 'fit' with the culture. Certainly the culture seemed to be time-consuming given all of the collaboration and members would seem to need to be collaborative players and be willing to connect with fellow culture members in a deep way. In this new stage of the organization with the requirement for what Clark calls the 'organizational saga', it's almost as though the organization could have been in a honeymoon phase where there was common belief that was generally working well for the organization.

5.2 Reflections on factors of influence

The factors that influenced the development of culture as identified in the results section included, in no particular order:

- Leadership
- Other members of the organizational culture
- Programmatic Influences
- Mission statement, goals, and conceptual framework
- Organization structure and size
- Physical space and location
- Resource and financial considerations
- The 'newness' factor
- Workload and time constraints
- The wider university
- Other external influences
- Field of study
- Other possible influences (e.g., image and identity)

Some of the factors presented in the results section were not surprising as they were well evidenced within the literature and were reflected in the conceptual framework (e.g., leadership was evidenced through references such as Angus, 1996; Berry, 1997; Brady, 2004; Carsten, 2003; Craig, 2004; Flores, 2004; Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991; Leithwood & Montgomery, 1986; Oliver, 1972; Peterson & Deal, 1998; Wood, 1998). However, other factors such as resource and financial considerations were identified by the study participants but had not been identified in the literature. In addition, there were inconsistencies within a factor of influence even when it appeared within both the literature and findings of the study. This is most obviously seen in the factor regarding other members of the organizational culture where the literature generally didn't identify students as an influence on school culture but the participants of the study clearly did.

As further observations regarding the results, factors such as the field of study (Lee, 2002) that were briefly raised within the literature emerged from the results of this study as factors influencing culture. This might be due to the fact that participants were asked directly about these possible factors rather than leaving their identification to the participants. For instance, while only one faculty member alluded to the notion of field of study as influencing culture before I asked, almost all participants saw the field of study as an influence once I proposed it as a possible factor. Another difference between the literature review and the results related to the reworking of a few titles of factors such as the factor originally entitled physical and administrative structures (see section 2.4). While the literature review generated the factor entitled 'physical and administrative structures', the study showed that distinct characteristics needed to be teased out and separated from this one factor. Therefore, two new factors emerged from physical and administrative structures – 'physical space and location' as well as 'organizational structure and size'.

In many instances, the literature supported the findings of the study. For instance, in discussing the influence of programming on the culture, one participant noted that faculty decided to organize students by cohort groups to increase a sense of community and connections (see section 4.2.3). Kosnik and Beck (2003) also noted that cohort groups helped faculty and students get to know each other better. Another example of connections between the literature and the findings of the study related to the mission statement, goals, and conceptual framework. While some participants noted that these documents had a definite effect, others were more cautious, making the distinction between the written documents and actually believing/enacting those documents (section 4.2.4). These comments resonated with the literature in that some academics noted the importance of these documents (Craig, 2004; Crissman, Spires, Pope, & Bell, 2000; Stine, 2000; Wisniewski, 1996; Brandes & Stuber, 2004) while others had concerns that they might just be 'another document on the shelf' (Brandes & Stuber, 2004; Grant, 1998).

There were also instances where, for me, a factor may not have been clearly visible in the literature prior to the data collection but it became quite evident afterward. In particular, this relates to the newness factor and its relation to Clark's notion of saga. Emerging within the literature through references to founding school principals (Goldsmith, 1997; Stine, 2000; Vazquez, 2001), key documents in the early stages of an organization (Froman, 1999; Lilly, 1996; Stine 1999), and early events and activities (Foley, 1996; Vazquez, 2001; White-Hood, 2002), I briefly mentioned in the literature review that everything being new could be possible factor of influence. However, it wasn't included in the conceptual framework as it seemed to be a given of the research context. Through the responses from the participants as well as my introduction to

Clark's (1972) work on saga, it became quite evident that the newness factor was a separate identity unto itself and worthy of consideration. Indeed, this relates back to the initial question at the beginning of the thesis regarding what happens when there is no established culture. In this case, participants perceived the newness of the organization resulting in the need to do much negotiation to figure out how things would work as well as it being a time to capitalize in bringing people together, creating a sense of pride and excitement as well as a 'hey we did it' atmosphere, emphasizing the need to build and sustain a reputation and to not let things fail, and raising issues of identity. Here, faculty perceive themselves as founders and they have created stories that explain their experiences. This relates back to the literature as outlined in chapter 2 but also to Clark's (1972) notion of saga. In a place where there is a void given that everything is new, the development of saga not only helps to fill that void in the early years where there is no culture but it lays a foundation for ongoing practice and future directions. As long as those in the organization believe the sagas, or in other words maintain common perceptions regarding culture and their experiences in that culture, the perceptions/sagas act as a way of reinforcing culture. They are a tool for common understanding in a landscape where the long history of organizational culture doesn't exist and can't be relied upon to shape the organization and its members. In addition, they act as a fuel for recharging the batteries of individuals who otherwise work so very hard in a new organization that they have the potential to burn out. In the formative stages of an organization, saga is one contributor to culture through the newness factor.

Parallels between the findings and personal experiences also resonated with the results. Despite such references not often being presented in theses, I will briefly make note of one anecdote from my own recent experience. While I was attending a University of Ottawa student biology conference this spring, issues around culture arose during a

panel discussion of graduate students and faculty. A few on the panel talked about how, in some biology labs in which they have worked, faculty and their students would get together in the lab on a Friday afternoon to have a beer and talk. I couldn't help but think how this social time would develop a sense of comradery and community among students and with faculty. I also got to wondering if this would be a more common practice within a department such as biology than it would have been in the faculty of education, thus relating to the field of study (Lee, 2002). The panel conversation then continued into a discussion regarding interdisciplinary studies and how hard it was to accomplish interdisciplinary work through partnerships with academics in other departments. One individual noted that it would be difficult to collaborate with other departments when they themselves don't always move out of their own little 'cells' in which they work to interact with others in their own department. This also seemed to relate back to my study with notions such as space and work space design or program structure (Deal & Peterson, 1999; Oliver, 1972; Stine, 1999).

Possible 'blind spots' of factors not identified by myself through the examination of the literature nor by the study participants during the interviews emerged when examining the results. Direct interview questions were not posed about these possible 'blind spot' factors as was the case for factors identified in the conceptual framework (section 2.5). Therefore, it may be that participants would agree with some of these ideas if they were to be raised in an interview now, but it is not possible to do so given that data collection is complete. In any case, one possible blind spot was that no participant directly talked about how the fact that the organization was a 'school of education' rather than a 'faculty of education' might have influenced culture. Maybe this fact had little or no effect on the culture, but considering that structure was recognized as an influence (section 4.2.5;

Lilly, 1996; Stine, 1999; Sullivan 2000), I question whether this major aspect of the organization's structure might have been overlooked.

In addition, participants were generally silent about the fact that those hired to work at the school of education were relatively inexperienced in being faculty members. One individual noted this, but there weren't any other explicit comments and the one comment that was made was focused more on mentorship than on the influence of relative inexperience. Given that the tenure-track, LTA, and part-time faculty all had little to no teaching experience at the B.Ed. level and that all tenure-track faculty had recently, or were still, completing their PhDs, the level of experience would seem to be an influence on the pressures, stresses, and workload of those individuals (Scott, 1995). As it is generally recognized that workload and stress tend to be highest for new teachers, I wonder if participants perceived this relative lack of experience as a possible influence as it wasn't noted in the interview comments. Then again, the innovative and engaging characteristics of the culture may also have come from the fact that many individuals didn't have much direct experience and so were able to think more creatively and flexibly as they weren't bound in the same way by prior experiences.

Another specific comment regarding the factors of influence was that the factors varied in the way in which they came about to influence the culture. For instance, some factors such as the practicum component of the B.Ed. program were required by the provincial governing body regulations and would therefore exist at all faculties or schools of education. However, as well as some factors just being inherent given the organization or program, other factors were planned (e.g., as with the student cohort groups) or occurred by chance (e.g., the fact that the building in which the school of education was located happened to become vacant the year before the program started). Given the

inherent nature of the factors as well as the influence by chance or by planning, it suggests that one needs to be aware of the shifting nature of influences and what one can or cannot do about those factors.

A final comment should be made regarding the relative importance of various factors.

This section began with a list of the factors in 'no particular order'. This was done purposefully because all factors are seen as important, given the findings of the research. There were a few instances whereby certain factors were highlighted as possibly being more important than others. In particular, the role of the leader was seen in this way through a few comments such as "I think that a factor that has influenced culture, the **hugest** factor to my particular situation leads to the leader [...] [Through] not just her charismatic manner but her modeling of her expectations, **her** openness [...]". In addition, beyond the stated importance by participants, some factors could be seen more important given a potential stronger focus than others (e.g., physical space and location; size). However, given these statements, it is important to note that the findings really show very much a synergistic relationship among factors. The influence of certain factors and even the existence of those vary factors is dependent on other factors. For instance, one might argue that leadership is key but the particular leader's style of collaboration and consultation would have been very much constrained had faculty been scattered throughout the university's main campus rather than being all located very close to each other in a separate facility. Therefore, many factors have input towards each other as will be discussed in section 5.3 and although certain factors may be perceived as having 'more of an influence', they are dependant on each other.

5.3 Relationships between factors and characteristics

This final section of chapter 5 examines the relationships among factors as well as between factors and the characteristics of the culture. In addition, a diagram is proposed with the argument that the development of culture is much more complex than being the result of one or two factors of influence.

It is interesting to note that some factors seem to influence other factors which then influenced culture. For instance, organizational structure influences culture but is itself influenced by things like the director's decisions regarding a more collaborative or horizontal rather than hierarchical structure, therefore involving the central factor of leadership. Another example of a factor influencing another factor which influences culture was the identification of the school of education as being new. In this case, the fact that the school of education was new attracted certain individuals to the organization and those individuals in turn influenced the culture. One further example which I noted was the fact that the people who were hired had characteristics such as high standards or the interest in being heavily engaged in the program. I found it interesting that most participants did not note that their own personal characteristics might add to the busyness, high workload, and stress factor influencing culture. If the culture had not been so innovative or if people had not been so interested in doing a good job then there wouldn't have been a feeling of needing to accomplish so much or completing work to such high standards. There almost seems to be a 'price to pay' for people being engaged, excited, innovative, and collaborative. Nothing is wrong with this other than the lack of recognition that what were considered valued aspects to the culture also contributed to what was seen as some of the more difficult aspects of the culture. Also related to these ideas was that factors worked together to shape culture. For instance, there was reference made to how the director led the valuing of partnerships but also

that the other participants in the culture bought into that and carried it forward, also contributing to the development of that cultural characteristic.

Within the results, there were instances when factors of influence and culture characteristics overlapped. For example, one characteristic of the culture identified by participants was that it was stressful and there was too much work. At the same time, having too much work and too little time was also seen as a factor of influence. In fact, characteristics influencing culture occurred more often than presented in the results chapter. For instance, if the culture were collaborative and included partnerships, this would reinforce aspects of community which would in turn reinforce the collaborative and partnership approach. Characteristics were acting as factors in that they reinforced the culture and each other. However, the characteristics weren't generally identified by participants as factors of influence and so are presented here as possibilities rather than actual factors in chapter 4.

What seemed to be occurring within the culture was that the identified factors, as well as the characteristics, mutually reinforced each other at various points, working together to shape an overall culture of complementary characteristics. In figure three, we see that factors are influencing each other and the characteristics of the culture are doing the same. However, in addition, there is overlap between factors and characteristics to represent that relationship and there are additional arrows to demarcate the influence that the factors have on the characteristics. Also included in the figure is an illustration of the fact that some factors occur within the culture (e.g., leadership) and some are external (e.g., provincial influences).

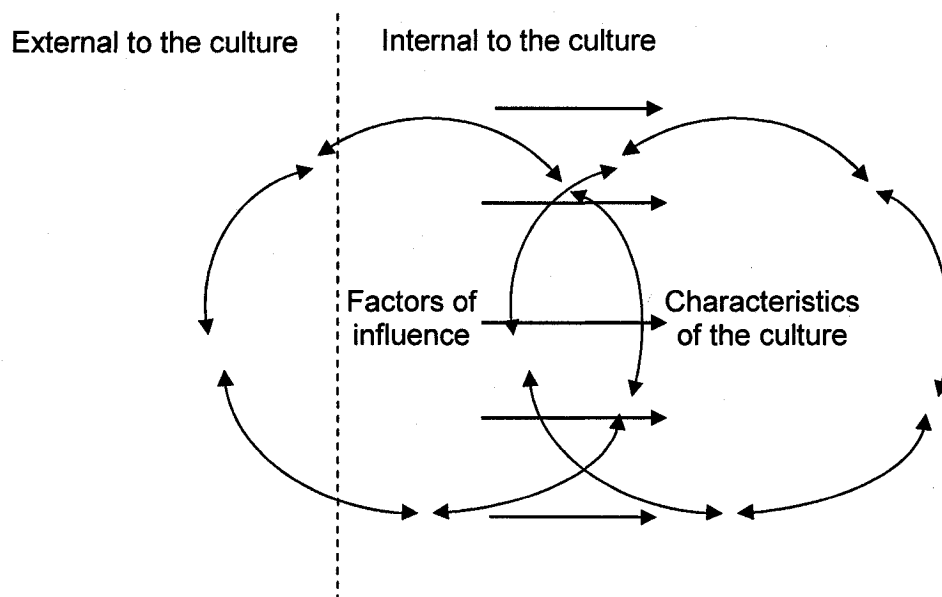


Figure 3: The relationship between characteristics of the culture and the factors influencing culture

Three things are not shown in the figure. The first is the relationship to time.

Presumably, some of the characteristics and factors would shift over time but this wasn't a focus of my study and would be difficult to illustrate for separate characteristics and factors. In addition, the other two things that are not included in the image are the exact names of factors and characteristics as well as more arrows linking all of these together. The names of factors and characteristics are not included as it would be too complex to illustrate the interrelationship of each individual component. Rather, this generalized illustration depicts the concepts at work within the culture and the characteristics and factors could shift given the organizational context and time.

I wanted to raise the question as to what happens when one or more factors shift or are present in a different form. For example, changing faculty offices so that they would have been in different buildings within the main university campus rather than all being in

the same place at a distance from the main campus would have had a marked impact on the culture of the school of education (Kettlewell, 1996; Oliver, 1972; Stine, 1999). Not only would it have influenced the culture directly but it would also have impacted things like the ability of the director to meet with faculty regularly in formal and informal ways, therefore influencing of the role of leadership. Factors are definitely reliant on each other and are also reliant on certain cultural characteristics. Although certain factors may be more influential than others, the development of new culture is a process that involves a number of considerations.

In conclusion, it seems as though there are some distinctions that can be made between characteristics and factors as defined in this study but that there is also some fluidity or 'blurring of the lines' between these two concepts which I had not originally accounted for given the literature. However, it is still a very worthwhile exercise to investigate culture in this manner as it provides some structure to the investigation in an effective way.

Chapter 6 - Conclusion

The final chapter of the thesis follows upon the findings of the study presented in the results and discussion chapters. This chapter outlines the limitations of the work and discusses the contributions of the study in terms of implications for research, practice, and the study locale. As a final component, a few brief comments are made in the last section.

6.1 Limitations

The following section outlines a number of limitations to the study. As asserted by Marshall and Rossman, "No proposed research project is without limitations; there is no such thing as a perfectly designed study" (1999, p. 42).

One limitation of this study is that a specific definition of organizational culture was used. Although it is common practice to settle on one definition from which to base such research (Angelides & Ainscow, 2000; Gruenert, 2000; Martin, 2002; Sckerl, 2002; Stine 1999), the fact that there is no one agreed-upon definition in the field of organizational studies (Kuh & Witt, 1988) means that if I had worked with a different understanding of culture, the research would likely have resulted in different findings. Secondly, possible factors of influence arose from the literature review which ended up, to a certain extent, guiding the study. The factors that emerged from the literature were used in constructing the conceptual framework, becoming part of the interview guide which may not be seen as a totally constructivist approach by some purist constructivists. However, steps were taken to minimize the narrowing of my perceptions prior to data collection and analysis (see section 3.6) and my notion of constructivism and its use in this study does align with more moderate views.

This study involved data collected at only one point in time and with one set of participants; that is, the data provides a snapshot of a larger experience. If the study had been conducted after the first year or if data had been collected during the school year rather than during the summer, participant responses may have been different. It would be interesting to revisit the research site after a longer period of time such as after ten years to examine how the culture would further evolve. At the time of data collection, there seemed to be developing what Clark (1972) referred to as an organizational saga,

or a common story, upon which the culture/individuals could lean to reinforce culture. Whether the organizational saga would continue to unfold in a similar fashion would be interesting to explore. Another comment regarding data only being collected at one time was that there wasn't the opportunity to follow up with all participants regarding ideas that certain individuals raised during the initial interview. This would have enriched the data as there were concepts that I wasn't aware of during the first set of interviews and I also occasionally I ran out of time during the interviews to probe everything that I was interested in following up on. There could also have been differences in responses if a different set of participants had been selected. Although qualitative interview research generally accepts approximately 10 participants as an acceptable number and I used a sampling method with the purpose of including a variety of perspectives reflecting the culture of the school of education faculty (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003; Goldsmith, 1998), it is worth noting the possible consequences of these methodological decisions.

Another limitation is that the research questions addressed espoused culture, not enacted culture; that is, rather than observing the actions of study participants, the data were the participants' articulated thoughts that a) came to mind during the interview and b) they were willing to share within a research context. However, examining participant perceptions through interviews is an accepted way in which to study organizational culture (Martin, 2002) and given the scope of a MA thesis, other approaches such as ethnography were not deemed practical. In addition, observational data could not have been collected on the first two years of the program as they had already passed and if the study had been based on observation, the data would have been presented based on my perceptions as a researcher which would have been different than that of the members of the culture. More of a concern for me was that the data collection was a one-time experience for each participant without any chance for them to think about the

questions prior to the interview. This had its advantages as it limited shared preparation for the interview or responses from becoming too scripted, but it did mean that I relied on the thoughts of the participants during the relatively short period of time in the interviews.

Two final limitations were the personal bias of the researcher and potential for participant motivation to influence participant response. As previously stated in section 3.2, this study was based within a constructivist paradigm with the understanding that no research is objective. To counteract this perceived limitation, I was aware of my bias during data collection and analysis, challenging my own thoughts and perceptions even though I acknowledge that I was seduced by this culture and the sagas that are a part of the culture. As previously noted in chapter 3, there were also definite advantages to being a prior member of the organization and by stating my position, I framed the context of the study. In addition, through using the views of a set of faculty and critically analyzing their voices to construct a set of themes, it is my belief that bias did not override their opinions but rather allowed their voices to prevail. There are many valid arguments that are presented within this consolidated reality, some of which are at variance to my personal views. I have attempted to submerge my 'voice' within a culture which I experienced as a participant, but also to which I have gained much deeper understanding through this study. In addition to my bias, participants would each have had their own personal motivations. It may have been that in their response to the questions, they would have tried to portray their experience in a certain way given personal/organizational interests. However, I don't believe that we ever escape our own biases and I would tend to err on the belief that participants were as honest as possible in their responses provided given the consistency among participant responses and the obvious willingness of many participants to point out challenges or difficulties at certain points in the interviews.

6.2 Contributions of the research

As with any research, it is my hope that this study carries significance and implications in many ways. It is my view that the study does so at three different levels: a) by contributing to the academic field of organizational studies in education; b) in the context of practice at a broad level; and c) by providing reflections back to the study locale. All three, I feel, are valuable results of graduate research.

Regarding the first context, there are a variety of ways in which this research carries implications for organizational studies in education. The literature is sparse regarding new school culture (Flathmann, 1996; Ritter, 2002; Stine 2000) and so this study contributes to deepening the understanding of processes at work during the early years of an organization; in other words, it helps to shed light on the question regarding what happens in a new education organization when there isn't 'an established way of doing things'. The findings of the study present concrete factors that are each worthy of consideration in research regarding culture development. In addition, I suggest concepts that could be further explored within other locales or through a revisiting of the locale for this study to look at shifts over time. The study also opens dialogue for further conversation regarding the complexity of culture development. Whereas the focus of many studies have been on one or a few factors, the results of this study suggest that the development of culture involves a wide range of factors that act in a synergistic relationship. The research is also significant in that it provides a window into examining an institution in its formative moments – moments that are not easy and which can result in failure given the various realities of the situation. However, in this case, the organization under study has been able to create a common perception regarding the culture of their organization, a set of sagas if you will, that has allowed for relative

success of the organization and program. Examining not only the factors but how those factors work in explicating the culture provides a more holistic understanding regarding the process of culture development. Examining culture in these formative moments is also significant because one can look at culture through a particular lens, one which might be clearer than that of a more established organization where culture has been lived by its members for a number of years.

Although the study is located specifically within a school of education, there are many concepts that would be applicable to those examining culture in new elementary and secondary schools – indeed, I drew upon such literature for my own review. Also, there are also concepts applicable to research in other organizational contexts such as non-profit organizations. There are a number of factors that, to me, seem as though they would resonate in other contexts and it would be of great value to explore these.

In terms of the general applicability of the research, I would argue that this study calls for a conscious awareness of culture in the launching of new educational organizations by paying particular attention to a number of factors which influence culture. This is addressed not only to those who work and learn within educational organizations, but also those who head the administration of universities and district school boards. There is an extensive literature regarding the effect of culture on organizations, programming, and individuals. Given this reality as well as the understanding of many factors being at play, it is the responsibility of many to take care of supporting the growth of that culture. Culture can be left to chance, but like a garden, tending of the culture helps it flourish and the more hands, the lighter the load and the greater the chance for success. In addition, not paying particular attention to organization culture and the factors that

influence it, can result inadvertent development of culture that isn't conducive to teaching and learning.

In terms of the study locale, I offer its members the findings of this work. I think it worthwhile for the organization to closely examine the discussion emerging from this research. The comments may or may not remain relevant to the culture since the data was conducted a year ago, but I believe that it is worthwhile to consider whether the various ideas carry meaning for future directions. Finally, I believe that being aware of the fact that we live our personal and work lives within cultures and how we relate to others in the culture is important. I hope that this study is a catalyst for thought.

6.3 Concluding comments

As final concluding comments beyond the significance of the study and a call for further research, I want to simply highlight the complexity of culture development in a new school of education. In beginning this study, I was aware of the rich literature on influences such as leadership and it was helpful that an initial list of factors emerged to provide some direction for the study. However, I wasn't necessarily anticipating as consistent a view of the culture in a new school nor the acknowledgment of such a variety of factors that weren't always apparent in prior literature. The emergence of the cultural characteristics as influences on culture and of factors influencing each other further illustrates the complexity of culture development. The process of conducting this study has been a rewarding one for me and I hope that the study was also of interest to participants and that it is useful in the contexts which I have identified.

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Appendix A – Interview Guide

Note: The writing in *italics* provides examples of follow up prompts that could be used throughout the interview.

Demographic / Introductory:

1. Please briefly explain your background regarding teaching and teacher education.
2. For how many years have you been working with the School of Education and what roles have you held during that time? (*e.g., position, what teach, other responsibilities*)
3. Why did you accept a position as a faculty member with the School of Education?

Culture defined and experienced:

4. What are five words that you would use to describe the organizational culture of the School of Education?
Why do you use _____ to describe the organizational culture of the School of Education?
Please provide an example of how that word applies.
5. What are fundamental or important beliefs; values; practices; activities [*these four terms will be addressed each separately*] of the School of Education's organizational culture that are shared among members of the culture?
Please elaborate and provide examples.
 - a. Beliefs?
(e.g., about teacher education?)
 - b. Values?
(e.g., are all voices equal among faculty, staff, teacher candidates, and school partners and if not, is it agreed upon whose voices are/should be 'listened to' more than others?)
 - c. Practices?
How do people generally interact with each other (i.e., faculty; teacher candidates; staff)?
Is there much conflict among members of the institution? What are conflicts related to? How are conflicts managed or resolved?
Do faculty work together or in isolation? How so?
Are people recognized formally/ informally for contributions to the organization? How so?
 - d. Activities?
What are the most important events, ceremonies, or activities at the School of Education? Why are these important?
 - e. Are these fundamental/important characteristics different as compared to other schools or university organizations with which you have had experience?
How so? Why do you think this is so?

Questions directly examining factors of influence through an emergent approach:

6. Given how you have described the organizational culture, do you feel that the culture has changed over time? *How so? At what points? How did the culture evolve to where it is now?*
7. What are the various factors that you feel have influenced the process of culture development?
[I will write down participant ideas of factors as they state them. We will then revisit each factor through questions a&b]
 - a. How has ____ influenced the organizational culture of the School of Education? *What has been the outcome of ____? How do you know it has had an influence?*
 - b. Has ____ been a constant influence or has it had greater/less affect at certain points in time?

Questions examining factors of influence based upon the conceptual framework for the study:

[Depending on how participants respond to the question 7, questions 8-20 will be used as prompts to talk about other possible factors not raised by the participant during the emergent component of the interview.]

8. Is the fact that the School of Education is relatively new had any influence the organizational culture? *How so?*
9. When staff and faculty arrived at the School of Education, much of the programming of the B.Ed. program was already initially designed. Although the programming has evolved somewhat, do you feel that the design of the program has influenced the organizational culture of the School of Education? *How so?*
10. Has the mission statement or goals of the School of Education influenced the organizational culture of the institution? Have any other key fundamental documents shaped the culture? *How so?*
11. [name of the university] and [name of community in which the university is located] have histories regarding teacher education (i.e., [name of old normal school in the community]; [...] Concurrent Education Program). To what extent do you feel these histories may have impacted the organizational culture of the School of Education? *How so?*
12. Does the wider university impact the School of Education in any way regarding organizational culture? *How so?*
13. Do you feel that the organizational culture of the School of Education is influenced by any other external factors to the School of Education? *What factors would these be and how would they influence culture?*
14. How would you describe the leadership within the School of Education? Has it had an influence on the organizational culture? *How so?*

15. How adequate are the physical and technical resources that you and others have had access to (e.g., space, computers, internet)? Has this had an impact the culture of the School of Education? *How so?*
16. Has the design structure of the institution impacted the culture (e.g., committees, size of the organization, communication practices?) *How so?*
17. Regarding faculty, staff, and teacher candidates...
 - a. Are there specific individuals that have had an impact on the organizational culture? *How so?*
 - b. Would the culture have been different if a different set of faculty were hired? *How so?*
 - c. Do you feel that you or others were aware of organizational culture and/or there was a conscious attempt to develop an organizational culture? *How so?*
18. Does the discipline of the School of Education (e.g., education instead of biology) influence the organizational culture? *How so?*
19. Have early activities or events in the School of Education's history impacted the culture of the School of Education? *How so?*
20. Has the image or identity of the School of Education affected the organizational culture? *How so?*

Concluding / Summarizing:

21. Are there any other factors that come to mind that influence the process of culture development?
22. Is there anything else you would like to add?