TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS IN AN AUSTRALIAN HIGH SCHOOL

STAFFROOM

Reconceptualising the significance of teacher relationships during non-contact time in a high school staffroom

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A Thesis submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Education

February 2017
Abstract

This study concerns teacher relationships in a high school staffroom in suburban Australia. It emphasises the emotional dimensions of collegiality as expressed and experienced by a professional staff group who occupy a single staffroom during their non-contact [that is, their non-teaching] times of the working day. The study seeks to identify and describe elements; physical, social, cultural, spiritual and micro-political that affects the emotional milieu of the staffroom. This focus is important because the role of staffroom relationships in the professional and personal well-being of a high school teacher is largely missing from the research literature.

A qualitative research paradigm is used to investigate how participants felt about the emotional quality of collegial affiliations in the staffroom. The design of the study is social constructionist and participants talk about the relationships that they have with their colleagues and how they interact with the space that they as a staff group occupy. A case study methodology is adopted as the data originate from a single high school. Seventeen staff volunteers participated in two informal interviews conducted over approximately six months. The researcher was employed at the school during the time of data collection and had a personal and professional relationship with the participants. The ramifications of these relationships are acknowledged and discussed in the study. Analysis of the transcribed interview data uses an interpretive paradigm so that each participant has a voice concerning how they negotiate relationships in the staffroom setting provided for them.

The two dominant themes that emerge from this study are that of the influence of space and the role of relationships, both collegial [lateral] and hierarchical, on staffroom relationships. Participants reveal a strong sense of purpose for the staffroom in their daily lives. There are multiple perspectives, both positive and negative, that highlight the importance of the staffroom space and the adult interaction contained within it. The size and
design of the staffroom materialised as an important contributor to the emotional quality of daily life for these teachers. The size, configuration and equipping of the staffroom influenced the emotional understandings and interactions that take place between colleagues. Staffroom relationships are regarded positively and there are several interlocking factors, such as friendliness, trust and the use of emotional labour, that affect the quality of the relationships that are formed and maintained there. Although not resident in the staffroom, managers have a noticeable impact on how staff members feel about themselves and their colleagues; the influence of managers has a noticeable impact on staffroom collegiality.

The objective of the study is to promote a change in the way the non-contact component of a high school teacher’s working life is comprehended and appreciated. Such an understanding is sought for the teachers themselves and for those who do not occupy a high school staffroom but whose decisions affect how a staffroom operates. The study draws on literature concerning teacher emotion in schools and builds on the recent research reports that show unequivocally that how teachers feel about the relationships that they have with their peers and managers influences their sense of individual fulfilment and professional efficacy. This study is important because research on the role of staffroom relationships on the professional and personal well-being of a high school teacher is largely missing from the research literature.
Statement of Originality

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

Signed

Date: February, 2017
Acknowledgements

I had been told that the doctoral journey was a lonely one and that is particularly true when you take, as I have, the part-time route. Nevertheless, there are several people who have provided a guiding light and oases along the way. Without two of them, I know the journey would not have been completed.

The first is Associate Professor Sue Thomas, my principal supervisor and the second is my husband Richard Parks. These two people have accompanied me for the entire journey. Sue provided support and guidance that helped to mould me into the researcher that I have become. She patiently read and commented on many drafts and took care of administrative details along the way. Richard has supplied the emotional and practical encouragement that can only be expected from your best friend and life partner. He has been very accommodating as I pursued my studies as well as carrying out more than his fair share of duties when required. To both of these people, thank you very much; I am indebted to both of them.

I also acknowledge the academic support from my other supervisors Dr Yoon-Suk Hwang, Dr Paula Jervis-Tracey and Dr Loraine McKay. Although none were with me for the whole journey, I have appreciated their advice, feedback and the depth of knowledge that they have so generously shared with me. I am grateful that all three were willing to come on board and get involved despite their busy work programs; thank you very much.

This journey would never have begun without a spark of interest being ignited by my then-colleague, David King, and the endorsement of another colleague, Duncan Ware. Similarly, at the other end of the journey, my thesis would not have been completed without input from Dr Clare Morrison who has formatted and prepared my thesis for submission and Dr Christine McDonald who provided such welcome help and expertise in her new role of EdD Program Convenor. Again, thank you to these people.
Finally, I thank my teacher colleagues who volunteered to be participants for this study. Despite their heavy and hectic work schedules, they found the time to talk honestly about their experiences. I appreciate their generosity and candidness; without their accounts this thesis would not exist. The participants who contributed so graciously to this study are, like me, people of faith. It would be inopportune to finish the acknowledgement section without thanking God, the creator of the universe for His love and His guidance. Through the redeeming love of Jesus Christ, God has provided me with the capabilities and resolve to not only start, but also finish this particular journey that was set in front of me.
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Chapter 1 - Teacher Relationships in a High School Staffroom

“During a typical day, the significant adult contact that a teacher will have is with colleagues” (Beatty, 2008)

This study concerns teacher relationships in a high school in suburban Australia. The study endeavours to contribute to understandings pertaining to the importance of the emotional dimensions of collegiality, collaboration and congeniality for a professional staff group by focussing specifically on the relationships developed and encountered in a high school staffroom during teacher non-contact time. Collegiality refers to linkages and involvement between colleagues. The definition by Kelchtermans (2006) that collegiality designates “the quality of the relationship among staff members in a school” (p.221) was adopted as a starting point for interpreting the interactions between participants. The term includes collaboration, a descriptive term, which emphasises cooperation and professional association (Hargreaves, 1994; Jarzabkowski, 2000). Congeniality refers to expressions of friendliness and support between colleagues (Barth, 2006). For reasons of convenience and clarity, the term non-contact is used to refer to the non-teaching components of a teachers’ day such as lunchtimes, break-times and before and after school times. For many of the participant teachers, much of this time was spent in the staffroom. The study seeks to identify and describe elements; social, physical, cultural, spiritual and micro-political, that affected the emotional milieu amongst these teachers. Participating teachers were part of a school campus where students between the ages of 11 and 17 years received their education. Participants were invited to discuss, through semi-structured interviews, the emotional aspects of staffroom relationships and to identify the factors that influenced these relationships. They accomplished this goal by talking about their feelings. It proved difficult to find a commonly accepted definition of the word emotion in educationally based research literature (Uitto, Jokikokko and Estola, 2015). Feelings were used as the discriminator as they are the affective
[that is, influenced by or resulting from emotions] outcome of emotions experienced by a person. The choice of this approach and a working definition of the term emotion and its relationship to feelings are discussed fully in the Emotions and this Study section of Chapter 3.

The objective of the study is to promote a change in the way the non-contact component of a high school teacher’s working life is comprehended and appreciated. Such an understanding is sought for the teachers themselves and for those who do not occupy a high school staffroom but whose decisions affect how a staffroom operates. The research provides an empirical and conceptual account of teacher relationships in a high school staffroom based on a belief that teachers are individuals “facing day to day interactions under circumstances which critically affect their motivation, job-satisfaction and effectiveness in the classroom” (Nias, 1987, p. 83).

**Background to the Study**

In a traditional Australian high school, a staffroom or series of areas designated for the exclusive use of staff is usually provided. Although Woolner (2010) reported a lack of scholarly publications covering high school staffroom function, there were a few earlier reports that concerned themselves with teacher staffrooms (Kainan, 1994; Little, 1990a) and their findings indicated that teachers were influenced by the settings in which they worked. More recent publications have emphasised relationships between colleagues in the staffroom (Groundwater-Smith, 2005; O’Connor, 2008). A series of reports about Australian staffrooms, (Christensen, 2013; Christensen, Rossi lisahunter, & Tinning, 2016; Rossi, Sirna and Tinning, 2008) emphasised the impact of micro-political experiences on newly-qualified staff members. By using spatial concepts, McGregor (2004b) defined the departmental staffroom and classroom as a focal point for teachers, she described them as “an intersection or knot in the unique skein of relationships” (McGregor, 2004b, p. 367). The findings from
this study confirm and extend those published by these authors and endorse the affirmation that, “If the head’s office is the brain of the school, the staff and staffroom are its heart” (Britland, 2012). The next section of this chapter identifies the origin, development and traditional purposes that are afforded to a high school staffroom.

**A High School Staffroom**

A high school staffroom is, in part, a type of office. In general terms, an office is a place where administrative work is done (Kellaway, 2013). A high school staffroom is a type of office in that it is the place allocated to teachers as a work space, a meeting place and a support space for activities that enhance their teaching role (Britland, 2012). Some high schools have departmental offices as well as or in place of a single staffroom but their function remains the same. They are a physical space provided for the convenience of classroom teachers as they carry out their professional duties. They are also a place of community and a place of relationship which is important for prospering the daily life of an individual teacher (Hargreaves, 2013; Nias, 1998; Shapiro, 2010).

**Staffrooms in Australian schools.**

The development and provision of teacher facilities in Australian schools were first fully recognised when post Second World War school building programmes were initiated (Healy & Darian-Smith, 2015). From this time, some form of accommodation for teachers was, until recently, accepted as a universal feature of any Australian school (Mann, 2015).

**A physical space to meet a high school teacher’s needs.**

The early purpose built high schools were cellular in construction and included a single room or set of subject-discipline rooms to be used by teachers when they were outside of the classroom (McCreadie, 2006). Such school plans laid down an understanding of what a staffroom is and what it provides and facilitates for a teacher (Healy & Darian-Smith, 2015).
A high school staffroom is fundamentally a place of congregation where non-contact professional duties and social interactions take place. It is a place to work, a place to eat and drink, a place for privacy and adult interaction, a place to store personal and professional items and a place to find out information (Clanfield & Foord, 2008). As Clanfield and Foord (2008) note, the staffroom satisfies a personal and corporate need for an office, a café, a refuge and place of rest, a storeroom and a notice board. The physical attributes deemed necessary for a high school teachers’ staffroom have remained constant, controlled by federal and state codes applicable to the construction of all new buildings (Australian Building Codes Board, 2014).

**Changing schools.**

The job specification of the high school teacher has changed considerably in the last 40 years with the addition of more roles, skill requirements and workloads (Hargreaves, 1994, 2013; Howard & B. Johnson, 2002; Nias, 1998). The significance of collegial relationships as social activities has also been noted during this time frame (Nias, 1998; M. Shah, 2012) and research findings have corroborated the importance of such associations in maintaining the professional, social, spiritual and mental well-being of an individual teacher (Groundwater-Smith, 2005; Hanson, 2012; Jarzabkowski, 2002; Kainan, 1994; Shapiro, 2010). To be supported in their increasingly diverse and complex role, some researchers have argued that a modern teacher requires spaces that fill their needs beyond the class room and individual subject boundaries (Bissell, 2004; Hargreaves, 2013; McGregor, 2003, 2004b). The work of these researchers emphasised the importance of differentiated space for educators in a high school, but as noted by Acker, (1999), Higgins, Hall, E., Wall, Woolner, Blake and McCaughey (2005) and Woolner, Hall, E., Higgins, McCaughey and Wall, (2007), the changing needs of high school teachers, not only in Australia but throughout the developed
world generally, has not infiltrated into the strategic thinking of school planners and school policy makers.

The discussion in this part of Chapter 1 has provided evidence to justify the belief that a high school staffroom is not a random structure assigned by an anonymous system. Rather, a high school staffroom has a genuine set of functions for the people who are privileged to use it. The work of educational researchers such as Bissell (2004) and Woolner (2010) signify that it is not only student spaces that need to be re-thought and re-designed; teacher spaces need to be re-configured to meet the needs of the modern high school teacher. Within the everyday framework of school life, the high school staffroom remains the place where teacher agency is socially, culturally and micro-politically constructed from the emotional interactions that take place there (Kwok, 2014). In this study, the term agency is used to describe a teachers’ response to their feelings. Participants were given the opportunity to reflect on how well the staffroom that was supplied to them fitted their personal and collective emotional needs as they strove to work together as a purpose-driven community.

The next part of this section investigates the thinking that lies behind the planning and building of new schools in Australia.

**Australian high schools of the future.**

Plans for future schools in Australia reflect the changing needs envisaged for the education and development of the 21st century child (Hall, M., 2015; Nair, Fielding, & Lackney, 2013; Perkins & Bordwell, 2010). Official future school planning documents continue to ignore the non-contact needs of the teacher (Woolner, 2010; Higgins et al., 2005). Some schools in Australia are in the process of being built where interactive teaching spaces for students and teachers replace traditional classrooms and teacher only spaces (Victorian State Government, 2015). The reasons and consequences of such changes are validated through the improvements envisaged for student learning but teacher agency is not considered. It is
within this context that this study sits. The Australian teacher high school staffroom may be in danger of disappearing before its significance for enhancing and maintaining adult relationships and teacher effectiveness is fully understood.

To underline this threat to the Australian staffroom, the situation in the UK (United Kingdom) can be cited where the purpose of staffrooms in English and Welsh schools has been under consideration for some time. In 2012, the incumbent UK government adopted an amendment to their School Premises Regulations confirming the removal of the regulation that had previously provided “accommodation for use by the teachers at school for the purpose of work and for social purposes” (Her Majesty's Government, 1999). The amendment went largely unpublicised although where acknowledged (Britland, 2012; Rose, 2012), the feedback asserted the importance of a staffroom for unity of purpose, individual and collective efficacy and to recognise that there is a place for socialising and relaxing during the working day. Rogers (2017) identified staffrooms as teacher places for “recharging, rethinking, resetting, resting and ranting, reasoning and realising, raucous laughter and relative abandonment” (para 2), a sentiment partially confirmed by Hammersley (1980) who observed staffrooms as places of periodic laughter and anecdotal conversation. A more generic comment (S. Hastings, 2008) stated that collegial relationships suffer in a school if teachers are unable to meet face-to-face in a regular, informal way.

The view that teacher agency is a direct result of affective judgement has been reported by other researchers (Beatty & Brew, 2004; Kwok, 2014). These findings clearly indicate that the emotions and consequent feelings that teachers in a high school staffroom have are neither exclusively private nor public but are collaboratively formed within an educational culture and institutional structure (Hargreaves, 2001b, 2005). The next part of Chapter 1 explains how a high school staffroom space can be viewed as a type of community
where social, cultural and micro-political interactions either support or prevent the types of relationships that can be formed.

**Community and the staffroom.**

Dunbar (2010), an anthropologist and evolutionary psychologist affirmed the importance of relational networks for sustainable communities to operate. He concluded that people have a series of friendship groups radiating outwards from a numerically small central group to large numbers of people on the outer fringes of individual relationships. In his representation, most work colleagues are found in one of the outer circles but this does not mean that the relationships are not important. Dunbar (2010) contended that constant communication with the outer reaches of our personal networks provides a cache of associates who can be called upon for support, distraction and companionship at various times during a working day. He emphasised the magnitude of face-to-face encounters and the importance of having a focal point where individuals can meet.

It is in the staffroom that teachers have most of their daily professional adult interactions. The nature, intensity and depth of relationship required by an individual and between individuals will vary. Research has established that these interpersonal relationships help to set the tone for the emotional well-being of an individual (Hargreaves, 2013; Jarzabkowski, 2002; Neville, 2013) as well as colour the culture of the working environment (Beatty, 2008). Beatty and Brew (2004) stated that what people do depends on what they think and feel. Transferring these findings to a staffroom, it is possible that the affective judgements of the participants in this study stemmed from their feelings as they interacted with their colleagues in the staffroom during non-contact time.

Teacher roles have changed significantly in the last 50 years (Hargreaves, 2013) but the need for emotional and social support as part of an adult community remains constant (Eldor & Shoshani, 2016). Eldor and Shoshani (2016) represent some of the first researchers
to illuminate the role and importance of compassion in the maintenance of healthy collegial relationships. The teachers in this case study worked in a Christian denominational high school which provided facilities that fitted a traditional concept of what a single high school staffroom is and what its functions are. Within that space participants conducted their daily interactions with each other. Through their daily dealings in the staffroom, relationships of varying degrees of intensity emerged. These relationships were emotional and reflected the physical, social, cultural and micro-political milieu of the staffroom. The relationships formed an important part of how the participant teachers felt about themselves and their professional lives (Beatty, 2007, 2008).

**Significance of this Research**

The significance of this research lies in its focus on emotion and relationships in a high school staffroom. Research studies in high schools tend to focus on how teacher collaboration, i.e. professional relationships help to consolidate student success (Hargreaves, 1994). The emphasis is on teamwork and professional compatibility but ignores the stimulus of collegial relationships for the benefit of the teacher as experienced in the non-contact time of a working day (Caswell, 2012; Groundwater-Smith, 2005; Shapiro, 2010).

Early research that covered emotionality amongst teachers tended to take place in primary schools. Lortie (1975) and McPherson (1972) for example, demonstrated the importance that primary teachers placed on supportive behaviours from their colleagues. These and other findings lay dormant amongst academic research with Ball (1987) observing that there was little interest in understanding the sociology of school organisation and so scant attention was paid to the day-to-day realities of working in a school, particularly a high school. As the role of teachers became more complex and the need to respond to changes in legislation became more urgent, researchers in the field of education used concepts from other areas of research. Goffman’s (1959) concept of social interaction for example, provided a means of
looking at staffrooms. He saw the staffroom as representing a backstage area where individuals were free to let down their guard. Educational researchers such as Hargreaves (1994), Kainan (1994) and Rossi et al. (2008) have used Goffman’s theory to investigate teacher agency and teacher vulnerability in a staffroom context. Goffman’s model is discussed more fully in Chapter 3.

Another, related sociological concept was that of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1979). The term describes the management of feelings and expressions in order to fulfil the emotional requirements of a job (Hochschild, 1983). In the simplest of terms, emotional labour is offered by a teacher transactionally whilst emotional work (Hochschild, 1983) is offered voluntarily with no reward. The place of emotional labour as practiced by a teacher in the classroom is well-documented (Chang, 2013; Goetz & Hall, N. C., 2013; Jarzabkowski, 2002; Mudrey-Camino, Sutton, & Knight, 2009). What is less understood is how the emotional milieu of the staffroom affects a teacher’s sense of efficacy for their work elsewhere in the school (Jarzabkowski, 2000). Participants in this study provided findings that clearly demonstrate a link between their sense of well-being and efficacy and their use of emotional labour in the staffroom. Emotional labour and work and the staffroom as a backstage domain are examined more fully in Chapters 2 and 3.

The findings of Nias (1989, 1998) into the lives of primary teachers revealed how much and in what ways teachers’ value their colleagues and she identified the subtle connection between teachers’ collegial relationships and their professional growth. It is therefore important to gain similar empirical data that focuses on a high school. Writing some time ago about a secondary school, Ball (1987), was explicit about the emotional dimension of school life at that time. He suggested that theorists and researchers neglected the non-teaching realities of collegial relationships played out in the secondary school staffroom because they “have been mesmerised by the obvious and deterred by the messiness involved
in the analysis of the personal and emotional aspects of organisational functioning” (Ball, 1987; p. 216). Educational research into understanding teacher affectivity [emotional reactions] has come a long way since Ball made his statement. It is important to investigate and bring to an educational forum a picture of the non-teaching emotional arena that is the Australian high school staffroom, particularly the emotional setting that surrounds teachers in their attempts to work together to achieve common goals. These findings will contribute to areas of practice such as strategic planning, cognitive leadership, problem-solving and standards-based reform.

This research does not arise out of a structural-functionalist approach to management. The study takes the position that positive working relationships between colleagues are beneficial and the responsibility of every adult who occupies the staffroom. The project explores how this shared responsibility is actually lived out in a high school, concentrating on the non-contact activities of staff. The research questions that have been used for this study are identified below.

**Research Questions**

1. What do teachers feel about staffroom relationships?
2. How often do staff members feel the need to use emotional labour with their colleagues in the staffroom?
3. What conditions foster or constrain the emotional understanding of the staff in their non-contact time?

**Limitations and Delimitations of the Study**

As well as being a place for children, a school is a workplace for adults and during an average working day the main adult interactions that a teacher has are with colleagues (Nias, 1998). This study excluded interactions between teachers and students, with parents and with
all ancillary staff. The focus of the study was exclusively contact with colleagues during non-contact time and was focussed on interactions that occurred in the staffroom. As the interviews progressed, it became clear that the sometime presence of senior managers in the staffroom and the friendships that they maintained with some staff members influenced the emotional milieu of the staffroom. Although technically not members of the staffroom, they did affect relationships and their influence was included.

The study is based on participants talking about their collegial relationships and a definition of the term collegiality was presented at the beginning of this chapter. Fielding (1999) provides an added dimension by emphasising the fact that collegiality has a group aspect and is a characteristic of a community; in this case a community of teachers. Although this study concerns non-contact time at school, teachers found it difficult to separate the emotionality of their professional and social lives and hence non-contact time relationships linked both the professional and social. Following the advice of Jarzabkowski (2000), the term “collaboration” is used to describe only professional, co-operative interactions between colleagues.

**Organisation of the Study**

This chapter has introduced the study and identified the place of the high school staffroom in the everyday life of a teacher. Chapter 2 is a review of the literature on emotion in schools, with the specific aim of highlighting current perspectives on these issues and revealing gaps in existing research that this study will address. Chapter 3 describes the conceptual approach used and Chapter 4 explains the methodological approach used to conduct this research. It gives a clear picture of the school setting, the instruments of data collection and analysis, ethical considerations and the role of the researcher in this study.

Chapter 5 is the first data chapter and provides an introduction to figures of speech and their use by individuals to illustrate their feelings when talking about everyday life in the
staffroom. Chapter 5 uses data from participants to show how emotionally-laden feelings were illustrated with the use of idioms, metonyms and metaphors.

Chapters 6 and 7 present the themes that emerged from an analysis of the data and the main findings are presented in these chapters. The themes that emerged from the data separated into two main groupings. The first major theme was that of Space and Relationships. It is dealt with in Chapter 6 and is divided into two minor themes; that of Physical Space and that of Personal Space. The second major theme is that of Lateral and Hierarchical Relationships and the findings relating to this theme are presented in Chapter 7. Three minor themes emerged within this major theme and they are Emotional Labour, Collegial Relationships and the Influence of Senior Managers. The data revealed clearly that collegial congeniality is an important part of school life for these teachers and that senior management influenced staffroom relationships by their physical presence and by the asymmetry of interaction that they had with various members of the staff body.

Chapter 8 leads to a re-conceptualisation of the significance of staffroom relationships when considering school organisation and school effectiveness. It ties the previous two data chapters together and expands on the findings to create a connected picture of the place of the staffroom, emotions and collegial relationships in the daily life of a high school teacher. The chapter ends with recommendations for future research.

With this introductory chapter completed, the study now focuses on the focus of this study, that of emotional influence on teacher relationships. Chapter 2 addresses the difficulty in adequately defining teacher emotion and explains how this study uses the function that emotions play in a teachers’ life as they describe the creation and maintenance of relationships with each other.
Chapter 2 - Teacher Emotion in Schools

“Teachers’ emotional displays vary according to their own motivations and the context of the workplace” (Jenkins & Conley, 2007, p. 979)

Chapter 1 introduced the background to this study and emphasised the possible value of a staffroom in a high school to teachers during the non-contact times of their working day. This chapter concentrates on teacher emotion and provides a review of the literature relating to this topic.

Recognising Teacher Emotion in Schools

The place of emotion in a teacher’s life was less recognised in the past (Fried, Mansfield, & Dobozy, 2015). Endeavouring to identify the role of emotion in teaching, Hargreaves (1998a, p.558), stated that “emotions are at the heart of teaching”. More recently, others have confirmed that emotions and the resultant feelings are an inherent part of teaching (Kelchtermans, 2005; Olsen, 2016) and that it is the experience of affect which forms the basis of the professional self of a teacher (Hagenauer & Volet, 2014; Shapiro, 2010).

Evidence confirms that teachers enter the teaching profession with “deeply held beliefs” (J. Lee & Yin, 2011, p. 26) in regard to how they fit into the educational system and how they can be a good teacher. They bring with them their background, history and personality and are impacted by the organisational factors that are demanded by their place of work. Part of the affective response from a teacher relies on the attitude that they develop towards their work (K. Miller, Considine and Garner 2007). Teachers learn that managing their emotions is an important part of avoiding the more negative aspects of affectivity in their working lives (Chang, 2009).

Researching in the field of job satisfaction for example, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2010) related that teachers conceptualise their sense of job satisfaction with the affective reactions
to their work. Working predominantly in schools in Western Australia, Lasky (2000) noted that when teachers feel successful in their work they also experience satisfaction and enjoyment and over time, this satisfaction produces a sense of professional and personal pride. Teachers also experience emotions towards work that result in more negative reactions. Common negative emotions in teachers are anger, frustration and disappointment (Liljestrom, Roulston, & deMarrais, 2007) and result from mitigating factors such as student indifference and misbehaviour, institutional demands, loneliness and an overall sense of powerlessness (Jepson & Forrest, 2006; Liljestrom et al., 2007).

The recognition of these negative feeling responses has resulted in a growing body of research into the phenomenon of teacher stress (McIntyre, 2015). With reference to teachers, stress has been defined as “unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration or depression, resulting from some aspect of their work as a teacher” (Kyriacou, 2001, p. 28). Queensland high school teachers for example, reported feeling stressed when there were “Too many demands on me from too many people, too many deadlines, and not enough human and other resources, trying to juggle competing agendas”. (Feltoe, 2013, para 6). Teacher stress becomes an issue when “these emotional responses are mediated by the perception that the demands made upon the teacher constitute a threat to personal self-esteem” (Kelly & Berthelsen, 1995, p. 346).

**Research and Teacher Emotion in Schools**

In the past, the emphasis in educational research and with policy makers was to accentuate the mind, cognition and rationality in teaching and learning with little acknowledgement of teacher emotions (Schutz & Zembylas, 2009). Those who did recognise the importance of emotion in teaching have now become the pioneers of this discipline (Boler, 1999; Hargreaves, 1994; Little, 1990a; Nias, 1996).
Early emotion research in schools.

The creation of the framework of this study recognises two principal contributors to the present-day study of teacher emotion in schools. Whilst both of these researchers have added understanding to a number of different aspects of teacher emotion in schools, they have reported findings that throw light on how teachers cope with and maintain non-contact relationships that they have with colleagues. The first is Jennifer Nias (1989a, 1996, 1998, 1999) who researched exclusively in the primary sector of British schools and whose findings continue to provide important themes in modern teacher and emotion research projects (Uitto et al., 2015). The second researcher is Andy Hargreaves. He remains a respected and contemporary researcher in the field of teaching and learning, including the role of emotion in teacher identity and the probable outcomes of educational reforms (Hargreaves, 1994, 1998a, 2001a) on teacher emotional well-being in the 21st century. He also introduced a number of terms and themes relevant to understanding the operation of teacher emotion in a school context that continue to underpin research projects from authors such as Beatty (2011), Bullock (2013) and Datnow (2006).

Jennifer Nias and teacher emotion and relationships in schools.

It was the work of Nias and her colleagues (1996) that helped to identify affectivity as being extremely important to a teacher. She claimed three reasons for her conclusion. First, that teacher experience is emotional and based on a series of interrelated and mutually dependent relationships. Secondly, that the judgements and perceptions of a teacher are rooted in cognition. She reported “feelings are not separate from the social and cultural forces which help to form them and which are in turn shaped by them” (Nias, 1996, p. 294). She agreed with the constructionist approach of Hargreaves (1994), that the mental process of knowing, of cognition and emotions are intertwined in the life of a teacher and not dichotomous poles as had been previously argued by psychodynamic researchers (Parkinson, 1995). Finally, she
argued that cultural and social forces, such as those found in a staffroom, help to shape the individual identity of a teacher. Both Hargreaves (1998a) and Nias (1996, 1999) recognised that emotional labour, which is transactional, and emotional work, which is given freely (Hochschild, 1983, 2003), were often combined in the professional self of a teacher as they endeavoured to invest themselves into their work, including their relationships with colleagues. Hargreaves and Nias recognised that a set of consequences of this merging of personal and professional identity was that the staffroom, as well as the classroom became an important source of self-esteem, vulnerability and fulfilment for the teacher.

Nias reported that an important means of maintaining professional and personal stability in a staffroom was by membership in a reference group (Nias, 1989a). Such groups were composed of like-minded people and the perspective of the group was often used to interpret given situations that a teacher might confront. If a reference group included social activities then Nias found that the dynamics changed and it became a membership group. Belonging to a membership group consolidated the sense of self for the individual teacher (Sherif & Wilson, 1953) and exerted more impact in the staffroom, especially at break times and lunchtimes. Nias (1989a) identified the most potent type of reference group operating in the staffroom as that of affectively linked teachers. The bond between reference groups and micropolitical power is discussed in the segment about cliques in Chapter 3.

**Andy Hargreaves and teacher emotion and relationships in schools.**

Hargreaves’ contribution to the study of emotions in schools stemmed mainly from his research findings on the impacts of postmodern ideology and educational reform on teachers and their professional selves (Hargreaves, 1994). He recognised that educational reform appeared to have a preoccupation with skills and knowledge, and did not recognise that the cognitive scaffolding of concepts and teaching strategies was “held together with emotional bonds” (Jeffrey & Woods, 1996, p. 71). He also recognised that relationships with other...
adults engendered the most heightened expressions of emotionality amongst teachers (Hargreaves, 2001b).

Hargreaves promoted collaborative teacher cultures and recognised that they emerged mainly from teachers as they operated as a social group with frequent and informal encounters. He concluded that successful collaboration cut across departmental boundaries, did not rely on position in a hierarchy and was strengthened by emotional bonds that displayed feelings of trust. Hargreaves (2001b) introduced the concept of emotional geographies to help explain the opportunities and threats that influenced the daily emotional bonds and understandings between teachers. He categorised the elements of emotional geographies as belonging to one or a combination of the following groups: personal, cultural, moral, professional, political and physical. Subsumed within his geographies, Hargreaves concurred with Nias and her colleagues that for trust and cooperation to exist “people must find one another highly predictable and share substantially the same aims (Nias, Southworth, & Yeomans, 1989, p. 81).

Hargreaves (1994) research findings led him to the conclusion that, in schools, collaborative cultures as depicted above were rare and were often substituted with a type of collaboration which he called “contrived collegiality” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 195). Contrived collegiality lacked authenticity because teacher relationships were bureaucratic, externally controlled and lacked spontaneity. He resolved that administrators were capable of colonising teachers time ”with their own purpose” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 109). Using Goffman’s (1959) allegory of informal back regions he purported that by claiming a back region such as a staffroom, administrators changed a place of relaxation and recuperation to a place of business and “administrative surveillance” (Hargreaves, 1994, p.111). Part of the response of teachers when they found themselves in such a situation was to find the maintenance of professional and social relationships more difficult and working life, generally, more
emotionally stressful (Hargreaves, 1998a). One of the casualties of the contrived collegiality observed by Hargreaves (1994) was that of trust between teachers.

Following on from his interpretation of the term contrived collegiality, Hargreaves introduced the idea of emotional silence (Hargreaves, 1998a) between colleagues to help elucidate the restrictive nature of what were called emotional rules by Nias (1998). Working within a postmodern structure, Zembylas (2005) also identified emotional rules and the ensuing silences that constrain authentic behaviour in a school environment. Also noted by Hargreaves (1998a) was the consequence of being unable to express emotions authentically, a concept called “emotional dissonance” (Hochschild, 2003, p. 90). The next part of this chapter reviews more recent studies in teacher emotion.

**Teacher emotion research in schools – the 21st century.**

Notwithstanding the work of the early pioneers, research into teacher emotions was, until recently, fairly limited. This scarcity was attributed to prejudice against emotion in Western culture (Zembylas, 2003) stemming from an assumption that emotions are complex and difficult to understand. It was argued that research in this area was hindered by the historical associations that the word emotional had with negative words such as irrational and unreasonable, and emotions had been viewed as "destructive, primitive, and childish, rather than thoughtful, civilised, and adult" (Sutton and Wheatley, 2003, p.328). Despite this background of negativity and the fact that there is no agreed conceptual model of what teacher emotion is (Fried et al., 2015), research reports relating to the importance of emotion and teachers in schools have burgeoned in the early part of the 21st century and the topic is now recognised as a justifiable research focus (Uitto et al., 2015). The emotion paradigm has become a meaningful topic in school research for a number of inter-related reasons (Fried et al., 2015) which are summarised below.
**Emotion and attrition rates amongst teachers.**

Attrition rates refers to the loss of teacher numbers from the profession, especially in the Western world, and was first identified in the latter part of the 20th century. The phenomenon has been reported to be increasing in momentum (Hargreaves, 1994, 2003, 2013). Re-counting her findings about new entrants into the teaching profession, Woolfolk-Hoy (2013, p. 264) argued that teachers are "neither warned about nor prepared" for the emotional demands of their chosen career, sometimes resulting in decisions to leave the profession (Richardson, Watt & Devos, 2013). From this concern, a body of work has emerged, using different perspectives and methodologies that investigate affective states such as teacher burnout (Goetz & Hall, N. C., 2013; Howard & B. Johnson, 2004; Nääring et al., 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2010), teacher well-being (Parker, Martin, Colmar, & Liem, 2012; Roffey, 2008) and teacher resilience (Castro, Kelly, & Shih 2009; Gong et al., 2013; Hong, 2010; Qing & Day, 2007).

Teacher burnout occurs when a teacher feels emotionally overwhelmed over a sustained period of time by their circumstances of employment (Hong, 2010; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001). Emotional exhaustion is considered the key feature of the burnout state (Maslach et al., 2001). Literature concerning teacher resilience, i.e. the capacity to cope with stress suggests that emotions play an important role in a teacher’s capacity to flourish rather than just survive in their professional life (Mansfield, Beltman, Price, & McConney, 2012). A recent report identified cooperation among staff as the principal contributor to a teacher’s sense of well-being (Kamil, 2014)

The inability to manage emotions has caused many new teachers to leave the profession (Gallant, 2013). The exodus of new and early retiring teachers in the USA, for example, continues to be reported as a cause for concern (Tsouloupas, Carson, Matthews, Grawitch, & Barber, 2010). Those who stay may reframe their sense of purpose by learning how to manage
and regulate their emotions by using emotional labour and emotional work to adapt to and fulfil their job description (Kinman, Wray, & Strange, 2011; Winograd, 2003; Yuu, 2010). Alternatively, they may progressively suffer from the symptoms of being worn out (Stephenson, 1990), that is becoming professionally disengaged, or burnt out which effects all aspects of their professional life (Neville, 2013) including their relationships with their colleagues (Ingersoll, 2001).

Other studies have identified the ameliorating effect of social and emotional support in re-energising teachers (Chang, 2013). School cultures and timetables that separate teachers from each other and provide limited time for reflection (Fullan, 2008) are identified as causing “an erosion of engagement” (Malasch & Leiter, 1997, p. 416) amongst teachers. Teachers’ perception of the social and emotional support that they receive from colleagues is strongly linked to how they manage stressful situations (J. Kahn, Schneider, Jenkins-Henkelman, & Moyle, 2006). Working in USA high schools, J. Kahn et al. (2006), reported findings that concluded that as positive emotional and social support increased, emotional exhaustion and cynicism decreased and professional efficacy increased. Such support needs an on-site venue where teachers have a refuge (Corby, 2014), a place of training and learning (Bullock, 2013; Flores, & Day, 2006; Kilpatrick, Bell, & Falk, 1999; Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace, & Thomas, 2006) and a place where they are able to be vulnerable (Kelchtermans, 2005; Rose, 2012). Traditionally this place is the staffroom where direct and indirect support can be received (Eldor & Shoshani, 2016; O’Connor, 2008; Shapiro, 2010).

**Accountability and teacher emotion.**

Teachers’ work has become increasingly driven by micromanagement from externally imposed reforms and senior managers (Lasky, 2005; J. Lee & Yin, 2011; Schmidt & Datnow, 2005; Sleegers & Van Veen, 2006). Many researchers report that emotions have become a political tool where the impositions of external expectations control an individual teacher’s
sense of personal efficacy (Day & Qing, 2009; Zembylas, 2005). They conclude that this has happened because individual and collective teacher responsibility has been replaced with accountability and high-stakes testing (Wiebe & MacDonald, 2014) as teachers’ work is shaped by ever increasing pressure to improve student academic outcomes (Datnow, 2011). Miskel and Hoy (2001) identified schools managed in such a way as possessing an authoritarian bureaucracy that often resulted in negative emotional experiences for teachers. They identified an alternative professional pattern of administration which frameworks a bureaucracy to support teacher initiatives and expertise. In a quantitative study, Leithwood and Beatty (2007) noted an improved sense of emotional efficacy amongst teachers when a professional model of management was used in a school. Elsewhere, Beatty (2011) suggested that managers can only improve the emotional well-being of teachers after they have recognised the importance of emotions in their own work life.

Reference has already been made to the consequences of the colonisation of the staffroom by administrators for work-related activities (Hargreaves, 1994). Social and emotional distances (Hargreaves, 2001b) have developed between colleagues as they strive to maintain an acceptable “model teacher” (O'Connor, 2008, p. 618) persona that is pleasant and calm in all situations. Personal relationships and the emotions associated with some degree of intimacy have been set to one side as individuals strive to fulfil the expectations imbued into their professional identity (Schutz & M. Lee, 2014). The consequences of these personal decisions made by teachers have begun to infiltrate research documents and in the main, individual productivity and school effectiveness have decreased when the circumstances described in this part of the discussion prevail (Earley & Bubb, 2004; Fenlason & Beehr, 1994; Lazarus, 2006).

The findings stated in the first two paragraphs of this segment do not represent a universal approach from all research projects. As a counterpoint to these findings, other
researchers have discovered that collegial relationships based on trust (Price, 2015), care (Edmond & Price, 2009; Eldor & Shoshani, 2016; O’Connor, 2008) and mutual vulnerability (Nias, 1999; Nussbaum, 2003) have enhanced the academic outcomes and purposes of a school organisation. These findings reflect more the outcomes expected from Hargreaves’ comments about effective collaboration. Datnow (2011) refers to the importance of teachers working as part of collaborative communities where teachers and leaders can find the rightful domicile of emotion in their working lives. She asserts that both teachers and leaders need to establish a situation where their personal needs and professional interests agree with the organisational goals of their institution. Datnow identified successful collaborative communities as having a strong sense of collegiality with evidence of shared vision in an emotionally safe and secure environment. However, like Hargreaves (1995) and Nias (1994) before her, Datnow referred to the whole organisation rather than identifying specific places for the concentration of positive activities to occur.

Reminiscent of Goffman’s (1959) back space concept, Bissell (2004), Rimé (2007) and Woolner (2010) recognised that teachers need space, to recover from emotional episodes. The importance of providing a safe place is recognised in other professions (Bloom & Farragher, 2010; Timmermans, 2012), but with a few exceptions (Day & Leitch, 2001; Jarzabkowski, 2002; Shapiro, 2010), the recuperative value of life in the staffroom for teachers has been under-researched. Consequently, the significance of the staffroom as a safe place for teacher emotion and the complexity of relationships that teachers have with each other remain largely unexplored in the modern folio of emotion research agendas.

The discussion so far regarding the relationship between emotion and attrition rates in schools and emotion and increased accountability in schools has emphasised the role that stress plays in the emotional life of a teacher. The next section looks at research findings about stress in more detail.
Emotional stress in a teachers’ life.

Perryman (2007) suggested that stress can be positive for a teacher as they carry out their daily duties. She used findings from an earlier author (Selye, 1956), and concluded that the drive for creative and productive work was enhanced by a certain amount of stress. However, the positive contribution that stress can make in a situation can be easily lost. It was recognised some time ago that “stress occurs when there are demands on a person which tax or exceed his adjustive resources” (Lazarus, 1976, p. 47). Reporting on teacher responses during Ofsted inspections in English and Welsh schools, Perryman (2007) recognised that prolonged and/or intense work stress produced a sense of being out of control for the teacher with a consequent loss of a sense of professional independence and professional control.

There are many emotions hidden and expressed within the stressful situations that teachers encounter on a daily basis. O’Connor (2008) concluded that caring and connecting with others left a teacher vulnerable to the possibility of hurt and disappointment. Working with pre-school teachers, Kelly and Berthelsen (1995) indicated that teacher stress emerged following negative or unpleasant emotional experiences in the workplace. They affirmed that “these emotional responses are mediated by the perception that the demands made upon the teacher constitute a threat to personal self-esteem” (Kelly & Berthelsen, 1995, p. 346).

Perryman (2007) alluded to the concept of performativity as a means of explaining increased stress levels amongst teachers. It is a term used to describe modern society’s focus on efficiency and effectiveness (Lyotard, 1984) in the workplace, especially at times of external auditing. Perryman linked the term to the increased sense of accountability and surveillance felt by teachers as they were judged in terms of outcome and performance. She associated the invisibility of institutional authority to that of a panopticon, a device designed for prisons where “the object of the inspection primarily is to make them not only suspect, but be assured that whatever they do is known even though that should not be the case”
(Bentham, in P. Miller, 1988, p. 43). The metaphor of the panopticon is relevant for teachers, as they discipline their behaviour depending on the monitoring and evaluation process to which they are subjected. Boler (1999) asserted that emotions are a site of social control and writing specifically about Ofsted reporting, both Perryman (2007) and Ball (2003) concluded that the constant surveillance in a panoptic-like school regime relied on the operation of internalised fear within the individual teacher. It has been reported that this emphasis on the “performative worth of the individual” (Ball, 2003, p. 218) has resulted in a loss of authentic behaviour by teachers and the implementation of a performance from the individual that requires a degree of emotional dissonance. Again reporting on the effect of an Ofsted inspection in an English primary school, Jeffrey and Woods (1996) described the deprofessionalisation of teachers characterised by feelings of trauma and the marginalisation of positive emotions.

**Positioning this Research Project – Staffroom Relationships**

Comments have been made through this literature review identifying the ways in which findings from this study can complement and possibly extend those findings already in existence. The place of emotion in school life is in its early stages of development and there is still a call for more conceptual clarity in emotional research (Fried et al., 2015; Meyer & Turner, 2006; Schutz & Pekrun, 2007). This lack of lucidity has required judgements concerning the use of the terms emotion and feeling and the choice of methodological procedure used in this study. Decisions made on the methodological procedures used in this study are explained in Chapter 4.

**The gap in the literature.**

Research findings concerning emotion in schools from the 20th century have helped to form the principal foci for the early part of the 21st century. These emphases have established that emotions play a significant role in a teacher’s work, especially in the way that educational
reforms, the role of management and power relationships impinge on professional identity and increase teacher resistance. The ability to manage and regulate emotion has been another focus, spotlighting the consequences of teacher well-being or teacher exhaustion. Studies have concentrated primarily on individual affectivity using quantitative methodologies. Teacher emotion has also been linked to the affectivity of students and their capability to learn as well as the ability of a teacher to be part of a learning community with colleagues.

The emotionality of classroom relationships have been the preoccupation of research documents in the last 15 years or so (Uitto et al., 2015). This is quite understandable but the relationships that teachers have with each other and with parents have also been identified as potentially important and as having received very little attention (Uitto et al., 2015). This project will not add to the contribution that parents make to teacher emotion but the emotionality of relationships between colleagues is the central component to the genesis of this study. With a few exceptions (Eldor & Shoshani, 2016; Jarzabkowski, 2002; O’Boyle, 2000; O’Connor, 2008; Shapiro, 2010) it is necessary to go back some years (Hargreaves & Woods, 1984; Nias, 1998, 1999; Nias et al, 1989; Sikes, Measor & Woods, 1985) to find research that identified the importance of colleagues to each other and recognised the staffroom as a place of learning. Nias and her team recognised that teachers and teaching are part of a social practice which occurs in interpretive communities in which relationships are continually being tested. One of these communities is the staffroom and its relevance requires greater comprehension before findings can be incorporated into current fields of understanding. In addition to the lack of contemporaneous study in this arena of emotion, a significance of this research lies in its focus on emotion and relationships in a high school as, with a few exceptions (Hargreaves, 1994, O’Boyle, 2000), research of this type has focussed in primary schools (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Forrester, 2005; Jarzabkowski, 2002; Nias,
The next chapter, Chapter 3, presents the concepts that have been used to help frame this study.
Chapter 3 - Conceptual Framework used in this Study

“Emotional displays and expression are caused by cultural rules” (Tsang, 2014, p. 4)

The first two chapters have clarified the purpose of this study and contextualised it in relation to documented research studies. This chapter presents and justifies the conceptual framework that informs the analysis of the empirical data collected. The framework has been constructed from a variety of sources to provide a suitable set of lenses to interpret the data supplied by the participants in this study.

Understanding Emotion

With a few exceptions (Bahia, Freire, Amaral, & Teresa Estrela, 2013; Fu, Lin, Syu, & Guo, 2010; W. Hastings, 2008), the most recent educational research publications concerning emotion do not define or theorise the term but rather define emotion by relating it to other concepts such as emotional intelligence, emotional competence or emotional understanding (Fried et al., 2015). For example, one influential article by Corcoran and Tormey (2013) used over 20 concepts linked to emotion but no defining parameter for the word itself (Uitto et al., 2015).

Emotion and this Study

For the purposes of this study, emotion is understood to be “a strong feeling that is derived from one’s circumstances, mood or relationship with others” (Stevenson, 2010). This definition allowed participants to discuss their feelings. The choice of this definition is explained in the following segment.

Many researchers use the term feeling interchangeably with the term emotion (Coupland, Brown, Daniels, & Humphreys, 2008; Damasio, 1999; Hagenauer & Volet, 2014; Hochschild, 2003; Liljestrom et al., 2007), especially when participants in their research are asked to discuss how thoughts and actions are shaped by the institutional, cultural and
historical contexts in which they live and work (Kozulin Gindis, Ageyev & S. Miller, 2003; O’Boyle, 2000). O’Connor (2008) for example, who interviewed three Australian high school teachers, discovered that teachers described their feelings about relationships within the context in which they were operating.

Reporting as an organisational theorist, Fineman (1999, p. 292) proposed that feelings are at the “heart” of most understandings of emotion. He defined a feeling as essentially the subjective experience of an emotion. His interpretation was that being able to feel means that we are aware of some psychological or bodily state of being. He then advocated that emotions are the personal displays of the affected or altered state. He also corroborated the notion that emotions acquire their meaning from the cultural setting that an individual occupies. Providing an element of agreement to this view, Neville (2013) stated that thinking and feeling are not distinct operations but are intrinsically connected. He affirmed his belief that an emotion is the bodily reaction to an event or object followed by feelings in the mind which then deliver the impetus to perform an action. Hargreaves (2004, p. 287) also made the link between feelings and emotions, noting that the Latin origin of the word emotion is “emovere; to move out, to stir up”. He contended that when people are emotional they are moved by these feelings and share them with their colleagues or subdue them if they are deemed inappropriate. Other researchers such as Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2002; Pekrun; Goetz, Titz & Perry, 2002; Beedie, Terry, & Lane, 2005) nominated the idea that emotions produce short and strong feelings in response to certain stimulations. These beliefs are clarified by Damasio (2003, p. 28) who ascertained that “emotions play out in the theatre of the body and feelings play out in the theatre of the mind”.

This short discussion illustrates why the term feelings has been used in this study to engender a response from participants that allowed them to articulate their thoughts about life in the staffroom. These feelings were socio-cognitive, that is, contextual, in that they were the
product of an interface between the biological/psychological [intrapersonal] part of their being and were linked directly to the physical, social, cultural and political [interpersonal] domain of their workplace.

A function of teacher emotion is to regulate behaviour and fit in with organisational and personal expectations (Kinman et al., 2011). The terms emotional labour and emotional work were introduced in earlier chapters and are discussed in more detail in the next segment to clarify their conceptual value when analysing data provided by participants in this study.

**Emotional Labour and Emotional Work**

The concept of emotional labour was incorporated into early studies of teacher emotion, especially by Hargreaves (1994, 1998a) and Nias (1989a, 1996, 1998). It is a concept that has endured and nowadays, emotional labour is often subsumed into larger projects relating to the role of emotion in the operation of a school (Uitto et al., 2015). Additionally, the place of emotional work, the freely expressed emotionality between colleagues as they carry out professional duties has gained some acknowledgement in educational research (Groundwater-Smith, 2005; Jarzabkowski, 2002; Shapiro, 2010).

**Emotional labour.**

Hochschild (1979, 1983) is a sociologist who introduced the terms emotional labour and emotional work to account for behaviours she identified amongst employees in service industries. Her working definition of emotional labour was “the management of feelings to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display” (Hochschild, 1983, p. 7). Hochschild’s deliberation is in accord with that of Goffman (1959) who suggested that when frontstage and on show, individuals wear many masks according to the social situation in which they find themselves. Goffman (1959) emphasised the fact that individuals try to impress others by presenting themselves as best as they can. He stated that an individual transmits his or her definition of the situation through a series of fronts. In this way, an interaction is created and
all participants work together to give meaning to the situation to which they are a part. Hochschild proposed that individuals are subject to “feeling rules” (Hochschild, 1979, p. 563) that are dictated by cultural expectations and governed by social structures. She identified a series of “display rules” (Hochschild, 1979, p. 557) that ensue and that are fostered by an employer. Such a notion is closely allied to what Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) called job-focussed emotional labour where teachers are required to act in a certain way to satisfy corporate rather than individual expectations.

Zembylas (2003) remarked that teachers learn to internalise and enact the roles and norms assigned to them in their place of work. Writing about service industries in general, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) noted that compliance can create a schism between felt and displayed emotion in an employee, something referred to by Hochschild as an internal “emotive dissonance” (Hochschild, 2003, p. 90). Over a protracted period of time, if unresolved, emotional dissonance creates emotional stress for a teacher (Howard & B. Johnson, 2002; Jepson & Forrest, 2006; Lazarus, 2006).

In addition to job-focussed emotional labour, Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) recognised a second type of emotional labour which they called employee-focussed emotional labour. This type of emotional labour concerns the regulation of emotional expression with work colleagues. Using survey data from 628 teachers in the United Kingdom, Kinman et al (2011) discovered that collegial social support ameliorated the negative effects of emotional labour in their everyday lives. Others, (Gallant & Riley, 2013; Schaeffer, 2013; Smircich, 1983) have reported that the need to use emotional labour constantly with colleagues can prevent the development of authentic, transparent relationships and have the potential to be detrimental to the emotional well-being of a teacher.
The consequences of the products of emotional labour in schools can be highlighted with an example, that of controlling teacher anger. Liljestrom et al. (2007) reported that emotional labour was exacerbated when school managers imposed high levels of restraint on their employees and that such emotional dissonance caused feelings of anger amongst and between the ranks in the hierarchy of a school structure. Similarly, DeMarrais and Tisdale (2002), stated that teachers felt angry, an emotion that they sensed the need to suppress, when they were prevented from using their personal beliefs and assumptions in their daily life as a teacher. Liljestrom et al. (2007) concluded that the participants in their study deemed the emotion of anger as incompatible with being a good teacher and such feelings had to be managed. Research documents designed to uncover the consequences and management of emotions experienced between colleagues in schools remains primarily between managers and their staff and concerns increasing school productivity (Beatty, 2008; Zorn & Boler, 2007). This observation provides additional support for the inclusion of emotional labour as a conceptual lens to aid interpretation of data in this report.

**Emotional work.**

Emotional work (Hochschild, 1983) describes those emotional adjustments that are not made as part of a contractual agreement but are part of a more intimate relationship. Originally, emotional work was seen as operating in an individual’s private life representing familial and friendship relationships. But education researchers (Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Chang, 2009; Gallant, 2013; Näring et al., 2012) have reported that the dedication of many teachers results in emotional labour and emotional work being undertaken together when interacting with the students in their care and in some cases with colleagues also. It is well documented that teachers spend more time at work (Ballet & Kelchtermans, 2009; Day, 2007; Parker et al., 2012) than in the past and it is inevitable that colleagues do become an important source of friendships and support for each other.
An understanding of emotional labour and emotional work as first introduced by Hochschild (1979) aids our understanding of the nature of staffroom relationships. Hochschild presented both as a demonstration of positive emotional responses although she did identify the possibility of inconsistencies causing personal dissonance and inchoate collegiality. In more recent research, the management of negative emotional responses is sometimes referred to as emotion regulation (Fried, 2011; Goetz & Hall, N. C., 2013; Gong et al., 2013; Mudrey-Camino et al., 2009; Sutton, 2002; Tsouloupas et al., 2010). Both aspects of this concept, controlling positive and negative emotional responses to maintain satisfactory teacher relationships are relevant in this study.

In the high school staffroom, an emotional climate or emotional milieu is established that reflects the staffroom as a cultural and work space, a social space, and a micro-political space. These factors are strongly inter-related and are discussed in the next section of the chapter.

**The Emotional Milieu of a High School Staffroom**

A school staffroom represents a community in action with a series of interrelated interactions from teachers that create an emotional climate which is based, ideally, on shared perceptions, shared behaviours and shared goals (Jarzabkowski, 2000; O’Boyle, 2000; MacNeil, Prater & Busch, 2009) as well as micro-political elements identified by Blase (1991) as being concerned with the operation of power. The emotional milieu helps to clarify the sense of community that is operational in the staffroom (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2011). From her observations in an Australian Catholic primary school, Jarzabkowski, (2000) concluded that the emotional climate of a staffroom can be positive or negative and is liable to change as a result of different activities and incidents in time and space

Also working in the primary sector in England, Nias, (1999), reported that combinations of emotional milieu-creating influences permit teachers to develop a sense of
purpose in their workplace These influences working together also affect how teachers behave individually, in small groups and as a whole group (O'Connor, 2008) and their social activities are influenced by the emotional climate of the staffroom (Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012). One of the controlling elements on the emotional milieu experienced by teachers is the culture of the staffroom. Using the framework provided by Hargreaves (1994), the segment below identifies the role of culture in the staffroom.

**Defining Culture as part of a High School Staffroom**

Recent research projects have tended to link culture and its influence on emotional climate only to emotionality in the classroom (Frenzel, Goetz, Lüdtke, Pekrun, & Sutton 2009) or as a series of emotional variables (Collie et al., 2012). In an earlier definitive publication, Hargreaves (1994) provided a view of teacher culture that was not as restrictive in its interpretation. He stated that “what goes on inside the teachers’ classroom cannot be divorced from the relations that are forged outside it” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 165) contending that teacher culture was created predominantly from those things that occurred between colleagues collectively. He identified three perspectives when attempting to understand the way in which culture operated in the staffroom. The first influence he called the *content* of staffroom culture; the second, the *form*. He suggested that form and content relied on the operation of mutuality between teachers. The third perspective was micro-political where, in the view of Blase (1991), styles of managerial leadership empowered some in the staffroom. Each of these aspects of staffroom culture is discussed in the next segment of this chapter.

**The content of teacher culture.**

Hargreaves (1994) proposed that the content of teacher culture was represented by the attitudes, assumptions, values, beliefs, habits and ways of operation, often imposed externally, and shared by a group of teachers in a staffroom. Working in inner-city schools in the northeast of the USA, Rosenholtz asserted that “people come to define their workday
realities through a set of shared assumption about appropriate attitudes and behaviours” and that “meanings of work are exchanged” so that teachers learn how they are “expected to behave” Rosenholtz (1991, p.3).

Hargreaves (1994) maintained that the content of the teacher culture was mainly introduced through institutional and local community expectations and resulted in a series of teacher sub-cultures within the staffroom that depended on factors such as subject affiliation, pastoral commitments and level of seniority on the staff roll. The externally imposed cultural content directed towards the staffroom created a type of professional reference group connection that may or may not have strong emotional attachments (Hargreaves, 1994). Such considerations are relevant to the content of this study. Subsumed within these institutional impositions, O’Boyle (2000) identified factors such as gender, age and level of service as other types of discriminatory factors which can identify stable social alliances including reference and membership groups (Nias1989a) in a staffroom. These and other associations are identified by Hargreaves (1994) as contributors to the form of teacher culture.

**The form of teacher culture.**

The observation that teachers, at least in part, construct their own collegial culture through a process of socialisation has been recognised for some time by researchers such as Ball (1987), Jarzabkowski (2000), Siskin (1991) and Sparkes (1987). The terms “forms of association” and “patterns of relationship” (p. 166) were used by Hargreaves (1994) to describe how teacher collegial culture emerged from a fixed pattern of teacher relationships initiated and consolidated by the teachers themselves. Barth (2006) noted that meaningful collegial relationships, both professional and social flourished when underpinned by congeniality. In a congenial atmosphere, Barth contended that relationships were usually entered into voluntarily and were generated for the mutual emotional support and benefit of those involved. Allied to Barth’s notion of congeniality is the concept of emotionally
supportive collegiality proffered by Harris and Anthony (2001). Emotionally supportive collegiality is characterised by open communication, listening to ideas and a respect for each other's work. Both Barth, and Harris and Anthony accepted that neither congeniality nor emotionally supportive collegiality necessarily supported teacher professional development. Rather, according to Barth, congeniality does “help us shut off that alarm each day and arise” (Barth, 2006, p. 10). Congeniality can operate at a relatively superficial level between colleagues but many teachers seek more meaningful professional and personal relationships which are possible when a congenial atmosphere pervades a communal area such as a staffroom.

An understanding of the importance of how and why teachers form and maintain relationships in a modern staffroom is linked to scholarly evidence presented in Chapter 2. Increased levels of accountability to external agencies have intensified the emotional load of personal and professional teacher relationships. The lack of resolution of emotional burdens have contributed to higher rates of attrition from the workforce by teachers. Authors such as Jeffrey and Woods (1996), Lasky (2005), J. Lee and Yin (2011), Little (1990a), Schmidt and Datnow (2005) and Sleegers and Van Veen (2006) have emphasised the importance of professionally positive collaborative relationships and interdependence when pursuing the goal of improvement student outcome. Hargreaves identified a collaborative teacher culture as beneficial when based on “sharing, trust” and “support” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 238). More recently, working with over 300 high school teachers in Pakistan, M. Shah (2011) affirmed that successful teacher collaboration required collegial relationships based on mutual trust, support and the ability to voluntarily share resources in an emotionally encouraging environment.

As explained in Chapter 1, teacher collaboration in this study is subsumed into a broader definition of collegiality which covers the meaningfulness of professional social,
physical, emotional and spiritual interactions for teachers. Chang (2013), noted that collaborative relationships were enhanced by the presence of the broader collegial inputs of social and emotional support between colleagues. Although focussing on collaboration, the authors in the previous paragraph accentuated social and emotional parameters in the same way that Harris and Anthony (2001) suggested that teacher development relied on emotionally laden, personal, positive and intense collegial interaction. How the participants in this study described the form of collegiality that they transacted provided a useful lens for identifying the quality of relationship shared between them.

Information provided in Chapter 2 detailed how administrative influence can affect the quality of collegial relationships including collaboration. Externally administered collegiality was viewed as “contrived” (p, 195) by Hargreaves (1994) and emotionally damaging in the long term. He suggested that in situations of contrived collegiality teachers adopt patterns of relationship that enable them to cope emotionally on a day-to-day basis. One of those choices is individualism which is discussed in more detail below. The discussion is followed by examples from recent scholarly reports to illustrate some of the emotional consequences of working in contrived circumstance.

Individualism was originally associated with the emotional qualities of uncertainty and anxiety and a reluctance to be observed (Lortie, 1975; Hargreaves, D.H., 1980). An alternative view was put forward by Hargreaves (1994) and Flinders (1988) who, although using different terms proposed that a teacher may choose an individualistic form of collegiality for a variety of reasons. For example, after interviewing 94 primary teachers, Clement and Vandenberghe (2000) concluded that the teachers in their study benefitted emotionally from conducting some of their tasks alone. This decision could be a preference, strategic; satisfying an immediate professional need or authorised by managers or a school team. This latter situation was called “ascribed autonomy (Clement & Vandenberghe, 2000,
Hargreaves (1994) noted that a teachers’ “sense of responsibility” (p.177) towards the care of students encouraged individualism. He proposed that administrators could help alleviate the emotional working load of a caring teacher by providing more time and space for colleagues to receive care from each other within collaborative working groups.

Trust has been identified as an emotion that enhances positive relationships when “facilitating stability, co-operation and cohesion” (Troman, 2000, p. 335) and is an important concept when considering enduring relationships between teachers. Using a case study of primary school teachers working in stressful conditions, Troman agreed with Giddens (1990) that trust has to be negotiated and not assumed in a modern staffroom. The antithesis of trust was identified by Hargreaves (2002) as being that of feelings of betrayal between colleagues. An example of betrayal was that of “communication betrayal” (Hargreaves, 2002, p.393) where the spreading of rumours and gossip encouraged misunderstandings and disharmony between colleagues which became the “emotional enemy of improvement” (Hargreaves, 2002, p. 405). Additionally, Ben Sasson & Somech (2015) emphasised the emotionally destructive nature of aggressive behaviour between colleagues. Dissatisfaction in teacher relationships can emerge when teachers are unable to display “individuality” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 178) such as being unable to make independent judgements or voice their preference at team decision-making time. Claims have been made that demands on collaboration “may encourage calculated exchanges rather than foster emotional links” (Jo, 2014, p. 127).

Findings from works such as those described above establish that relationships in a staffroom are realised, reproduced and redefined through a variety of relationships and teacher cultures, both professional and personal and the articulation of relationships between staff members help to establish the cultural character and the cultural climate of the staffroom (Jarzabkowski, 2000). Including the content and form aspect of teacher culture into the framework of this study aided the understanding of participant talk when they described how
interactions with their peers made them feel as well as recognise the cultural influences, which through habituation, had become invisible (Gross, 2010).

There is another perspective, a micro-political one which has been highlighted by authors such as Ball (2012), Christensen (2013) and Gallant and Riley (2013). The micro-political perspective is defined as dealing with “the use of power to achieve preferred outcomes in educational settings” (Blase, 1988, p. 113). Following a similar understanding, Ball (1987) emphasised the strategic nature of micro-political power as an individual pursued their professional and social interests. Hargreaves (1994) suggested that micro-political influences concerned differences between teachers and the groups that they associated with although Blase (1991) recognised cooperative and conflicting actions as belonging to a micro-political perspective of teacher relationships.

The vocalisation of opinion will not necessarily result in an authoritative voice in a staffroom. As noted by Hoyle (1982), in addition to personality, qualities such as expertise, access to information and resources affect the power of influence of an individual teacher. Emotions in the staffroom become a political issue because their validation and expression represents “a process of determining who must repress as illegitimate, who must foreground as valuable, the feelings and desires that come up for those in given contexts and relationships” (Reddy, 1997, p. 335). Zembylas (2005) extends understanding of this notion and identified teacher power as being located in emotional expression depending on those who have the power to express their thoughts and translate them into actions and those who must repress their thoughts and any consequent emotional expressions.

One of the micro-political consequences of an asymmetrical distribution of power in the staffroom community is the creation of cliques (Busher & Barker, 2003). Cliques operate as reference groups but not all reference groups are cliques. Cliques are a micro-political entity and endeavour to exert power as well as exchange information. Power struggles can
transpire between different groups, each group being united by a particular aspect of identity such as gender, subject, career, age or status (O’Boyle, 2000). When present in a high school, Hargreaves referred to the staffroom community as being “balkanised” (Hargreaves, 1994, p.18). He proposed that strong traditional departmental groupings were replaced with insulated social as well as professional groupings that demanded high levels of loyalty from members (Hargreaves, 1994). In one of his case study high schools, Hargreaves (1994) discovered teachers who considered themselves either “Ins” or “Not-ins” (p.231) depending on the social group to which they belonged.

The unbalanced distribution of power between teachers and clique groups in the staffroom has been attributed to the unequal treatment afforded to them by members of their administrative team (Goodison, 2013; Lacey, 2012; Sikes et al, 1985). Conveying results from semi-structured teacher interviews, Glaso, Ekerholt, Barman and Einarsen (2006) reported that job satisfaction improved when teachers felt some form of reciprocity with administrative staff and teachers also admitted to suppressing, faking and exaggerating emotional responses to fit in with behavioural norms and ingratiate themselves with their leaders.

An example of early documentation concerning clique formation in a high school comes from Riseborough (1981) who was monitoring the reorganisation of a comprehensive school in England. One of the results of the comprehensivisation process was the polarisation of teachers in the staffroom into a clique of disgruntled teachers whose career aspirations, through the new head teachers recruitment and selection process, had been curtailed if not thwarted, and a “cabal” (p.366) of mainly newly-appointed teachers whose allegiance to the norms and values of the new head teacher were strong. Riseborough provided a robust example of how managerial influence and favour can disrupt collegial, lateral relationships.
Data presented in this segment accentuates the influence of administrators on the patterns of relationships that exist in a staffroom. Identifying the micro-political factors that control relationships in the staffroom was deemed to be an important concept when analysing the content of teacher interviews. The concept of space and the provision of space for teachers is the next consideration. As indicated in Chapter 1, it is envisaged that the physical space of the staffroom provides a context and influences the relationships contained within it.

**The Influence of Space on Staffroom Relationships**

Information concerning teacher relationships and the physical space in which they operate is largely absent from teacher emotion research literature. This is, however, an important concept for the current study as emotions and the feelings that they engender are context specific (Meyer & Turner, 2006; Schutz, Hong, Cross, & Osbon, 2006). Affirming this notion, McGregor (2004) reported that the way teachers organise their lives both individually, professionally and socially depends on the context of the institutional space that is provided for the multiplicity of interactions that take place during a typical working day.

Traditionally, a staffroom is viewed as a communal facility, pre-supplied and valued according to the quality of the resources provided (Woolner, 2010). As reported in Chapter 1, the danger of losing staffroom space in schools in England and Wales has resulted in reaffirmation of the value of a staffroom to a busy teacher (Britland, 2012; Hanson, 2012) and the importance of designing a staffroom for the needs of a modern teacher (Rose, 2012). The list of staffroom functions supplied by Clanfield and Foord (2008) and also detailed in Chapter 1 provided a useful framework for data analysis in Chapter 6. This practical approach affirmed the importance of a modern staffroom in a school but it did not always offer insight into how social, professional and power relationships are influenced by the space in which they operate. Writing as a cultural geographer, Massey (2013) stated that social practice and social interactions affect the way in which a space is used and the way that
people feel when using that space. Interpreting this observation in terms of a teachers’ life, Siegel (1999), asserted that:

The arrangement of space has immediate and far-reaching consequences for teachers’ ability to effectively and efficiently accomplish daily activities, the formation of social and professional relationships and the sharing of information and knowledge. (p. 4).

The statements from Massey and Siegel highlight the reciprocity that exists between space, time, and the people who use the space. Human geographers call this phenomenon \textit{spatiality}. The concept of spatiality has a number of complexities and its value and applicability in this study is outlined in the next segment of this chapter.

Some researchers who focus on social space in schools (Karlsson, 2003; McGregor, 2000) use the concept of spatiality coined initially by Lefebvre (1991). Lefebvre proposed that space is a physical, imagined and lived experience. He redefined space as lived within the “physical and mental realms” (p.73), claiming that social relations “project themselves into a space” (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 129). Consequently, space is taken to be more than just a backdrop or a container to social interaction. In Lefebvre’s view, space is created through the multifaceted layers of social interaction that occur there. Writing from the perspective of organisational management Morgan (2000) used the term spatiality to describe the material, social and political interaction between users of a space and although sometimes writing about interaction at a global or regional scale, Massey (2013) affirmed the notion that a space becomes a meeting place when individuals are able to negotiate and re-imagine the potential of the space in which they work.

The ability to interact with and understand a space requires a set of skills, which in geographical terms is called \textit{spatial literacy} (Bednarz & Kemp, 2011). Bednarz and Kemp maintained that an individual was spatially literate when they could think and reason in a spatial context and make decisions or identify and solve problems in a particular space.
Reporting predominantly about classrooms, Fisher (2004) noted that “spatiality plays a silent and subconscious role” (p. 36) in a teacher’s life and used the term spatial literacy to illustrate how individuals engaged in social production and made meaning of the spaces provided for them. After carrying out research that included teacher interaction in a high school staffroom, McGregor (2004b) reported that the behaviour of the inhabitants of a school space was moderated in some way by the behavioural expectations of the buildings. In spatial literacy terms, individuals interpreted the institutional opportunities and limitations imposed upon them. Furthermore, McGregor (2004b) pointed out that the behaviour of some members of a staffroom diminished the space that could be used by others. Certain behaviours that they engaged in could not be shared with everyone in the staffroom. Consequently, the staffroom became a smaller space for some who needed to seek alternative accommodation for their downtime activities.

The concepts of spatiality and spatial literacy view space as a constitutive element to teacher emotionality and relationships rather than a backdrop. But, as already stated, the roles assigned to a staffroom were deemed important when interpreting data in this case study. Although a “communal and public space” (Siskin, 1991, p. 142), one of the designated roles for a staffroom building is privacy. In Goffman (1959) terms, it is a refuge for teachers. Hargreaves (1994) identified the staffroom as a type of back region (Goffman, 1959) where a teacher could relax, foster trusted informal relationships and reflect on and prioritise commitments. McGregor (2000) suggested that a staffroom can also become a front region for a teacher if they choose to act in an inauthentic way in order to impress and gain or maintain a professional or personal advantage amongst the staff community. Reporting with data gathered from beginning teachers operating in an Australian departmental staffroom, Christensen (2013) found that new teachers not only adapted their behaviours to impress but to comply with cultural organisational expectations and the hegemonic behaviours peculiar to
the group of colleagues with whom they now shared a working space. Hargreaves (1994) noted that administrators can commandeer staffrooms for frontstage activities, a decision which compromised a teachers' ability to use the staffroom as a back region. From her research in an Irish high school, O’Boyle (2000) found that teachers do use a staffroom as a backstage although as noted by Hargreaves (1994), outsiders have a propensity to consider backstage teacher behaviour as immature or unprofessional, a judgement refuted by Hargreaves who maintained that effective, productive, long-serving teachers require a stress-free zone for relaxation and recuperation.

The discussion in this section has identified and justified the approach to space adopted in this study. Firstly, participant views considering the purpose of the staffroom emerged as an important theme. High schools have traditionally supplied a teacher staffroom for study, recreation and privacy (Clanfield & Foord, 2008) and this practice, until recently has been produced and reproduced without thought to the adequacy of the space provided for the modern teacher (Bissell, 2004).

Secondly, a “social reality” (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 129) was created and re-created by the participants which relied on participant and group interpretation of how the space could be and was to be, used. As described by McDowell and Sharp (1999), “social life necessarily happens in certain spaces and places” (p. 261), and some elements of the concepts of spatiality and spatial literacy were used to aid the analysis of data. The preceding discussion has identified Goffman’s (1959) backstage/frontstage conceptual model as suitable for identifying teacher feelings concerning the recreational adequacy of the staffroom building for non-contact activities.

Chapter 3 has provided the principal concepts that have been used to guide the creation, data collection and analysis of the study. These concepts are emotions as feelings, emotional labour and emotional work, the emotional milieu of the staffroom, the form and content of
teacher culture, micro-political power and the final concept is the staffroom space itself. The concepts have been chosen because they offer useful lenses for analysing the data. The next chapter, Chapter 4 describes the methodology used in this study.
Chapter 4 - Methodology of the Study

“... keep it simple ... have a straightforward fit between your topic, method and model” (Silverman, 2013, p. 126)

The three preceding chapters of this thesis have provided the information necessary to understand the purpose of this study. This chapter describes and justifies the methodological approach used to gather relevant data. This study used a qualitative research paradigm since the research questions, given in Chapter 1, are designed to investigate teacher accounts of the nature of non-contact relationships experienced in a high school staffroom. The study places an emphasis on the emotional quality of collegial affiliations and on how they make an individual feel. Such feelings arise as emotions filter through the cultural, spiritual and moral beliefs of the person (Newberry, Gallant & Riley, 2013). These foundations are acquired and changed or verified continuously through life experiences and will at least partly reflect the accepted cultural, spiritual and moral beliefs of the institution in which the individual works (Newberry et al., 2013).

The study has a constructionist epistemology (Andrews, 2012) as the design of the study encouraged teachers to articulate their understanding of the multifaceted character and diversity of collegial interaction when in the staffroom. There are three theoretical approaches to studying emotions in schools. They are the psychodynamic, social constructionist and interactionist approaches. To validate the choice of a constructionist epistemology, the next section briefly reviews the methodologies that are commonly used to study emotions in schools.

Approaches to the Study of Emotions

The different approaches used to study emotion in schools are not mutually exclusive (Zembylas, 2005, 2007) and theoretical assumptions concerning emotions have
methodological implications (Savage, 2004; Schutz & DeCuir, 2002). The main approaches to studying emotion are reviewed here to help clarify the qualitative approach identified for use in this study. The psychodynamic approach focuses on emotions as private (Denzin, 1997; Schutz & Pekrun, 2007) whilst social constructionist approaches consider emotions to be a socio-cultural phenomenon. Much of the framework provided by Hochschild (1983, 2003), Nias (1987, 1996) and Hargreaves (2013) fit into the latter approach. Zembylas (2007) referred to the third perspective as an interactionist approach which complements some of the scaffolding provided by Hargreaves and Nias.

**The psychodynamic approach to researching teacher emotion.**

Researching emotion in schools using a psychodynamic methodology is well established (Gong, Chai, Duan, Zhong, & Jiao, 2013; Greenfield, 2000; Howard & B. Johnson, 2004; Jepson & Forrest, 2006) and focuses on the reactions of an individual but largely ignores the socio-cultural context that provides meaning to those reactions. Psychodynamic researchers seek to measure emotional states resulting from the consequences of environmental changes such as those of school reform. Their focus of study is often to gauge the emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1996), emotional skills or emotional knowledge (Chan, 2009) of the individual.

Psychodynamic theory was used in the early phases of emotion research to identify the positive qualities of a good teacher, for example, those who were able to “interpret inner thoughts, understandings, feelings and desires of children” (Van Manen, 1995, p. 33). Although some research is qualitative, researchers predominately use quantitative methodologies to measure parameters such as resistance to and the consequences of change. Teacher resilience (Castro et al., 2009; Kirk & Wall, 2009; Patterson, Collins, & Abbot, 2004), teacher stress (Howard & B. Johnson, 2004; Wilhelm, Dewhurst-Savellis, & Parker,
2000) and burnout (Chang, 2009) are commonly measured qualities of the individual teacher.

There are some qualitative researchers who use this approach and they include certain adherents of the narrative tradition of inquiry. They have emphasised how individual emotional qualities form an important part of teachers’ personal and practical knowledge (Clandinin, Pushor, & Murray Orr, 2007; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). Whilst recognising their contribution to identifying the emotional life of a good teacher Hargreaves (1998a commented:

Drawing on predominantly philosophical, psychological and literary foundations, these writers have also tended to treat teachers’ ways of knowing (including emotional ones) as mainly matters of personal and moral choice, commitment and responsibility. This has been at the expense of considering how sociological, political and institutional forces shape and reshape the emotional landscapes of teaching for good or ill, in different ways under different conditions (p. 835).

The psychodynamic approach is primarily used to gauge individual teacher emotion, especially to measure levels of work stress and burnout. The second way that researchers appraise teacher emotion is through a social constructionist model.

The social constructionist approach to researching teacher emotion.

This approach gained credence in the 1980s and 1990s when studies began to emphasise the situated nature of teacher emotion and that emotion is not a simple readout of an internal state, but is a communicative experience (Averill, 1980; Beattie, 1995; Jeffrey & Woods, 1996). A social constructionist approach focusses on the socio-cultural experience of a teacher, and illustrates the distinctive nature of local understandings that would be missed by outsiders. Considerable amounts of educational research conducted more recently have been
influenced by social constructionist methods where the focus is on relationships (Andrews, 2012; Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2008; P. Woods & Jeffrey, 2002). Emotions are seen as being social constructions and are improvisations of the real world, based on interpretation by an individual (Andrews, 2012). This approach acknowledges and builds on the understandings of the psychodynamic approach. The emphasis in this approach is in eliciting meaning for the individual on what they experience (Mills et al., 2008). Whilst the predominant procedure in psychodynamic research is quantitative, the process that is best suited to the constructionist approach is qualitative methodologies such as interviews, diaries and observations (Uitto et al., 2015).

Both the social constructionist approach and psychodynamic approach are viewed as limited by some researchers (Leavitt, 1996; Zembylas, 2007) as, according to them, they represent a dichotomy between the internalised world of the teacher [psychodynamic] and the influence of external forces on the way that a teacher feels [social constructionist]. It was Leavitt (1996) who originally proposed an approach that he believed created a bridge between the psychodynamic and social constructionist approaches to studying teacher emotion. The third approach views emotion as interactional and performative and ascertains that emotion is vital to the processes in which the psychological and the social are produced (Schutz & Zembylas, 2009).

**The interactionist approach to researching teacher emotion.**

The approach is called interactionist because, according to Zembylas (2007), it operates outside the boundaries imposed by the previous two approaches. Leavitt (1996, p.524) argued that the interactionist perspective seemed truer to our “common, daily life experience of emotion” than a vision of emotion as either individual or simply social. Teacher emotions are conceptualised as determinants of relationships that take place in the liminal space between an individual and their social context (Zembylas, Charalambous, Charalambous, and
Kendeou, 2011). In suggesting this approach, Zembylas et al (2011) placed emphasis on the social, political and cultural contexts in which teacher emotions were performed which makes teacher emotions socially and politically consequential. In this way, the interactionist approach agrees with the sociocultural approach to studying teacher emotion. The sociocultural approach maintains that teacher emotions are culturally relevant, public and reflect power relations. The sociocultural approach mediates between the subjective experience of teacher emotions and the social practice that prescribes the relevance of the emotions that a teacher is able to exhibit.

This information was used to choose the social constructionist approach as the most appropriate for the study because participants were invited to talk about the relationships and interactions that they had with those around them and with the space that they as a staff group occupied. The social constructionist approach fitted in with the concepts identified in Chapter 3 of emotional labour and work, culture and power and the staffroom space as providing the framework for the study.

The methodology of the study is that of a case study. A case study is an in-depth description and analysis of a “bounded system” (Merriam, 2014, p. 40). A case can be "whatever bounded system is of interest" (Stake, 1983, p. 283). This study is limited to one particular high school staffroom and so there is an intentional boundary on what is being studied. Data collection took place via two in-depth interviews with 15 volunteers and one in-depth interview with two other participants. There were two documents supplied during the interviews that acted as reference materials. Details of the documents are provided later in the chapter.

Analysis of the data used an interpretive paradigm (Jarzabkowski, 2002). The interpretive model was suitable for this study as the approach asserts that what we know and how we behave is negotiated within the culture, the social settings and the relationships that
we have with other people (Angen, 2000). For the interpretive researcher, descriptions of human behaviour are based on social meanings (Bassey, 1999). People living and working together interpret the meanings of one another, and these meanings can change through social interaction. Therefore, the purpose of interpretive research is “to advance knowledge by describing and interpreting the phenomena of the world in attempts to get shared meaning with others” (Bassey, 1999, p. 44). The next section explains the interest of the researcher in this particular subject area.

**Positioning the Researcher**

This research study would not have occurred without the teaching career that went before it. My position as a researcher is heavily dependent on my experiences as a teacher and my continued fascination with the non-contact relationships between colleagues.

**Teacher to researcher.**

I began my teaching career in 1975 in the UK and retired in 2013 from the case study school in Australia. Employment was continuous between these dates and included teaching contracts in Hong Kong and New Zealand. I worked in a variety of establishments and with the exception of one year, I had access to a single staffroom.

As my career progressed I became aware of the significance of the single staffroom. It provided a common area where non-professional acquaintances were established, allegiances and support sought and friendships developed. It was a place where collective and personal events and landmarks were celebrated and it provided a refuge from external professional stresses and the protagonists of such anxieties. My observations led me to note that it was also the place where the general tenor of the teaching staff was nurtured and maintained. Disputes and disaffection amongst colleagues disunited the staffroom in the same way that friendliness and forgiveness brought harmony. Staff members responded to all this interaction through emotional expression. During the course of the day, colleagues spoke about their feelings to a
variety of work-related circumstances and relationships that they found themselves situated within.

Towards the end of my career the non-contact element of collegial relationships continued to hold my interest. My observation was that whilst teachers were asked to add more value in terms of time, expertise and commitment to improving student outcomes, little importance was attached to how collegial relationships affected teacher efficacy. I subsequently discovered a scarcity of literature regarding feelings and staffroom relationships. I decided that this was the research gap to which I wished to contribute.

**Teacher, researcher: the insider, outsider debate.**

I joined my final place of employment at the beginning of 2007 as a classroom teacher. The school had no departmental suites and housed most staff in one area where professional and collegial interaction took place. The school was relatively new and expanding requiring commitment from its employees with a strong focus on developing curricula and supporting students pastorally. As a member of the single staffroom, I observed the effects that the workload had on my colleagues and the relationships that they developed. Although my observations were discontinuous, depending on my presence in the staffroom, they provided a means of appreciating the general atmosphere, methods of operation and expected standards prevalent amongst colleagues.

I soon learned that the way that I carried out my research, as a part time researcher in my place of employment was an increasingly popular approach recorded as “small-scale practitioner research” (Mercer, 2007, p. 2). The next segment of this chapter deals with the issues of my status in the staffroom community of this high school. In December 2013, after collecting the interview data, I retired and ceased to be employed at the case study school. I took my completed interviews with me and undertook the transcription, analysis and writing
up of the case study findings off-site. The impact of this move off-site is considered at the end of the segment.

In the early part of the twentieth century, the distinction between the stranger and native i.e. the researcher and the researched in anthropological and social studies was seen to be clear-cut (Merton, 1972); the world that the researcher belonged to was distinct from that of the researched. More recently, sociologists and anthropologists have studied the less strange and found themselves in a situation where they share at least one characteristic peculiar to the research group (Hockey, 1993). This sharing of a “lived familiarity” (Griffith, 1998, p. 361) was used to identify a researcher as an insider as opposed to an outsider. An outsider is a person who “does not have any intimate knowledge of the group being researched prior to entry into the group” (Griffith, 1998, p. 361).

For Olson (1977) the dichotomy between the insider and outsider researcher was distinct but for others (Breen, 2007; Carter, 2004; Labaree, 2002; Hockey, 1993) the role of the researcher was better conceptualised as being placed along a continuum between two poles, with insider and outsider forming the poles. The continuum concept is supported by others. For example, the notion that identities, including that of a researcher, are “always relative, cross cut by other differences and often situational and contingent” (DeVault, 1996, p.35) and that a person does not have a “single status but a status set” (Merton, 1972, p.22) positions an individual at different points along the insider/outsider continuum “as situations involving different values arise, different statuses are activated and the lines of separation shift” (Merton, 1972, p. 28). Although my insider status was undeniable whilst employed at the case study school, the continuum concept has some relevance to my experience.

My longevity at the case study school gave me a direct familiarity with the cultural expectation of the institution. I understood the employment culture of the participants due to an empathy conferred from group membership. Such a “pre-understanding” (Brannick and
Coghlan, 2007, p.68) was advantageous due to familiarity with, at least some, of the micro-political factors operating in the staffroom (Perryman, 2011). But, as also pointed out by Perryman (2011), such familiarity could be disadvantageous if the reasons for participant feelings were not sufficiently investigated. On the other hand, I had varying degrees of professional and personal intimacy with the participants and this influenced the depth of response from different participants. I moved away from the insider role most for those who I had least to do with both professionally and personally whilst participants who deemed me to be their friend shared their more intimate thoughts freely. I consider it fair to say that all of the participants trusted me; my relationship with each participant was secure enough for their provision of honest reflection about life in the staffroom. As an insider, despite the varying degrees of intimacy, I was able to share and understand jokes, nuanced references and implications which helped to make the interview sessions relaxed and informative events.

The relevance of the continuum was also highlighted by variations that occurred within one interview, something referred to by Mercer (2007) as a “shift in rapport” (p.4). There were a few occasions when a participant spoke of an incident or topic unknown to me. The level of “insiderness” at this time was somewhat diminished compared to the more frequent occurrence of a topic of mutual interest arising when the discussion became more intimate and confiding. Noise for example, was a common problem for me and participants and it was at these times of shared frustration that the insider role was most marked. Such a situation in a small-scale case study is viewed in a beneficial light where

The interviewing process becomes less a conduit of information from informants to researchers that represents how things are, and more a sea swell of meaning making in which researchers connect their own experiences to those of others and provide stories that open up conversations about how we live and cope.

(Ellis and Burger, 2003, p. 471)
Despite this closeness to some participants I did not seek to be told certain things by the participants to corroborate any prejudices or views that I might have. I did make it clear to participants that I did not want them to tell me what they thought that I wanted to hear. I had decided in the first stages of planning that neither the Principal or senior managers would be interviewed; the intention of this project was to give the participants rather than management a voice.

From a pragmatic perspective, being an insider was advantageous because of accessibility to the site, the ease of obtaining permission from the Principal who welcomed the research initiative and the ability to organise interview times with participants at mutually convenient times. As already noted and in line with S. Shah’s (2004) statement, there was no culture shock or required introductory period to familiarise myself with the physical and cultural environment of the school. My professional position in the school, unlike that of Hawkins (1990) who was a principal researcher did not have a detrimental effect on the research outcome. I had no influence over the construction and layout of the staffroom, individual timetables, faculty structure or the way that individuals managed their time in the staffroom. My position was more in line with the statement that insiders are able “to blend into situations, making them less likely to alter the research setting” (Hockey, 1993, p. 204).

Familiarity with a research site can also have disadvantages. Mercer (2007) listed negatives such as having a myopic viewpoint and single-mindedness about issues as being common pitfalls that the unaware, predominantly insider researcher, can fall into. Furthermore, a myopically minded researcher may take things for granted, not challenge a spoken assumption or avoid sensitive issues. Rather than tolerate such weaknesses, I planned the interviews so that they provided an account that contained an honest, thick description of the emotional everyday life from participants in this particular staffroom.
My understanding of thick description was encapsulated by the statement that it “goes beyond surface appearances to include the context, detail, emotion, and webs of social relationships. It presents the significance of an observation, event or behaviour; thick description includes voices, feelings, actions and meanings” (Ponterotto, 2006, p. 539). The interviews with participants were conducted with this aim in mind and it was difficult to estimate the extent to which familiarity interfered with this goal. I assumed that awareness of the pitfalls reduced their occurrence and impact. There were no private discussions with participants about the content of their or others’ interviews outside of the interview room.

The interviews were conducted in such a way that, apart from written guidelines found in Appendix G and H, the participants were encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings with as little prompting as possible from the researcher. This does not mean that I made no input to the discussion, but I did not try to put ideas into the participants mind or lead them to make a particular conclusion about an event or situation in the staffroom. I concluded that our shared credibility and rapport allowed individuals to speak frankly about their experience of staffroom relationships. Participants appeared to be pleased to be given a platform to share their feelings. There was no sense that they feared judgement as warned by S. Shah (2004) or that they felt threatened in any way (Mercer, 2007, citing Dimmock, personal communication, 2005). Participants spoke with candour. It was at such times that they were encouraged to speak about events, situations or expectations rather than colleagues. At no time were they invited or encouraged to judge their peers in an unnecessarily critical manner. The participants were largely gracious in their comments and acknowledged the external and internal objective influences that affected subjective responses from their colleagues.

This case study was not ethnography, it focussed on the staffroom only and there were no observational data collected. Volunteers verified the accuracy of their own transcribed
data but did not have access to any other data. Collection of the interview data was completed in November 2013 and I left employment at the case study school in December 2013. From that point on, I effectively became an outsider in my relationship with the participants. I have never spoken about the content of an interview with another member of the staffroom during the data collection, transcription or interpretation process. I have not discussed the content of an interview with anyone else associated with the school. Transcription of the data was accommodated by a professional organisation who kept no record of the transcribed material. The data that I took away with me became the resource used to create this study.

A perspective such as social constructionism is viewed as appropriate for the conduct of a study such as this where the data was collected largely as an insider (Breen, 2007). This is because the social constructionist view of emotions emphasises the cultural character of emotional displays. In this case study, the participants and researcher shared the same culture. Although the data analysis focussed wholly on participant talk, the research process and its products were viewed as being to some degree a co-construction between the researcher and the participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Patton, 2005). Working within this perspective, the researcher conducts research ‘with’ rather than ‘on’ people. As the participants were essentially my colleagues, this view fitted in well with the design strategies that were used to assemble the framework of this project. Another consideration was enhancing the internal validity of the study.

Enhancing the Internal Validity of the Study

Validity in qualitative research requires checking to ensure that the findings that emerge from a study are accurate and reflect the reality described by the participants. Internal validity focuses specifically on the procedure undertaken to collect data. Identification of bias is one tool for enhancing the internal validity of a study (Merriam, 2014). By this Merriam (1998, p. 205) meant that the researcher “clarifies their assumptions, world view and theoretical
orientation at the start of the study”. The first part of Chapter 4 has accomplished this requirement as well as providing the information necessary to link the purpose of the study with the way in which it has been designed.

Merriam (1998, p. 203) proffered other advice to researchers so that they “accurately portray participants’ constructions of reality”. One of the procedures suggested was that of triangulation by which he meant observation, interview and document review. To ensure such an outcome and bearing in mind time-constraints, there were, where possible, two interviews with each participant. Within the interview time two school documents were reviewed. The first was a mud map of the staffroom found later in this chapter [see Figure 1] and the second was a list of official school core values [see Appendix A]. Allied to this were the researcher’s understandings as to how the staffroom operated. Participants did refer in their interviews to commonly observed practices or incidents that both they and the researcher had seen. This approach provided multiple sources of data from the participants to converge on one topic which was relationships in the staffroom.

Preliminary analysis of the data allowed themes to emerge from which conclusions were made. Following transcription, each participant was shown a written copy of both of their interviews and invited to provide feedback. This action satisfied another of Merriam’s (1998) actions, that of member checks. A preliminary interpretation of the data was also presented to the case study school principal who used the feedback to initiate physical changes in the staffroom structure. The participants knew that this was going to happen and unlike the situation that Mercer (2007) found herself in, were not intimidated by this part of the procedure. A copy of the feedback constitutes Appendix B. The academic supervisors provided a constant rudder to steer the nature and quality as data analysis continued.
After the data collection phase of the study, I decided to remove myself physically from the research site and concentrate on the primary role of researcher. The following sections in this chapter describe the research site, data collection, and data analysis.

**The Research Site**

The case study was conducted at a high school which is a member of a Christian denomination in Australia. I was familiar with the ethos and principles that underpinned the college culture and this knowledge helped my understanding of the faith lens through which people spoke in the interviews. The school was middle-sized and the single staffroom housed a mixture of middle school and senior school teachers.

**A faith community.**

The faith aspect of the school was important when investigating the relationships between the teachers. In addition to professional qualifications and expertise, there were specific expectations on the focus, commitment and behaviour of a teacher in any school under the auspices of this denomination. Although each school was unique when endeavouring to meet the needs of its local community, there were broad expectations that influenced the behavioural patterns of the staff body and so influenced collegial relationships. The expectations of this particular school are found in Appendix C and Appendix D at the end of this study.

There was a daily morning devotional in the staffroom conducted on a roster basis for all members of staff and forgiveness and grace were expected to govern the relationships of the members of the school community. This school was similar to other faith schools in trying to share and live out Christian values with an expectation that members professed a personal respect for one another and valued the contribution made by each person to the development of the organisation. Section 5 of Appendix A defines these expectations more explicitly.
Location of the school.

The chosen high school was located in a semi-rural area on the edge of a major Australian conurbation. It was composed of a middle and senior school operating on one site. The fact that most of the teachers shared one staffroom is important as at the time of data collection, both professional and social activities were occurring in this one place and there were no other officially designated study or social areas. Senior administration personnel, school office personnel, the school pastor, student counsellors and three other teachers with specific roles had their own offices. There was 41 staff members domiciled in the one staffroom at the time of data collection. The catchment area for the school was the surrounding middle-class suburb and very few children travelled a great distance to school. There were a few members of staff who had taught at the school since its inception and the turnover rate of staff varied from year to year.

The staffroom.

Figure 1 is a modified version of a hand drawn mud map presented to each participant at the beginning of their first interview. The map afforded a starting point for discussion for each interview. The layout of the staffroom and the seating plan were very familiar to each participant. Participant seats are shaded in green and the researcher’s desk is marked in blue.

The layout of the staffroom.

The staffroom was divided into two main areas, a communal area that constituted approximately one-third of the available space and a larger area offering a work station for each teacher. Each work station comprised a desk with at least one drawer and shelves above and at the back-end of the desk that provided a space for books and other resources. The shelves meant that although some teachers faced each other, they were not visible to each other. Most teachers did sit next to at least one person and so could engage in conversation face-to-face without having to move from their desk. The single desks at the north-western
and south-eastern end of the staffroom faced outwards. Teachers sitting at desks 1-5 had a view out of a window and those sitting at desks 37-41 faced a wall. The walls of the rest of the work area and the north-western edge of the communal area were furnished with windows.

![Mud Map of the Staffroom]

Figure 1 - Mud Map of the Staffroom
The next segment provides details about data collection and the participants who occupied the staffroom. Although the interviews did not take place in the staffroom, the common bond between the participants was membership of the staffroom community and so details about data collection, the participants and their interviews are included here.

**Data collection.**

Following the granting of ethical clearance and with the verbal permission of the school principal, staff members were invited to an introductory meeting to learn more about the study. Each volunteer signed a consent form [see Appendix E and Appendix F for introductory and consent form details]. These events occurred at the beginning of September 2012.

**The participants.**

No canvassing was undertaken by the researcher, the participants selected themselves by responding to an email request posted on the school system. Seventeen members of staff agreed to participate in informal, open-ended interviews. Fifteen members of staff completed both interviews. One member of staff completed the first interview and then moved to a new job at the end of 2012. Another colleague volunteered in early 2013 and completed one interview. Table 1 is a summary of participant details. Information is restricted to ensure that anonymity is reasonably assured for each participant.

Fourteen of the staff participants resided in the staffroom and three had offices elsewhere. Two of the three had cause to visit the staffroom frequently and the other member visited less frequently but was very keen to participate. There was approximately six months separating each interview. The first set of interviews was conducted during the latter part of 2012 and the second set during March, April and May 2013. The participants represented a broad mix of gender, age and experience across a range of denominational affiliations. Most faculties were represented and some teachers belonged to more than one faculty. As shown in
Figure 1, the geographic distribution of individuals afforded the opportunity for a variety of perspectives to be delivered, especially concerning the use of the physical space.

Table 1 - The Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: (Pseudonym)</th>
<th>Length of Career (years)</th>
<th>Level of Responsibility: Classroom - (c), Pastoral - (p), Other - (o)</th>
<th>Teaching Faculty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carl</td>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>c,p</td>
<td>Humanities/Arts/PE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brendan</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>c,p</td>
<td>Science/Maths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molly</td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>c, pa</td>
<td>Humanities/Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seth</td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>c, pa, o</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bella</td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>c,p</td>
<td>Humanities/Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trish</td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>c, ma</td>
<td>Humanities/Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stan</td>
<td>01-10</td>
<td>c, pa</td>
<td>Science/Maths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhonda</td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>c, ma</td>
<td>Business/IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gemma</td>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>c,p</td>
<td>Business/IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff</td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>c, ma</td>
<td>Humanities/Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophie</td>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>c, pa</td>
<td>Humanities/Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynda</td>
<td>01-10</td>
<td>o</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amber</td>
<td>01-10</td>
<td>c,p</td>
<td>Science/Maths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelique</td>
<td>01-10</td>
<td>c,p</td>
<td>Business/IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holly</td>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>c, ma</td>
<td>Humanities/Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe</td>
<td>01-10</td>
<td>c, pa</td>
<td>Science/Maths/PE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessie</td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>c, ma, o</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fifteen of the participants were classroom teachers and seven of those held middle management posts in either curriculum or pastoral roles. Pseudonyms have been used to identify participants and non-participating staff members when referenced by participants. The transcribed documents were delivered by hand to each participant and each participant gave permission for their material to be used in this study.
The consent form.

The first note on the consent form refers to a digital diary that at the time of signing, all members were happy to agree to complete. The participants were all given the relevant URL, a journal topic and after they had logged on, were provided a password for my use only that ensured their anonymity. It soon became apparent that the teachers did not have the time to write a journal on a regular basis. At the end of six weeks one member of staff had made some entries which she reported as being therapeutic. The other 16 members of staff conveyed their apologies but had not been able to make the time to establish a pattern or routine to make a digital diary. We agreed that all participants would withdraw from this section of the consent form and complete the interviews.

The interviews.

The interviews were semi-structured and open-ended in nature. For each series of interviews a brief guidance sheet was provided [see Appendix G and Appendix H]. For the first set of interviews some explanatory notes were offered identifying terms such as emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) and staffroom culture (Hargreaves, 1994). Four guiding questions were given for each set of interviews. Some participants worked their way methodically through each question whilst others used them as general signposts to reach whatever point they wished to make. Participants were also presented with a copy of the school core values [see Appendix A] during their first interview and asked for comment. The same list was displayed in the staffroom and represented the organising values of the denomination that oversees the school. Figure 1 was available for every interview. It was used by most, especially when they were identifying areas that they visited frequently or when they indicated places that they deemed to be friendly, accepting or otherwise. Participants were also invited to comment about the place of technology with relationships in the staffroom. The modern staffroom contains a selection of technological devices that enable a variety of methods of
communication. It was feasible for gadgets such as headphones, smart phones and mp3 players to be used to allow or prevent interaction between colleagues.

The interviews were held in mutually free time, before and after school and during break times and were always conducted on the school premises in what was deemed an anonymous and emotion-free zone for both interviewer and participant. Care was taken that the interviews were not overlooked or overheard. I was satisfied that the participants engaged in a process of constructing reality concerning staffroom relationships, it was a process to which both interviewer and participant contributed (Patton, 2005).

The interviews were recorded on an iPad and then transferred to a laptop stored off-site. The iPad record was deleted with the transfer. The shortest interview was 25 minutes in duration and the longest over 90 minutes and so a lot of data was generated. The interviews were transcribed professionally as an mp3 recording and as a written document. The next task was to analyse them. Details about the analysis form the next part of this chapter.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the data was an ongoing process informed by the conceptual framework and the themes that emerged mainly from the initial reading of the interviews. Additional analysis and consolidation was then possible. As stated earlier the analysis was interpretive.

Manual interpretation.

The procedure of analysis was based on guidelines provided by Creswell (2008), and details are found in Appendix I. The analytical approach involved several steps and required the researcher to move back and forth between emerging themes and conclusions. It was an iterative process that can be conceptualised as comparative analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

First, all the interviews were read through several times and notes were made of what appeared to be the main points raised by participants. Two or three full interviews were read
each day and the process took several weeks to accomplish. This initial analysis identified two broad themes that linked directly to staffroom relationships. One theme involved the physical structure of the staffroom and its influence on relationships and the second, possibly more predictably, related to social network groups. After this preliminary reading of the data, technical analysis was conducted.

**Technical analysis.**

The second step involved the use of a coding process facilitated by a software program used for analysing qualitative, unstructured data (Edhlund, 2011). The transcribed interview data was transferred to this program. With the aid of this tool, preliminary codes were developed [see Appendix J] and patterns within the codes began to emerge. There were no pre-determined codes or themes and the analysis reflected the “free-flowing” with no “structured or rigid” attributes recommended by Strauss and Corbin (1998).

Where possible, codes were conflated to form a theme or joined to a theme that emerged during the manual manipulation (Creswell, 2008). From the original preliminary themes, a series of minor themes developed. The combination of these two processes, manual manipulation and the software coding program created a series of conclusions that were inductively generated (Maxwell, 1998). Although the analysis was simple, the themes and sub-categories within the themes were empirically grounded and well-aligned with the data supplied by the participants. The two overarching themes identified during the manual manipulation were retained at the end of the whole phase of data analysis. Subsumed beneath the major theme of Space and Relationships were the minor themes of Physical Space and Personal Space. The more amorphous second major theme of friendships and social networks consolidated into Lateral and Hierarchical Relationships with three minor themes, emotional labour, collegiality and managerial influences..
This chapter has explained how and why the study was structured as it was and provided details of the high school, the staffroom and the participants who were part of the study. The method by which the data were collected and analysed has been presented and justified.

The content of the next chapter, Chapter 5 was not anticipated when this study was first conceived. As the data was analysed it became clear that participants were frequently using figures of speech to illustrate the feelings that they had about staffroom relationships. The figures of speech were idioms, metonyms and metaphors and they were used by participants to make their feelings more understandable. Chapter 5 describes the motives and feelings that lie behind the figures of speech used by participants to better understand the results in Chapters 6 and 7.
Chapter 5 - Data Analysis: The Use of Metaphor, Metonymy and Idioms

“We use up to six metaphors per minute in English, most unconsciously and unnoticed”

(Gibbs Jr, 1992)

Analysis of the spoken data from interviews revealed a continual use of metaphor, metonym and idiom by participants to describe how they felt about the staffroom and the relationships that were nested within it. It was clear that such expressions were an attempt, usually used instinctively, to actualise in more concrete terms feelings whose meaning would otherwise have been difficult to represent. For this reason, this first data chapter examines why and how metaphors, metonyms and idioms were used by participants to exemplify their abstract, usually emotional, thoughts. These figures of speech in themselves do not represent any theme that emerged from the data but they do represent a vehicle that was used by participants that allowed themes to be recognised. In order to appreciate the perspectives of the participants, quotes from them appear throughout Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Italics are used for teacher quotes incorporated into the body of the text and a numbered text box arrangement is used for longer quotes. Arrows in the text boxes identify the emphasis from the teacher participant when explaining how they felt about a topic.

Figurative Language and Everyday Speech - Idioms

Idioms were a very common form of expression used by participants. An idiom is a phrase, common to a particular culture (Fauconnier & Turner, 2008) that has a figurative and readily understood meaning. Metaphors, the construction of which are explained later in this chapter, are often used in the creation of an idiom (Lakoff & M. Johnson, 1980) and hence impart meaning and understanding during a conversation. For example, a common idiom used by participants in this study to indicate the power that senior managers had was to suggest that they “set the tone” over staffroom culture that participants then felt obliged to follow. This is
a very common idiom used in western culture and is metaphoric in nature as an abstract concept, that of staffroom culture, was described by participants in concrete terms. Setting the tone refers to the pitch, quality and strength of sound of a musical instrument. Exactly what conceptual metaphors are, and the role that they play in understanding the strength of emotions, is dealt with later on in this chapter.

Participants used many idioms and the examples given in this chapter illustrate the way in which they were used rather than trying to analyse the meaning of each idiom incorporated by a participant into their interview. Their analytical value in this study rests on two related premises. Firstly, like metaphors and metonymies, idioms acknowledge a shared common understanding which existed between the participants. Secondly, idioms contributed to an explanation of a feeling state as expressed by a participant and feelings are at the heart of this study.

Another example found in the data collected in this project was the idiom “keeping someone at arms’ length”. This idiom was used as an attitudinal reference from Carl and concerned his perception of how managers behaved towards him. According to Lakoff (1987), the cultural understanding of this particular idiom created meaning in the form of two conceptual metaphors. The first metaphor is that intimacy is related to physical closeness and the second metaphor is that physical distance is related to physical, psychological or emotional harm. Physical closeness is linked positively to emotional closeness and this is good as it indicates approval from the person seeking the closeness while distance is bad as it denotes disapproval. Although the interpretation is simple, the link between the physical world and the emotional world of the participant is evident. Carl equated physical distance with emotional distance and lack of affirmation from his managers.

Idioms were a common method of expression used by participants and generally were easily understood in the context of their delivery. Idiomatic expressions do occur in
teacher talk in Chapters 6 and 7 and, where relevant, are used as lenses for the data analysis presented in those chapters.

**Figurative Language and Everyday Speech - Metonyms**

Metonymy is a form of expression where a word or phrase is used to refer to something else to which it is closely associated, but the word or phrase does not have to refer to the whole entity, or vice versa (Kovecses, 2002). Metonymies can be classified in two ways. Firstly, either “a whole stands for a part or a part stands for a whole” or secondly, “a part stands for another part” (Kovecses, 2010, p. 150). Examples from the case study data are presented below to illustrate these differences. The following examples illustrate how common cultural understanding permitted metonymies to be used and understood by inhabitants of the staffroom in the study.

**Examples of metonymies used in this case study and their meaning.**

Morning worship services for the whole school were frequently referred to as “Chapel”. This is an example of a container metonym where the building was used to describe what takes place inside it. In this example, a part, the building explained another part, an act of worship. Another common metonym used by participants was to refer to two members of senior staff as “Admin”; the persons who partly made up the management team in the school were defined by their role. In this instance, a whole, the administration team of the entire school referred to a minority of people in that team.

In a metonym, there is only one domain or concept whilst understanding in a metaphor is achieved by conceiving one thing in terms of another, there are two domains or concepts used (Lakoff & M. Johnson, 2008). The purpose of a metonym is referential and requires one domain or concept only as it is allowing one entity to stand in for another (Lakoff & M. Johnson, 2008)
One more example from the data illustrates the common usage of metonyms by the
teacher participants. Discussing collegial relationships, several teachers expressed wariness
about engaging in private conversations or displaying how they really felt in the staffroom.
Stan aired his concern by using a metonym referring to some of his colleagues as having
“flapping ears”. In this case, the expression flapping ears replaced the concept of
confidentiality amongst colleagues. Because ears are conventionally associated with
listening, a contiguous relationship existed between flapping ears and privacy. The concept
that Stan used acted across one domain and was metonymic in nature. Stan referenced his
lack of comfort and sense of vulnerability in the staffroom by linking flapping ears with not
feeling safe to express his thoughts freely. Where relevant for the purpose of analysis, there
are more examples of metonyms in Chapters 6 and 7.

**Figurative Language and Everyday Speech - Metaphors**

Like a metonym, a metaphor is a word or phrase that has a different meaning to its literal
meaning (Lakoff & M. Johnson, 1980). Lakoff and M. Johnson proposed that one entity,
often an abstract concept or idea, which is called the target, is viewed through the lens of
another usually more concrete phenomenon which is called the source. The difference
between a metonym and metaphor is illustrated by Jeff’s contention that the “walls have
ears”, an expression he used to explain why he left the staffroom to engage in private
conversations. The meaning of his metaphor is exactly the same as Stan’s “flapping ears”
metonym, but in this case Jeff has transferred listening capabilities onto a wall. Ears have
been attached to a concrete object source to imply that people inside the walls of the
staffroom, who are the target, had a propensity to eavesdrop.

The depiction of this understanding of metaphoric and metonymic thought relies on a
particular model of cognition called the Contemporary Theory of Metaphor (Lakoff & M.
Johnson, 1980). This model endeavours to explain how and why metaphor and metonymy are
so common in everyday conversation. The evaluation of metaphoric expressions from participants is based on this model and the main components of the theory are briefly presented in this chapter.

**Root metaphors.**

The purpose of a metaphor is to interest, inform and persuade a recipient to remember a message in a way that is difficult to achieve with mere description. In doing this, individuals invite a listener to be part of the world that they are describing although it may be outside of their direct experience. As has already been shown with idioms and metonymy, metaphors are successful when all parties share a similar cultural understanding of the subject matter. This representation of cultural awareness is dealt with in the Contemporary Theory of Metaphor (Lakoff & M. Johnson, 1980) by calling such metaphors “root metaphors”. The importance of engaging with root metaphors has been expounded by some researchers (Fauconnier & Turner, 2008; Lakoff & M. Johnson, 2008) as it is their contention that root metaphors provide insight into and help shape the world view of an individual.

A dramatic representation of the impact of using a root metaphor was presented by who, when discussing the sudden departure of a colleague, remarked “we shot our sheep, the lost sheep that we shot instead of doing what we should have done in taking care of him”. Seth has metaphorically referred to the biblical parable of the lost sheep where the shepherd makes every effort to save a wayward sheep. Seth invited the listener to be part of his thinking as a staff member who belonged to a faith school where forgiveness and being given a second chance was, for him, an important part of the culture. For Seth, the abstract and vaguer target concepts of forgiveness and rehabilitation were contrasted with the concrete source concept of destroying the life of an animal. For Seth, the metaphoric death of the sheep related to the, in his view, unnecessary loss of a colleague from the staffroom. It was evident that Seth’s world view was shaped by his belief system which in turn influenced his
thinking and the choice of root metaphor that he used. Lakoff (1993) argued that the locus of the metaphor in an example such as that of Seth is not in the language used but in the way that meaning is taken from one conceptual domain and transferred for expression in another conceptual domain. Seth spoke in a cultural context that he knew would be understood by the author and which reflected the cultural world to which he belonged.

Seth’s metaphor illustrated what some researchers contend; that the display of personal emotion lays at the heart of everyday interaction in a social setting (Geary, 2012; Hargreaves, 1998a; Nias, 1996; Oplatka, 2007). As in the case of Seth, emotions and consequent behaviours are influenced by a perception of events; it was not the situation itself that controlled how Seth felt but rather how he interpreted the event that caused his emotional response (Kovecses, 2000). Researchers such as Geary (2012), Kovecses (2000, 2010) and Lakoff & M. Johnson (2008), argue that emotional reactions such as Seth’s stem from and are grounded in events and experience from the past of the metaphor user. These events and experiences in turn create the cultural attitude of the individual and shape the choice of the real and imagined world that they live in.

Individuals use metaphor because they are able to “map” (Lakoff & M. Johnson, 2003) their thoughts across a variety of conceptual domains and so put a concrete conceptual expression to their more abstract thoughts, emotions and ideas. In this case study, a common way of mapping between conceptual domains for participants was to use what Lakoff and M. Johnson (1980) called “container metaphors” to describe their responses to situations, people and events.

**Participant use of container metaphor.**

Lakoff and M. Johnson (2003) identified a container metaphor as having a source domain with an inside and outside and the capability of holding something. There are different sorts of container metaphor such as events as containers, society as a container or time as a
container, and they are also used when describing emotional states (Kovecses, 2002). Lakoff and M. Johnson (2003) reported that container metaphors are especially common when individuals are attempting to describe difficult emotions.

One of the stressful situations that every participant encountered in the staffroom was a lack of working space and Seth used a caged bird container metaphor to try and convey the effect that the lack of space had on an individual. Seth used a “human is an animal” metaphor and container metaphors that included animals were commonly used by participants to describe their feelings. Seth alluded to the lack of available personal space in the staffroom as akin to that of chickens in a cage remonstrating that “We’re like caged chickens in the staffroom; those poor old chooks [meaning the teachers] that have only got their little space and they’re expected to do their- what they need to do”.

Such an animal metaphor has an emotional force which renders it value-laden, reflecting a particular ideological attitude (Goatly, 2006). The reader is now in a position to make a personal connection with Seth’s feelings and emotions concerning the staffroom. Seth has provided an example of grounding (Lakoff & M. Johnson, 2003) where the reader is given the opportunity to conceptualise the non-physical [thought, feeling, emotion] in terms of a physical entity. The metaphor provides the reader with an assertion that availability of physical space in the staffroom was an issue, but it does not provide a conclusive argument in itself (M. Johnson, 1981). Seth’s implies in this quotation was that inadequate space restricted lifestyle capabilities for a teacher in the same way that it does for a caged chicken and needs to be taken into consideration if both are to be fully functioning and stress-free. This example confirms the fact that a metaphor only focuses on and highlights a limited perspective of the target concept. The focus in this example was the impact of limited space.

Participants used other types of container metaphor to express their feelings towards day-to-day life in the staffroom. The superficiality of some collegial relationships required
participants to engage in emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) and to metaphorically wear a mask to hide how they felt. Findings regarding emotional labour are revealed primarily in Chapter 7. Seeking privacy in the staffroom, participants engaged with container metaphoric thought to express what they did to achieve a private moment. The metaphors used and the means by which participants reacted to and managed their desire for private space is discussed in Chapter 6. In more extended conversations, multiple figures of speech were used by the participant.

**Using multiple metaphors in one conversational piece.**

In this example, Rhonda used a series of metaphors and an idiom to answer one question. As she rallied her thoughts, she used conceptual metaphors to shape her answer in concrete terms that were readily understood by her cultural peers. The metaphors that she used are recognisable as one container metaphor, one root metaphor and an animal metaphor. She rounded off the conversation with a culturally relevant idiom.

**Extract 1: (Rhonda): “It’s a bit like Big Brother”**

211 And – and so I also find um, within the staffroom that… because people are, I
212 guess it’s a bit like Big Brother, for a large part of the day, people are
213 living in close proximity with nowhere to go as individuals because if they
214 want to go anywhere outside the staffroom, it’s still not alone time because
215 someone will find you or a student will come and, ask a question or
216 whatever. So, you have to really get right off campus if you want a mental
217 break of any real description. And while we can try and be positive and come into a
218 conversation feeling really good, I believe, or my response to some members
219 in the staffroom is that they’re what I call “psychic vampires” – just in terms of,
their constant interactions and their constant conversations over extended periods of time seem to be quite negative and therefore emotionally draining. I suppose I try and not get angry with them and tell them to, “Get on with it, this is life, suck it up Sunshine.” And while I don’t want to do that all the time and I don’t think that’s the way to respond to them all the time, sometimes I do want to do that, because, selfishly, nobody’s saying to me, “Hey, Rhonda how are you feeling?” Or “What’s happening?” or all that sort of thing.

This excerpt can be broken up into four linked ideas that terminate with a verbal request in lines 225 and 226 from Rhonda for visibility and consideration in her contact with these particular members of the staff community. Rhonda is displaying a form of emotional dissonance described by Hochschild (1983). First of all, in lines 212 and 213, Rhonda recognised the compact nature of the staffroom and alluded to the lack of seclusion there by using a “The Staffroom is a TV studio set” root container metaphor. She did not refer to any TV studio set, but one in particular, that of Big Brother which is based on “the Big Brother is watching you” concept found in Orwell’s novel, 1984 (Orwell, 2009). The message that Rhonda attempted to portray was very clear. Not only was privacy an issue in the staffroom but as in the Big Brother TV studio set, to gain privacy it was necessary to leave the staffroom completely.

She does this by explaining in line 216 that the only way that teachers can escape and benefit from a “mental break” is to leave the campus altogether in the same way that a Big Brother contestant would have to leave the TV show. Rhonda has used a second conceptual metaphor to move to the next stage of her argument which is closely linked to the first. The concept for this second metaphor is that of “The Brain on Holiday”. People often move away from their domicile for their holiday to recoup and refresh so that they can return and pursue their lives. Rhonda implied that colleagues in this case study need a mental break, a mini
holiday, for refreshment, specifically of their minds, so that they can return and carry on with their work in the staffroom.

In line 219, Rhonda has mapped a character trait of a mythological creature on to the behaviour of some of her colleagues and in so doing has used an animal metaphor to make her point. Such a metaphor has sufficient grounds of similarity between the two domains to produce vivid imagery, readily understood within the framework of a common culture. She then implies the consequences of this behaviour by employing a draining metaphor in line 221. Rhonda has used a container metaphor to illustrate how a sapping process has a detrimental effect on her emotional well-being.

Rhonda has linked a string of thoughts through the articulation of a series of metaphors. She has explicated a possible cause of what she viewed to be unreasonable behaviour from some of her colleagues and then identified the effect of this behaviour on herself. She also recognised that she had to manage her response to this behaviour to maintain reasonable relationships with staff members. At no point did Rhonda deny the value or purpose of the staffroom. Hidden within her text in line 213 is her surmise that there was “nowhere to go as individuals”; that this may be a deficit in the structure of this staffroom which at the time was beyond the control of its users. This matter, that the staffroom was a valuable, but imperfect place is dealt with more fully in the next two chapters.

The metaphors used in the analysis of this sample of text show how their interpretation helps the reader to understand familiar processes and to illuminate the meaning of experiences. As expressed by Carpenter (2008, p. 274), they are “a powerful strategy to portray complex realities … adding depth of meaning and understanding”. They do nonetheless have limitations which are dealt with in the next section.
The Interpretation of Metaphor, Metonymies and Idioms

According to Lakoff and M. Johnson (1980), aspects of an individual’s experience that are difficult to define are especially prone to become targets of metaphor and metonymy in particular. By providing a concept with a concrete image it is given a complex pattern of relationships and associations (Geary, 2012). It has become clear that participants in this study used metaphor, metonymies and idioms as devices to express how they felt about situations and relationships with their colleagues. It is important to note that figures of speech only tell part of a story and must be interpreted cautiously as they cannot present the whole picture about a situation (Geary, 2012).

Having noted this proviso, the analyses of metaphor, metonymy and idiom from participants were an important part of the evidence used to help distinguish the two major themes that emerged in this study. To accomplish the relaying of emotional feeling, participants frequently used figurative language and the analysis of the data relied on the voice of the participant as they described how they felt about various aspects of life in the staffroom. Evaluating some of the figurative expressions that they used provided a valuable means of uncovering feelings from participants towards their colleagues, organisational culture and life as it happened generally in the staffroom of this study.

This chapter has emphasised the common cultural understanding of the participants and the way in which this consensus of thought influenced the way that they expressed themselves. Container and animal metaphors were common methods employed to express emotional thoughts, especially those that were challenging. Through analysing figurative speech, the content of this chapter has illustrated some of the variables, such as space, privacy, hierarchical relationships and lack of transparency with colleagues that influenced participants’ attitudes towards life in the staffroom. The next two chapters analyse the data
with a view to justifying the identification of the two major themes of participant thought: Space and Relationships and Lateral and Hierarchical Relationships.

Chapter 6 - Space and Relationships in the Staffroom

“Space is not a neutral, untidy backdrop to adult and pupil interactions, it is (re)-created through politics and ideology (McGregor, 2004a, p. 4)

The analysis of data in Chapter 5 presented evidence indicating that a relationship existed between the physical structure and space of the staffroom and the way that staff used the area and the culture that resided there. This implication was suggested by references made by participants such as “walls having ears”, “caged birds” and “living in close proximity”. This chapter explores this relationship further and presents an analysis of participant comments about how the staffroom influenced their emotional life. As stated in Chapter 2, authors such as Fineman (1999) and Neville (2013) have declared that feelings are the subjective reaction to an emotional episode or state and influence the way that individuals behave in a situation. Using relevant concepts, this chapter seeks to understand participant feelings as they engaged with the opportunities and limitations presented by the staffroom space.

For purposes of clarity, this chapter is divided into two sections. The first section concentrates on physical space as participant talk frequently linked feelings with the adequacy of the amenities found in the staffroom. As noted in Chapter 1, the provision of facilities for teachers has remained largely static in western countries since the inception of the modern school after World War 2. Clanfield and Foord (2008) identified that a staffroom operates as an office, a café, a rest area and a refuge. An examination of Figure 1 in Chapter 4
confirms that the first three of these facilities were supplied in this case study school and these three functions provided a general framework for analysis in the Physical Space section of the chapter.

The other amenity mentioned by Clanfield and Foord (2008) was that of a refuge and the second part of Chapter 6 identifies the necessity, as expressed by participants, for personal space during their non-contact time. The emotionally-laden use of container metaphors by participants in Chapter 5 illustrated the stress felt as they described their desire for different spaces and for some form of seclusion. Because participants used both physical and mental solutions to satisfy their requirement for private space, findings from both Goffman (1959) and Lefebvre (1991) proved useful when unravelling this data.

**Physical Space**

Participants spent a proportion of their non-contact time in the staffroom preparing lessons, marking student work, meeting colleagues, and phoning parents. The initial part of this section illustrates the attitudes that participants had towards a single space staffroom as their professional, non-contact abode. Analysis of participant comments identified the importance of the staffroom when considering a teacher’s sense of belonging to an institution and their preference of a single adult meeting space over departmental offices.

**Workplace and culture.**

Extract 2 is from a participant who held a number of professional responsibilities in the school. Stan’s comments reflect those of other participants and illustrate the central role that the staffroom had in his affiliation with his colleagues. Stan identified repeated interactions with his adult colleagues, rather than his classroom connections, as defining his sense of belonging to a workplace. Such a finding accords with that of Day and Leitch (2001) who when researching the role of emotion in teachers’ lives discovered that educators rarely spoke
about what they did or the meaning of their job. They spoke about their involvement in the life of the staffroom community and its significance to them. Day and Leitch concluded that emotional feelings were strongly identified with a persons’ sense of place and associated activities that they shared in the life of a group.

Extract 2 (Stan): “We define our workplace as the staffroom”

I think a staffroom is comparable with any other workplace in that, sure, we go off to our little corners to teach but ultimately we would probably define our workplace as the staffroom more than any classroom.

Extract 3 is a continuation of Stan’s thoughts on this topic. Akin to the findings of Jarzabkowski (2002), Stan identified the patterns of negotiated relationship with his colleagues as representing a staffroom culture that he recognised and adhered to in the context of school life. Stan felt that colleagues shared their professional and personal lives in the staffroom bounded by a mutually accepted set of commonly held principles to which they were accountable. Stan emphasised the centrality of the staffroom for his professional work life and the cooperation and reciprocity with colleagues that was embedded in his non-contact time.

Extract 3 (Stan): “For me, a staffroom has a culture”

And I think in the same way then, for me a staffroom has a culture. And the culture is predominantly based, or made up of, the things we share, … and the thing that cuts through– it’s about the mythologies we hold and the things we believe to be right. I think that you define a culture on the basis of certain things that are encouraged, not through rule or mandate, but through the feedback you get from others.
**Professional connectivity.**

At the time of data collection there were no departmental or pastoral offices distributed over the campus. This had not always been the case, and one of the longest serving teachers, Sophie, reflected on the professional benefits of a single staffroom.

**Extract 4 (Sophie): “It’s a lot easier to have a professional conversation”**

14 If you wanted to have a professional conversation with someone, you
15 actually had to walk a long way. So, you wouldn’t have those
16 professional conversations; any interactions would be social. Now,
17 together, . . . it’s a lot easier to have a professional conversation

One of the credentials that Hargreaves (1994) identified for successful professional collaboration amongst colleagues was that of accessibility to each other across time and space and Sophie’s remarks appear to confirm this reality for her. The present context of the space/time framework in which she operated facilitated professional connectivity in a way that was previously unavailable or difficult to attain for her. Sophie’s statement is in line with that of McGregor (2000) who discovered increased distance and lack of time inhibited both professional and social relationships in one of the high schools that she studied.

Sophie identified engagement in both social and professional relationships with colleagues and Lefebvre’s (1991) observation that a “present space” (p.113) was created by the layering and interaction of different relational spaces to create a place was used as a way to describe and analyse Jessie’s observation in Extract 5.

**Extract 5 (Jessie): “I really do appreciate that [a single staffroom]”**

1179 I really do appreciate that [a single staffroom] because I can see
1180 for example, Music, … If we had separate rooms, an English staffroom
1181 or a Business staffroom, I would not have a clue what’s happening
with the Musical. I would not understand the pressures that Trish is under or what some of the Heads of House... what’s happening there. I appreciate being in there and being able to listen and know what other people are feeling and based on that, I’d make a decision.

As a senior middle manager, Jessie had his own office but chose to spend most of his non-contact time in the staffroom. Implicit in Jessie’s statement is his understanding that the staffroom space was not a homogeneous collection of professional and social relationships but a collection of departmental spaces operating as a connected community that, at least sometimes, avoided the departmentally balkanised environment described by (Hargreaves, 1994). Little (1995) recognised departmental offices as “powerful, intellectual, social and political homes” (p. 185). The transfer of these “homes” into a single, heterogeneous space was advantageous for Jessie and extract 6 provides an example of his thinking.

Extract 6 (Jessie): “Don’t worry about it”

Last Friday, because I’m doing Jason Ross’s lesson, my lessons were taken off me and given to Audrey Knight. She then had a full day with a morning tea duty and helping kids at lunchtime... and she started to, you know, get really upset. I said, “What’s the problem?” She said “Blah, blah, blah.” I said, “Don’t worry about it. I will do that lesson If we weren’t together, I wouldn’t have known that had happened... it’s a support mechanism for others in the staffroom”.

The staffroom operated as “an intersection or knot in the unique skein of relationships” (McGregor, 2004b, p. 367). Audrey’s [pseudonym] stress arose from a change to her relational commitments for that day outside of the staffroom. She was stressed because she had lost her sense of control (Perryman, 2007) and the extra, externally imposed,
demands had challenged her “adjustive resources” (Lazarus, 1976, p. 47). Jessie’s response identified a relationship in the staffroom space that operated in a professional, social and organisational manner. These three attributes were able to overlap in the space and produce an outcome that reduced the emotional burden for one teacher.

The introductory part of this chapter has identified positive elements attributed by participants to life in the staffroom as a single entity. But this staffroom was divided into two parts, the kitchen area and a study area. Analysis of data in the next segment reviews the role of the kitchen and communal area for participants and implies that a paradox existed between the work part and rest zone of this space.

**The staffroom as a social community - The kitchen and dining room as a communal area.**

In Clanfield and Foord (2008) terms, the kitchen and dining area provided facilities as a café and recreational area. The area satisfied Goffman’s (1959) backstage criteria of a place to relax, socialize and reflect. He conceded that a backstage area would contain “minor acts” which included “intimacy” and “disrespect for others present” (Goffman, 1959, p. 128). Stan referred to the kitchen area as a “break-out” area, Rhonda called it a place for “down time” and Lynda “the place for letting off steam”. The comments from Angelique and Jeff below identified a “blurring of the boundaries” (Ben-Peretz & Schonmann 2000, p. 53) between the rest and work areas which produced unease for both of them.

**Extract 7 (Angelique):** “That’s something I have to learn to deal with”

329 I don’t mind it in the kitchen area; the common area can get quite loud.

330 But I just find it a bit difficult when you are at your desk and you are

331 wanting to mark papers or read an email, but you can’t because they’re

332 all standing around, joking and talking. I find that a bit difficult, but

333 again, that’s something I have to learn to deal with.
Extract 8 (Jeff): “I got really cranky”

One day I came in there and I wanted to do some work and I was sitting at my desk and there were people yak, yak, laugh, laugh, yak, yak. I just got my iPad and threw it . . . I’d just had it. I thought, “How am I supposed to work here in this environment? I have no support to work in this environment.” You know what I mean? I got really cranky.

Both excerpts indicated that the levels of noise deemed acceptable in the kitchen area differed to that which was acceptable in the work area of the staffroom. Goffman’s (1959) suggestion that areas of relaxation involved some sort of disrespect to the other occupants was implied in both Angelique’s and Jeff’s statement. Preparation time was recognised by Hargreaves (1994) as being “precious” (p.181) as it was a time to cope with the immediate demands of internal and external professional expectations. There was evidently a conflict for those teachers who wished to work in isolation and extracts 7 and 8 indicate that the micro-political power exerted by the larger, recreational group spilled over into the work space area. These findings concur with those of McGregor (2004b) who discovered that the behaviour of some can impede or diminish the use of a particular space by others. Both responses were emotional but Angelique’s betrayed a degree of resignation whilst Jeff’s offered some resistance.

Extract 9 supplies an observer’s view of kitchen/dining room activity. Joe’s comment [line 15/16] indicated that users of the area were emotionally re-energised by the interaction that they had with their colleagues. Staff members were able to relax and reflect through social relations. The latter part of his observation implied that the emotional download overheard possibly involved comments that would not be aired elsewhere. Such a finding is
in agreement with the assertion that “back regions are typically out of bounds to members of the audience” (Goffman, 1959, p. 124). In this instance, the audience were the people and associated customs that constituted the interactions that happened in the frontstage of these teachers’ lives.

**Extract 9 (Joe): “I can hear everyone in the common room”**

14 Where I sit, I’m kind of right in the middle, I can hear everyone in the
15 → common room . . . So, it often sounds quite noisy with a lot of laughter,
16 which is good. But often it might sound like . . . complaining or
17 → whingeing as well. A lot of that goes on.

*Privacy in the kitchen and dining area.*

It is not known if members of the kitchen/communal area knew that they could be overheard. Some participants deemed conversation in the kitchen area more secure than interaction in the work area whilst others were more wary. For example, Gemma was much happier to conduct conversations in the relative openness of the kitchen and dining area rather than risk being overheard by colleagues sitting close to her or her conversation companion. Molly agreed with Gemma stating that “you can’t even have a proper conversation with the person sitting beside you without other people overhearing it”. But, apart from group activities, Molly did not go to the communal area as she considered it to be “unsafe”. Molly was unable to engage with the purpose for which the kitchen/dining area had been provided as she felt unable to let down her guard, a prerequisite for the successful operation of a backspace.

*The size of the kitchen and dining area.*

Angelique’s and Jeff’s comments have already identified the inability of the kitchen/dining area to contain all the aspects of the “playful aggressivity” (p. 128) and “kidding” (p. 128) noted by Goffman (1959) as indicative of a backstage area. Their articulated frustration was
an expression of the requirement for differentiation of space and time. The ideal was expressed by Ben-Peretz and Schonmann (2000) as the need for teachers to have “work and no work “(p. 67) areas during different episodes of their non-contact time. The no work part of this staffroom appeared inadequate for individual needs. Participants noted that the same people customarily occupied the relaxation area during their non-contact time and displayed recurring patterns of behaviour that attracted some and deterred others. Despite the apparent annexation of the area by a few, some participants relaxed there with friends.

One of those people was Rhonda. Rhonda’s metaphoric reflection of “psychic vampires” discussed in Chapter 5 resulted from observations that she had made when visiting the communal area in the morning before school began. Rhonda did not feel integrated with that group of people as they did not offer the type of conversation that she sought. But the activities of this group did not always make the kitchen/dining area a smaller place for her. Rhonda did visit and use the common area with colleagues who shared her mutual interests. She also revealed sympathy for her colleagues’ need for a backspace. She noted

**Extract 10 (Rhonda): “In fairness to what I said before”**

277 In fairness to what I said before about the interactions in the common
278 room and what seems to be frivolous, fair enough, I have no right to
279 deny them that, because if they’re finding enjoyment at that particular
280 point in time, then that’s giving them, emotional recharge to deal with
281 whatever’s going to happen after that break time. So, that emotional
282 downtime is important.

One particular incongruity that interfered with the operation of the kitchen/dining area as a backspace was that of lunch and break time interruptions from telephones and students. Stan’s comment alluded to the kitchen area becoming a type of command centre without the allocation of responsibilities amongst the occupants.
Extract 11 (Stan): “By week 10 everyone’s snapping at each other”

It sounds crazy but for big chunks of the day, things like phones and doors define the mood of the room. If you’re sitting and having your lunch, the tension that can exist around the lunchtime table because someone is refusing to get up to answer the door whilst others are always getting up to answer the door… by week ten everyone’s snapping at each other.

Several other participants related incidents where relationships were detrimentally affected because phone calls and students came directly to a small, open plan, mainly windowed area without any filtering taking place beforehand. This example appears to provide another example of blurred boundaries (Ben-Peretz & Schonmann, 2000) caused possibly by an institutional lack of clarity between “public and private time” (Zerubavel, 1985, p. 14) as, although in a public space, participants desired privacy from external influence when they were eating.

The kitchen and dining area as a place for planned activities.

Participants identified two group activities that happened on a regular basis in the staffroom and both occurred in the kitchen/dining area. The first was a daily; morning act of worship and the second was a weekly morning tea. As noted by McGregor (2003), each activity was viewed as part of an organisational ceremonial/ritual culture engaged in by staff. Staff spoke about the impact of sharing each of these practices and the meaning that they were able to elicit by talking about their feelings and attachments to others when in the space (Hall, S., 1997).
The kitchen/dining area used as a chapel.

Attendance at the daily devotional was a professional obligation and a bonding activity that recognised the spiritual values shared by the staff body. Every participant expressed an attachment to this group, not necessarily to the individuals in the group but to the ethos and principles on which the reason for meeting stood. Such a devotional activity did not fit in with Clanfield and Foord’s (2008) description of typical staffroom purposes, but although there was a larger space on site, the kitchen/dining area was deemed convenient for this meeting each morning as they did not have to leave the staffroom building. The importance of using part of the staffroom space for this purpose was summed up by Trish who commented, “I go to worship with a brain full of stuff that has to be done, and so it becomes important for me that worship is about focussing on what’s important rather than what’s urgent.” She went on to say

Extract 12 (Trish): “To get me back to the right place”

204 If I’m feeling weighed down and focusing too closely on what’s on my
205  “to do” list, which I do [laughs], then sometimes it’s the switch
206  to get me back into the right space and that helps me to be more
207  resilient and I feel more productive and effective in my classroom and
208  in my staffroom relationships too.

Trish’s comments have illustrated that findings identified by other researchers are pertinent in this case study. Despite the architectural and cultural unsuitability of the kitchen/dining area, each morning it became a place where shared values created bonded attachments amongst staff (Hall, S., 1997). This finding indicates that the kitchen/dining area did not have a fixed, single or unchanging meaning; the context of the zone changed as its use changed providing credence to the statement “the where and when of events are as significant
as what those events are” (Shields, 1997, p. 187). Meeting each morning in the kitchen/dining area provided an important cultural moment of unity for participants.

**Using the kitchen/dining area for morning tea.**

A weekly morning tea was a whole group social activity that was greatly appreciated by participants. Eating together is recognised as a therapeutic activity (Julier, 2013) with psychological benefits and this appeared to be the case for the participants in this study. Asked to reflect on a recently positive emotional event, Holly asserted “I enjoy when we bond, I enjoy when we have morning teas; I make a bit of an effort sometimes to bring something, because, you know, people get excited about that”.

Brendan identified morning teas as one of the few regular times when there was enough space [people stood rather than sitting down] and enough time for people to socialise. He made his views known by saying, “People are friendly, but maybe the staffroom is not big enough or cosy enough for everyone to sit around and have a chat, and we don’t have time to do that, but Friday, on Friday when we have morning tea, people interact better”.

Brendan and Holly’s comments were indicative of participant views on morning teas. The activity provided a representational system (Shields, 1997) where the food and conversations provided an impetus for individuals to share ideas, thoughts and feelings and reinforce their cultural bonds. In each of these examples of group use of the kitchen/dining area, a different set of practices were used to unite the staff members. These findings also fit in with Lefebvre (1991) who identified spaces as complex. One institutionally provided physical space was apprehended as an imagined space that influenced the lived experience of the occupants.

**Personal Space**

Data analysis in this chapter has revealed that the staffroom was designed to perform two primary tasks, that of recreation and a work area. Participant talk demonstrated that the
kitchen/dining area was interpreted by them as a type of Goffman (1959) backstage area although its size and uniformity moderated its success, especially for some individuals. As students were banned from all areas of the staffroom the work area was a backstage zone too although teacher needs in the work zone clashed with teacher behaviour and routines grounded in the kitchen/dining area. Conflict was particularly apparent when Goffman-like backstage behaviour spilled over into the work area. A way of interpreting teacher needs in the work zone was to view them as a type of individualism which has been coined as a “complex social and cultural phenomenon” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 171). In this case, participants desired isolation to complete the demands of their immediate workload. This was termed “strategic individualism” (p. 172) by Hargreaves (1994) and as an “adaptive strategy” (p. 25) by Flinders (1988). Participants positioned themselves in the work area when “preparation time was a scarce resource that could not be wasted in relaxation” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 172).

Although participants desired some form of professional isolation they also wanted personal space, something that Hargreaves (1994) linked with individual choice and the need for solitude. He depicted solitude as a “temporary phase” (p.180), which involved “withdrawal” (p. 180) in order to “reflect, retreat and re-group” (Hargreaves, 1994, p.180). Hargreaves (1994) demonstrated that constant collegiality had a detrimental emotional effect on many teachers. The final part of Chapter 6 used a combination of Hargreaves representations of solitude and strategic individualism to understand more fully participants’ expressed desire for personal space.

**Personal space – the inability to withdraw.**

The size and uniformity of the staffroom made it very difficult for participants to negotiate any form of separation from colleagues. As expressed by Seth, “people are kind of confined to their own little space, and it’s not even a personal space, it’s a space. It’s very hard to think
when, you know, you’re sharing a whole space with everybody else”. The request from Seth for personal space was endorsed by Rhonda. She explained that she perceived “a communication threat” to exist in the staffroom as individuals was denied “room for personal spread”. Alluding to animals in a zoo Stan observed that different personality types required different habitats if they were to flourish. He suggested that social contacts would be improved if individuals were able to “choose their timings and spaces for social contact”. The comments from Seth and Rhonda alluded to the expressed need for a space that peculiarly belonged to the individual rather than to the whole group. In agreement with McGregor (2004b) and Taylor and Spicer (2007), participant data indicated that the built environment was actively shaping social relations and practices, a situation that suited some and not others.

**Personal space – to achieve a quiet place.**

All the participants in this case study wanted a personal space which was quiet. In addition to professional quiet, participants desired to be alone, away from the emotional toll of interacting with others. The possible consequences of the constant social and professional intrusion of others was effectively outlined by Trish when she made this self-reflection about her need for quiet

**Extract 13 (Trish): “My brain can’t cope with any noise at all”**

171 My brain can’t cope with any noise at all, so there are times I find it

172 really difficult and I find it psychologically, physically, emotionally

173 draining that there is no place to be on your own. Sometimes I just have

174 to deal with that, but I don’t feel like I give people the best of me on

175 those days.

Trish’s comment agrees with that of Siegel (1999) who concluded that the professional, social and personal productivity of a teacher was heavily influenced by the arrangement of
the space in which they operated. Her comment also concurs with Lefebvre’s argument that a lived experience by an individual lies in both the “physical and mental realms” (Lefebvre’s, 1991, p. 83). Other participants also articulated their need for a quiet place, an alone place, and were specific about what it accomplished for them.

**Using personal space as a safe place.**

Appendix K contains a series of quotes from participants that indicated their expressed desire, at times, to be separated from others and to be alone. The quotations were chosen because they all used the word *hide*. Two quotations [Holly and Sophie] reflected a need to seek solitude to avoid other people and so expressed the desire to retreat (Hargreaves, 1994). Molly and Lynda wanted time to recover and re-group (Hargreaves, 1994) and finally Seth identified an emotional consequence for an individual who was unable to find a temporary retreat (Hargreaves, 1994).

The implication in each case was that the emotional resilience (Mansfield, Beltman, Price, & McConney, 2012) of each participant was tested and they needed to retreat to regain composure. Participants were inadvertently referring to the outcome of the emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) that they had used to conduct proceedings with their colleagues. Seth in particular, speaks about the consequences of breaking the emotional rules and silences (Zembylas, 2005) embedded in the shared values and accepted norms in the staffroom community. Amber noted the protocol that no “tantrums” were acceptable in the staffroom, but, in a safe place, participants would be able to vent and re-energise their emotional reserves that had depleted during the day. The next part of this chapter reviews the methods that people used to manage their need to have access to personal space and so prevent their part in unacceptable outbursts.
How participants supplied themselves with personal space.

There were two main ways in which participants created a place of solitude. They either remained in the staffroom, using physical or psychological means or they left the staffroom completely. The analysis of the data in this segment aligned with the work of Lefebvre (1991) who recognised that individuals interact with others in a myriad of ways using physical and mental spaces to create their lived experience. In the absence of appropriate physical spaces, participants used their spatiality literacy skills (Fisher, 2004) to negotiate and scaffold a solution for their solitude needs as and when they emerged.

The most common forms of creating personal space were a combination of physical methods. Sophie described how she placed a chair between her desk and the general entry to her placement in the staffroom. She also described how she had helped others create rope barriers between their desks and the rest of the staffroom. In each instance the desire was to create a personal space that allowed for some degree of solitude without interruption. The other common method of creating a physical barrier in the staffroom was to use ear phones. This method was particularly popular with younger participants as Bella explained

**Extract 14 (Bella): “Putting earphones in”**

12 I’ve noticed the culture of putting earphones in, that are plugged into a computer or a phone to give the idea that somebody is needing to have focused time. Whether they’ve actually got music on or not, I don’t think that they do sometimes. I guess blocking out everything, you can have some focus time.

Bella was describing an example of strategic individualism (Hargreaves, 1994) but there was also an element of solitude as the individual had withdrawn from interaction with others.

When confined to the staffroom for a particular reason, some participants explained how they withdrew emotionally from those around them and sought solitude within. For
example, Trish referred to her metaphorical action of “just trying to climb into my bubble . . . because it sometimes is the only way I can get the quiet I need to cope. Sometimes it’s on that-level of just surviving”. Similarly, Stan spoke about his “retiring to oneself” in the staffroom. He did this by closing his eyes and disassociating himself from his surroundings and he mentally cogitated on whatever thoughts and tasks were on his agenda at that time. These two instances reflected attempts by participants to solve their need for solitude in the staffroom.

When possible, participants created personal space by leaving the staffroom altogether. Stan reflected the general consensus when he remarked that “I think a number of people have found their own little corners around campus where they can just go and hide”. Holly made a habit of leaving the staffroom early. She explained “I actually went to class ten minutes early yesterday, just to sit in the classroom, just to sit and have some quiet time and do a little bit of work”. Holly’s comments illustrated the combined benefit of using a strategic individualistic approach as well finding a place to reflect and re-group (Hargreaves, 1994).

Participants felt that there were no designated safe places, a factor noted by Seth and recorded in Appendix K. Jessie commented “And when crises do happen, people do leave. I know they walk out of the staffroom. Where they go . . . ? Don’t know”. Some participants were reluctant to leave the staffroom when emotionally upset because of the prevalence of students around the campus. Such an attitude was intimated clearly by Gemma when she said

**Extract 15 (Gemma): “There’s nowhere you can go within the school”**

51 Because sometimes you’re in there and if you’re feeling a little bit

52 upset, there’s nowhere you can go within the school to just sit and

53 regroup… unless you want to go and sit down in the car [laughs] which

54 is a little bit hard because you go past all those students on the way.
Stan and Holly identified their cars as safe havens when travelling to and from work. They used the journey to download and process information and to prepare for the emotional demands of their working days.

The content of this chapter has direct relevance to answering the research question “What conditions foster or constrain the emotional well-being of the staff in their non-contact time?” Data analysis has revealed that the staffroom space provided a unity of purpose (Britland, 2012; Rose, 2012) for the participants and it operated as an office, a café and a place of rest (Clanfield & Foord, 2008), although individual and collective efficacy and its function as a place to work, socialise and relax were compromised by the size and homogeny of the space. Private, personal spaces were missing and participants used a combination of physical and mental/emotional techniques to seek refuge. Findings in this chapter have established that the use of emotional labour was required by colleagues and that the physical layout and functionality of the staffroom contributed to this necessity.

The findings in this chapter show that the staffroom was an important, but imperfect domicile for teachers. Stan’s comment that “I’m frustrated in a sense that the relative complexity of peoples’ roles isn’t reflected in the setting that they’re working in. I think that affects how well we do our jobs and how we relate to each other” acts as a suitable segue between this spatiality chapter and Chapter 7 which concentrates on the web of relationships that were contained within the staffroom space.
Chapter 7 - Hierarchical and Lateral Relationships in the Staffroom

“Our sense of reality is first and above all our capability to coordinate our experience and actions with respect to others” (Hargreaves, 2000, p. 203)

The content of Chapter 6 revealed that the characteristics of the physical space of the staffroom influenced the quality of collegial relationships that were possible and also affected the sense of well-being and professional efficacy of the individual teacher. Stan’s emotive remark placed at the end of Chapter 6 suggested that increased “professionalisation” (Hargreaves, 1994, p.135) characteristic of a modern teachers’ role required a different physical setting to that supplied. Stan’s view reflects that of authors such as Bissell (2004) and Woolner (2010) who highlight the deficiencies of traditional staffrooms similar to that provided in this study. The content of this chapter complements that of Chapter 6 and concentrates on the data provided by the participants regarding their affective responses in regard to the maintenance, and if necessary, structuring and restructuring of personable relationships with their colleagues during non-contact time.

The chapter is divided into two parts. The opening section deals with the effect that senior managers had on the quality and character of collegial relationships in the staffroom. These relationships had the capacity to be influenced by rank and the whole section is presented beneath the umbrella term of “Hierarchical Relationships”. The second part of the chapter deals with relationships between colleagues who occupied the staffroom. The types of and quality of collegial relationships between peers were complex and included influences from the context of the location and from hierarchical relationships. This part of the chapter is entitled “Lateral Relationships”.
Hierarchical Relationships

The first series of reflections taken from participant interviews concerned the physical presence of senior managers in the staffroom. Miskel and Hoy’s (2001) identification of the emotional impact of different types of school bureaucracy on teachers was chosen as the initial way to describe and analyse the feelings of participants. From this opening analysis, emotional issues relating to colonisation (Hargreaves, 1994), surveillance (Perryman, 2007) and performativity (Perryman, 2007) emerged as relevant to understanding the impact that administrators had on the emotional well-being and professional effectiveness of participants’ lives.

Participants desired to have closer relationships with senior managers so that senior managers were more aware and supportive of the daily pressures experienced by teachers in the staffroom. This view was summed up by Gemma as she deliberated on what she thought to be large amounts of unacknowledged work undertaken by colleagues as part of their job description

Extract 16 (Gemma): “We’re right and you just have to do it”

549 The managers of the school tend to just waltz in and waltz out in terms
550 of the staffroom environment and I think that affects our staffroom
551 relationships because we feel like they’re coming in just to inspect or
552 just to find out nitty-gritty details and then leave again. They’re not
553 actually there to socialise, or interact, or be with the staff. Their attitude
554 is very much “We’re right and you just have to do it.” I find that quite a
555 bit, and there’s a very big difference if they want to speak to you, it’s
556 like… they ring up on the phone “I want an appointment with you
557 at such and such” and there’s no clarification as to “Okay, I just want
558 to have a discussion about where we can take this”, or whatever. It’s
very confrontational, rather than being more of a colleague discussion. And I think it would benefit management to try to come down more to a level where they’re offering collegial support and engagement with the staff on a more equal level. I know their job has a number of demands on it, and I appreciate that, but sometimes by stepping down and just being gives the staff more confidence in what they’re doing and they’ll tend to respond better to working in the school, because I think the mindset currently in the staffroom is very much “us versus them”

Miskel and Hoy (2001) suggested that school administrations vary from each other depending on the selection and combination of elements from the bureaucratic patterns and professional patterns of organisational procedure. Bureaucratic patterns emphasise the coordination of administrative work and professional patterns accentuate the technical and instructional work of the school. Gemma’s comments in lines 553-559 indicated that her experience was that of an authoritarian bureaucratic structure with rules and procedures impersonally applied so that she considered her interests subordinated by administrative directives [line 554]. Holly noted “well no one’s asking your opinion, you know, on what you think, I find that happens a lot here”. Gemma and Holly’s interpretation of the situation is noted by Miskel and Hoy (2001) as a “hindering structure” (p.115), a coercive structure that according to Leithwood and Beatty (2007) promoted negative emotional experiences. In a later statement, Gemma emphasised the negative consequences of top-to-bottom directives when she stated “a number of the decisions, especially lately, have put a great deal of emotional and mental pressure on staff, which has caused illness, tiredness, blow-ups, that sort of thing”. Trish agreed, commenting “. . . they just pile on the work without taking
something off the bottom . . . we’re just expected to be superhuman all the time”. Gemma and Trish’s angst can be viewed through the lens of job-focussed emotional labour (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002). The stress expressed by both participants stemmed from their constant need to satisfy corporate expectations rather than their own professional and personal standards.

From line 560 to the end of her statement, Gemma endorsed a professional pattern of authority (Miskel & Hoy, 2001), where any decisions made included input from those with the necessary and relevant knowledge and expertise. The conflict that Gemma, Trish and Holly identified is explained by Miskel and Hoy (2001) as being quite common in schools, especially those with a formal, authoritative structure. In such schools, the professional focus of teachers is student-centred, concentrating on a caring ethic (Hargreaves 2001b) whilst the focus of the administrators is organisational featuring pragmatism and little emotional connectedness (Hargreaves 2001b). Seth remonstrated that “people feel unappreciated” and that he considered teachers to be “treated as commodities rather than as individuals”. Jeff’s declaration that senior managers viewed himself and his colleagues “as functional objects, not as emotional beings” provided another example of this sentiment. These reactions from participants illustrated the consequential feelings attached to the continuation of disciplined compliance in the staffroom and the use of job-focussed emotional labour (Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) by participants and their peers.

**Senior managers and their use of the staffroom.**

Extract 16 above began by considering the presence of administrators in the staffroom and was supported by other participants who voiced dissatisfaction with the mode by which administrators used the staffroom. Jeff, for example, tendered the remark that “they just come, make proclamations and then go. They don’t hang around. Sort of fly-in-fly-out”. Gemma’s statement [line 551] provided one possible explanation for the discomfort felt by
participants. Writing about the effects of school inspections in the UK, Perryman (2007) observed that teachers became stressed when they considered themselves to be in positions of surveillance and continual professional accountability and this condition reflects the observation made by Gemma. Hargreaves (1994) assessed that such “administrative surveillance” (p. 111) indicated an attitude of colonisation by administrators towards the staffroom and teacher time spent in there. This attitude from administrators was reinforced by comments from Jeff and Gemma who expressed disappointment that administrators did not socialise in the staffroom and Bella concurred noting that “Admin don’t come over and join in, they don’t connect with the staff very well”. Volti (2011) explained that negative emotional outcomes are common in a heavily authoritative organisational structure because the work desires and interests of individuals are neglected. Participant data has indicated that the presence of administrators in the staffroom caused emotional tensions.

Senior managers influenced staffroom relationships without necessarily being present in the area. In the following segment participant talk is presented to reveal two effects. The first concerns managers as role-models of certain behaviours and the consequences when such behaviours were not received by participants. The second identifies a perception of apparent preferential treatment from administrators towards some members of the staff community. Participants conveyed how this made them feel and how the situation affected interaction between colleagues.

**Role-modelling by senior managers.**

All participants agreed that it was desirable for senior managers to model behaviour when interacting with teachers in the staffroom. Sophie reflected the mood with her comment “what we are sets the tone for our students and what they [senior managers] are sets the tone for us”. Sophie’s statement can be interpreted in the light of perspectives presented by authors such as Kindlon and Thompson (2000), who working in North American schools
noted that administrators presented a narrative to teachers which set precedents and limits for behaviour in the staffroom. At the start of Chapter 6, Stan recorded his observation that the staffroom rather than a classroom defined his workplace and so provided support for Kindlon and Thompson’s (2000) assertion that the professional reality for a teacher was defined by the cultural content of the staffroom rather than elsewhere. Directing attention to the staffroom, Rosenholtz (1991) stated that teachers learn how they are expected to behave from their managers and, identifying the importance of the emotional ambience in the staffroom, Bryk and Schneider (2003) affirmed that a healthy school has a staffroom that resonates with relational trust.

But participants did not always articulate relational trust when their comments were directed towards the administrators who frequented the staffroom. In lines 555-559 of extract 16 Gemma noted apprehension when summoned to the office of a school manager. Carl concurred, reflecting that during the time between a telephone call or email from a manager and a meeting he developed “a whole ball of emotions . . . I think that’s very unfair”. Carl is noted in Chapter 5 as acknowledging that senior managers tended to keep staffroom personnel “at arms’ length”. These statements from Gemma and Carl can be interpreted in the light of Gouldner’s (1959) observation that a workforce may perceive their bureaucracy as punitive and punishment-centred when one side initiates and enforces rules for everyone. Gouldner’s findings were not sourced from a school but the sentiment applied to the experience that Gemma and Carl anticipated when called for by administrators. Seth’s statement recorded in Chapter 5 provided some context for their unease, as rather than “taking care of the lost sheep” [rehabilitation], a colleague had been “shot” [contract terminated]. To be recognised as a particular type of person, a series of relationships have to exist (Gee, 2001) and although subject to the passage of time and context, these relationships involve emotional attachment or disengagement (Britzman, 1993). The finding from the
comments of Carl and Gemma indicated that at the time of interviewing, there was a lack of
relational trust (Bryk & Schneider, 2003) between themselves and the administrators to
which they were directly accountable. This lack of trust had created a schism referred to as an
“us and them” situation by Gemma and Bella.

Participants identified their feelings about the schism in specific ways. Molly reported
that “the powers that be may give you a nod or a ‘yeah, we’re thinking about you’, but there’s
no warmth in that. There’s a message that ‘well, our business is to get on with our job; you
need to get on with your job”. Molly referred to a lack of warmth from administrators but
Angelique, along with others identified appreciation and support as the emotional elements
sought from superiors. Angelique declared that “this appreciation doesn’t come from
administration even though they keep saying it; I feel like its lip service . . . appreciation is
shown, it’s not just spoken”. Hargreaves (2001b) identified appreciation, acknowledgement,
personal support and social acceptance as the arbiters when seeking to establish cooperation
and trust with colleagues. He used the notion of moral distance to identify the contrast
between personal closeness achieved because of support and appreciation and lack of
closeness due to conflicting purposes resulting in feelings of being misunderstood,
undervalued or threatened as in Carl and Gemma’s situation.

The findings from this section agree with those of Kelchtermans (2005) and Zembylas
(2003) who both stated that teachers experience vulnerability in their workplace and need
support to prosper. In the lateral relationships section of this chapter, data analysis revealed
that support was sought through collegial relationships with peers. For the majority of the
participants support from superiors was lacking. This lack had consequences. Extract 17
details Trish’s sense of vulnerability and her requirement for support from her administrative
colleagues

Extract 17 (Trish): “I need them to encourage me”
I need them to encourage me when I’m feeling the weight of my responsibilities. I need them to remind me that I’m not doing this by myself, that I do everything with God’s help, or, how they treat me reminds me how I need to support the people around me.

Agreeing with Sophie’s implication in the opening part of this segment, Trish links her capability to support others with the support that she is shown from the administration team. Jo (2014) reported a similar finding stating that teacher commitment was associated with the quality of the relationships that administrators maintained with their staff members. Trish’s comment relates to teacher commitments to each other. She observed, “They’ve become a bit more selfish and self-centred as they’re focused on their own survival and they don’t feel they’ve got the resources to help and share with people who really need them”.

Commenting about the younger, less experienced members of staff, she said; “I can feel them climb into their bubble; they just want to cope with what they have to do and nothing else”.

These statements comply with those of Jo (2014) who reported that teacher commitment improved in a high school when administrators moved away from direct supervision to indirect facilitation thereby enabling staff to manage their workload and move beyond satisfying their own immediate needs towards helping others as well.

**The dispensation of favour by senior managers towards staff members.**

The findings provided so far in this chapter have indicated an unevenness and dislocation of contact and relationship between staffroom occupants and senior managers. Participants identified that the asymmetry in contact had resulted in colleagues being treated differently by administrators. Jessie, for example, called himself one of the “golden boys” acknowledging that informal, personal relationships with members of the administration team gave him access to knowledge and resources and the input of his own ideas which was
unavailable to many of his colleagues. Participants, including Jessie, voiced concern over the existence of administrative favourites residing in the staffroom. They deemed that their presence caused unrest as favourites were able to operate using a different set of rules to other teachers, a situation recognised by Miskel and Hoy (2001) as typical when an informal management structure operates alongside a more formal structure.

The school values were a common set of principles that were posted in each class room and acted as a guide for classroom behaviour. They were part of the formal, moral framework for adult and student conduct in the school. Reflecting on the content of a printed copy of the school values [see Appendix A], Joe commented

Extract 18 (Joe): “People get treated differently”

337 There’s probably not as much justice as there should be. I think people get treated differently within the school, by Admin. Just depending on their role or their position or how long they’ve been here. I think you can tell the obvious favourites pretty quickly, especially with things like the allocation of rosters.

Joe implied that the school values were not acknowledged and implemented universally across the school as shown in the way that administrators behaved towards the staff community. With reference to the list of values, Stan commented, “any good school would have them” and reinforcing their general applicability Stan stated “in fact, the local pizza shop could have them . . . HR [that is, Human Resource] issues, love, justice, you know”. Jeff and Bella provided some insight into the relational ramifications of the operation of favouritism in the staffroom

Excerpt 19 (Jeff): “The place is like mirrors”

60 The place is like mirrors; I think in many ways, it reflects a lot.
Like, admin reflects into this place here and the relationships here are the fabric of this culture. They might not be actually here, but they influence the interaction, because of who they favour or who they are giving more time to or who they’re empowering or whatever. Admin choose the people that they’re the most comfortable with, others get pushed to the side.

Extract 20 (Bella): “There are lots of favourites”

I really feel that certain people can get away with things and other people can’t. There’s lots of favourites going on, and that pits people against each other, but nothing is said about it. Things are said behind peoples’ backs, but not directly to the person.

Conclusions made by A. Lee and Nie (2013, 2014) regarding teacher empowerment offer a means of understanding the comments provided by Jeff and Bella. A. Lee and Nie (2013) contend that teacher’s feel empowered or disempowered depending on how they perceive the behaviour of those to whom they are accountable. A. Lee and Nie (2014) maintained that teachers needed to feel psychologically empowered before they could endeavour to change their work related outcomes. Jeff’s comment [line 64] suggested that he recognised that some of his colleagues were receiving opportunities for professional growth and that such “patronage” (Rhodes & Brundrett 2009, p. 390) was, at least in part, earned using subjective [comfort] rather than objective criteria. Bella alluded to 17th century cock and dog fights to illustrate how teachers pursuing career development vied with each other. In these cases, what Hargreaves (1994) called contrived collegiality employing emotional labour (Hochschild, 1979) would inevitably exist. Jo (2014) provided useful insight noting that
“calculated exchanges” (p.124) would replace any meaningful, positive emotional links in such circumstances. The timing and placement of these events had a direct effect on the quality of the emotional climate of the staffroom (Gross, 2010; Jarzabkowski, 2000).

Reporting about the challenges that teachers faced when seeking to develop professionally, Day, Elliot, & Kington, (2005) found that teachers upheld their professional commitment but, if they felt as Jeff said “pushed to the side” their organisational commitment waned and they sought a job elsewhere. Rhodes and Brundrett discovered that two of the most common hindrances for inclusion into the leadership “talent pool” (p. 390) noted by teachers in their studies were favouritism and closed decision making and a culture of “them and us” (Rhodes & Brundrett, 2009, p. 390). The statements from Jeff and Bella indicated some level of disenchantment, a situation that Hargreaves and Fink (2006) suggested could be countermanded with an open, accessible whole school professional development policy.

This section on hierarchical relationships has identified participant views on the input that senior managers made into the relational aspect of collegial life in this staffroom. It is clear that the bureaucratic organisation of the school was highly centralised with teachers’ work strongly systemised and individual teachers held accountable for their personal productivity. Participants sought more support and affirmation from senior management. The findings reported in this segment confirm that the actions of senior managers were an influence on staffroom relationships. Participants sought better physical, professional and emotional connectivity with their bosses and also desired impartiality in the way that hierarchical relationships were conducted.

**Lateral Relationships**

Chapter 6 and the first part of Chapter 7 have provided information on the forces in play that molded the lateral relationships accounted for in the staffroom. Physical space, personal space and bureaucratic expediency have all been shown to feature and their effect on agency
and affectivity has emerged from the words of the participants. This section on lateral
relationships is divided into three parts. The first part examines emotional labour and
identifies the situations where participants felt they most needed to use it. Next, personal
relationships are examined followed by small group relationships. Two types of small group
were identified.

**Emotional labour.**

The concept of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1979) was readily understood by participants
metaphorically as a “mask” that they wore. They appreciated the appropriateness of showing
acceptable emotion rather than felt emotion (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993) in the classroom
and, whilst not using the terminology, comprehended the classroom as a frontstage (Goffman,
Gemma for example declared “going back to what I was taught at university. In education,
you walk into a classroom and you’re an actor on a stage; you put on a different mask”. Stan
agreed with this attitude stating, “I think being professional is about wearing the mask, or
modifying your behaviour because of the setting you’re in”. Participants also realised that
acting a role in the classroom exerted a toll on their emotional reserves. Molly declared “if
you’ve got a six-period day, the mask has a tendency to fall away at some point, because we
get tired and we get tired of putting up that mask all the time”.

Because of this emotional exertion, participants conceded that it was much less
desirable to use emotional labour in the staffroom. Evidence has been presented in Chapter 6
and the beginning of this chapter that confirms that the staffroom space itself and the impact
of an authoritative administrative regime caused the necessity of obeying, at least sometimes,
feeling and display rules (Hochschild, 1979) and respecting emotional silences (Zembylas,
2005) which intruded into the emotional equanimity of participants. The “illness, tiredness
and blow-ups” previously recorded from one of Gemma’s statements are indicative of
personal emotional schisms (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993) when participants were unable to relax and recuperate and display authentic emotional displays in the staffroom. Hochschild (2003) identified the continuation of such a schism as causing an emotional dissonance that lead to symptoms of stress in the individual.

Gemma was one of the participants who felt unable to “let my guard down completely” in the staffroom due to trust issues with some of her colleagues. She opined that if she did, it may “generate some sort of attack”. Gemma had at least one trusted friend in the staffroom but her unease centred on finding a safe, private place where “I can have a completely open and honest conversation without others listening in”. Gemma’s comments indicated that the “us and them” attitude towards administrators also existed sometimes between members of the staffroom community. The analysis of data in this section recognises what Brotheridge and Grandey (2002) called employee-focused emotional labour where the regulation of emotional expression was necessary between work colleagues. One of the bonds that appeared to help gel some relationships, including possibly the one above, was gossip and its significance as a force that established a line between insiders and outsiders (Kurland & Pelled, 2010) in the staffroom is discussed next.

Kurland and Pelled (2010) noted that gossip helps people to feel that they belong and brings people together who share common interests and views. It is part of the forms of association (Hargreaves, 1994) engaged in by the staff community. This explanation implies that reference and membership groups (Nias, 1989a) are capable of and, in part, are bonded by gossip. Despite the negative connotation, gossip can be positive as well as negative (Grosser, Lopez-Kidwell & Labianca, 2010) although negative gossip requires a close friendship group with a higher level of trust between members (Grosser et al., 2010). In lines 250/251 of extract 20, it was negative gossip that Bella identified as a destructive influence to her emotional well-being and her need to use employee-focused emotional labour in the
staffroom. Hargreaves (2002) concurred, identifying negative gossip as “communication betrayal” (p. 393) and an “emotional enemy” (p. 405) to the well-being of the teacher community. Some participants reported the importance of expressing their feelings to their sense of well-being but felt inhibited by the cultural form (Hargreaves, 1994) of the staffroom. Sophie stated “Yes, the ones who tend to swing emotionally are the ones that, behind their backs, get talked about the most . . . it’s not that people who are emotional are not coping; it’s a way of coping”. Holly called this way of coping her “regrouping” mechanism and something that she did away from the staffroom. The participants who viewed themselves as vulnerable to evaluative statements over their emotionality can be considered to be engaged in a form of reputational warfare (Hallett, Harger & Eder, 2009) with their colleagues and participant talk revealed that the situation threatened the quality of some of the social bonds between colleagues. Consistent with the evaluative nature of gossip, Turcotte (2012) maintained that to escape being the subject of gossip, a person must adhere to group norms, something that Bella, Gemma, Sophie and Holly recognised and something that caused them to expend emotional labour in order to fit in with the group dynamics of the staffroom.

**Relationships comprising two people.**

The section on emotional labour has identified the consequences of constraints and pressures that influenced lateral relationships in the staffroom. Participants, however, also shared many incidences of their appreciation of strong, positive forms of collegiality and this segment and the first part of the next segment analyse data from participants concerning emotionally beneficial relationships. Most participants had developed a strong bond with a particular member of staff. Carl and Amber, Carl and Brendan, and Jessie and Stan for example, spoke about the strong cross-departmental friendship that they shared. Holly was specific about why her strong friendship with a colleague worked so well. In addition to a shared interest in
Information Technology she had aligned herself with someone who was not a “whinger”, who “worked hard” and was “grateful that they had a job”. Extract 21 provides an example of a departmental friendship and Extract 22 relates to an inter-departmental friendship. In each case, the friendship is not part of a group friendship; Jeff and Trish speak about the influence of one colleague in their daily working life

**Extract 21 (Jeff): “So easy to get on with”**

297 I have a really good relationship with Brianna . . . So easy to get on with. It was really easy to work with her and we could sound off, you know? And we could say what we thought [laughs]. Totally honest with each other . . . Because, you know, we both think the same way.

299 She’s from a country town, both from the same university, have a lot in common, both pretty non-fluffy people [laughs]. So, she was very easy, very accommodating and just good fun.

**Extract 22 (Trish): “I got a lot of emotional support from him last year”**

7 I think we’ve partly connected because… beyond our subject areas, in some ways, we are on the same page. We’re both very down-to-earth, straightforward people, we both care a lot about the kids. And I just think we clicked because of that. I got a lot of emotional support from him last year. Just a smile, or a silly joke, something about one of the kids, … there was an understanding. It was almost like an emotional, or a spiritual understanding that we were looking out for each other.

Jeff highlighted the way in which congeniality (Barth, 2006) cemented his departmental ties with Brianna. There was no indication that toxicity formed part of the
relationship and although there were factors that could have separated them [age, gender, adult life experience], it was the factors that they had in common [education and origin], plus fun that maintained emotional equanimity between the two. Trish and her colleague had no departmental ties but again she identified the attributes [attitude to life and professional care] that bound them together to create what Harris and Anthony (2001) called emotionally supportive collegiality. In line 13 she stressed the importance of the congenial input from her colleague in the form of sharing, trust and support; attributes identified by Hargreaves (1994) as those necessary for a strong collaborative culture in a staff group. In both the examples, the professional and personal life of each participant was enhanced by a specific relationship that they maintained with a colleague. Trish’s colleague in particular highlighted that fact that emotional work was not simply directed towards the care of students but, as suggested by a number of authors (Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Chang, 2009; Gallant, 2013; Näring et al., 2012) also enhanced collegial relationships.

**Small group relationships in the staffroom.**

All participants acknowledged affiliation with departmental and pastoral groups as part of their professional roles in the school. These groups created a series of sub-cultures (Hargreaves, 1994) in the staffroom and participants understood that the perspective of the group influenced their attitude towards professional issues and decisions made in the school. From this perspective, all of the participants belonged to at least two [one departmental and one pastoral] reference group (Nias, 1989a) and as postulated by Sherif (1953), participants gained a degree of group identity from these reference groups. Seven participants recognised association with other groups that involved social activities and a greater degree of affective connection than reference groups. Nias (1989a) called such groups membership groups and the next part of this segment analyses the importance of membership groups as contributors to the emotional well-being of participants.
Small groups as sources of friendship.

Holly summed up her view of the situation by stating “there are lots of groups in the staffroom and you find your place”. Holly identified one of her membership groups as being with the people close to her work station. She commented “you know we definitely share more, emotionally, with each other. I know those people, what’s going on in their lives, their private lives, whereas the people down the other end, I wouldn’t know”. Holly’s experience with her near neighbours can be understood through Hargreaves (2001b) concept of emotional geographies. Spatial closeness had created an environment of sharing and emotional understanding between colleagues. Holly’s words reflected the importance of congeniality (Barth, 2006) and emotionally supportive collegiality (Harris & Anthony, 2001). That physical proximity had helped to engender. Holly’s experience is reflected by Lasky’s (2000) observation that infrequency of interaction, caused by geographic distance can prevent more intimate levels of social, professional and emotional connections. Similar to the experiences noted by O’Boyle (2000) and Jarzabkowski (2000) participants noted belonging to membership groups that related to gender or age. Brendan commented, “All the teachers here that are close to my age . . . I’m quite friendly with them and I do interact quite well with them and they are very friendly and supportive”. Joe also belonged to a friendship group defined by age and sporting interests. He affirmed “Like, if they’re one of my friends, then I’ll probably work harder for them, if you see that they are struggling . . . or doing an activity, then I’ll probably try harder to assist with that”.

Unlike Holly, some participants were not thwarted by the geography of the staffroom. Stan, for example, commented that “I tend to associate probably more with people from other faculties, that’s where my mates are”. Membership to this group was not confined to the professional and physical geographies (Hargreaves 2001b) of the staffroom but was consolidated by wider emotional geographies occupying the personal, moral and cultural
realms (Hargreaves, 2001b). The extract below demonstrated how Stan’s friendship group operated for him.

**Extract 23 (Stan): “The sort of stuff that mates do for each other”**

930  in this setting, we’ve got this opportunity where we can click with
931  people that might be 30 metres away, in terms of where they sit. But,
932  you know that they’re on your side, they’ll back you and as happened,
933  last Friday I had to go, could not stay to do my Friday duty. And I just
934  went down to Peggy and laid it on the table to her. “Can you…?
935  And she said, “Yep, go for it.” Now, that’s the sort of stuff that mates
936  do for each other.

Hargreaves (2001b) noted that “collegial relations are a peculiar combination of closeness and distance” (p. 504) and the examples above reinforce the importance of belonging to a membership group for the participants. Molly illustrated this importance by stating “if we’ve got friends at school that you want to spend time with, your relationships within the staffroom is a lot different, you actually look forward to coming to work to actually see those people, because that’s a positive part of your life”.

**Small groups as sources of power – cliques.**

There was a second type of membership group identified by participants as wielding micro-political power in the staffroom which they called cliques. Blasé (1988) recognised micro-political power as the pursuance of “preferred outcomes” (p. 113) and the dictionary definition of a clique is “a small close-knit group of people who do not readily allow others to join them” (Merriam-Webster, 2015, p. 125). Participant talk was analysed using these statements as starting points. Busher & Barker (2003) noted that an asymmetrical distribution of power in the staffroom community was a pre-requisite to the creation of cliques and Hargreaves (1994) reported that high school staffrooms became balkanised when there were
power struggles between different groups; a situation often instigated and maintained by unequal treatment from administrators. Hargreaves (1994) attached balkanised tendencies to the defensiveness and resistance to change endemic in departmental “cubbyholes” (p.28) scattered around a high school. Although such cubbyholes did not exist in this school, data analysis in this chapter has already identified a strong administrative influence in the staffroom and the concept of a balkanised staffroom community proved to be valuable when assessing the role of cliquish relationships.

One clique group was called the “Boys Club”. Some members of the Boys Club had worked at the school from its foundation and the group was recognised by all participants. The group comprised of a mixed gender group, including senior managers and three “golden children” including Jessie who has previously identified himself as a “golden boy”. The group had status, power to make decisions, was fairly exclusive and in Carl’s words “a little judgmental”. Angelique ascertained that this group maintained a “let’s stick together” mentality which influenced policies of procedure in the school including promotional appointments. Her conclusion was that “there’s nowhere for anybody to get in and break that thing, you know, appointments, because it’s a cliquey little group”.

Although two of the “golden children” were fairly new, they were recognised as “ins” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 231) by participants. Carl observed that other new-comers, not favoured so demonstrably by the administrative team were left to “swim helplessly on their own”. Amber was such a new-comer identifying her situation as that of a “not-in” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 231). She recognised “alliances” between some of her mentoring colleagues and members of the Club which made it difficult for her to seek help about sensitive issues. Other, more established and experienced participants were not so intimidated by these alliances obtaining support and affirmation from elsewhere (O’Boyle, 2000, Tsang
2014), although there was an acceptance that Boys Club members helped to form the “mirrors” mentioned by Jeff in Extract 19.

The second clique group was essentially a departmentally mixed friendship group of predominantly younger, highly motivated teachers who, through a combination of professional and personal affiliation had gained favour with administrators and was metaphorically referred to as the “A Team”, alluding to the fictitious American action-adventure TV series. One of the golden children from the Boy’s Club also belonged to this group plus two other, different staff members who were also deemed to be golden children. Participants observed that members of the A Team were treated differently by administrators, echoing the disquiet recorded earlier in this chapter when the incidence of favouritism was discussed. Participants claimed that members of the A Team received enhanced professional opportunities, not always commensurate with their skills or experience. Gemma stated “when you’re in the staffroom you can pick, if there’s a vacancy, who is going to get that vacancy. It is very clear cut, you sort of feel, is there any point to putting your hand up or putting your hat in the ring”. The A Team were not unlike the “cabal” (p366) detected by Riseborough (1981) in a British comprehensive school as the A Team showed undoubted allegiance to the purposes and plans of the administrative body of the school, for which they were rewarded and their existence influenced the quality of lateral staffroom relationships.

Comments from two participants also implied that members of the A Team carried a high emotional load as part of their work schedule. Both participants spoke about their protective input into the operation of the A Team. Sophie commented “there is a lot of power play in this place” and identified herself as a member of The A Team which qualified her as an “insider” or as an “ins” (p.231) in Hargreaves (1994) terms but she accepted that she was not one of the golden children. She acknowledged that the presence of The A Team exacerbated the existence of an emotional, social and professional “us and them” in the
staffroom although she assumed a protective “gatekeeper” role towards them, using physical string ropes] means to separate them from the rest of the staffroom at times when deadlines or some other form of professional stress happened. Molly also identified herself as linked to the A Team in a “mothering” role although she noted that “it isn’t safe around The A Team due to their links with senior managers”.

Participants understood that the friendship group identified as The A Team was hard-working, professionally positive and collaborative. Authors such as Jeffrey and Woods (1996), Lasky (2005) and J. Lee and Yin (2011) have suggested that a group like the A Team sustains its members through interdependent, supportive relationships and the closed ranks lock out any sense of threat from other colleagues. Their existence was also encouraged by the unequal, preferential treatment afforded to them by the administration team, a situation identified by researchers (Goodison, 2013; Lacey, 2012) as a cause for some disruption amongst teacher peer relationships. The two cliques contributed towards the emotional milieu of the staffroom as their presence tended to divide the staff group rather than unite it and a degree of micro-political power was bestowed to each group and to the individual members that was unavailable to non-members.

The content of this chapter has helped to answer the research questions in this case study concerning the use of emotional labour and the conditions that foster and constrain emotional understanding by participants in the staffroom. Chapter 8 is the final chapter of this study. Using the research questions as guidelines, it draws together the key findings. There are also sections on the limitations and implications for policy and practice as well as suggestions for future research stemming from the study.
Chapter 8 - Conclusions and Future Directions

*Feelings are just self-evidently part of the experience of being a teacher (Kelchtermans, 2005, p. 995)*

This chapter provides a set of conclusions that can be elicited from the content of Chapters 6 and 7. As discussed in Chapter 3, the study focussed specifically on the domain of the staffroom and so excluded the impact of relationships that teachers had with others, such as students or parents who did not use the staffroom. As sometime visitors to the staffroom, the influence of senior managers on teacher affectivity was included. Additionally, the participants were busy at the time of data collection. Their busyness was due to centrally-imposed curriculum reform [Australian Curriculum] and updating of and newly introduced pastoral and supervisory duties. As noted by researchers such as Datnow (2011) and Wiebe and MacDonald (2014) such reforms and initiatives were not unusual in the high schools of western countries at this time and their influence on teacher affectivity was included.

**Introduction to the Main Conclusions of this Study**

This study found that the staffroom constituted a type of community with a series of relational networks contained within it. As described in Chapter 1, following the guidelines of Dunbar (2010), there were relationships of varying degrees of intensity that served a variety of functions for the occupants. The staffroom had been created to aid the collaborative efforts of staff members but the close proximity and overlapping of spaces for social, work-related and recuperative activities blurred emotional and relational boundaries and formed a context of vulnerability for participants. The significance that this research has made to the field of emotionality in staffrooms is summarised below using each research question to contextualise the conclusions presented. The latter part of the chapter identifies the
limitations of the study, implications for policy and practice and signposts directions for future research.

**Research Question 1: What do teachers feel about staffroom relationships?**

Supporting the findings of Day and Leitch (2001), participants noted the importance of the staffroom as a workplace; however, the professional lives of the participants were heavily influenced by the social and micro-political cultures that resided there. Participants identified their sense of place by using emotional words such as “helping” and “sharing”. Additionally, participants sought the emotionally safe and secure relationships reported by Datnow (2011) and the mutual trust and emotional encouragement detected by M. Shah (2011) in her research. Harris and Anthony (2001) reported that a supportive environment could be superficial and only personal and intensive relationships led to any form of teacher enhancement. A conclusion from this study differs slightly from that of Harris and Anthony in that participants reported that all forms of positive collegial relationships that were supportive, rewarding and stimulating contributed to the meaning and perceived value of a teachers’ professional life. Both the “strong ties” and “weak ties” (p. 511) identified by Little (1990b) added to the context of emotional well-being amongst teachers. Participant voices in this study affirmed that collaboration [job-related actions] and collegiality [quality of a variety of relationships] “constitute and reflect each other” (Kelchtermans, 2006, p. 221) that is, the way in which individuals work together is facilitated by the quality of the relationships that they share. Additionally, data from this current study affirmed congeniality and friendliness (Barth, 2006) as important components of both social and professional relationships in the staffroom.

This current study has highlighted the fact that collegiality imposes different conditions for emotional display at different times and that a staffroom contains a matrix of complex emotional sites that are subject to change and redefinition. Participants identified
influences on collegial relationships from cultural, micro-political and spatial/time organisational contexts. This finding brings together work from both Hargreaves (1994) and Blase (1991) and authors such as Goffman (1959), Lefebvre (1991) and McGregor (2000, 2002, 2003, 2004b). The data revealed the presence of forms of association and pattern of relationship as described by (Hargreaves 1994) of individualism, collaboration and contrived collegiality, and micro-political factors had created a balkanised staffroom community (Hargreaves 1994).

Space and time also influenced the quality of relationships. Teacher feelings, including those of managers, for example, were harmonised as joint partakers when the staffroom was used for a single activity to which everyone shared the same attitude. Although not well-equipped for the activity, daily worships were the most frequently occurring example where social relations “projected themselves into a space, becoming inscribed there and in that process producing the space itself (Lefebvre, 1991, p.129). The rest of this section expands on these conclusions by looking at the blurring of boundaries and teacher vulnerability in the staffroom.

Not all activities in the staffroom were as harmonious as daily worships and morning tea. Different types of relationship needed different spatial requirements if they were to proceed for the full benefit of the people involved. The staffroom in this study had been provided by the school administrative authorities as a place suitable for teacher collegiality, especially collaboration to take place. As stated by Rosenholtz (1991) and Kinman et al (2011) the provision of such a space indicated the organisational expectation for the way in which teachers would interact during non-contact times. Evidence from this study indicated an inconsistency between organisational and personal/individual expectations on this matter.

Firstly, there was the simple division between “work” and “no work” (Ben-Peretz & Schonmann 2000, p. 67) areas. Participants desired work areas for strategic and elective
individualism (p. 172) practices as described by Hargreaves (1994). Extracts 3-6 in particular indicated that the 5 requirements noted by Hargreaves for collaborative work were in place but participants sometimes required alone time not collaborative time. A conclusion from this study is that, during non-contact time, individualised space is required for teachers to attend to daily professional matters. Interpretation of data from this study also confirmed that non-contact spaces should include Goffman (1959)-like backstage areas where impression-management to an audience is unnecessary. These spaces should be separated from the quiet work spaces. Stan’s request for a series of “break-out spaces” indicated that one space is insufficient for everyone’s restorative and resting needs and spaces for relaxation need to be segregated according to different levels of noise and amounts of activity that can be generated in each one.

Teachers requested a place for solitude and retreat as part of their backstage (Goffman, 1959) area. This conclusion accords with that of Clanfield and Foord (2008) and Hargreaves (1994). Rimé (2007) affirmed that teachers need space to recover from emotional episodes that have probably happened outside the staffroom. Participant talk confirmed that a combination of rules and norms which described the cultural content and form (Hargreaves, 1994) of the staffroom precluded any emotional outbursts happening there. A refuge is a space that in Lefebvre (1991) terms needed to be reclaimed as part of the staffroom for the emotional well-being of the staff community. This conclusion concurs with Zerubavel (1985) who stated that there will be times in a teacher’s life when any form of public engagement, including that with fellow teachers is inappropriate. At that time, the emotional needs of the teacher will be wholly private and will require a suitable space.

The lack of definitive boundaries for some forms of teacher relationship, including solitude was one of the causes of balkanisation in the staffroom space. Evidence has been presented in Chapter 6 and 7 detailing the physical, cultural, political, and psychological
boundaries that teachers created for themselves as they strove to manage their non-contact space. The next section of this chapter draws conclusions by considering vulnerability as a context that helps to define educational relationships.

This study agrees with the findings of Kelchtermans (2005) that vulnerability is not an emotion as posited by Lasky (2005) but is part of a structural condition that describes relationships between teachers. Kelchtermans (2005) focussed on the vulnerability that a teacher has with his/her students but this study concludes that the staffroom is also a place of vulnerability for a teacher. This study agrees with an inclusion from Hargreaves that teacher vulnerability is linked to feelings produced from an individuals’ perception of individual physical safety and/or psychological security in a given situation (Hargreaves, 1998a).

A participant’s sense of vulnerability in the staffroom evoked both positive and negative emotions. Findings in Chapters 6 and 7 note a variety of emotional reactions to situations where teachers sensed personal vulnerability in the staffroom. The contexts for participants revolved around feelings of power and powerlessness [as identified by Hargreaves (1998b)], being supported or threatened and the degree to which the participant felt in control of processes for which they were responsible and/or accountable. This study has identified a number of coping strategies that participants used to protect their emotional status in vulnerable situations. Agreeing with the research of Blase (1988), this study concluded that participants made behavioural and attitudinal adjustments that were either reactive [to protect themselves from others] or pro-active [to influence others]. Physical separation via some sort of barrier was a particular contribution made by this study that is not identified by Blase. Other reactive responses from participants were principally those of acquiescence and conformity, both of which carry a negative emotional burden. Participants noted passive aggressive [gossiping] and ingratiating [from the golden children] behaviour from their colleagues. These behaviours although reactionary are also recognised as
protective mechanisms and provide evidence to confirm the conclusion that the staffroom operated as a balkanised community. One participant (Jeff, extract 8) admitted to the directly pro-active behaviour of confrontation. It is important to emphasise that not all vulnerabilities evoked negative emotional responses. Content in extracts 3, 5, 6, 10, 17, 21, 22 and 23 all contain evidence of participants embracing and educating positive emotionality from vulnerable staffroom contexts. Many participants exercised a degree of diplomacy in their relationships which relates directly to the use of emotional labour and emotional work and is discussed in the next section of this chapter.

**Research Question 2: How often do staff members feel the need to use emotional labour with their colleagues in the staffroom?**

This research has identified that emotional work was an important constituent of emotionally positive and supportive collegial relationships. A number of activities mentioned by participants’ were interpreted as deeds or attitudes that actively provided friendship, care and support to fellow colleagues. This research agrees with W. Kahn (1998) who acknowledged that collegial support and offering help included being emotionally present for others. Statements in extracts 5, 6, 21, 22 and 23 in particular reinforce that participants supported each other in this way. Hochschild (1993) posited that helping to manage others emotions are a form of collegial emotional labour. She theorised that its purpose was to help someone else cope with unwanted emotional episodes. Evidence from this study [extract 22 for example], suggests that helping others to manage their emotions can also be a form of emotional work shared by friends.

Participants in this study identified their use of client-centred emotional labour as described by Hochschild (1983) when dealing with students and parents and viewed emotional control in these situations as a natural part of their professional obligation. The behavioural adjustments noted previously led participants, on occasions to use “colleague-
focussed emotional labour” (Jarzabkowski 2000, p. 242) with some of the contexts that they encountered with colleagues in the staffroom. This type of emotional labour represents a refinement of Hochschild’s original definition of the term and is aligned closely with Brotheridge and Grandey’s (2002) employee focussed emotional labour. The findings from this study confirmed that exercising emotional labour in this way, unlike emotional work, was transactional and caused more stress to participants as they felt the need for its constant implementation and readjustment of their natural patterns of behaviour.

This research brings to prominence the significant issues between colleagues that engendered the use of emotional labour including the use of emotional silences and emotional rules (Hargreaves, 1994). Participants’ comprehended that self-regulation of behaviour aided the avoidance of conflict between colleagues. This awareness from participants concurs with Hochschild’s (1993) original statement about the ability that emotional labour has to manage the emotions of other people. Participants also stated that using emotional labour had a selfish motive, as presenting a certain front (Goffman, 1959) could ingratiate one person to another. Evidence is presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 that conclusively indicates that some of the relationships in the staffroom lacked authenticity and led to various forms of contrived collegiality and contributed to the balkanisation of the staff community (Hargreaves 1994).

Participants also conceded a limitation to their influence in the staffroom because of what they called “big” [Jessie] or “dominant” [Seth] personalities. In this study participants retreated to deeper, less emotionally exhausting relationships in reference, friendship and clique groups, and used the geography of the staffroom to evade challenging personalities or situations. The latter part of this conclusion is affirmed by Fineman who stated that some places provide an “amnesty from normal emotional labours” (Fineman, 1996, p. 556).

The general emotional milieu of the staffroom was pleasant and subdued. Stan captured the essence of thought from participants on this matter when he said “I think we’ve
got a culture that has now arrived at a place where we have dumbed down our relationships to
the point of jovial, . . . there are some pockets of the staffroom that probably engage better
than others but basically we exist at a level of contrived joviality”. In her case study school
Shapiro (2010) referred to her staffroom as a “safe but shallow” environment where
interaction was regulated to be non-confrontational and as emotionally non-taxing as
possible. The findings in this study have resulted in a similar conclusion to that of Shapiro.
The incidence of emotional labour in the staffroom was not just fabricated by the incumbent
teachers. There were two external influences whose impact is detailed in the conclusions
relating to Research Question 3.

**Research Question 3: What conditions foster or constrain the emotional
experiences of the staff in their non-contact time?**

The conclusions stated within the boundaries of this research question relate to the combined
influence on staffroom relationships of a highly bureaucratic administrative system at a time
of educational reform. Administrative management procedures contributed to the splintered,
balkanised and contrived (Hargreaves 1994) condition of some staff relationships and the
frequent use of emotional labour (Hochschild 1983) between colleagues. Change and reform
were introduced in a way that caused power struggles between staff and emotionally
conflicting responses towards administrators. Participant comments echoed the sentiment that
they wanted their managers to “exhibit a sincere and broad interest in teachers as human
beings” (Blase, 1993, p. 152).

Teachers in this case study preferred a professional pattern of authority (Miskel &
Hoy, 2001) rather than the bureaucratic structure that was in place. They asked that
administrators modelled, implicitly and explicitly, the actions that exemplified the teacher
behaviour that the school organisation expected from them. At the time of data collection,
participants perceived incongruence between published school values that were inculcated to
the children and administrative behaviour towards the staff. Rather than being enforcers of behaviour that resulted in fears of surveillance and punishment, participants requested a consistent and demonstrated set of values that united the school and helped to dismantle the physical, cultural and psychological barriers that hindered productive collegiality in the staffroom.

Middle managers resided in the staffroom and largely speaking were not part of the decision making process for the school or for their subject areas. The action of Jessie in Extract 6 to undo an administrative decision was unusual but indicated that senior managers carried administrative burdens which, due to communication blockages, introduced hindrances to the smooth running of a teachers’ day. Senior managers were undoubtedly burdened by the workload that they carried and as noted by Sykes and Elmore (1989), a releasing of some duties to suitably skilled personnel would create time for managers to concentrate more on developing personal relationships and instructional leadership with colleagues. Data supplied in this case study agrees with Nias (1998) that praise and recognition were two interpersonal attributes most valued by teachers. Participants believed that if managers were released from unnecessary duties time would be available to develop personal, authentic and reciprocal relationships with them that acknowledged the attributes of the individual. Participant talk agreed with reporting from Little (1990b) and regarded acknowledgement and celebration of individual and group achievements by managers to be an enabling practice that helped to unite the staff community.

As a demonstration of their preference for a professional pattern of authority (Miskel & Hoy, 2001), participants looked for a hierarchical structure and organisational rules that guided them and helped to solve problems rather than coerce and punish them. With such a structure in place, participants envisaged that a greater level of professional autonomy was possible improving their sense of self efficacy (Woolfolk-Hoy & Spero, 2005) towards the
contribution that they made to school goals. Participants believed that the present situation of restricted collegiality in the staffroom inhibited their opportunities for learning experiences, a situation described by Rosenholtz (1989) as a demonstration of a learning impoverished environment. Participants wanted more opportunities for ascribed autonomy (Clement & Vandenbergh, 2000) where they received time and authorisation to accomplish work and study projects alone. This desire aligns with Kelchtermans (2006) assertion that teacher outcomes benefit in a hierarchy that attributes a balance between autonomy and collegiality.

The contents of this segment of the chapter have shown that participants felt that a re-structuring of the school administrative system would have direct beneficial effects for the individual and for professional and social relationships in the staffroom. Their concern was that the system in place was discouraging and caused feelings that led to a sense of de-professionalising (Jeffrey, 2002; Jeffrey & Woods, 1996) for the individual and for groups of teachers. Participants clearly expressed a desire to re-connect their professional commitment with their organisational commitment as described by Day et al. (2005). They envisaged that a change in management structure would enable them to cope better with any externally imposed reforms and accountabilities. They understood that collegial relations are never completely free of conflicts (Nias 1999b) but their views aligned with those of Miskel and Hoy (2001) that if the allocation of work relating to external formal demands was more balanced with individual capabilities, problems could be viewed as opportunities rather than constraints.

In conclusion, this research has contributed new knowledge concerning the importance of teacher non-contact time to the emotional well-being of a teacher and how life in a high school staffroom contributes to an individual’s sense of professional efficacy. It has demonstrated the multi-faceted nature of collegial relationships and has provided an opportunity to appreciate the importance of non-work, congenial and friendly relationships as
well as those that are mainly work-focussed and collaborative. Relationships in the staffroom have been shown to be rich, complex and negotiated.

This research has provided an opportunity to re-conceptualise the influence on affectivity that the availability of space at different times for different functions both professional and recreational, has on the emotional life of a teacher. Additionally, this research has added to the broader picture of how the deployment of employee-focussed and job-focussed emotional labour and emotional work influences the affectivity of a teacher during their non-contact time. Finally, the outworking of the school administration system has been shown to influence the quality of collegial relationships in a high school staffroom. Its operation facilitates the formation of some types of relationship and dissuades others; this dynamic has the power to unify or separate collegial relations.

Limitations, Implications for Policy and Practice and Future Research

The thesis was designed to look specifically at life in a staffroom for a group of high school teachers. The final part of Chapter 8 completes the project by identifying its limitations and then suggesting how the findings can be incorporated into future policy and practice initiatives. The chapter concludes with suggestions for future research that could follow on from these findings.

**Limitations of this research project.**

As a qualitative case study, the thesis is limited by the fact that the data was collected in one place within a time frame of about nine months. During this time, most participants were interviewed twice. The interviews were squeezed into mutually free times and there was an original plan for each participant to keep a diary. Time restraints made diary-keeping untenable and the idea was abandoned. Nonetheless, participants were generous with their time and provided data from which this thesis has emerged.
The focus of the analysis had to be narrow and other influences on teacher emotion such as that of the teacher-student relationship, the parents of students and the personal lives of teachers were marginalised. The decision made for the study was to take a pathway less trodden by others in educational research and focus on teacher emotion as experienced by what occurred in the staffroom between colleagues. What has materialised from this decision is a set of findings that can sit alongside and possibly influence the main concerns of other research into teacher emotion. The potential for engagement of these findings with that of other researchers is discussed in the future research part of this chapter.

**Implications for policy.**

There are two principal areas that this study has highlighted for review by policy makers. First of all, policy makers need to recognise the emotionality of a teacher’s life, including life outside the classroom. Positive emotions help to energise and enable a teacher towards a greater level of efficacy. Unfortunately, recent reforms have resulted in teacher burnout and increased levels of attrition in western countries. Policy makers have the opportunity to discover how emotions control a teachers’ sense of achievement and what they can do to reduce the levels of attrition, especially amongst young teachers.

Secondly, as pointed out by Bissell (2004) and Woolner (2010), the modern teacher has a diverse and complex role and spaces beyond the classroom are required for their non-contact time. Modern staffrooms do not reflect modern needs but teachers are influenced by the settings in which they work (Kainan, 1994). As identified by McGregor (2000) the staffroom has a central purpose in satisfying the out-of-classroom needs of the teacher. The provision of suitable staffrooms for teachers must be an agenda item for policy makers.

**Implications for practice.**

The results of this study were shared with the Principal of the case study school. The findings were passed on by him to a teacher group who had the remit to improve the working space of
the staff room. A copy of the communication is found in Appendix B. School principals also have the responsibility of facilitating the type of organisational culture that prevails in their institution. It is clear in this study that a restructuring of the means of administration would have a great benefit to the emotional well-being and professional productivity of the participants in this study.

If both policy and practice initiatives change regarding staffroom provision, then schools can be built that contain more appropriate non-contact spaces for teachers. Architectural firms can respond to policy initiatives laid down in Australia initially by the state government and can seek input from the school and local community. In the past, the changing needs of teachers in a school have not been recognised (Nair et al., 2013) but the content of this research has contributed three factors that should change school plans; teacher emotions in the staffroom matter, the adequate provision of non-contact teacher spaces is important and administrative structure in a school impinges into the non-contact life of teachers.

**Future Research**

Leaders’ feelings and views about life in the staffroom would be a natural extension to complement these findings. Similarly, the influence that parents and teacher-parents have on staffroom interaction would be beneficial. There are many different types of staffroom provision, including none at all, and so an endless supply of comparative studies is possible. In this study participants were treated as a single cohort but another area of investigation relates to how teachers behave during different stages of their career. Additionally research that investigates the link between high school teacher feelings and the perceptions of how time is prioritised and used in the staffroom will complement the findings from this study. Finally, the study was based in a faith school in Australia. A natural extension to this study includes collecting data from different types of faith and secular schools in Australia or
elsewhere, comparing and contrasting the impacts of different ideologies and geographies on teacher feelings and relationships.

The aim of this study is to make audible teachers’ voices over an aspect of their school life which has definitively been shown to matter to them very much. Teacher relationships and the emotions that underpin those relationships have a direct bearing on the real and the perceived efficacy with which teachers feel they carry out their duties. The final voice is given to Stan who, along with others, has contributed generously to this study. Asked why he valued the staffroom in this particular high school, he said

‘It’s about people who just connect and that sort of stuff. So, the brilliant part of this set-up is that, there’s the freedom to get to know people that you otherwise wouldn’t get to know. And I don’t mean ‘shake hand’ type get-to-know, but I mean shared experiences over a long period of time, good ones and bad ones, it’s shared experiences that create the professional and personal links. We’re in this together; we really matter to each other’.”
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10.1080/014119204200023723


Appendix A: School Values; Living in the School Community

- Hope
- Humility
- Love
- Forgiveness
- Appreciation
- Compassion
- Quality
- Justice
- Service
- Courage
Appendix B: Letter Sent to the Principal of the Case Study School

Dear X (Principal),

Hi there, I hope all is going well for you and that the school holidays have been productive and enjoyable.

I am some way into the analysis of the data that I collected for my doctorate qualification whilst at X and enclose a very brief statement on what appear to be the main findings elicited so far. I have heard that the staff room is being re-designed and thought that the points below may have some use in the planning process.

The title of my thesis is ‘Teacher relationships in a high school staff room’

Seventeen members of staff volunteered to participate and I have endeavoured to identify the key themes that run across the content of the interviews. Participants were asked to reflect on the culture of the staff room, the nature of the relationships that exist and factors that encourage and inhibit those relationships.

Brief summary of findings

Staff room culture

The majority of participants identified some benefits of a single staff room. There is an economic benefit as resources can be shared and it is possible to gain an understanding of individual needs and specific departmental pressures. It is possible to know all members of staff to some degree and this has a unifying influence. Support, collegial and collaborative, can be sought from a wider range of individuals than if confined to departmental offices.

Participants are in agreement concerning the professional and social expectations of staff room members. Interviewees felt an obligation to serve the school to the very best of their ability and to offer support when appropriate to each other. Staff room culture is seen as fixed and the status quo is inherited from the school’s development as well as from dominant personalities within the staff room, from senior staff members and from parents.

The history of the staff room especially affects newcomers. The general weakness of departmental ties has been compensated for by the creation of friendship groups and other affiliations that rendered difficulties for newcomers to ‘settle in’. The strong friendship groups are seen positively by others who deem them indispensable when individual support is required.

The staff room culture is often affected by stress and the majority of participants recognised that whilst everyone was ‘human with frailties’, it is unwise to display any weakness or be seen to make mistakes. Participants considered it ill-advised to bring emotional issues into the staff room and most acknowledged that they wear a mask to hide their true self. Many interpreted this action as displaying their ‘professional self’ which is necessary but the stress came from unfair expectations; being asked to perform at their best in a less than ideal environment. They concluded that wearing a ‘painted face’
is necessary to avoid discouragement that could easily spiral into negativity and loss of personal productivity.

The nature of the relationships
The staff room is a true community and the whole gamut of relationships is communicated within a confined place. Professional relationships dominate although participants felt that occupying one area dilutes departmental ties and the stress of belonging to multiple departments was exacerbated by the protective behaviours of HOFs and HOHs operating in one situation. The lack of personal space inhibits, but does not prevent, social contact which is deemed very important.
Participants feel professional and emotional distance from others who are housed elsewhere. This is especially true with senior staff members. A majority of interviewees expressed disquiet that decisions that affected the character of the staff room were made by individuals who had the authority but did not understand the constraints of working in a multi-purpose confined building. Participants generally considered their professional relationship with senior members of staff to be shallow although a few acknowledged the compassionate nature of the Principal. There is a consensus that people feel unappreciated because they are kept at arm’s length. Most articulated a feeling of fear if approached or emailed by a senior member of staff as they considered that they must have done something wrong.

Factors that encourage staff room relationships
There is a universal appreciation that the Christian ethos of the school enables individuals to pull together, serve the students and each other through a variety of challenges. Morning teas and special events are highlights that lighten the load and give an opportunity to see another dimension of individuals. Morning devotions were appreciated by interviewees as they gave the opportunity for attentiveness to God, reflection and again to learn more about the people that they worked with.

Factors that discourage staff room relationships
Rather than articulate the common perceptions of difficulties, the main points identified by interviewees to improve staff room relationships are listed.

1. Provision of personal areas for individuals rather than ‘space’,

2. Separation of social and work places. Provide spaces for small group meetings,

3. Separation of eating and relaxation locations. Use of doors and partitions so that one area is left and another entered,

4. Provision of improved (and segregated) facilities, especially toilets,

5. Privacy for making phone calls to parents,
6. Private areas for personal use. There are times when individuals need to remove themselves from students and colleagues. Such times need to be quarantined,

7. Managing student access to staff room at lunch and break times and controlling incoming phone calls to staff room,

8. Provision of an effective process of non-judgmental teacher support at senior management level,

9. Senior staff model behaviour and spend more time in staff room,

10. All staff is inducted into the appropriate use of email communication.

This summary represents a general indication of the state of teacher relationships in this particular high school staff room. I hope you have found it interesting and that it will be useful to you.

With best wishes
Appendix C: The Denominational School: Governance and Running of the School

Guidance Concerning the Ethos of Schools in this Denomination which Includes the Case Study School. Note Section 5 Identifying the Role of the Teacher.

4. The school and the responsibilities of the Church of Australia
The church commits itself to the promotion and support of its schools by
• assisting and encouraging congregations, associations, and districts to provide for the Christian education of members, in keeping with the command of Christ
• providing means and opportunity for the professional theological pre-service and in-service education of teachers
• encouraging congregations and parishes to follow up and minister to the contacts made in the wider community by the school, and to involve the members of the school community in the ministry and mission of the congregation
• working with the schools to help them realise their full potential as mission and nurturing agencies of the church.

5. The school and the responsibilities of governing councils and principals
The church expects the governing councils and principals of its schools to
• staff its schools with skilled and registered educators who are able to uphold the teachings of the church and model the Christian lifestyle. In the first instance it seeks to use the services of active members of the church. Beyond that, the church seeks to staff its schools with active Christians from other denominations who are willing to uphold Lutheran teachings
• support and encourage in-service training — including theological training — for the professional development of teachers
• promote the purpose of the school in the local congregation, zone, or district
• help local congregation, zone, or district to use the school as a means of establishing and maintaining contact with the wider community
• actively pursue every opportunity for maximising the school’s effectiveness as a mission agency of the church

6. The school and parents
The church acknowledges that parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. Through its schools, therefore, the church seeks to support parents in the fulfilment of this responsibility to their children. Furthermore, the church, through its schools, offers to all parents the option of a Christian education for their children.

7. The school and the government
7.1 The church acknowledges that the state has accepted responsibility for providing schooling for all its citizens. This education is compulsory, free, and secular in its orientation.

7.2 The church further acknowledges that the government permits non-government authorities, such as the churches, to operate schools, provided that they meet certain government determined criteria, such as curriculum and health and safety requirements.

7.3 The church will continue to own and operate its schools in accordance with government requirements, provided that meeting these requirements does not bring the church into conflict with the word of God and the teachings of the church.

7.4 The church will continue to accept financial assistance from the government under conditions determined by the government from time to time, provided that the teachings of the church are in no way or at any time compromised.
Appendix D: The Denominational School; Teaching the Child

Basic understandings

A school is based on some solid understandings about people and life.

God’s word, as revealed in the Bible, is the authority for living and learning in each school. Its central message is that of the gospel, the good news that our acceptance by God does not depend on our own worth or achievements but on his unconditional commitment to us as evidenced in the life and death of Jesus. We believe that through the process of Christian schooling God’s Spirit is active in the lives of the community leading children and families to know and trust God.

In a school each student is seen as a unique person created by God. He made them and loves them and provides each of them with dignity and worth. All of them have their own talents and needs as well as the potential to live useful and fulfilled lives in the world.

We believe that all positive knowledge and learning is a great gift of God for the growth and welfare of human beings. Each school considers it important to develop a spirit of service in its students so that their lives, studies, relationships, ambitions, values and attitudes they reflect a commitment to living useful lives for the good of others.
Appendix E: Invitation to Participants to Participate

Teacher Relationships in a High School Staffroom

INFORMATION SHEET

Chief Investigator
Associate Professor Sue Thomas PhD
School of Education and Professional Studies
Phone: (61)737355743
Email: s.thomas@griffith.edu.au

Student Investigator
Margaret Parks
Doctor of Education
Phone: 0430466101
Email: margaret.parks@griffithuni.edu.au

Why is the research being conducted?

You are being asked to participate in a research study concerning relationships in a high school staffroom. The study is based on the fact that interactions with colleagues will produce feelings and these feelings are the basis of our emotions. The research includes a study of culture and the freedom that teachers have to create and recreate emotional meaning and connection with colleagues.

During the daily routine of professional life, emotions are used to interact with colleagues. Felt emotions will not necessarily be the same as expressed emotions but emotions experienced will influence the type of connection and relationship that you make. Reflecting on the emotional aspect of relationships may result in more understanding and provide an opportunity for stronger and more productive collegial relationships.

I am a part-time student enrolled at Griffith University studying for a Doctor of Education qualification. This qualification is a research degree and so requires data to be collected for analysis and interpretation. I am also a full-time teacher at the chosen school and so I am known to you.

You will be asked to do three things:
1. Take part in an introductory interview (confidential, informal, length negotiable)
2. Maintain a digital diary for approximately 6 weeks (no minimum number of entries). The digital diary record is an ongoing process that occurs between the two interviews.
3. A final interview (same terms as first interview)

You have been invited to be part of the research because you are a member of staff at the selected High School. Inclusion in this research project is voluntary and open to all members of the selected High School. Collection of data is based on interactions between colleagues that take place primarily in the central staffroom of the school.

The feedback and expected benefits of the research

A transcribed copy of the interview will be given to you for verification. An important benefit is that you will have an improved understanding of the role of emotion in your professional
life. Relationships with colleagues will be better understood and working relationships may be enhanced. Secondly, you will be helping to highlight the significance of emotional connectivity between colleagues to policymakers. Very little research on teacher emotions has been conducted in High Schools; you will be part of an emerging field of study. Finally, the school will receive feedback and the ethos of the Lutheran system which encourages strong bonds and personal respect among its adult members will be made available to a wider audience.

Risks to you

There are no known risks to this procedure. Confidentiality and anonymity procedures will prevent any general discomfort occurring. Any discomfort arising from interviewer/participant relationship will be dealt with as soon as identified.

Your confidentiality

Your identity in this study will be treated as confidential. The results of the study will be published as a doctoral thesis by Margaret Parks but will not give your name or include any identifiable references to you. Pseudonyms will be employed when direct quotes are used. Interviews will be recorded as VOD casts on flip videos. This is necessary as it is important to accurately record your presentation and associated body language (simple hand gestures and head movements). They will be stored offsite (i.e. not on school premises) and the interviews will be deleted when the data has been analysed and interpreted. The source of the digital diaries will be off site and access will be for the participant and researchers only.

Your participation is voluntary

Any participation in this research project is voluntary and you are free to withdraw your commitment at any stage in the data collection process. Whilst permission has been granted by the Principal to collect data at the college, your decision to take part or not take part will in no way impact upon your relationship with the college organisation. There is no financial compensation for your participation in this research.

The main cost for taking part in this project is time.

Questions / further information

Please ask as many questions as you like before you decide whether you want to participate in this research study. You are free to ask questions at any time before, during, or after your participation in this research.

Your questions should be addressed to one of the following people:

Chief Investigator:  
Name: Associate Professor Sue Thomas  
Phone Number: 37355743  
Email: s.thomas@griffith.edu.au

Student Investigator:  
Name: Margaret Parks  
Phone Number: 0430466101  
Email: Margaret.parks@griffithuni.edu.au

The ethical conduct of this research

Griffith University conducts research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. If you decide to become a participant and have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the research project they should contact the Senior Manager, Research Ethics and Integrity on 3735 5585 or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au

Privacy Statement
The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and/or use of your identified personal information. The information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory authority requirements. A de-identified copy of this data may be used for other research purposes. However, your anonymity will at all times be safeguarded. For further information consult the University’s Privacy Plan at http://www.griffith.edu.au/privacy-plan or telephone (07) 3735 5585.

Appendix F: Participant Consent Form
Teacher Relationships in a High School Staffroom

CONSENT FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chief Investigator</th>
<th>Student Investigator</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Associate Professor Sue Thomas PhD</td>
<td>Margaret Parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Education and Professional Studies</td>
<td>Doctor of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: (61) 737355743</td>
<td>Phone: 0430466101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:Margaret.parks@griffithuni.edu.au">Margaret.parks@griffithuni.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the information package and in particular I have noted that:

- My involvement in this research will include an initial and final informal interview and the maintenance of a digital diary over a period of approximately 6-8 weeks;
- I have had any questions answered to my satisfaction;
- I understand the risks involved;
- I understand that there will be no direct benefit to me from my participation in this research;
- I understand that my participation in this research is voluntary;
- I understand that if I have any additional questions I can contact the research team;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without comment or penalty;
- I understand that I can contact the Senior Manager, Research Ethics and Integrity, at Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee on 37355585 (or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au) if I have concerns about the ethical conduct of the project; and
- I agree to participate in the project.

<table>
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<th>Name</th>
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Appendix G: Information Provided for First Interview

Staff Relationships in a High School Staffroom

Interview 1

A few theoretical thoughts

- You are being asked to reflect on how your emotional experiences with members of staff affect you, How do they make you feel? What meaning do you attach to different interactions?
- Staffroom culture is a very important part of your connectivity with staff members. How do you interpret the staffroom culture? How does this culture encourage or prevent interaction?
- Linked to staffroom culture is the Christian ethos of the school. What beliefs and values do you take for granted? What effect does this have on your interactions?
- Your interpretation of an emotional interaction with another staff member sets a limit to the level of understanding that you can enter into with that colleague. How does this statement apply to you? What limits and opportunities have arisen from your understanding of the statement?
- Have staffroom relationships affected your professional growth?
- Emotional labour – this is the effort that you expend when hiding a true emotional reaction and replace it with an “expected” response. Do you have any effects from the use of emotional labour?

Guidance for the interview – things that you may wish to talk about.

- Your thoughts on the staffroom culture – what is this, what does it look like, sound like, and feel like? Who determines this culture? What expectations does it bring, how does it modify the way that you interact with people?
- Are there emotionally positive and emotionally negative places for you in the staffroom – describe and explain using the mud map provided?
- Emotional labour – think of one positive and one negative interaction that you had recently. How did it make you feel? What sense did you make of it?
- Do you have different types of emotional reactions in the same situations with different people?
These are just starting points – as long as you focus on staffroom relationships, you are free to talk about whatever you want.
Appendix H: Information Provided for the Second Interview

Teacher Relationships in a High School Staffroom

Interview 2

Please consider the following questions for the content of your second interview

1. Digital relationships – what place does digital technology play in your relationships in the staffroom. In what way is it positive and in what way negative?
2. Silence in the staffroom – how important is non-communication between colleagues for you? (positive and negative)
3. There were two worships delivered by Heads of School at the beginning of the year (notes in separate attachment). How do you consider the attitude and behaviour of managers affects staffroom relationships?
4. Is it necessary to continue some staffroom relationships beyond the school day to prosper your professional development or is this a purely voluntary activity?
5. What is the relationship between departmental relationships and the emotional energy of the whole staffroom?
Appendix I: Data Analysis in Qualitative Research

Interpreting the Meaning of Themes/Descriptions

Interrelating Themes/Description

Theme

Description

Validating the accuracy of information

Coding The Data (hand or computer)

Reading through all Data

Organising and Preparing Data for Analysis

Raw Data (transcripts, field notes, images, etc.)

Taken from Creswell, J (2009). Research Design. Thousand Oaks, California; Sage
Appendix J: Initial Codes Found Using NVivo

Purpose

Workplace

Social Space/Work Space

Differentiation of Space

Refuge

Silence

Affirmation

Support

Acceptance/Trust

Acknowledgement

Stress

Stressful Relationships

Cliques

Vulnerability

Resistance to Change

Spiritual Cohesion

Noise

Emotional Labour

Objectivity/Management

Subjectivity/Relationship

Avoidance
## Appendix K: Personal Space Seen as a Place to Hide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Quotation</th>
<th>Reasons for hiding</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holly</td>
<td>I find it (referring to the staffroom) tiring. There’s nowhere to hide... You see them all day, every day. So, um, it can be a bit exhausting, so maybe that’s why people withdraw a bit, just to protect themselves.</td>
<td>Holly tires from interacting with colleagues who she feels have negative attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molly</td>
<td>There are times I’d like to go and hide in a little hole and...</td>
<td>For time-out and to detox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynda</td>
<td>You can’t even hide. I mean, I guess that’s the thing that if you had a really bad day, you haven’t really got a place where you can go and have the privacy of just having quiet time in your own space; you don’t even have that.</td>
<td>Personal recovery from a bad day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophie</td>
<td>But it depends on how I’m feeling. Like, at the moment, I really just want to be left alone, um, and being – I guess I – I hide more than a lot of other people.</td>
<td>Sophie’s perceived personal toll of constantly being nice to people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seth</td>
<td>Whatever has happened they haven’t had the private space to hide and have a meltdown.</td>
<td>Reputations tainted by emotional outbursts in the staffroom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Words in italics reflect words used by participants in their discussion to describe why they or other people need to hide away from interaction in the staffroom.