

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Virginia Davidhizar Birky for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education presented on December 3, 2001. Title: Perspectives of Teacher Leaders in an Educational Reform Environment: Finding Meaning in Their Involvement.

Redacted for privacy

Abstract approved: _____

Chris (Southers) Ward

The purpose of this qualitative research study was to describe the experiences of secondary teachers who were actively involved in positions of teacher leadership in their schools and to discover the meaning that leadership activities had for them in their work. The informal teacher leaders performed their leadership functions in an environment of educational reform and change, voluntarily, and on their own time.

The study was framed and described by data gathered primarily through a series of in-depth interviewing and based on a structure for phenomenological methodology. The individual interviews were audio taped and transcribed in full text. Other forms of data collection included a survey and e-mail reflections from the participants, and researcher reflections. Data was coded by topics and organized into themes based on an inductive analysis of the transcribed data.

Results of this study indicated that teacher leaders found great satisfaction, both affectively and cognitively, in their involvement. They found meaning in their work because of a positive school environment, through collaboration with colleagues, participation in curriculum writing and committee work, and involvement with innovative activities. They indicated the biggest rewards came from their work with students. In addition, the teacher leaders frequently made

reference to something inside themselves, their personality, and their drives. They found they needed the stimulation and the challenges that teacher leadership activities presented.

The findings of this study contribute to the knowledge base on teacher leadership. They have implications for teacher educators who prepare future teachers for leadership roles, particularly at the secondary level and in an educational reform environment. Knowing the experiences that teacher leaders find most meaningful in their work, particularly curriculum work and collaboration with colleagues, will inform teacher educators as they prepare pre-service teachers to be knowledgeable and confident in these activities. In addition, administrators who want to encourage teacher leadership activities in their school may benefit from understanding what motivates teachers to become leaders and will be more knowledgeable about the needs of their staff when planning staff development opportunities. The study concluded with recommendations for further research on teacher leadership.

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**Perspectives of Teacher Leaders in an Educational Reform
Environment: Finding Meaning in Their Involvement**

by

Virginia Davidhizar Birky

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I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my dissertation to any reader upon request.

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Virginia Davidhizar Birky, Author

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This research would not have been possible without the teacher leaders who took part in my research study. I am honored to have been a researcher with whom they shared their lives for a period of time. To witness their stories is to celebrate and validate teacher leadership at its finest. Thank you Angie, Rose, Will, and Marie for being a part of my life, and for teaching me and others who read this dissertation research!

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
CHAPTER 1: CONTEMPLATION AND INTRODUCTION: FRAMING THE RESEARCH STUDY.....	1
The Research Study.....	1
Background and Context of the Research Study.....	2
Significance of Research Study.....	5
The Researcher.....	6
Overview of Study.....	13
CHAPTER 2: EXAMINATION: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE..	15
Educational Reform.....	16
Teacher Leadership in an Educational Reform Environment.....	35
Summary of Chapter.....	70
How the Literature Informed this Study.....	71
CHAPTER 3: ORGANIZATION: EMERGENCE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY.....	75
Type of Study and Rationale for this Approach.....	76
Major Steps in Collecting and Analyzing Data.....	79
Summary of Chapter.....	101
CHAPTER 4: CONVERSATION AND INTERPRETATION: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY.....	103
Profiles of Participants in the Study.....	104
Common Themes.....	113

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

	<u>Page</u>
Main Theme: "My involvement satisfies me intellectually, [both] affectively and cognitively."	117
Enjoyment of Work: "I fundamentally enjoy what I do."	122
Rewards from Students: "The biggest rewards ... come from ... making a difference with my students."	123
Expectation for Improved Curriculum: "I have always enjoyed doing curriculum work."	135
Relationships with Colleagues: "I have been blessed with marvelous colleagues."	139
Stimulation and Challenge: "I need the stimulation and I need the challenge."	147
Discussion and Analysis of the Data: Researcher's Reflections.....	166
CHAPTER 5: CELEBRATION: SUMMARY AND DISSCUSION.....	190
Summary of Study.....	190
Philosophy of Teacher Leadership	196
Implications for Practice	197
Future Research.....	199
Epilogue.....	201
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	203
APPENDICES.....	211

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
Table 1: Themes, Sub-themes, and Sub- Sub-themes.....	117
Table 2: Themes with Interpretation of the Theme.....	194

LIST OF APPENDICES

	<u>Page</u>
APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF TERMINOLOGY FOR THE OREGON EDUCATIONAL ACT FOR THE 21 ST CENTURY.....	212
APPENDIX B: LETTER: IDENTIFICATION OF PILOT STUDY PARTICIPANTS.....	214
APPENDIX C: SURVEY OF POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS FOR DOCTORAL RESEARCH.....	216
APPENDIX D: SUGGESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANT E-MAIL REFLECTIONS.....	218
APPENDIX E: LETTER: REQUEST FOR PRINCIPAL TO IDENTIFY TEACHER LEADERS.....	219
APPENDIX F: LETTER: REQUEST FOR OREGON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT TO IDENTIFY TEACHER LEADERS.....	221
APPENDIX G: LETTER: REQUEST FOR SITE COUNCIL CHAIR TO IDENTIFY TEACHER LEADERS.....	222
APPENDIX H: LETTER: REQUEST FOR IDENTIFIED TEACHER LEADERS TO COMPLETE SURVEY.....	223
APPENDIX I: LETTER: REQUEST FOR POTENTIAL TEACHER LEADERS TO BE PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH STUDY.....	224
APPENDIX J: INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT	225
APPENDIX K: CATEGORIES AND TOPICS IDENTIFIED FROM DATA.....	231

PERSPECTIVES OF TEACHER LEADERS IN AN EDUCATIONAL REFORM ENVIRONMENT: FINDING MEANING IN THEIR INVOLVEMENT

CHAPTER 1

CONTEMPLATION AND INTRODUCTION: FRAMING THE RESEARCH STUDY

The variety of opportunities for teacher leaders has increased in recent years. Teacher leadership remains a *hot* topic. (C. Livingston, 1992, p. 11)

The Research Study

The purpose of this study was to understand the experience of secondary teachers who were actively involved in positions of teacher leadership in their schools and to discover what teachers found meaningful in their involvement as leaders. The teachers performed their leadership activities in an environment of educational reform and change. Teacher leaders in this study were informal leaders who chose their involvement and for the most part, performed these functions on their own time. They differed from their teacher-colleagues because of these choices and involvements. Leadership activities included curriculum writing, grant writing, committee work, and other actions, which contributed to the life of students, fellow teachers, and the school. More specifically, the study explored the following questions in relation to teacher leaders: What was it like for them to be teacher leaders in this arena of educational reform? Did they find meaning in their involvement, and if so, where? What were the

factors that influenced, motivated, and discouraged their involvement? How did this involvement contribute to and detract from their lives as educators?

Background and Context of the Research Study

Significant changes have taken place in the American educational system over the last 10 years as educators have responded to the challenge of higher standards for students. In the process, educational goals have changed as greater emphasis is placed on proficiency rather than seat time. The relationship between teaching and students' learning is also given more importance as teachers help students contextualize and construct their own knowledge in relation to real-life problems. States have responded differently, but many are addressing the challenge, often referred to as educational reform. Other terms used interchangeably with educational reform throughout this report are "restructuring," and "school reform." There is a glossary of terminology related to educational reform in Appendix A of this document.

Oregon's Educational Act for the 21st Century has been in place since 1991 with its emphasis on "standards-based" learning and high expectations for all Oregon public school students. The Act calls for "dramatically raising student achievement" and "higher academic standards" (Oregon Department of Education, 1998, p.1). "Standards," according to the Oregon Department of Education, are a "set of clear, measurable guidelines that give students goals to shoot for and teachers a way to measure progress" (Oregon Department of Education, 1998, p. 1). In addition to academic standards, discipline and work habits are also emphasized for the purpose of insuring that students graduate with the skills needed in a competitive, technology-

driven world. These skills include the ability to compete in college and employment and to function more successfully in a complex society (Oregon Department of Education, 1998).

The educational climate in Oregon described above is the environment in which the research for this study took place. Because the educational reform initiative in Oregon was mandated by the legislature, all public schools must comply; however, great variation has occurred in the method and process of that change. Some school districts have been leaders in initiating reforms and are working towards the changes actively and consistently. Others, for a variety of reasons, have been slow to comply. The same is true for teachers in Oregon--their responses to state mandates have been extremely varied. Some teachers have been active in the implementation of state mandates since the beginning, while others have been hesitant to get involved.

In my observation, teachers in Oregon fall anywhere on a continuum from being "extremely negative" to "extremely positive" toward educational reform. From the time that Oregon's legislature mandated educational reform in 1991, there were teachers who, for one reason or another, voiced concerns about the law and its mandates, wished it would "go away," chose to stay uninvolved until the law went into effect, worked to raise consciousness about possible negative effects on students, or were content to let other teachers do the initial work to prepare for it. At the same time, there were teachers who accepted the changes, chose to write new curriculum, participate in grant writing or implementation, or collaborate with others in decision-making and in program design. These teachers were not necessarily supportive of every aspect of the law, but seemed to accept the fact that there were problems in the

current educational system and were interested in trying to make it better. This study is interested in the group of teachers who supported efforts to change the system through educational reform activities, even before the law was in effect.

Because many of the activities related to educational reform were not yet required by the state or the school, teachers involved from the beginning may be identified as "teacher leaders" in Oregon's educational reform movement. Their informal role in educational reform was seen by their administrators and their peers as one of leadership. Some individually implemented changes in their classrooms (e.g., wrote and used scoring guides, addressed state or national standards in their lesson planning, or developed project-based assignments). Others met collectively to develop either voluntary or mandated changes (e.g., were members of Site Council, were members of school or building-wide committees, or wrote and implemented Goals 2000 grants). In the reform activities, these teachers were visible to others as they demonstrated Nahavandi's (1997) definition of a leader: one who "influences individuals and groups within an organization, helps them in the establishment of goals, and guides them toward achievement of those goals" (p. 4).

The motivation and hard work of informal teacher leaders, especially in Oregon's educational reform environment, caused me, the researcher, to ask some questions: In contrast to teachers who had chosen not to be involved in the initial years, what is it that kept teacher leaders involved? Why did they choose to spend additional time collaborating with others, going to meetings, or writing curriculum? When others were negative about the mandates, why were some teacher leaders positive? What gave them energy? What were the benefits of their involvement?

What were the challenges? The assumption was that these teacher leaders had found their experiences meaningful in some way. If so, what did they find meaningful? What was the source of that meaning?

Significance of Research Study

This research study contributes to the knowledge base on teacher leadership in an educational reform environment. Results of this study have implications for teacher education, staff development, administration, and professionalism.

The findings will inform teacher education departments that prepare future teachers for leadership roles in educational reform environments by understanding the experience of current teachers who are taking leadership roles in educational reform. Knowing the perspectives of current teachers will help future teachers ask the appropriate questions in relation to their eventual role in similar educational settings, as they plan strategies that enhance the educational experiences for those who will be their students in the future. The findings also have implications for teacher educators. Results from the study will inform teacher education departments of leadership activities that contribute to a meaningful experience for teacher leaders in a restructuring environment. In addition, teacher-preparation courses may need to be adapted to prepare future teachers to enter a teaching job in an educational reform environment.

Administrators and staff development coordinators may gain insight into the perceptions of teachers who are leaders in their schools and be more knowledgeable about the needs of their staff in relation to educational reform. Specific skills that

teacher leaders frequently use may also be addressed at staff development workshops.

In addition, administrators will gain insight into what motivates teachers to become and what discourages teachers from becoming teacher leaders.

The Researcher

There is a particular set of lenses with which each researcher enters a course of study. I am no exception. My set of beliefs, personal experiences, and professional experiences have influenced each part of my research study. Especially impacted is the topic of my research, the literature I read, the references I cited, how I chose to collect data, who I chose to study, how I analyzed the data, and how I reported the findings of my study. So that the reader can understand the experiences that shape the values and beliefs I bring to the research, I will share my background and perspectives that are pertinent to my research study. A personal theoretical perspective is a process. My perspectives are a result of contributions from a number of other positions, combined with my personal background and experiences.

Personal Background

My perspective is white, female, and middle-class. I was born the oldest of two children to parents who were caring and supportive in every way. My father grew up in the Midwest during the depression. I often heard him talk about how hard it was for his parents to make ends meet, and about the value of hard work. He graduated from high school, left his home state to work for several years, met my mother, and went to work to support his family. Two of the most important gifts he gave me were affirmation and unconditional love. My mother grew up on a farm in the Midwest. She

played competitive women's basketball and was an "All American" basketball player during the time when she attended two years of a business college. She was capable of doing many things well and had high expectations of herself and others. My mother was a leader--she held offices in various organizations to which she belonged, as well as carried many church responsibilities. My childhood was happy. In contrast to many, my life has been easy. I have had few major disappointments in life and have not sensed injustices against me. The stress or conflict I sometimes feel is usually a result of something I have brought upon myself.

After graduating from high school, I went to college, graduated with a degree in education, and got married. My husband and I then spent two years on the island of Jamaica where we taught in a Jamaican high school. After that, we moved to Ohio for 10 years, Colorado for 4 years, and then to Oregon in 1987. My employment background in all four of those locations was educational practice at the secondary level. While I had always been involved in professional organizations and had leadership roles at church, my teacher leadership experiences did not begin with intensity until we moved to Oregon. Throughout my 11 years of teaching in Oregon, I was involved in many leadership activities at the building, district, and state level.

Many of my past experiences and personal characteristics have subtly influenced my choice of a research topic and methodology. I enjoy people and meeting with persons of similar interests. I can't say that I enjoy taking risks, but I have taken many in my life (e.g., living in another country, moving to unfamiliar locations, and hiking several 14,000' mountains)--apparently I do not mind them as much as some people. Change is part of what makes life interesting, and I have discovered that I seek it out in

order to experience new challenges. I have at times asked myself why I wasn't satisfied to do "business as usual" in my school instead of frequently trying something new. I developed many new courses and programs during the last 10 years, most of them being at my initiative. I have always been "busy," involved, and active. I am an organized person, enjoy detail, and know how I want things to be done. I am non-confrontive, a listener, accepting, nurturing, and relational. I am proactive and work within the system as best I can. I have a clear belief of what my moral values are, and they influence my daily life. I seldom challenge persons in authority. I am easily influenced by others' thinking and often need someone to help me see injustices. At other times, I have a sense of justice that is derived from my religious convictions, which influence my beliefs, values, and actions.

Relationship of Theoretical Perspectives to Research Study

Throughout my doctoral program, I was challenged to critically think about my epistemology and various theoretical perspectives. I re-constructed previous beliefs and formulated new perspectives related to constructivism, interpretivism, feminism, social critical theory, and afrocentrism. These perspectives had been developing in me over the years, but they had never been identified or articulated. My journey to a doctoral degree has been a significant part of my epistemological growth in that I now relate my research to my theoretical perspectives. I see a relationship between my methodological choices and my epistemology, and I realize how my epistemology has affected my thoughts and actions in the past (and most recently, my choices for research).

From the very beginning of my doctoral program and course work, specific characteristics of post-modern thought and its application to research seemed to "fit" my way of thinking. These traits were gleaned from my reading, class handouts, and class discussions. However, I also struggled with some inconsistency between my background, which was quite traditional, and some of the perspectives from which I was reading. This tension created an interesting "new" perspective, which is presented below. As stated earlier, the process is ongoing. In formulating my thoughts, I related especially to the following post-modern characteristics, informed by the theoretical perspectives identified in the preceding paragraph:

- There are multiple truths, depending on one's context: personal situation, family situation, social setting, and culture.
- The world is constantly changing. People change too, and their lives are evolving.
- Exploring people's lived experiences tells us much about their life and the meaning they give it.
- Multiple voices are present to influence opinions and decisions.
- Life is not predictable.
- There is an acceptance and tolerance of multiple religious beliefs and multiple cultures.
- It is beneficial to be connected to others.
- Contextual learning/education is valued.
- Student exploration and problem solving is encouraged.
- Student reflections and autobiographies are insightful for both the student and the teacher.
- The function of the teacher is to facilitate learning rather than impart knowledge.

- Students, teachers, and other staff or guests work together to create a meaningful learning experience.
- Authentic assessment is frequently utilized to evaluate progress.
- Education is a journey and an individual's knowledge is constantly emerging.

The statements above suggest a different approach to research than has been done in the past. In fact, the term "teacher leadership" is by its very nature, post-modern. Teacher leaders were not recognized in a time of positivism. Administrators were considered the only leaders in schools and they were the only ones who made decisions outside of the classroom. Slattery (1995) suggests that post-modern curriculum encourages "autobiographical reflection, narrative inquiry, revisionist interpretation, and contextual understanding" (p. 36). Slattery's terms apply to the type of research I utilized in my study.

With the statements above resonating with my own experience and beliefs, I knew early on I would pursue qualitative research. In fact, as I formulated possible research questions in my mind over the course of a year, I realized that qualitative research methodology was the appropriate approach for all but one of the prospective questions I had formulated. As the year progressed, I learned about naturalistic inquiry, phenomenology, hermeneutics, and ethnography. The possibilities for my research then began to develop because there was a "fit" with what I wanted to know. Thus, I embarked on a research method that was compatible to my epistemology--qualitative research.

Relationship of Professional Experience to Research Study

As the researcher for this study, I am largely supportive of the educational reform efforts in Oregon. While I do not view some components to be as positive as others, I believe that some of the initiatives provide a vehicle for improving the education of children. I am supportive of the focus on results and of students demonstrating their proficiency by showing they can apply what they learn. I am not so favorable to the extreme pressure caused by testing and accountability on the part of educators and students. However, the goal is to increase the number of students who are successful in learning, facilitate application of their knowledge, and make the world a better place. If educational reform can help us meet that goal, I am supportive and choose to be a part of it.

My personal interest in the topic of teacher leadership and educational reform arose out of my own involvement in these areas while teaching in an Oregon high school from 1990 to 1998. The school district in which I was teaching was the fourth school district in my teaching career—the one where I was most involved, most supported and mentored by my principal, and the one that provided for me the most professional growth.

In 1991, the Oregon legislature passed into law a number of educational reform initiatives that were to be implemented over a period of years. I became extensively involved in numerous educational reform activities, such as: writing curriculum to address state standards, writing curriculum for new and innovative courses, and serving on Site Council (a site-based management team). I also benefited from being a part of a school district that was considered to be an innovative district due to early reform

involvement at the district office level. In addition, both district high schools experienced early involvement in the Oregon school reform movement. I also participated on several task forces for the Oregon Department of Education with the product being new curriculum that was disseminated statewide, and I was instrumental in our school's application for a Goals 2000 grant. When we received the funds, I served as facilitator for the team of 11 school and community members. As a result of this involvement, I attended a number of statewide conferences and meetings related to education reform in Oregon. I viewed these experiences as good for students, as well as professionally beneficial for me. I initiated some of the involvement and others requested some of it. Monetary compensation was sometimes involved through grants and hourly pay; however, other work was done voluntarily because of the belief that these efforts helped both students and teachers find meaning in their work.

As I began my doctoral program in the fall of 1998 after eight years of teaching and involvement in this type of educational reform environment, my research interests quickly developed. The first paper I wrote for my course work was on teacher leadership, examining the qualities and characteristics of teachers who were leaders in their schools. During the next term, I wrote about teachers who were leaders in an educational reform environment. At that point, I began to have some questions about teacher leaders' motivation for involvement in educational reform efforts and decided to pursue this as a research topic.

I was most interested in focusing my research on the group of teachers described previously who were extensively involved in a variety of educational reform activities. I considered them "teacher leaders" in Oregon's educational reform

movement. Their motivation and hard work caused me to ask some fundamental questions. In contrast to teachers who had chosen not to be involved in the initial years, I wondered what it was that had kept the teacher leaders involved. Why did they choose to spend additional time collaborating with others, going to meetings, or writing curriculum? When others were negative about the mandates, why had they been positive? What gave them energy? What were the benefits of their involvement? What were the challenges? My assumption was that these teachers found their experiences meaningful. If so, *what* did they find meaningful? And what had been the source of that meaning?

My own involvement in educational reform activities was precisely the reason why I had an interest in this research study. The questions came easily for me because I had been involved as a teacher leader. Somewhere in that experience there was meaning--enough to make it worth my time and effort. I assumed that what was true for me was likely true for other teachers as well. It was this quest for understanding that motivated my research question, and it was in this environment of Oregon secondary schools that I sought answers!

Overview of Study

The purpose of this research study was to discover the meaning that involvement in teacher leadership activities had for teacher leaders at the secondary level who were working in an educational reform environment. Phenomenological methods were used to interview four teachers with extensive involvement in leadership

activities in order to understand their teacher leadership experiences. The research questions focused on the following:

- *What is it like to be a teacher leader, particularly in an educational reform environment?*
- *What is it that makes their work meaningful?*
- *What motivates teacher leaders to be involved in educational reform efforts?*

The report of this research contains five chapters. The first chapter includes an introduction to the topic, background and context of the study, significance of the study, and information about the researcher that impacted the study. The second chapter is the review of literature relevant to the study and an explanation of how the literature has informed this study. The third chapter highlights the design and methodology of the study, including a rationale for the phenomenological approach used. Findings of the study are described in the fourth chapter, beginning with brief profiles of each participant. They are followed by quotations excerpted from the in-depth interviews with participants and organized around six themes, one main theme and five sub-themes. The final chapter includes a summary of the research study, a philosophy of teacher leadership, and implications for practice and further research.

CHAPTER 2

EXAMINATION: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Teacher participation in leadership is critical
to the process of school change.

(A. Lieberman, in Livingston, 1992, p. 159)

The purpose of this research study was to examine the lives of teacher leaders who work in an educational reform environment at the secondary level and to discover the meaning that leadership experiences had for them. The review of the literature used for this research study is provided to the reader to present the knowledge base and context upon which my study was built. It recognizes the contributions of writers and research studies from the past and shows linkages between those writings and what was discovered in this present research.

Literature related to educational reform and teacher leadership has increased in volume over the last 10 years. Findings from relevant research studies assist in understanding the experiences and perceptions of teacher leaders in changing educational environments and help others understand the context from which teacher leaders work. This literature review is structured into the following sections:

- Educational Reform -- to examine the historical and political aspects of a movement that has impacted educational practice across the United States, including the state of Oregon; to identify factors that influence the accomplishment of educational reform efforts; to identify realities and challenges faced by teachers working in an educational reform environment.

- **Teacher Leadership and Educational Reform** -- to define leadership as it applies to teachers, specifically to teacher leaders in an educational reform environment; to consider the evolution of teacher leadership; to gain insight into the roles that teacher leaders play; to identify the qualities, characteristics, and skills needed of teacher leaders; to consider some of the challenges and realities surrounding teacher leadership in educational reform; to understand how teacher leaders experience their work in an educational reform environment; to gain insight into the sources of satisfaction and meaning for the teacher leaders involved in this study.
- **How the Literature has Informed this Study** -- to summarize the research, which has been completed; to identify areas of research that may be missing; to give direction for this research study.

Educational Reform

The context of this research study was an educational reform environment.

Teacher leaders who participated in the study were working in a state that had adopted standards-based education and tested students to determine their ability to meet those standards.

Definitions

For the purpose of this research study, it is important to have a common understanding of various definitions associated with educational reform. In his book on restructuring, Conley (1996) noted that educators seldom make a distinction between

the three words "renewal," "reform," and "restructuring." He provided the following definitions for the related terms, which he believes illustrate different levels of change:

- Renewal activities -- those that help the organization to do better and/or more efficiently what it is already doing.
- Reform-driven activities -- those that alter existing procedures, rules, and requirements to enable the organization to adapt the way it functions to new circumstances or requirements.
- Restructuring activities -- those that change fundamental assumptions, practices, and relationships, both within the organization and between the organization and the outside world, in ways that lead to improved and varied student learning outcomes for essentially all students. (p. 5)

These terms are used quite interchangeably in the literature. Throughout this document, I will most often use the term "educational reform" because that term seems to be the most commonly used across the United States and has a more standardized definition.

The term "standards-based education" is one that bears definition since a major component of educational reform is the standards students are expected to meet. The most common definition is: a statement of what the student is expected to know and be able to do. Zmuda and Tomaino (2001) further clarify by stating that standards are "fixed goals for learning that lay out what students should know and be able to do—the knowledge and skills essential to a discipline according to these fixed standards" (p. 2). Hansche (as cited in Zmuda and Tomaino) states that standards should be specific,

aligned with other standards, clear, understandable, and “assessable in a variety of ways” (p. 3).

It was not the intent of this research study to debate the issue of educational reform, renewal, or restructuring. I did not seek to question the participants on their beliefs about state-initiated directives. Nor did I intend to determine the most effective ways for reform or restructuring to take place. The context for this research study, however, was educational reform and an environment of change. Teacher leaders who participated in this study were unable to completely separate their work in the classroom and school from educational reform. In order to more thoroughly understand their responses, it seems necessary to understand the historical significance of educational reform.

Historical and Political Perspectives of Educational Reform

To more fully understand educational reform in the United States, it is beneficial to examine the historical and political implications of the reform movement. Knowing the sentiment over time of people across the United States, both from within and outside of the educational community, provides an understanding of the rationale behind the changes that have taken place in the past. These sentiments and changes continue to take place currently, and will in the future as well.

In the nation's schools today, the demands for reform are calls for change and challenges to do better. The rationale for educational reform stems from many sources. Among them are changes in society, families, and the learners themselves. Some argue that the economy and school funding require changes to be made. In addition, there

are technological advances and pressures from the business and industrial sectors. The majority of current educational journals and books are being written in response to reforming schools with the intent of increasing the competence of students. There has been a steady stream of reports declaring that the knowledge of most students is insufficient to meet the demands necessary to compete in the world (Parker & Parker, 1995). McLaughlin and Oberlin (1996) indicate that a "perceived mismatch between what society expects and what students can do has unleashed an avalanche of initiatives to raise standards, change curricula, tighten educators' accountability, and restructure the way schools do business" (p. x). Even the literature on school reforms uses language that is more appropriate for the business setting than that of schools.

The concept of school reform is not new--it has been addressed and re-addressed for over a hundred years. In their book on the irony between what Americans believe about education and the very gradual progress made, Tyack and Cuban (1995) said, "For over a century citizens have sought to perfect the future by debating how to improve the young through education. Actual reforms in schools have rarely matched such aspirations, however" (p. 1). They defined educational reforms as "planned efforts to change schools in order to correct perceived social and educational problems" and indicated that the steps involved in reform include discovering problems, devising remedies, adopting new policies, and implementing change (p. 4). According to Parker and Parker (1995), "the history of education in the United States can be viewed as waves of school reform designed to accomplish two goals: provide equal educational opportunity and attain excellence in student achievement" (p.1). While it is

unlikely the two "waves" can be separated, this study relates more to the latter, that of increasing the quality of student performance.

In 1983, the National Education Association's *Committee of Ten* report recommended that specific academic subjects be required for all students going on to college (Parker & Parker, 1995, p. 280). At the turn of the century, John Dewey urged the adoption of progressive pedagogies such as student-centered learning, class discussions, and teaching methods that included group work and student reports from field experiences. Years later, this progressive education movement was challenged by conservatives who discounted an eight-year study showing increased academic achievement when experiential learning took place (Parker & Parker, p. 280).

In the 1920's, the challenge for curriculum reformers was "how to educate the nations' youth to be economically productive and socially conscious individuals" (Rousmaniere, 1997, p.73). To change course content and make programmatic changes required teachers to balance the curriculum directives and demands with limited resources. Previous to 1969, public opinion surveys gave education and schools very high marks. After that time, criticisms of schools increased and results of the Gallup Poll showed schools steadily decreasing in popularity and public confidence (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). During the period of time from 1950-1990, Harvard President James Conant's influence was felt (Parker & Parker, 1995). He recommended education goals for the whole nation and was a proponent for strengthening science and language curriculums. He also called for the improvement of teacher education programs. Some of these goals are now being realized with state achievement tests (Parker & Parker).

In 1983, the report *A Nation at Risk* and in 1991 the *SCANS (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills) Report* asserted that the United States was no longer competitive in the world market due to students' lack of ability to read and write and perform workplace skills as well as workers educated in some other countries. The reports set the stage for public attention to the schools and renewed the debate about school reform (Maeroff, 1988). Parker and Parker (1995) argue that "our once unchallenged preeminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors through the world" (p. 283). The *Nation at Risk* report was produced by university presidents, education experts, and administrators, and highlighted the fact that students from other countries spent more hours and weeks in school than did students in the U.S. The report also showed that an alarming 40% of minority students were illiterate (Parker & Parker). In response to this charge, within three years most states had raised their graduation requirements and increased competency testing for both students and future teachers. The benefits were short-lived as conditions in the nation changed. Parker and Parker indicated that school problems arose from "unaddressed social problems" (p. 283). Some criticized the report, saying that school reform depends on a "better home life, better health, more community support, and leaders willing to take risks" (Asayesh, as cited in Parker & Parker, p. 283). Asayesh (as cited in Parker & Parker) also reported that others, specifically Philip Schlechty and TheodoreSizer, called for systemic change at the local level rather than the national level. According to Maeroff, Sizer viewed the teacher sympathetically as one who was caught between competing demands: "although he is the key to reform, is rendered immobile" (p. viii). Thus, Sizer proposed systemic

solutions so that teachers could be free to function as they considered best in order for learning to take place.

In the 1980's and 1990's, national teacher certification was introduced as a way to increase teachers' professionalism, marketability, and salaries (Parker & Parker, 1995). *The Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy* in 1986 called for change and the restructuring of schools (Eckersley, 1997). Reform groups also attempted to improve teacher education, led by the Holmes Group who experimented with Professional Development Schools. The purpose of these schools was to "integrate theory with practice, and initiate research to improve the curriculum and teaching methods" (The Holmes Group as cited in Parker & Parker, p. 285). In this, changes in the certification of teachers were seen as the basis for reform (Maeroff, 1988). In his recently published book, The New Meaning of Educational Change, Fullan (2001) asserts that there is currently a "large scale reform" with evidence being "whole school models of reform, district-wide reform, and state or national initiatives" (p. 25). He believes that design teams are functioning to recommend and implement changes. In addition, individual schools are being funded and used as demonstration models from which others can learn.

Today, one of the most common characteristics of educational reform efforts is statewide assessment. According to a recent article, all 50 states now have some statewide testing policies in place (Doherty, 2001). These state testing policies have probably caused the greatest controversy in the debate over educational reform. Doherty states that "testing advocates see statewide testing as a way to raise expectations and help guarantee that all children are held to the same high standards"

(p. 1). At the same time, she continues, "critics say testing narrows student learning to what is tested--and what is tested is only a sample of what kids should know" (p. 1).

The quest for educational reform continues. Efforts at the district, state, and national levels are evidence of perhaps the most comprehensive reform agenda ever undertaken (McLaughlin & Oberlin, 1996). Tyack and Cuban (1995) referred to the lofty goals for the year 2000 as "utopia." They asserted that the expectations were so high that few schools could meet the goals and that public confidence in schools and school leaders would be lost. Some schools that progressed have since regressed to the mean (Tyack and Cuban). The educational reform efforts highlight standards-based education at the local, state, and national level. In addition, educational reform serves to meet the needs of all learners, whether they diverge in ability, culture, gender or any other type of differentiation. The discussion never ends, but should it?

Educators today are greatly impacted by educational reform efforts. Each state and district makes decisions that greatly affect the lives of teachers in the classroom. Teachers in Oregon work in such an environment where the state requires standards, testing to meet the standards, and other evidence of competence at various benchmark levels from grades K-12.

The history of educational reform described above gives the reader background on the environment from which this study originated. The literature that relates to the historical perspectives of educational reform describes the influences affecting classrooms, teachers, schools, districts, and states. It places this research study in a context that helps the reader understand the bigger and broader picture of educational reform in the United States.

Oregon Perspectives

Oregon is one of the states that has legislated mandates for educational reform. In 1991, the Oregon legislature passed the Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century. The Act calls for "dramatically improving student achievement" by raising expectations for students, focusing curriculum and instruction on higher standards, holding students accountable for achieving the standards, using the community as a learning resource, and building new partnerships (Oregon Department of Education, 1998, p.1). Instead of the traditional gauge of seat time, students in Oregon are expected to demonstrate what they know and are able to do by meeting both academic and career-related learning standards. Students are evaluated by the standards, as well as by classroom assignments. Students, parents, and teachers know the expectations. The goal is to better prepare students for college as well as to work competitively in a global economy.

Oregon's Educational Act, monitored by the Oregon Department of Education (ODE), has affected all public schools in the state. Standards-based instruction in Oregon includes many interrelated components: content standards, performance standards, statewide assessment tests, and school and district improvement plans (see Appendix A for definitions of the terms). All of these and other requirements have been adopted at different times. Because all pieces cannot be implemented at once, they are being phased in over a period of approximately 14 years. The changes have dramatically affected the lives of every teacher, student, and administrator in the state (ODE, 1998).

When the Educational Act is fully implemented, students will have an opportunity to earn a Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM) and a Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM). These documents will show prospective employers and college admissions personnel that the student has mastered a high level of knowledge and skills. Students at the elementary level are expected to meet benchmarks at specific grade levels to indicate the student is "on track" to meet the CIM and CAM standards (ODE, 1998).

This study is especially impacted because of Oregon's educational reform efforts. Most of the informal and voluntary activities that teacher leaders perform are related to Oregon's legislated educational system. Thus, it is critical to consider the work of teacher leaders in this study in light of these policies.

Implementation of Educational Reform

The historical aspects of educational reform have already been discussed. For those educators who find themselves in such an environment at the present time, the challenge they face is to determine the best ways to enhance students' learning. For the proponents of educational reform, the answer lies in efforts which drastically change the way teaching and learning currently takes place. The majority of educators would agree that the ultimate goals for the reform initiatives are to assist students in learning, produce young people who know how to learn, and enable students to know and do whatever is necessary to live and work in the world. In addition, the reform efforts were initiated to increase students' ability to be critical thinkers and to make school relevant and meaningful. But how do the changes take place most effectively?

Eckersley (1997) lists numerous methods for reforming education: writing new curriculum standards, changing teaching strategies, changing the textbooks, increasing teacher autonomy and participation in decision making, introducing merit pay, beginning charter schools, introducing the voucher system, or starting all over!

As indicated earlier in this chapter, of the variety of methods for school reform, standards-based curriculum may be the most common. According to Darling-Hammond and Falk (1997), standards are defined as describing "what students should know and be able to do as a result of their schooling" (p. 190). They further assert that standards are "intended to provide educators with guidelines for curriculum and teaching that will ensure that students have access to the knowledge believed to be necessary for their later success" (p. 190).

While standards-based education is a common characteristic in all educational reform efforts, the focus should be on results instead of on standards, according to Schmoker and Marzano (1999). The authors state that teachers need to know exactly what students need to learn, in what areas students need to improve, and what teachers need to work on with their colleagues. Thus the difference between "standards" and "results" is that results have a much broader meaning than standards. They are neither good nor bad and can be synonymous with feedback—they guide us, "telling us *what to do next* and *how to do it better*" (Schmoker, 1999, p. 3). The learning standards are "essential to focus and to coherence in order to achieve better results" (Schmoker & Marzano, p. 131). Focusing on results, claim the authors, is preferable to each teacher making independent decisions regarding what textbooks to use and what concepts to emphasize.

As is true for Oregon, individual states have determined the best methods for school reform in their state. Eckersley (1997) points out that "states were assisted in this with the passing by Congress of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act in 1994, with the establishment of a grant program that enabled them to design their own reform plans" (p. 3). The Goals 2000 Act determined that the solution lay in the development and adoption of state and national standards; therefore the United States government has provided funding to states for the purpose of accelerating the progress toward their own standards-based education improvements since the law was enacted in 1994 (United States Department of Education, 1999). Nelson and Hammerman (1996) indicate that today's standards movement has been informed by the socio-constructivist position, which holds that teaching is an intellectual rather than a technical task, and learning proceeds through the individual construction of understanding, rather than accepting facts and rules from a teacher or textbook. The implication of the federal government, as well as Nelson and Hammerman's position, is that students learn best with the standards approach. An opposing viewpoint will be addressed in a future section.

Realities and Challenges for Teachers

Implementing educational reform practices is all about change for those involved. When teachers adjust to standards-based education, the changes they need to make in their classrooms and schools are inevitable. Teachers are critical to the process of successful change.

Fullan (2001) suggests that educational change depends on what teachers do and think. With "high proportions of students feeling alienated, performing poorly, or dropping out," these changes are also necessary for educational improvement (p. 123).

There is a lot of literature on the work of teachers who are experiencing "change" or reform in their school environment (Lieberman, 1995). In an environment of restructuring, most teachers have had to change the way they function as educators. These changes include the following: the structure for decision-making, the role of the administrator, curriculum development, curriculum integration, methods for instruction, assessment of student learning, the role of textbooks, student groupings, partnerships with the community, technology as a learning tool, and others (Conley, 1996). In addition, the role of the teacher has changed (the change that is most closely related to this study). Conley states that whenever restructuring is successful, it is very likely that the role of teacher will change as much as the principal. He goes on to say:

Schools that are restructuring generally tend to 'professionalize' the role of the teacher. This means that teachers make many more decisions and select the programs and methods they believe will work best for their students. They spend more time discussing the school's goals, vision, and purpose, as well as its effects on students. (p. 86)

Conley's description could be perceived to increase the autonomy of teachers.

However, he reminds the reader that it may be uncomfortable for teachers to make decisions for other teachers in the school, especially when they affect the whole school. He asserts that this shared decision-making "requires very different norms and values within the school and new skills by the teachers" (p. 87).

In his research on organizational culture and how it influenced the implementation of standards-based education, Eckersley (1997) studied 132 teachers

and administrators from three Oregon high schools that were identified as making the most progress in restructuring efforts. Teachers in the study were highly motivated and had a personal commitment to student achievement and high standards. Results of Eckersley's study revealed that the culture of the three progressive schools played a major role in supporting the implementation of a standards-based system. For teachers, restructuring required a commitment to their work.

Lieberman (1995) describes similar actions and attitudes of teachers involved in Kentucky's Education Reform Act of 1990. Some schools and some teachers were involved in reform efforts only because it was mandated. Others, however, were doing it because they believed in it and bought into it. Lieberman indicates that some teachers' perspectives of acceptance of the reforms set them apart from their peers.

Despite the work of school reform, teachers with a high degree of involvement in reform activities often accept change in ways that are not true for uninvolved teachers. Maehr and Midgley (1996) studied elementary and middle school teachers to compare the patterns of "involved" with "uninvolved" teachers. The teachers met in collaborative groups that focused on new ways of teaching. The researchers found that for those teachers who were involved with the discussions, planning, and implementation of new methods, the changes were more evident. They also found however, that over time, in this case a period of years, the less involved teachers also came to discover some of the positive effects of the changes and began to embrace the changes themselves.

While many support educational reform efforts, others believe differently. Schmoker and Marzano (1999) are supportive of standards-based education, but they

point out that if the standards are written or implemented poorly, they can have a negative effect on students and teachers. They assert that when this happens, teacher morale and self-efficacy suffer. Alfie Kohn (1999) speaks out against standards-based education and believes the drive for tougher standards causes a “preoccupation with achievement” and is actually unfavorable to learning (p. 21).

For some, the change has not come easily. Many have become increasingly distressed as the restructuring efforts progress and as they are forced to get involved in change efforts they do not support. While some teachers sense an increased voice in decision-making, others are concerned about giving up some of their autonomy and giving away some of their decision-making power about what and how they teach. Some resent the loss of independence to do as they wish without consulting others. Others experience feelings of isolation. At the same time, pressures in the school are greater and unlike anything they have ever experienced in the past (Tewel, 1994; Lieberman and Miller, 1992).

Smatlan (1993) conducted a qualitative study for the purpose of understanding the world of teachers in relationship to proposed reforms and to explore the hidden and social realities that the teachers experienced. Smatlan specifically wanted to know what teachers' perceptions were to changes in education, their sources of resistance, whether they wanted a voice in the changes taking place, and how they defined empowerment. In her study, Smatlan interviewed six classroom teachers who were employed in an urban school district undergoing restructuring. Emerging patterns helped to form the basis of developing hypotheses to attempt to understand how the teachers understood their work worlds. Some of the teachers in Smatlan's study were

not happy with the amount of change taking place. One teacher found district improvement efforts to be the "same thing we've been doing for years" (p. 101). In Smatlan's study, teachers saw only piecemeal efforts made toward restructuring by the school district rather than a vision or plan for the future.

Some teachers in Smatlan's (1993) study found educational reform efforts to be made only because the change was mandated. Teachers were positive about the collaboration that resulted from a team effort in educational reform. They stated their schools were organized with teacher teams for the purpose of collaboration and support, but that these teams were often in name only, and in reality, teachers functioned very independently. Their years of experience did not seem to make a difference to others in the school; they could only make the desired changes in their own classroom. In reality, teachers had little need for working together.

Conley and Goldman (1998) reported on research conducted in Oregon that investigated educator reactions to state systemic school reform legislation. They found a reticence on the part of teachers to embrace state-level education reform initiatives while simultaneously agreeing with its ultimate goals. Educators in the study agreed with previous studies (Conley, 1996; Goldman & Conley, 1997; Tyack & Cuban, 1995) that indicated teachers were cautious about reform efforts for a number of reasons. They believed the reforms would not be sustainable over a long period of time, were overly ambitious, took too much time to implement, and were impractical when combined with the current model of schooling. In his book on school improvement, Lilyquist (1998) stated that there is new evidence to suggest that "many of the actions taken to improve schools are slowly strangling them" (p. 7). He argued that the causes

have been systemic and advocated improving the current system rather than changing the whole system.

Teachers working in an environment of educational reform experience change in many ways. The findings on change suggest that it is difficult and personal. Teachers are similar to other individuals who experience change; each person approaches the process differently. Doyle and Hartle (as cited in Langone, Cross, and Combs, 1987) recognize the necessity of change when they state, "school improvement requires that teachers change what they do in their classrooms" (p. 94). Individuals experience different degrees of intensity in their adjustments to change. One research study conducted by Vail and Mandiloff (1995) examined the change experiences of home economics teachers involved in curriculum reform. In this interpretive study, 31 Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) teachers participated in a summer Curriculum Institute and began "charting a new course for secondary home economics programs in Idaho" (p. 80). Participants met for five days of self-discovery, learning experiences, examination of different philosophical frameworks, reading the works of leaders in the field, and reflection. After analyzing the data, taken from a series of teachers' journal writings on their experiences and feelings, Vail and Mandiloff identified a series of stages in the change process that teachers experienced as they participated in workshops. These stages were: blind enthusiasm/reluctant participation (great hopes or frustration for their participation in the workshop), discovery (of inner feelings and new knowledge), commitment/investment (moving from reluctance and fear to empowerment), needs identification (of families and students), disappointment (at the overwhelming task and of obstacles and limitations), intense emotion (of frustration,

excitement, concern, responsibility), self-doubt (when considering the responsibility of making things happen), caution (second thoughts), resolution (recognized fear but renewed determination to change), and passion (strongly supported the work they had just accomplished). Vail and Mandiloff expressed uncertainty as to whether all people need to progress through each stage in order to accept and implement changes. Nor did they know whether or not participation in these stages was necessary for implementation of the change process.

Conley (1993) confirms teachers' uncertain feelings when he writes about the restructuring experience teachers have: "Many educators seem to view restructuring as a way to create the appearance of change without necessarily confronting the harsh realities that these changes suggest. These educators seem to say, 'I'm all for change -- as long as I don't have to do anything differently'" (p. 9). The educators Conley refers to are content to let others plow new ground, write new curriculum, serve on committees, and make building or district decisions. Months or years later when it becomes necessary to implement the changes, they are content to follow. They may either be more accepting of the changes than they once were, or they may be glad they didn't have to spend their time and energy in meetings and in developing new curricula.

Other authors also discuss the amount of work required to reform education. In fact, Lieberman (1995) says that the word "restructuring" even implies that test scores will improve, and that it will happen very automatically. She states that the public is led to assume that a rearrangement of "form" will result in better educational outcomes, but that "what the public is not told is the work that will be required to achieve those outcomes...it is hard work, very hard work" because teacher leaders

working in this environment are seeking to change themselves and their colleagues (p. viii).

An area on teacher leadership which will not be covered in this review is that of the relationship between the principal and teacher. There is evidence to show that a strong teacher-principal working relationship is essential to support education reform efforts. In Eckersley's (1997) research study, 88% of teachers believed that their school culture supported a participatory form of administrative leadership. This included the adoption of site councils (site-based decision-making bodies on issues related to the state reform requirements), prevalence of action research teams, an increased number of teacher leaders in all three schools, and high levels of teacher-principal trust. Eckersley concluded that principals' actions could either motivate or discourage teachers' participation in both educational reform efforts and teacher leadership activities.

The realities and challenges for teachers in an educational reform environment are many. Some become discouraged. Changes are necessary. The amount of work involved is great. Some teachers are supportive and some are not. For this study, it is important to understand the experiences of teachers in general before we examine the lives of individual teacher leaders. Participants in this study were at one time (or perhaps still are) a teacher with these realities and challenges. The teacher leader/participants also work with other teachers in such an environment.

While the literature addresses realities and challenges for teachers, a large gap exists on these topics for teacher leaders. Is their perspective the same as it is for teachers? In addition, the question of where they find meaning in their involvement is

not answered. This information is missing and therefore motivated my study. I wanted to gain individual perspectives and determine a deeper and personal meaning for teacher leaders' involvement in their role as teacher leaders. The next section looks specifically at teacher leadership in relation to educational reform.

Teacher Leadership in an Educational Reform Environment

Because the overall goal of educational reform is to increase student achievement, and because teacher leaders are seen as instrumental in making that happen, the topic of educational reform is seldom addressed in depth without discussing teacher leadership. Over the last 10 years, educational reform has increased teachers' involvement in leadership positions in their schools. Pellicer and Anderson (as cited in Moller and Katzenmeyer, 1996) said, "Teacher leaders remain the last best hope for significantly improving American education" (p. 82).

To better understand the specifics of teacher leadership, a brief discussion of leadership in general may help. According to Terry (1993), there are six views of leadership, which provide insights into the roles leaders play. The perspectives merit brief examination here and include:

- Personal leadership--inherent traits and skills; an inborn talent; specific personality types; a biological view; "destined" to either be a leader or a follower.
- Team leadership--the ability to develop teams of people so they can acquire the ability to lead. Depending on their interaction with others, anyone can become a leader. This means that in a group, sometimes

one person is the leader and at another time, the leadership position lies with another person.

- Positional/Functional Leadership--"part of a larger political, social, and economic environment;" leaders "are shaped by the demands of particular conditions and judged by their ability" to adapt to the situation (p. 24); function of a system or a role taken.
- Political Leadership--seen as a position of power; sometimes the position is self-assigned, and at other times, it is given by others.
- Visionary Leadership--vision that directs human action; points people "toward a desirable future" (p. 36).
- Ethical Leadership--two viewpoints—persons are either ethical and therefore leaders, or else they strive for ethical behaviors and that makes them leaders.

The views of leadership which seem most relevant to the results of my study are personal, team, positional/functional, and visionary leadership. These will be discussed in more detail in chapters four and five.

Definitions

There are many definitions of leadership, each with similar themes. Crosby (1996), for example, states that leadership is "deliberately causing people-driven actions in a planned fashion for the purpose of accomplishing the leader's agenda" (p. 3). He elaborates by saying that a leader moves in a planned direction with a clear goal in mind, often laying out a sequence of events that helps people understand what is

going to happen and what is expected. The direction the leader moves is often a result of actions taken by other people. However, the leader moves in the direction the leader really wants, even if it is different from the stated goals.

Kotter (1988) writes from a business perspective and states that effective leadership "moves people in a direction that is genuinely in their real long-term best interests" (p. 17). In the business arena, it is more common to discuss leadership as it relates to persons in the highest level of management; however, "more and more, the need for leadership doesn't stop at the executive level either. Corporations are finding that even lower-level managerial, professional, and technical employees sometimes need to play a leadership role in their arena" (Kotter, p. 11).

According to Nahavandi (1997), leadership always involves interpersonal influence or persuasion; therefore, there can be no leaders without followers. But when these elements are combined, "a leader can be defined as any person who influences individuals and groups within an organization, helps them in the establishment of goals, and guides them toward achievement of those goals, thereby allowing them to be effective" (p. 4).

Terry (1993) proposed that leadership is an action united with authenticity and is both practical and theoretical. In other words, it needs to be "real" and yet combine many different leadership perspectives. Even though he believed there was no common definition of leadership, Terry cited Stogdill's *Handbook of Leadership* from 1981, which summarized definitions of leadership from over 3,000 books and articles. The summary statements on leadership are:

Leadership is an interaction between members of a group. Leaders are agents of change; persons whose acts affect other people more than other people's acts affect them. *Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group.* (p. 11)

Educational institutions are seeing the need for more leaders at every level. In the field of education, a more accurate definition of ideal leadership might be that of Krietlow, Aiton, and Torrence (1965), who define it as "the means by which one or more persons aid a group in setting and attaining desirable goals" (p. 57). This statement applies specifically to a teacher who is also a leader with students, community members, parents, or peers.

Teacher leadership is similar to leadership in general; however some unique differences exist. In her book on teachers who lead, Wasley (1991) states that the whole issue of defining teacher leadership "is problematic in that it has not been perceived as important in any aspect of teacher preparation or continuing education. Nor has it been significant enough to gain any full faculty discussion in schools" (p. 147). Wasley points out that even teacher leaders have no definition for the term, partly because no one had ever asked them to define teacher leadership and partly because it had never been important enough to create a discussion of the term. She states that when they do define it, they tend to "characterize teacher leadership in terms of their own work, which does not necessarily provide a broad enough view for the overall improvement of education" (p. 147). Wasley asserts that the lack of an opportunity to define their own role as teacher leader illustrates a larger problem:

Granted that there are many ways to improve schools and the discussion of teacher leadership is not the only way, but the fact that teachers have not thought about these issues provides a powerful example of both the

isolation in which they work and their lack of participation in the larger discussion about their role in improving schools. (p. 147)

Teacher leaders fall into two categories: formal teacher leaders and informal teacher leaders. Formal teacher leaders are those given familiar titles such as department chair, curriculum coordinator or specialist, advisor, or mentor. These positions are often compensated, perhaps by additional salary, but more often in exchange for a lighter teaching load. The position of informal teacher leader is becoming increasingly more common. These may include many of the same tasks performed by formal teacher leaders, but they are often initiated by the informal teacher leaders, conducted on their own time, and may or may not be combined with other school involvements. Informal teacher leaders are "recognized by their peers and administrators as those staff members who are always volunteering to head new projects, mentoring and supporting other teachers, accepting responsibility for their own professional growth, introducing new ideas, and promoting the mission of the school" (Wasley, 1991, p. 112)

Importance of Teacher Leadership

The literature increasingly addresses the subject of teacher leadership and the value of the role for others in the schools. Current literature is clear that "schools should be reorganized to give teachers richer opportunities to be leaders," according to a report by the Institute for Educational Leadership (Zehr, 2001, p. 1). The report went on to say that despite many obstacles, "the existing system is ripe for teacher-driven change from within--that is 'teacher leadership'" (p. 1).

As recently as a decade and a half ago, teacher and principal roles were fairly traditional. In her research study of 115 teachers, Johnson (1990) found few teachers encroaching on the norm of working only in their classrooms rather than assuming any kind of leadership or advising any of their peers; however, all of that is changing. In regard to teacher leadership, Moller and Katzenmeyer (1996) remark that "schools that have taken advantage of the valuable resource ... have seen the difference it can make. Students learn more, teachers are more satisfied with their work, and schools benefit from increased human capital" (p. 1).

The topic of educational leadership has been given increasing significance as theorists and others have begun working together in order to ultimately improve student learning (Barker, 1998). Many argue that teachers should be the primary persons involved with the development of instructional policies. Livingston (1992) makes a similar comment to Barker's when she indicates that teachers are critical in moving education toward excellence. Livingston argues that renewed reform efforts by effective teacher leaders optimize teaching and learning in the classroom by adding to the knowledge base and by providing personal and material resources. Little (1988) indicates that it is increasingly unreasonable to think that we can improve the performance of schools "without promoting leadership in teachers" (p. 78).

As a partial result of restructuring efforts, more has been written and practiced on shared leadership, and the word "leadership" is being redefined as it relates to school reform (Barker, 1998). According to Starratt (1995), there is growing evidence that involvement by teachers in education reform is critical in order to move education toward excellence. In fact, it is doubtful that educational reform would move forward

without teacher involvement or without teachers serving as leaders. Several writers state the importance of the teacher leadership role in educational reform. Starratt argues that the magnitude of school reform requires a leadership response from teachers. Lieberman, Saxl, and Miles (1988) state that in the climate of educational reform, teacher leadership inside schools is needed more than ever. Apps (1994) made a similar comment when he stressed that leaders must be working toward "organizational change and renewal and a teacher of it as well" (p. 153).

The role of public school teachers is often perceived as being limited to classroom instruction. As a result, they are rarely regarded as leaders. Due to the educational reform movement, however, it is clear that the idea of teacher as leader and leader as teacher has gained new recognition and importance. While principals are crucial for changes to take place in defining teachers/educators as leaders, principals recognize that teachers are a critical component to the changes as well (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1990). In fact, Tewel (1994) suggests, "the major responsibility for transition management should rest with teachers" (p. 331). Barth (2001b) asserts that it is in teachers' hands that the possibilities for school reform reside. He goes on to say that taking leadership and moving the school toward improvement "lies at the heart of what it means to be a professional" (p. 3).

Other writers have also discussed the importance of teacher leadership. In the introduction to their book on becoming a teacher leader, Bolman and Deal (1994) ask the question "What does leadership have to do with teaching?" Then they answer their question by asking, "Isn't leadership what principals and superintendents are hired to do?" (p. 1). In her book about teachers who lead, Wasley (1991) says that "research

has led many people to the conclusion that teachers need greater leadership opportunities if public education is to survive in any kind of meaningful way" (p. 7).

Livingston (1992) cites four reasons for developing more powerful leadership roles for teachers:

- (a) Many teachers presently do not want to leave the classroom or undertake management functions to exercise leadership.
- (b) Teacher leaders must have legitimate power, derived from their peers.
- (c) Teachers are interested in learning opportunities that allow them to collaborate with their peers.
- (d) Different collaborative relationships (e.g., mentoring, division of labor, and partnering) offer different incentives and leadership opportunities. (p. 21)

Schmoker (1999) also discusses the importance of teacher leadership in his book on school improvement. He indicates that the most interesting thing we have learned about leadership in schools in the past few years is that it has to include leadership by teachers. Principals cannot accomplish their goals, the school's goals, or the community's goals for greater achievement without the help of teacher leaders. He states that "change has a much better chance of going forward when principals team up with teachers who help to translate and negotiate new practices with the faculty. The combination of principals and teacher leaders is a potent combination, as so many schools demonstrate" (p. 116). Schmoker advocates formalizing teacher leadership in schools by designating them, cultivating their skills, paying them according to what they do, providing them with release time, and involving the faculty in their selection.

The opportunities for teachers to be leaders increases for those who are actively involved in an environment of educational reform. Barth (2001b) indicates that rank in the hierarchy has little relevance when it comes to school-based reform. He says:

Reformers are those who know something about the organization, have a vision leading to a better way, can enlist others in that vision, and can mine the gold of everyone's craft knowledge to discover ways to move towards that vision. Frank McCourt, the author of *Angela's Ashes* and a former classroom teacher, suggests: 'Ask the teachers--for a change. They're on the front lines. Forget the bureaucrats and politicians and statisticians. Ask the teachers. They know the daily drama of the classroom.' (p. 2)

Eckersley's (1997) research study highlights the role of teachers as leaders in an educational reform environment. One principal in Eckersley's study suggested the people involved in school reform had a lot of respect in their building, that other teachers saw them as leaders, and that most of the staff listened to them. Another principal described the importance of developing teacher leaders within his school. He believed that when there were teachers who were aggressive about school change, they made a significant difference with the rest of the staff in making intentional changes in the implementation of reforms. Colleagues of teacher leaders in Eckersley's study also believed that strong leadership of certain teachers made a difference in moving reform efforts forward, and their work inspired others to participate in standards-based restructuring in their classrooms. For each of the high schools in Eckersley's study, the bases of power moved from traditional positions and departments to site councils and inter-disciplinary action teams.

Educators who were teaching before the educational reform movement began are starting to understand the impact school reform has made on their job and career. For those who have become leaders, whether it was a personal choice or not, there is the realization that things are different now. New information is available and must be learned in order to function in a new environment with different expectations. No

longer can teachers work independently and in isolation in their own classroom with their individual ideas and resources. District and statewide efforts, especially in a standards-based environment, dictate that partnerships with business and the community are critical to the success of the student as well as the teacher.

Collaboration and teamwork with off-campus partners as well as with fellow teachers is necessary in order to work together on creating tasks that are meaningful to students.

As a result of her research study, Smatlan (1993) suggests that if change is to take place, teachers must be leaders. She states that change does not need to start at the top of the organization, but both those in authority as well as those who carry out the change must recognize it as worthy. Smatlan goes on to say that "bottom up change has particular value because the stakeholders at the most immediate level can and should be actively involved" (p. 133).

While some teachers have resisted reform efforts, many others are committed to making the necessary changes with a positive attitude and enthusiasm. Positive results will not come without effort. It will take committed people. As Livingston (1992) states, "We simply must work at keeping energetic, resourceful, caring people with students. Business as usual ... will not keep good people in the classroom" (p.7). With the new expectations of reform in education, comes also the need for teachers to be prepared to function as leaders. Leadership skills, Livingston notes, are needed more than ever before.

In the recent report on teacher leadership compiled for the Institute for Educational Leadership (2001), one of the final recommendations was an encouragement to expand teacher leadership structures and in the process, to also

improve them. These structures should be examined in light of the community's "shared education goals" (Institute on Educational Leadership, p. 22). The report indicated that most people "have little or no understanding of the importance of teacher leadership" (p. 22). It advised teachers to engage the general public in the discussion and begin building public awareness for the concept of teacher leadership.

Discovering what the literature has to say about the importance of teacher leadership roles is valuable for this research study. It is clear from the literature that the importance of teacher leadership is emerging and increasing. It is also apparent that teacher leadership is critical to school improvement and to moving educational reform forward. Since their role is so important, the literature creates an argument for the value of a study that seeks to understand what the experience is like for teacher leaders. The next section explores how teacher leadership roles have emerged.

Evolution of the Role of Teacher Leader

According to Moller and Katzenmeyer (1996), the emergence of teacher leadership has been influenced by three major factors:

- (1) Teachers have incorporated new and innovative ways of teaching into their classrooms. They have shared their ideas and new strategies with other teachers who have also implemented them. "Credible teachers are influential with their colleagues. ...The use of new strategies ... has offered teacher leaders a legitimate avenue to open professional conversations with their peers" (p. 2).
- (2) Site-based decision making designed for school improvement causes teachers to emerge as leaders when parents and the community are involved.

These leadership positions include both formal and informal leaders.

(3) When teachers begin to affiliate with other schools that are making similar changes, teacher leadership is inevitable for those who participate. As they begin to share, they realize how much they can give to one another. They begin to take initiative and ownership for the success of projects rather than depend on administrators to be the only provider of leadership. "As they share with teachers from other schools, they realize that they are not the only ones committed to making a difference (p. 2).

Educational reform and recent practices in the field have had an influence on the concept of leadership in schools. Administrators and teachers view leadership differently than they did in the past. Jackman and Swan (1996) state the following:

Leadership has traditionally been thought of as the responsibility of the administration. In recent years, however, administrators have begun to share responsibility for leadership with teachers. Organizational changes in schools resulting from a switch to site-based management and decision making have changed many schools and provided teachers with the opportunity and responsibility to assume some leadership roles that were unavailable to them before. (p. 41)

The most common route to becoming a teacher leader has either been through becoming an administrator or involvement in union-type activities for the purpose of improving the work environment (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2001). According to Little (1988), one of the reasons teachers may choose a position of leadership is to advance on the career ladder. She indicates that many times teaching is not viewed as a career in the same sense as is true for other professions. As a result, some teachers choose to take a position of leadership which they see as a way to advance in their individual career. These are generally formal leadership positions and

may include lead teacher, department chair, and a teacher on special assignment to assist in administrative tasks. Zehr (2001) makes a similar comment to Little's when she says, "In most school systems, teachers become true leaders only through landing posts as administrators, getting involved with activist-type teacher movements, or becoming involved in union affairs" (p. 1). Over time, these teachers will advance to

senior positions on the basis of their demonstrated knowledge, skill, energy, and commitment. Their new positions will be recognized by distinctive titles, access to discretionary resources, and expanded responsibility and authority. The number of such positions will be limited, and teachers will necessarily compete for them. (p.79)

Even when the teacher does not seek out an administrative position in order to be a leader, the administration or colleagues may select teachers to be chairpersons or subject matter or grade-level representatives. Teachers have not always supported being a formal teacher leader with such a title because it places a barrier between themselves and their peers. Little (1988) indicates that perhaps the reason teachers with leadership titles are not supported by their peers is because there is an element of competition involved when teachers take formal leadership positions. Little asserts that most teachers are not interested in "promotion and advancement." Maeroff (1988) also indicated that many teachers do not want administrative positions. In his book on the empowerment of teachers, Maeroff indicates that empowerment does not mean being in charge and having the final say in educational decisions. He reports that many teachers say they do not want the responsibility of all the decisions in school. They just want their voices to be heard and respected, and to see changes being made as a result of those voices being heard: "Empowerment of teachers need not mean that principals

cease being in charge, but it should mean much more consultation and collaborative deliberation" (p. 7).

Much of the literature I reviewed was in reference to the informal roles teacher leaders assumed in their school settings. A research study done by Hatfield, Blackman, Claypool, and Master (as cited in Wasley, 1991) examined the working lives of 87 teacher leaders. Results of the study indicated that many of the roles teacher leaders played were informal and voluntary. Schmoker (1999) supported the idea that

leadership can be exercised by any staff members who assume responsibility for their school or district's success, who attempt to favorably influence even one other member of the organization. In ways formal and informal, everyone has opportunities to lead. (p. 117)

Schmoker maintains that numerous teachers in a school can be involved in informal leadership activities. Moller and Katzenmeyer (1996) would concur because the premise of their book is that every teacher has the potential to be a leader. When the role of teacher leader is reconfigured and informal, it is available to more teachers. In addition, "it creates an interactive community of teachers collaborating for improvement and experimentation in their schools" (p. 48).

Wasley (1991) talks about a "new call for leadership" when she says, "Descriptions of the possibilities recommend that teachers assume leadership in the redesign of the schools, mentor their colleagues, engage in problem solving at the school level, and provide professional growth opportunities for their colleagues" (p. 5).

Wasley believes that the informal work of teacher leaders is more effective than formal teachers' work. She asserts that most leadership roles currently available are not designed to change practice but to "ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the

existing system" (p. 5). She is referring to such roles as high school department chairs who order materials, communicate curricular requirements, and compete for resources: "Few teachers see these positions as ones that enable them to learn and to grow...or build a shared vision" (p. 5).

Teacher leaders, whether they are formal or informal leaders, are "involved" with various school tasks. But there needs to be a purpose to that involvement. Maeroff (1988) makes the statement, "Involvement alone is not enough; it leaves too much room for tokenism. Genuine influence is needed. ...Teachers who have influence can affect outcomes" (p. 7). I find this interesting because in schools today, there are administrators who give lip service to teacher leadership and struggle to give up control that they formerly had. Teacher leaders themselves may enjoy a title or the attention they receive because of a new role. In both cases, teacher leadership is a "token" position and does not accomplish the goals articulated by proponents of increased teacher leadership in schools.

An article by Walsh-Sarnecki (2001) brings up another perspective of teacher leadership. The author discusses the current teacher shortage in Detroit, Michigan and the impact of using teachers to do "quasi-administrative work" on the shortage. These teachers would be defined in this research study as formal teacher leaders. They were in the classroom approximately half of the time and spent the other half of their day as department chairs who supervised teachers, coordinated testing, and handled misbehavior. The premise of the article was that with the current teacher shortage, these teachers should be back in the classroom, and Detroit Public School District was

taking steps to assure that would happen in order to assist in the improvement of academics in the school system.

It may be difficult to determine when a teacher becomes a teacher leader or what the difference is between an exemplary or master teacher and a teacher leader. The line between teaching and leading may not always be clear. According to Bolman & Deal (1994), "teaching and leadership are both about infusing life and work with passion, meaning, and purpose." They go on to say that John Gardner summarized their view precisely when he said, "Leaders teach. ...Teaching and leading are distinguishable occupations, but every great leader is clearly teaching--and every great teacher is leading" (p. 3). Moller and Katzenmeyer (1996) state that "until there is an awareness that all teachers can assume leadership responsibilities, we will continue to attract only those who want to be formal leaders" (p. 98).

Motivation for Teacher Leadership

Teachers in an educational reform environment often have a choice of whether or how involved they wish to become; at other times they do not. When a teacher becomes involved before mandates are effective, the role they play frequently changes to one of teacher leader. Because the role of teacher leader is often voluntary, there are factors that motivate their involvement. There are also factors that hold them back and discourage involvement. Some of these rewards and challenges are cited in the literature as identified by teacher leaders in school restructuring situations.

Even though change is difficult, it sometimes motivates some teacher leaders to do more. Fullan (2001) points out that one reason teachers need change is because

they are "frustrated, bored, and burned out" (p. 123). In a study done by Lortie (as cited in Fullan), teachers indicated that access to new ideas and opportunities for growth were necessary to keep teachers energized for their work

For some teacher leaders in Eckersley's (1997) research study, efforts to reform education offered an opportunity to "rekindle their motivation for the profession" (p. 162). Researchers of teacher leaders working in an educational reform environment identified a variety of factors which motivated teachers' involvement. Reasons for involvement included student achievement, self-actualization, and collaboration. Eckersley also found that organizational culture proved to encourage or discourage teachers to be leaders in educational reform. Richardson (as cited in Smatlan, 1993) stated that "teachers are motivated by student performance and engagement rather than salary incentives and other external rewards" (p. 114). Smatlan (1993) also discovered that teachers expressed relationships with their students as being one of the rewards of teaching.

Eckersley (1997) found that teachers and administrators were also motivated for personal reasons. For some teachers, the opportunity to participate in the development and implementation of standards was addressing a need for self-actualization. Eckersley indicated that teachers wanted to be the "drivers of the restructuring: not just passengers and definitely not receivers" (p. 102). For them, there was a need to be on the cutting edge of activities related to educational reform. Some felt the need to be involved in order to align with legislated directives in the state. Others really cared about the project because it was basically teacher-directed and implemented.

A principal in Eckersley's (1997) research study believed that for some teachers their level of commitment and involvement was affected by changing career needs. The principal proposed that for some individuals, lack of involvement was because the teacher had his or her own life and priorities, which change as time changes. The principal stated:

Some are young and just starting to have families and they do an excellent job in their classrooms and they are very conscientious but their time is limited to the time that they can dedicate to the profession at this point in time. So they are not getting involved ... and I think we need to respect that ... and there are other people in their time of life who are ready for some additional challenges and do get involved in some new progressive things ... they have the time to do it now. (p. 103)

According to Johnson (1990), teacher leaders are also motivated and discouraged from leadership positions by workplace conditions. School is the "workplace" for teachers and teacher leaders. Johnson described a research study done with a sample of 115 teachers who varied in gender, years of experience, teaching level, and demography of schools and school districts. The study found that the workplace "profoundly affects [teacher's and teacher leader's] work" (p. xx). Johnson discovered the following characteristics of "school as a workplace" for those who work in it: physical components (e.g., safety, comfort, resources), organizational structures (e.g., authority, workload, autonomy, interdependence), sociological perspectives (e.g., peers, status), political character (e.g., voice in governance, equity), economic conditions (e.g., pay, incentives, rewards, job security), culture (e.g., strength, supportiveness), and psychological dimensions (e.g., meaningfulness of work, opportunities for growth). Johnson said, "Just as deficits in some areas may drive good

teachers away from schools, deficits in some areas may drive good teacher leaders away from that role" (p. xx). The assumption can then be made that a positive workplace environment motivates teacher leaders for involvement.

The literature on motivation for involvement in teacher leadership is present to a small degree. In order to explore the research questions for this study, it would be desirable to understand more fully what inspires, encourages, and discourages teacher leadership involvement.

Roles of Teacher Leaders

Teacher leaders take on many roles in their leadership activities. Some of these are related to what they do and others are related to the process of their actions.

Activities, Tasks and Involvements. Teacher leaders are involved in a wide variety of activities in their role. Wasley (1991) described a 1987 study done by Hatfield, Blackman, Claypool, and Master. Teacher leaders in the study reported that the majority of their work concentrated on staff development, curriculum development, and instructional improvement.

In a study of her own, Wasley (1991) found teacher leaders to work 10-hour days, then in the evenings correct papers, write for professional journals, and create their own curriculum. In addition, some of the teacher leaders taught summer school for universities.

According to Lieberman et al. (1988), teacher leadership is both a facilitation process and a persuasion process. The facilitation process includes the technical aspects of leadership (who, what, when, where, and how). It includes such activities as

planning and/or leading a departmental meeting, presenting information to staff, organizing and/or analyzing curriculum materials, utilizing best practices in the classroom, aligning curriculum with standards, and creating a grant application document. A teacher leaders' activities may also have persuasion elements such as presenting information to the principal, addressing an issue at site council, modeling innovative practices, building relationships with parents and community members, and negotiating a decision at a departmental meeting. Apps (1994) adds to the list of tasks in which teacher leaders are involved when he says that teacher leaders manage learning, provide resources, and help people learn how to work together in groups and support each other.

In a recent article, Barth (2001b) notes areas where teacher leader involvement is essential to the health of the school. He indicates that all of the teacher leadership activities have an impact on teacher-student relationships. Those tasks most related to the current study are:

- choosing textbooks
- shaping curriculum
- setting standards for student behavior
- designing staff development and in-service programs

Moller and Katzenmeyer (1996) describe additional roles that exist for teachers, particularly at the district level, who desire leadership positions and are interested in influencing change. These include staff development (share successful strategies from their classroom experience), curriculum coaches (support teachers as they implement new district curriculum), task facilitators (work with task forces or committees to

provide structure and processes for completing a task), mediators (help groups and individuals manage conflicts), mentors (work with novice teachers to help “acculturate them into the school system” (p. 79), innovation facilitators (initiate, implement, and institutionalize a change to be made), and clinical professors (work in collaboration with a local university and preservice teachers and intern programs). As with other teacher leadership roles identified in this study, some are formal and some are informal; some are paid positions and some are voluntary; some are initiated by the teacher leader and others are designed to fill an open position with a title.

Livingston (1992) comments that in addition to the traditional tasks we assign to leaders, perhaps a more compelling reason for teachers to become leaders is to maximize teaching and learning. After all, the main goal of education is to enhance student learning, and students should be the primary reason for planning instruction. While student achievement is a reason for teachers to become leaders, the term “leadership” does not always imply such a focus. Archer (2001a) in his recent article, cites Mark Simon who referred to leadership when he said, “Instead, the term is still tied to status within a bureaucracy” (p. 2).

Other writers highlight the concept that the main role of teacher leaders is to improve productivity in schools. Lieberman, Saxl, and Miles (1988) said:

The target of teacher leadership is the stuff of teaching and learning: teachers' choices about curriculum, instruction, how students are helped to learn, and how their progress is judged and rewarded. Teachers who lead leave their mark on teaching. By their presence and their performance, they change how other teachers think about, plan for, and conduct their work with students. (p. 84)

Bolman and Deal (1994) indicate that when teacher leadership works well, teachers,

like other leaders, make a difference in the lives of others; however, when those influences are on students, the differences may be hard to assess and may not be evident for years to come.

Collaboration. As stated earlier in this chapter, collaboration is an important activity for teacher leaders who might otherwise feel isolation. It is defined as “working jointly with others” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 1998, p. 102). In her book on the workplace, Johnson (1990) states that “ideal” work settings are “places of intellectual sharing, collaborative planning, and collegial work” (p. 148). According to Fullan (1993), “The ability to collaborate on both a small- and large-scale is becoming one of the core requisites of postmodern society” (p. 3). He goes on to say that we are limited in our ability to learn without the contributions made by others to our lives. In a study by Ashton and Webb (cited by Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996), the main benefit of collaboration was that it could “reduce teachers’ sense of powerlessness and increase their sense of efficacy” (p. 45). In Maeroff’s (1988) qualitative study, teachers indicated that they were stronger because of the collaborative work they did with their peers who were also a part of a leadership training program. Rather than sense isolation, teachers commented on the respect they felt and the strength they drew from each other. One teacher leader said, “Because you have something to share, you become colleagues instead of victims” (p. 27). Another teacher leader said, “I was inspired in a way that I never was before and I finally feel good about myself as a teacher” (p. 29). Eckersley’s (1997) study also verified that collaboration with fellow teachers was a rewarding activity for teacher leaders. In Peter Senge’s (1990) book, he asserts that “team learning” is one of five disciplines for learning organizations. In this

capacity, teams "develop extraordinary results," and individuals grow more rapidly than they would otherwise (p. 10). It all begins with dialogue and thinking together.

In his recent book on the meaning of educational change, Fullan (2001) cites numerous studies to support the value of collaboration. A 1989 study by Rosenholtz (as cited in Fullan) examined schools where teacher leaders and principals fostered collegial improvements. The study gave "clear and convincing" evidence that collaborative schools were successful and effective (p. 125). Fullan discusses studies conducted in elementary schools in which academic achievement increased. One teacher in a study (as cited by Fullan) commented that her teaching had improved "100% to 200%" because of the mutual work of planning, learning, and evaluating together with her colleagues (p. 129). High school teachers were studied as well. Fullan describes a study by McLaughlin and Talbert (2001) of 16 high schools in two states. The high schools were set up with professional development schools and revealed that most high schools lacked a sense of sharing. However, when teachers were aware of being a part of a community and shared instructional resources and thoughts with their colleagues, the innovations they made were successful.

Barker (1998) indicated that teachers in her study viewed their involvement in school leadership teams (SLT) to be a positive force in their school and in their lives. The SLT served as a vehicle for building relationships and communicating with peers, administrators, and students. For the teacher leaders, the SLT became a support group, which provided moral support, unity, courage, resilience, energy, and encouragement in their task. They felt treated as professionals, equal with the principal, and supported by their school district.

The teachers in Barker's (1998) study indicated that the experience of being on an SLT also strengthened their commitments to teaching and to leadership. Overall, the teachers in Barker's study perceived a more positive experience than other teacher leaders in the literature examined by Barker. Unlike those in other studies she examined, participants in Barker's study described themselves as leaders, were confident in their role, continued to identify themselves as teachers, enjoyed a relationship with the SLT, and were significantly supported and validated in their work.

Sometimes, professional development was the vehicle for collaboration. Teachers in two dissertation studies (Barker, 1998; Eckersley, 1997) considered in-service opportunities as beneficial to their development as teacher leaders and a positive factor in their involvement in educational reform. Barker's participants indicated that the training also contributed to a sense of empowerment in collectively changing school-wide efforts. The opportunity to collaborate with others in professional learning and action research was cited as a way to strengthen their experience for teachers in Eckersley's study.

Collaboration fosters collegiality, which is when someone has a relationship with colleagues (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 1998). According to Johnson (1990), collegiality helps teachers and teacher leaders meet personal needs (e.g., interaction, reassurance, support, camaraderie, and encouragement), instructional needs (e.g., subject matter expertise), and organizational needs (e.g., coordination of students' learning, sharing of resources, setting and upholding standards, and initiating and sustaining change). Each of these is supported in the literature related to teacher leadership.

LeBlanc and Shelton (1997) studied teacher leaders' job satisfaction. They found that teachers who were satisfied in their job were more likely to be involved in teacher leadership and collaborative roles.

In summary, teacher leaders play a variety of roles related to curriculum development and instructional improvement. In order to consider the meaning of teacher leadership involvement for teachers, it is valuable to understand the roles teacher leaders play and exactly what they do in their schools. The previous section of the literature informs the reader of some of those roles. The next section examines the qualities and skills found in teacher leaders.

Qualities and Skills of Leaders and Teacher Leaders

To further consider leadership, there is value in examining the literature related to the unique characteristics, qualities, and abilities of the person as a leader. Various writers have identified essential characteristics of leaders. These related to knowledge, skills, and attitudes. In his book on leadership, Apps (1994) identifies nine qualities and characteristics of leaders in this emerging age. They include:

- Passion--a passion for what they do and how they do it. It's what keeps them committed to a cause when others move on.
- Awareness of Personal History--how they're influenced from their past, how they think, what they think, how they learn, what they learn, even what they see and do not see as a result of their histories.
- Spirituality—their spiritual side; the heart and soul of their being; the most important aspect. It guides who they are, what they do, and how they do it.

- Balance--harmony between family and personal life and work life.
- Skills--of creative and critical thinking, communicating, relating to people, reflecting on activities, framing questions, and the ability to develop new skills (sometimes as they are practiced).
- Solitude and Contemplation—a time for reflection and to confront themselves alone. It is a time to be in touch with the inner self.
- Tolerance for Paradox—internally stable so they are able to adjust to and stimulate constant change.
- Courage--doing what you believe to be the right thing, ability to take risks, looking at an organizational vision, having persistence and patience (p. 112-117).

The characteristics above each related to my study on teacher leaders in varying ways.

Terry (1993) identified essential skills of leaders, which are categorized according to his six views of leadership mentioned previously in this chapter. They include understanding oneself, understanding small-group management techniques, strategic planning, possessing system savvy, managing conflict, encouraging collective leadership, using intuition, identifying and analyzing ethical issues, and practicing clarity. In addition, persons in leadership need knowledge of the history and the context, and also an ability to build character within themselves.

Teacher leadership has some distinguishing characteristics that are different from those exercised by individuals in other public arenas or within the school system itself. Lieberman et al. (1988) note, "There is not only a set of leadership skills that are

teacher-like, but a way of thinking and acting that is sensitive to teachers, to teaching and to the school culture" (p. 37).

Teacher leaders in the study by Hatfield et al. (as cited in Wasley, 1991) identified the skills and qualities that were important to their work. These included: the ability to deal with people, to communicate well, to be flexible and patient, to be competent, and to be well respected. In another study reported by Wasley and conducted by Porter in 1986, leadership skills that were found to be important were: trust and rapport building, organizational diagnosis, dealing with process, managing work, and building skill and confidence in others. Terry (1993), on the other hand, asserted that there is no set list of [general] leadership skills--that it all depends on what one's definition of leadership is. And, he said, since there seems to be no common definition of leadership, there can be no common list of characteristics.

According to the results of a research study conducted by Lieberman et al. (1988), essential characteristics of teachers leaders include the ability to "build trust and rapport, examine issues within an organizational context, build skill and confidence in others, use resources wisely and efficiently, deal with change, and engage in collaborative work" (p. 68). O'Connor and Boles (as cited in Moller & Katzenmeyer, 1996) name the following characteristics as important: understanding of "politics and power, skill in managing personal relationships, communication skills, understanding of group dynamics, presentation skills, organizational skills, and ability to change" (p. 68). Bolman and Deal (1994) refer to listening and sensing as important characteristics of teacher leaders.

Vail (1995) cites several studies that indicate predictors of teacher leadership behaviors. In her quantitative study of 97 home economics teachers, Vail analyzes the extent of home economics teachers' involvement as teacher leaders and attempts to identify the predictors for the emergence of teacher leadership. More specifically, she examines the characteristics and experiences of home economics teachers in terms of personal characteristics, professional characteristics, school health, and teacher leadership importance as perceived by peers. In addition, she studies the relationships between teacher leadership performance and the characteristics of these teachers.

An analysis of the data in Vail's (1995) study revealed that the characteristics and experiences of home economics teachers were similar. Home economics teachers viewed teacher leadership behaviors as important; however, there was a discrepancy in that teachers perceived teacher leadership to be important, but their performance indicated otherwise. Home economics teachers were more likely to perform teacher leadership if they perceived it to be important, were located in a certain area, served as a mentor, and were involved locally in a general education organization. Data further showed that "membership in a general education organization decreased teacher leadership performance by home economics teachers, but if their commitment moved beyond membership to involvement at the local level, teacher leadership performance increased" (p. 42). Consequently, the best predictors of teacher leadership performance were: perceived teacher leadership, local involvement in a general education organization, and teaching in a suburban school district or teaching in a school located in a small town.

The literature described in this section discusses skills both teachers and teacher leaders need in order to function effectively. It is beneficial to consider what expertise teacher leaders need as they are individually interviewed and studied in this research. The next section explores the challenges and realities of teacher leaders.

Challenges and Realities of the Role of Teacher Leader

Teacher leaders deal with common challenges that face all teachers, as well as some that are unique to their informal roles. Moller and Katzenmeyer (1996) identified issues that teacher leaders brought to workshops they were attending. As a result of having no positional authority, these teacher leaders dealt with a higher level of ambiguity than a formal teacher leader would face. In addition, it was necessary to sort out their relationship with those persons in authority. Most informal teacher leaders did not wish to fully understand the principal's perspective because they did not plan to become one. Consequently, they were challenged with the vague relationship and expectations of both their colleagues and their administrator.

Moller and Katzenmeyer (1996) found other challenges for informal teacher leaders. It was difficult for teacher leaders to sort out their attitudes toward teachers who were less willing to change. These "resistors" dampened the enthusiasm of teacher leaders, and coupled with their lack of positional power, affected their own attitudes. In addition, teacher leaders needed to figure out what leadership meant for themselves and what it meant for their colleagues. Could they delegate tasks? Who owned the change that was taking place? What if colleagues didn't agree with decisions that are made? Who was the final authority? Teacher leaders in Moller and

Katzenmeyer's study also spoke of the isolation they felt and also where they would find the source of the courage and stamina it took to do their job.

As for some teachers who experience negative responses to educational reform mandates, some teacher leaders have similar reactions to the changes taking place in their lives. In a qualitative study by LeBlanc and Shelton (1997), participants described teacher leaders' views of their work roles. The researchers collected interview data from five teacher leaders, using a semi-structured protocol of questions "designed to elicit a rich description of the teacher leaders' perspectives" (p. 35). Teacher leaders who were interviewed discussed the issue of change as sometimes being "too much." There was a sense of frustration as teachers indicated how often they tried something new until the money ran out. At that point, the innovation was dropped, even if the implemented change was working.

Another stress identified by teacher leaders in Smatlan's (1993) study was the limited opportunity for professional growth. Several teachers in the study spoke of their desire for continuing personal and professional growth, but they found sole responsibility for renewal, rather than receiving any help from the district. One teacher used his sick days to keep himself informed of innovative practices taking place in other schools. Another teacher found that serving on special district committees was a way to stay informed.

According to Lieberman and Miller (1992), high school teachers deal with challenges that are not faced by elementary teachers. An obvious difference is the large number of students they teach in a given day as well as the extreme adjustments in both students and subjects from one period to the next. The students they teach are typical

adolescents who have come to national attention for both the personal problems they experience as well as the behavior problems they sometimes create. Secondary teachers are expected to be subject matter specialists and school facilities are usually compartmentalized accordingly. In fact, it is common for some teachers in the same building to rarely see each other. Lieberman and Miller indicated that high school organizations are also "more bureaucratic, more formal, and more difficult to negotiate" than elementary school structures (p. 38). In addition, there is a certain "pecking order" that gives teachers with seniority the "best" classes as well as students who are older and headed for college.

It is necessary for teacher leaders to find ways to deal with the challenges they face in their work. According to Fullan & Hargreaves (1996), it takes commitment to an educational ideal, energy, and courage in order to keep the motivation necessary to assert one's leadership and to step outside of traditional "teacher tasks" (p. 11).

Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) point out the importance of balancing work and life to prevent burnout. The additional benefit is that this balance "leads to more interesting teachers and more interesting teaching" (p. 79). Teacher leaders in Barker's (1998) study perceived difficulty, like those in the literature she cited, in balancing their leadership and teacher roles. However, they seemed to find ways to moderate the conflicts in time and responsibility.

This section of the literature described realities for teacher leaders. However, the extent of information related to teacher's perspectives is limited. Findings from this research study will provide more insight into individual realities.

Rewards, Satisfaction, and Meaning

As for all jobs, there are many rewards associated with teacher leadership. People search for meaning in their lives. Some of the rewards were mentioned in the literature. Oftentimes rewards, satisfaction, and meaning were discussed together and interrelated.

Johnson (1990) wrote that in addition to the physical, sociological, economic, cultural, and organizational factors, psychological variables are important to job satisfaction. Her study showed that intrinsic rewards were far more significant than extrinsic rewards. Teachers needed either recognition or reinforcement from their superiors, money, or satisfaction. All three were great, but satisfaction was the most necessary. Most teacher leaders' work promises the intrinsic reward of personal satisfaction. One of the main sources of this satisfaction was the prospect of making a difference in students' lives and of feeling good about one's teaching.

One of the characteristics of leaders and teacher leaders is that they have a vision for the future. In his article on teachers and change, Fullan (1993) indicates that when a teacher has a personal vision, it gives meaning to work. The vision comes from within and in order to work on the vision, a teacher must repeatedly ask her or himself "What difference am I trying to make personally?" (p. 2).

Sometimes the rewards exist because they build on earlier actions. According to Marris (as cited in Fullan, 2001), new experiences are always linked to a previous experience in order to sense some reality in the situation. In this way, people can attach some meaning to the experience, even though it may not be a meaningful experience for others. If they can make the connections to a previous experience that

someone else has not had, the experience may carry meaning for them, while at the same time, it may not do the same for another person. For example, if a teacher leader has a positive experience on a district-wide writing grant (or any group activity related or not to school), that activity may contribute to their sense of satisfaction the second time around or in a similar experience to the first one. For another person without the same background or experience, the satisfaction or meaning may be deferred or non-existent.

Throughout the literature, there is new interest in considering the inner lives of teachers and teacher leaders. Perhaps it is more important in a fast-paced and more impersonal society than in the past. McDaniel (1999) asserts that the new millennium will increasingly focus on the "personal dimensions of a teacher's life" (p. 31) and how to nurture and feed a teacher's soul and spirit. Being in touch with a person's inner life brings about "personal renewal," a term used by several writers (Covey, 1994; Kessler, 2000; McDaniel, 1999; Palmer, as cited in Kessler). Covey describes personal renewal as a reality "on which the quality of life is based" (p. 54). When persons experience renewal, they are better able to serve, to grow, and to change, and the quality of life is improved. Covey states that "quality of life is inside out. Meaning is in contribution, in living for something higher than self" (p. 58).

The emphasis on the soul, spirit, and inner self is highlighted in Kessler's (2000) book, The Soul of Education. She emphasizes the significance to students when she says, "While we are debating the question—should modern public school even have a soul?—most students continue to bring their souls to school" (p. ix). Palmer (as cited in Kessler) states that if we want students to effectively learn, we must "address what

has heart and meaning for them" (p. vi). The discussion here is on students, but in order for teachers to work with students in discovering their inner lives and what is meaningful to them, teachers must first understand the experience themselves.

Fullan (2001) talks about both the inner life and of change in his new book on the new meaning of change. The basis for what he says is the same as that described by Covey (1994). Fullan states "meaning has both moral and intellectual dimensions" (p. 30). He goes on to say that making a difference in the lives of those around you, whether they are fellow teachers or students, "requires care, commitment, and passion as well as the intellectual know-how to do something about it" (p. 30). One cannot effectively care about colleagues or students without establishing a relationship with them. Palmer (as cited in McDaniel, 1999) also refers to the value of personal relationships to be in touch with both soul and spirit.

McDaniel (1999) sees the emphasis being given to the inner life and personal renewal as especially essential in an educational reform environment. He says that many imaginative solutions are necessary to counteract the challenges of "fragmentation, burnout, and frustration" experienced by teachers (p. 35).

It is because of change, either voluntary or mandated, that teachers working in educational reform may feel burned out and frustrated. Fullan (2001) claims that both the "anxieties of uncertainty" and the "joys of mastery" are significant to the meaning of educational change (p. 32). He states that if the actions toward change work out to be beneficial to those involved, the result is a "sense of mastery, accomplishment, and professional growth" (p. 32). His premise is that meaning for an individual is then related to the success or failure of the reform.

While some of the descriptions and citations above and in the literature are directly related to the meaning of change for teachers in general, it is likely that the same concepts apply to teacher leaders in an educational reform environment. As for teachers, teacher leaders who work in an environment of change often perform tasks that are a result of change. The meaning teacher leaders make of their experiences in a changing environment may be a result of sharing that meaning with others. Perhaps that is why so much is written about the value of collaboration in educational reform environments. In fact, Marris (as cited in Fullan, 2001) is confident that nothing new can be incorporated into one's being unless some meaning is shared with others. And Fullan himself states that the meaning for those involved in collaborative efforts is enhanced when work is done together. He says, "acquiring meaning is an individual act but its real value for student learning is when shared meaning is achieved across a group of people working in concert" (p. 46). Speaking of change and collaboration, Fullan even asserts that whether change is successful or not is dependent on "the interface between individual and collective meaning" (p.9).

Collaboration also provides a certain amount of satisfaction. According to Johnson (1990), those who study the collegial relationships of teachers have found that when there is "intellectual sharing, collaborative planning, and collegial work," satisfaction is increased for teachers, and school is also more effective for students (p. 148). So it is appropriate to talk about the meaning of change for both individuals and for a group of people who share meanings of a phenomenon.

Whatever the experience of individual teacher leaders is, they are most likely making some meaning out of their experience. It is a circular experience. Fullan

(2001) says that when people experience meaning in their work, they are likely to enjoy the experience to a greater extent and as a result, be motivated to continue to change, to work, and to find meaning. In his book on the meaning of educational change, Fullan indicates that rather than the enjoyment of the experience, it is more about receiving enough energy to be motivated to make the necessary changes. He gave this caution from his writing:

The most important point of the chapter was that finding moral and intellectual meaning is not just to make teachers feel better. It is fundamentally related to whether teachers are likely to find the considerable energy required to transform the status quo. Meaning fuels motivation. (p. 48)

This research study was focused on finding deep answers to the question of meaning in teacher leadership involvement. Much effort was put into a search of the literature that described the meaning leadership had for teachers. The results were limited. Most significant was that meaning is definitely made from these experiences. However, the identification and descriptions of this meaning was absent.

Summary of Chapter

To summarize this review of the literature on the topic of teacher leadership, there are definitions of leadership in the literature; many of them apply to teachers. The literature shows the importance of teacher leadership, especially in light of educational reform. Teachers have responded to school reform mandates in a variety of ways -- some have been supportive; others have not. For teachers who were supportive, there were processes that teachers implemented to make the necessary changes. They needed encouragement and support for their achievements; if they did not get it,

frustrations arose. Of those who were supported and began implementing changes, many became teacher leaders. For teacher leaders working in educational reform, the perceptions of their experiences varied. Teacher leaders, as well as teachers, are looking for ways to make their lives meaningful. For some, personal renewal follows the inner search for meaning. For others, meaning comes as a result of personal renewal.

How the Literature Informed this Study

The literature reviewed for this research study has informed me in a number of ways. It specifically helped me focus on relevant and unanswered questions. The main questions without answers related to what the experience of teacher leadership is like and the source of meaning in that experience and involvement. The literature also identified completed studies that related to my research. In my examination of the literature, I was surprised by how much material had been written on teacher leaders working in an educational reform environment. The majority of these books recounted research studies that related to teachers' experiences in the classroom or in the school. While there were books on teacher leaders and books on teacher leadership, most of the research was done specifically with teachers rather than teacher leaders. Few books presented theories related to the topic of teacher leadership alone. Instead, they were focused on teachers.

In the literature review related to teacher leadership and educational reform, several questions were frequently asked, sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly. If I were to state the question asked most frequently by researchers, it would be: *What*

are the factors that contribute to the successful implementation of educational reform efforts? While the answers provided for this question did not answer my own research question, I realized that there was a multitude of books and articles to assist educators in making sense out of educational reform.

My questions, however, were related to the actual experience of teacher leaders. I wanted to know how they understood or perceived their experience and their role as teacher leader. I was curious as to how they made sense and meaning out of those activities.

As a result of the literature review, some of my initial questions about teacher leadership have been answered, at least partially. Others remain unanswered or would benefit from further exploration. In summary, those questions are:

- *What is it like to be a teacher leader, particularly in an educational reform environment?*
- *What is it that makes their work meaningful? What, in their involvement with educational reform efforts, do teachers find meaningful?*
- *What motivates teacher leaders to be involved in educational reform efforts? What discourages teacher leaders' involvement?*

A summary of what I learned from the literature related to each of the above questions follows.

What is it like to be a teacher leader? Teacher leaders perform many roles, particularly new roles, in their work. These roles are usually informal and performed voluntarily. Sometimes they are ambiguous and there is little structure, which results in

increased choice about whether or how they participate. Teacher leaders' informal leadership roles have changed the way they function as teachers. They have more autonomy and make more decisions than they did in the past. Many teacher leaders lead their peers more than their principals lead their fellow teachers. They work long hours and are often involved in educational activities outside of their school environment. Teacher leaders sometimes get frustrated with others who are less willing to change. There are few opportunities for professional development.

What makes teacher leaders' work meaningful? Teacher leaders believe their work helps move the school forward and they are on the "cutting edge" of what is happening in their school. One of the sources of satisfaction for them is knowing that they are making a difference in the lives of students. Intrinsic rewards seem to play a more important role than external rewards. When teachers are satisfied with their jobs, they are more likely to be involved as teacher leaders.

What motivates and discourages teacher leaders? Change motivates them--they need change and believe they would get bored or burned out if they didn't have it. Teacher leaders enjoy new opportunities and working with new ideas. They are motivated by student achievement and their own self-actualization. They also enjoy relationships and their collaboration with others. In fact, when collaboration takes place, more change is likely to take place. Colleagues provide moral support and energy. Teacher leadership activities prevent the feelings of isolation sometimes felt by teachers. In general, the literature shows that teachers are slow to embrace change; however when the research was on teacher leaders, they were generally found to be accepting of educational reforms and change in their lives. They had a high degree of

commitment to their teaching and their leadership involvement. Workplace conditions and organizational structure were also instrumental in influencing motivation for teacher leaders.

The results of several qualitative studies addressed the questions stated above, but insufficiently for my research questions. Especially absent was the answer to the question regarding what teacher leaders find meaningful in their involvement. In order to "get at" the research questions, I believed it was important to hear the voices of teacher leaders themselves. Thus, my study was designed to add information to the questions. The research study I conducted was important at this time in Oregon school restructuring efforts and added value to the literature base.

CHAPTER 3

ORGANIZATION: EMERGENCE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

School improvement ... requires new leadership
roles for teachers. (A. Kilcher in Livingston, 1992, p. 91)

The purpose of the research was to discover the meaning that involvement in teacher leadership activities had for teacher leaders at the secondary level who were working in an educational reform environment. To accomplish this, qualitative interviews were conducted with four teacher leaders who had been identified by their principal and selected colleagues. This chapter describes the method selected for this study and identifies the foundations for methods of study by qualitative researchers. Data collection and analysis were described in the context of research foundations.

I discovered many excellent research practices through evaluation of literature and research relative to teacher leadership and educational reform. Books and journal articles described numerous research studies, and because I read a number of complete doctoral dissertations rather than a journal article on the research, I was able to search for and find excellent research practices addressed somewhere in the dissertation. The literature has informed my research. The next section of my investigation is divided into the components of my research study. For each, I will summarize how the literature has informed my study related to the point under discussion, give the rationale for the practice, and state my investigative actions in light of best research practices.

Type of Study and Rationale for this Approach

This study was interpretive in nature and examined the meaning four teacher leaders found in their work, which they performed in an educational reform environment. My participants and I worked together to identify and describe the meaning of their experiences as teacher leaders. While the interviewer may seriously attempt to make meaning from what the participant shares in the interview, it is important to realize that some of the meaning is a result of the interaction between the interviewee and the interviewer (Seidman, 1991).

To truly understand what the experiences of teacher leaders were like, it was necessary to know the context of the interviewee's lives, as well as the people with whom they worked. It was also important that the methodology valued the importance of listening and offered opportunity to provide for deep understanding which goes beyond the perspective of day-to-day experiences of the lives of these teacher leaders. According to Patton (1990) it is difficult to explore the meaning of an experience unless the reader understands the context from which the interviewee speaks. In fact, he said that a "one-shot interview" with no knowledge of the respondent's life situation does not provide enough bases for interpretation (p. 24).

The study attempted to bring together the understanding of these experiences into a theoretical framework, which has implications for the practice of teacher leaders, for teacher education, and for future research. Current teacher leaders may find the experiences of others helpful in reflecting on their own practice. Teacher educators may be informed of leadership activities that contribute to a meaningful experience for teacher leaders in a restructuring environment. Those who instruct future teachers may

also become aware of skills necessary for teacher leaders, for example, that of collaboration. This knowledge will help teacher educators prepare future teachers for leadership experiences. In addition, further research may be conducted that will verify and expand the knowledge from this study.

It was important to me that the results of my study were relevant and contributed new information to a body of knowledge in the field of education. When I first developed an interest in the topic, I assumed no studies had ever been done on the subject. Therefore, in my initial literature searches when I saw others writing on this topic, I was discouraged to think that perhaps I would need to choose another focus for my study. However, as I read a number of entire dissertation research studies, and as I explored the literature from journal articles and books, I became certain that my proposed study was unique in several ways. In fact, it would even add to the body of knowledge on teacher leaders who work in an educational reform environment! I investigated topics related to the experiences of being a teacher rather than an administrator, and the experiences of being a teacher leader rather than a teacher. In addition, I examined the topic of teacher leadership as it existed in an environment of educational reform rather than in general education practice. My goal was to "hear the voice" of the teacher leaders as I sought to understand their perspective in as many ways as I could, rather than identify factors that accomplish the objectives of educational reform, or that assist teachers' work in a restructuring environment. There is abundant literature on the latter two goals, but that was not my interest. I wanted to get to know these teacher leaders in ways that were not clear to me from the literature.

Because I knew less about teacher leaders' personal experiences, I decided to focus on hearing the voice of teacher leaders within the educational reform environment. "Giving voice" is an expression associated with qualitative research and "refers to empowering people who have not had a chance to tell about their lives" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 204). By listening to these voices, it gives me and the reader a chance to better understand the world of people we would otherwise not know, in this case teacher leaders. Bogdan and Biklen point out, however, that although I may honestly attempt to convey to my readers the stories of these teacher leaders, I can never succeed completely as I am the one telling the story they told to me.

In my review of the literature, I found that the term "educational leadership" often implies leadership by the principal or administrator. When conducting a dissertation study to gain insight into the experiences of teachers who were serving on school leadership teams and engaged in creating school-wide change, Barker (1998) discovered that more research had been conducted on administrative leadership rather than teacher leadership. From the literature, she discovered that educational leadership had been well researched, but the majority of it had focused on the principals as leaders and how their style and characteristics influenced the school and the lives of the teachers with whom they worked. As a result, Barker focused more on teacher leadership than administrative leadership. The focus of my study was also on teacher leaders who happen to be working in an educational reform environment. Barker's study focused on teacher leaders who were members of a school-wide team and examined teacher leaders' values and attitudes about leadership. Barker also identified

factors that were supportive and beneficial to the teacher leadership efforts. My study examined individual teacher leaders to discover what contributed to a meaningful experience for them.

Little research has been done to understand teachers' lived experiences, especially related to educational reform. Ferrarotti (as cited in Seidman, 1989, p. 4) stated that "social abstractions [e.g., educational reform] are best understood by the experiences of individuals whose work and lives are the stuff upon which the abstractions are built." Seidman goes on to say that so much research is done on schooling itself, but little is done on the individual lives of teachers and other school personnel. Yet, it is these people's lives that truly define what "school" is all about. Seidman's view is consistent with the results of studies related to teachers' involvement in educational reform. Even when teacher leaders, rather than administrators, were studied in the research, it usually had more to do with organizational structure and context, rather than the actual experience for those working in the environment of educational reform. I believed that my research could make a contribution to the understanding of teacher leaders' perspectives and experiences in an educational reform environment and to the literature.

Major Steps in Collecting and Analyzing Data

This section reviews the major steps I took to collect and analyze the data from my research study. It includes an overview of the pilot study, how I identified participants, procedures followed to collect data, and what I did to analyze the data.

Pilot Study

As a new researcher, a pilot study was important in my research to refine the entire data collection process. Conducting a pilot study was also beneficial for me to become familiar with the interview procedures and the data transcription process. I found from the pilot study that I did not need to revise or alter my interview procedures, but instead, I needed to refine them. It was most helpful to learn how to ask open-ended questions and to attempt to keep my own experience out of the process.

In December 1999, I contacted two high school principals in Oregon by letter (see Appendix B) for the purpose of having each principal identify one teacher who had extensive involvement in educational reform efforts. I went through the administration to identify participants for my pilot study because it was important to me that all parties involved were aware of and supportive of my research plan to examine the lives of participants fairly deeply. I was indeed “asking people to grant access to their lives, their minds, their emotions” (Lofland & Lofland, 1995, p. 39). By telephone, I contacted the two teachers who had been referred by their principals to further explain the study and to determine each teacher's willingness to participate in a pilot study. When the teachers both agreed to participate, I mailed a two-page survey (see Appendix C) to them and requested they return it upon completion. The survey contributed limited demographic information, as well as indicated the teacher's own perceived level of involvement in teacher leadership activities, some of which were related to educational reform and some not. Three in-depth interviews were arranged with each pilot participant, which took place from January through March 2000. The

teachers were also invited to e-mail a reflection of the interview experience between each of the three interviews. They were given suggestions to use for their responses (see Appendix D). Data from the pilot study interviews was not used in the final data analysis.

Identifying Participants

The literature informed my study in relation to the number of participants. Because I used Seidman's (1991) phenomenological model of interviewing, which will be described more fully later in this chapter, I decided to conduct in-depth interviews with four participants. This number of participants was consistent with many of the qualitative research studies I read. In Barker's (1998) research, the investigation revealed multiple perspectives as 10 participants were studied. Smatlan (1993) interviewed six participants in her study. In their doctoral research, both Eckersley (1997) and Hurley (1998) conducted interviews with a variety of licensed staff members (teachers, administrator, counselor, and site council chair) from each of three high schools.

There are several reasons that my interest for the research study was more in secondary teachers than in elementary or middle school teachers. Perhaps the most important is that I understand the context of the high school experience, having had that involvement in the past. Another reason is because for some secondary teachers, including myself, involvement has been a choice. Some secondary teachers became involved in efforts to develop or implement Oregon's Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM) early in the reform process, when preparing students for the Certificate of

Initial Mastery (CIM) was a more immediate requirement (see Appendix A for a glossary of Oregon terms). While PASS (Proficiency-Based Admission Standards System) has a different reason for existing at the secondary level, it is often in the forefront because of the emphasis on academic achievement, college preparation, and college admission. As discussed in chapter 2, elementary teachers have also been challenged to prepare students to meet benchmarks at various grade levels and give state standards tests. Therefore, my interest in secondary teacher leaders in contrast to elementary or middle level teacher leaders was because a portion of high school teachers chose involvement in curriculum development, CAM, and PASS, and were motivated for reasons other than preparing students to meet standards for state tests. As stated in the beginning pages of this research study report, there are teachers in Oregon at every grade level who are involved in educational reform voluntarily and those who are either not involved, or who are involved because it is an expectation of an administrator or a school district. This study sought to understand more about teachers who, because of that chosen involvement, were seen as teacher leaders in an educational reform environment. These teacher leaders were defined as informal teacher leaders, those who often initiated their involvement, volunteered their time and efforts, and had no leadership titles. In addition to the identified criteria for teacher leaders, I also wanted to identify secondary teacher leaders with extensive involvement in educational reform activities. The term "extensive" was relative--the more involvement the better.

To identify teacher leaders who fit all of the criteria named above, a letter (see Appendix E) was written to 11 high school principals representing five school districts

in the state, both rural and urban. The letters requested the principals' assistance in the identification of teachers who had been most involved in a wide variety of school reform efforts and who had taken leadership in those activities. Thirteen examples of possible activities (site council, curriculum writing for state-wide dissemination, district-wide committee for CAM, etc.) were given in the letter. Similar letters were sent to the representative for the Oregon Education Association (OEA) and the current site council chair in those 11 high schools (see Appendixes F and G). One difference in the letter to the principals and the letter to the OEA representative or the site council chair was that the latter did not give a list of possible activities and involvements. The letters to OEA representatives and site council chairs were mailed during the first week of January 2000 and were followed by a telephone call for the purpose of identifying the names of one to three teacher leaders in the school. Two principals chose not to participate, saying their teachers "had too much on their plate" at the time. I did not pursue inquiry with the OEA representative or site council chair for those two high schools. In the end, I had the names of 48 teacher leaders as identified by their principals, OEA representatives, and site council chairs. Eleven of them had been mentioned by more than one of the persons identifying teacher leaders.

The 48 identified teachers were contacted by telephone, letter (see Appendix H), or e-mail to explain the study and to determine their willingness to be a part of the main research study. I was unable to make contact with 8 of the 48 teachers. The other 40 were willing to complete the two-page survey, which I then sent, again either

by postal mail or as an e-mail attachment, based on the preference of the teacher. Of the 40 teacher leaders sent a survey, 38 returned it in a self-addressed stamped envelope.

The purpose of the survey was to gain demographic information, as well as to determine the extent of their experiences in educational reform in Oregon. Because the extent of involvement in teacher leadership activities was important, the entire back side of the completed surveys was a place to list the leadership activities in which the teachers were involved, as well as their specific role in that activity and the number of years they were involved. A list of criteria was developed and included on the survey. The list of examples was the same as the one on the letter to principals, OEA representatives, and site council chairs. It included examples of activities, such as participation in:

- Site council
- Demonstration site
- Curriculum writing for state-wide dissemination related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- Goals 2000 grant writing
- Goals 2000 school team that implemented a Goals 2000 grant
- School-wide committee(s) related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- District-wide committee(s) related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- State-wide committee or task force related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- State-wide committee or task force related to other educational reform efforts in Oregon

- Teaching of a class for a CAM program or an introductory course for one or more of the endorsement areas
- Giving presentation(s) to content area peers or school building colleagues
- New Century School

In order to identify teacher leaders to be potential participants in the main research study, I used the information on the surveys to choose four persons for the main study. I considered three criteria: 1) extent of involvement in teacher leadership activity, 2) how many times they were identified by the three persons consulted, and to a lesser extent, 3) demographic diversity. The main goal was to select participants with the most extensive, broad-based and comprehensive involvement in educational reform activities.

I then made a grid of teachers who were named more than once. If they were either the OEA representative or the site council chair, I counted them as being identified in that area. My rationale for this was that because they were involved in that particular leadership activity, they could not nominate themselves, and no one else could nominate them either. Of the 11 teacher leaders who were identified by more than one person, two of the teacher leaders were identified by all three nominators: principal, OEA representative, and site council chair. Nine others were identified by two of the three persons who nominated teacher leaders.

To make the final selection of four participants, I used the two teacher leaders who had been named by all three persons who submitted names of teacher leaders. These two persons had also been extensively involved in teacher leadership activities, as evidenced by their completed survey. For the other two participants, I especially

considered those who were identified twice by their administrator and peers. I also weighed the extent of involvement again, looking for a wide variety of activities. To make the final selection, I also examined the surveys for basic demographic variation, making sure that I had teacher leaders from different school districts, and who varied in age, gender, and subject area representation. I then contacted the four selected teacher leaders (see Appendix I) to make certain they were still willing to fully participate in my study. When they consented, the appointment for the first interview was set.

The above-described selection process resulted in four teacher leaders who met the stated criteria and agreed to be participants in my research study. The teacher leaders were given pseudonyms to protect their true identity. Chapter 4 describes the lives of Angie, Rose, Willfred, and Marie, as well as their teacher leadership experiences.

Data Collection

Context. A researcher should be knowledgeable about the context of a study in order to interpret the data most closely to the meaning intended by the participant. Because of my previous involvement at the secondary level and in educational reform in Oregon, one of the strengths I bring to this study is that of understanding the context. In the literature I read, it seemed that most researchers were well acquainted with the context for their study. In fact, most had personal experience with a similar program, strategy, or activity. For example, in Eckersley's (1997) study, the researcher was knowledgeable about the context of the implementation of restructuring efforts. Even before the study was done, Eckersley was acquainted with each of the schools in

his study and with the process of implementing standards in Oregon because of his work at the university where he was employed. Vail's (1995) study demonstrated that she was knowledgeable about the context and culture she studied because she had been in the profession of home economics education for many years and had done a great deal of research, often in the area of leadership. Barker (1998) was also knowledgeable about the context and culture of school leadership teams (SLTs), the focus of her study. She stated prior involvement with SLTs in the same state as her study was conducted. In addition, she had served as a trainer of school leaders and site teams.

Bias and Limitations. Understanding the context in which a research study is conducted may also point to a potential bias and limitation in the study. I am a researcher who in my study has examined the experiences of individuals similar to myself. It is necessary that I declare this bias. Throughout my interviews, I struggled to maintain neutrality. The interviews seemed more like a "conversation with a peer" than with a "stranger" as I quickly felt akin to these teacher leaders. The greatest challenge was not in asking the right questions, but in holding myself back from responding "That's the way it was for me!" I identified with these teacher leaders and wanted to tell them so. However, I recognized that my comments or facial expressions could affect what the participants shared. So in my interviews, I consistently worked to keep my thoughts and experiences from influencing the data.

My voice is inevitably in the analysis of the study. I found much of what the participants said to be personally fascinating. Therefore, I continually weighed whether a statement or premise was the voice of the interviewee or of mine. I also considered

whether or not I was choosing to include a statement because of its interest to me, or because it was a true result of the study.

Ethical Practices. It is important for a researcher to take precautions to assure confidentiality and anonymity of the research. In my research study, care was taken to protect confidentiality. A private location was used for the interviews, usually the teacher's classroom. While participants' comments were tape-recorded, only the transcriptionist, my major professor, and I know the names of the teacher leaders. I was careful not to mention names or schools of other participants as I talked with the teacher leaders. In the final written analysis and report of the research, pseudonyms are used for each of the participants, as well as for the school in which they taught, in order to protect the participants' privacy. As soon as the research is published, tape cassettes of the interviews will be separated from participants' names and destroyed.

Procedure. For my study, four methods of data collection were utilized with each participant: a survey, three in-depth interviews, researcher observations and reflections on each interview, and a follow-up e-mail reflection on the part of the participant.

On the initial visit with each participant and before the first interview began, teachers were given an opportunity to read the "Informed Consent Document" (see Appendix J) and ask questions of the process prior to an invitation to sign the document. Potential participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could either choose to participate or withdraw from the study at any time.

The series of three interviews with each of the four participants for the research study was completed from March to July 2000. The interviews took place at the participant's high school at the convenience of the teacher leader and were held at two- to three-week intervals between the three interviews. The interviews were from 1 to 1 ½ hours in length.

Immediately after each interview, I reflected on the interview by noting observations related to logistics (e.g., interruptions, cold room), the interviewee (e.g., seemed comfortable, wasn't feeling well), and new insights for the research process (e.g., move microphone closer). Between each interview, teacher leaders were invited to e-mail their reflections to me (see Appendix D). Teacher leaders were encouraged to reflect and write on any or all of the following: the interview experience, additions to the data, and any experience they had related to educational reform activities since the last interview or the last e-mail reflection. These could have included experiences either within or outside of the classroom. With the exception of one participant, I received an e-mail reflection from each of the participants after their individual interviews. One teacher leader expressed difficulty accomplishing this task and sent two instead of three reflections. In the analysis of data, I found little from the reflections that I could use. However, the practice allowed me to "check in" with the participants and make certain they were comfortable with the process.

In the field of education, for many years the contribution of research to "the theoretical understanding of human action and experience" was disproportionately small (Mishler, 1986, p. vii). Today in a postmodern era, interview research as a form of inquiry is more common for a qualitative research study. It can take many forms,

from highly structured questions to casual conversations, depending on the nature of the research question. Mishler (1979) discussed how one method of interviewing results in narratives and stories which are used as a way of knowing and understanding a particular aspect of the interviewee's life. For this type of interview, the goal of the researcher is not necessarily to find answers to traditional interview questions or to evaluate the experience. Instead, it is to understand the experience of other people and to find the meaning they make of that experience.

One way a researcher searches for meaning or understanding is to use a hermeneutical approach to the interview process. Hermeneutics originated as a term to describe the interpretation of Biblical text, but today is also used in relation to finding meaning, which is essential to the qualitative approach (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). It is defined by Kvale (1996) as "the study of the interpretation of texts" (p. 46) and by Slattery (1995) as an "approach to understanding the meaning of texts, language, relationships, historical artifacts, and schooling" (p. 103). The interviewee's experiences are later interpreted for the meaning they possess to the reader. In the hermeneutic approach, one's everyday human experience is described and then interpreted. The authors go on to say that qualitative research attempts "to tap the deeper meanings of particular human experiences" (Rubin & Babbie, 1997, p. 26). Putting the hermeneutic approach into the form of a question related to this study, one might ask: *How can a researcher find the meaning behind what a participant says in a research interview?*

Because I was focused on understanding the thoughts, actions, and perspectives (past, present, and future) of the person being interviewed, the most effective style is

one that is unstructured, non-directive and flexible in nature (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

According to these authors, there are several characteristics that describe qualitative research that can be applied to the interview:

- The *process* of the association between interviewee and interviewer is just as important as the product or the outcomes.
- The information gained from an interview is analyzed *inductively*, so that general ideas and theories are built as the details are gathered and grouped together into themes.
- The researcher is concerned with *meaning*, or making sense out of what the interviewee shares.

Van Manen (1990) uses the term "deep understanding" to include "one's perceptions, interpretations, plans, attitudes, feelings, values, and constructions of thought" (p. 70). He advocates that all are important in developing understanding. Meaning, according to Rehm (1987) can be viewed as the ability to understand how all these entities or events relate to each other, the self, and the larger whole. Rehm says, "whenever previously disparate parts are grasped into a new unity, a meaning is discovered" (p. 121).

For this research study, the series of interviews with each participant was based on a structure for in-depth interviewing called "phenomenological interviewing." This interview process was advocated by Seidman (1991) and is characterized by open-ended questions that build upon and explore participant responses to previous questions so as to reconstruct the interviewee's experience with the topic under study. Knowing the context of interviewee's lives, including the people around them, is critical to exploring the meaning of an experience (Patton, 1989, as cited in Seidman, 1991). Kvale (1996) also stated that phenomenological interviewing involves "understanding

the phenomenon through the interviewer's perspectives, describing the world as experienced by the subjects, and with the assumption that important reality is what people perceive it to be" (p. 52).

The interviews were conducted in the form of a conversation. The concept of interview as conversation was described by Rubin and Rubin (1995). They advocated that one way the qualitative researcher attempts to learn as much as possible about a person's experience is through a guided conversation. In their book on qualitative interviewing, they stated the following:

As in normal conversations, questions and answers follow each other in a logical fashion as people take turns talking. Researchers listen to each answer and determine the next question based on what was said. Interviewers don't work out three or four questions in advance and ask them regardless of the answers to earlier questions. The interview, like an ordinary conversation, is invented anew each time it occurs. (p. 7)

In order to make the interviews a conversation, I tried to give the participant a role in "defining the content of the interview and the direction of the study" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 95). The participants started out as strangers to me, other than the brief contact we had prior to the first interview by e-mail and telephone. Since my data collection mainly relied on interviewing, it was important for me to build the relationship that Seidman (1991) discussed. Each interview began as small talk in order to develop rapport with the interviewee. It then moved to the purpose for that particular interview. Bogdan and Biklen discussed the importance of listening and of treating the person you are interviewing as the expert; I attempted to do both. I saw our time together and our conversation as a reflection of the two personalities (their personality and mine) and the interaction that took place between us. As a result, I

believe the participants felt at ease and talked freely, and my goal was accomplished which was to "produce rich data filled with words that revealed the respondents' perspectives" (Bogdan & Biklen, p. 95).

I used the series of three 90-minute interviews suggested by Seidman (1991) as the format for the interviews. Interview One was focused on life history and was meant to establish the context of the participant's experience. Participants were invited to tell as much as possible about themselves in light of the topic. They were encouraged to reconstruct early experiences in their families, in school, and at work. Interview Two was to "concentrate on the concrete details of the participants' present experience in the topic area of the study" (p. 11), which in this case was teacher leadership and educational reform. Here, the context of the social setting was important. These teachers found themselves in an educational environment that included relationships and activities with students, other teachers, administrators, or parents. Participants were encouraged to tell stories about their experiences as a way of eliciting details. In Interview Three, participants were asked to reflect on the meaning of their experiences. This did not involve rewards and satisfactions as much as it did the intellectual and emotional connections between the participant's work and life (Seidman). In this interview, participants were asked to consider how the factors in their lives interacted to bring them to their present situation. In order to do this, they were encouraged to examine the details of their present experience and the context within which it was occurring.

Even though the third interview is the only one that asks participants to focus on understanding their experiences, all three result in meaning making. Mishler (1986)

noted, "Telling stories is one of the significant ways individuals construct and express meaning" (p. 67). Vygotsky similarly stated, "The very process of putting experiences into language is a meaning-making process" (as cited in Seidman, 1991, p. 12). As participants selected events from the past and told stories of their experiences, they imparted meaning to them.

Based on Seidman's (1991) model, I used the questions listed below and adapted them to my topic. They served as a guideline for the open-ended, semi-structured questions I asked of the participants in this research. Questions were asked in any order within an interview, depending on the participant's responses. Occasionally, additional pertinent questions were added and others were eliminated. This was both a result of time issues as well as the fact that I tried to let the participant's words guide the interview. Throughout the interviews, I occasionally wrote down prompt words for me to remember a follow-up question. This was to allow the participants to completely finish their thoughts before interruption. An example of a follow-up question is: "A little bit ago you said something about how much you enjoyed working on that district-wide committee. Can you tell me more about that"?

Interview Questions

I adapted Seidman's (1991) model of questioning to formulate an inquiry with my participants. The questions follow:

Interview One (focused life history):

1. Tell me about your past experiences in your family. What was it like for you growing up?

2. Tell me about your past experiences in school. As you were growing up, what do you remember about school? What do you remember about your parents' involvement in your education?
3. How did you first get started in teaching? How did you get started in educational reform efforts? What were the events that led to your participation? Since the time you began, what has that experience been like?

Interview Two (details of experience):

1. What do you actually do in your teaching? Reconstruct a typical day. What do you do in your classroom?
2. What do you do related to educational reform? What do you do in a leadership capacity? Do you consider yourself a leader? Do others see you as a leader?
3. What are the benefits for you in being involved as a leader in educational reform? What are the challenges? Could you explain what you mean by.....?
4. Would you talk about your relationship with your students? With other teachers? With your administrators? What about parents? The community?
5. Can you tell me a story, for example, about your teaching or your relationship with students, especially as it relates to educational reform activities?

Interview Three (reflections on the meaning):

1. Given what you said about your life before you became involved in education reform, and given what you have said about your work now, how do you understand educational reform? What sense does it make to you?
2. By some definitions, you are a teacher-leader. What is that like? How is it meaningful to you? How is it frustrating or discouraging? Could you explain what you mean by.....?
3. Given what you have said in your interviews, where do you see yourself going in the future?

The majority of the data was collected from participants as described above.

From the literature, I gained additional ideas and best practices for research, many of which I had learned in course work for my doctoral program over the last three years. Reading about their use in other studies brought to mind their application to my study and helped shape my research. For example, Barker (1998) collected data from two in-depth interviews and a focus group. After each interview, the researcher wrote notes on any observations she had made and her personal reflections related to the interviews. Barker's study led me to follow the same practice.

For a qualitative study, the word "trustworthiness" is commonly used instead of "validity." While neither term may be adequate (Seidman, 1991), the question can still be asked, "Are the comments of my participants valid?" Seidman's model of the three-interview structure increases the accomplishment of trustworthiness in my study. Over the course of the three interviews, I could verify the internal consistency of participants' comments. When analyzing the data, I frequently found similar remarks made by the same person with different wording.

Triangulation is a term used frequently in discussions of qualitative research. It involves the use of "multiple data collection technologies, multiple theories, multiple researchers, multiple methodologies, or combinations of these four categories of research activities" (Denzin, as cited in Berg, 1998). On the other hand, Bogdan and Biklen (1998) advise against using a term so ambiguous. However, they believe the use of multiple sources leads to a fuller understanding of the phenomena being studied (Bogdan & Biklen) and recommend it when conducting qualitative research. In my study, I used four participants for the collection of data. In addition, two of the four

methods of acquiring data, researcher's reflections and participant's e-mail reflections were added precisely to substantiate previous data.

Barker (1998) took several precautions to make the participants comfortable with the interview process. These included: a private location for the interviews, opportunity to read about the process and ask questions ahead of time, and signed permission forms by the participants. I followed the same practice. I also read in Barker's study that teachers often feel more comfortable being interviewed in their own classroom and they usually prefer to be interviewed after school when it is quieter rather than during a preparation period earlier in the day. I made a decision to offer that to my participants because I wanted to be sensitive to their schedule rather than mine.

During the data collection phase of my study and the months following, I continued reading literature on teacher leadership and educational reform and added it to the review of literature. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) stated that when a researcher explores the literature while collecting data, it enhances the analysis process. They pointed out a danger to this approach: in their reading, the researcher may "find concepts, ideas, or models that are so compelling they blind you to other ways of looking at your data" (p. 165). Because my data was collected within a relatively short period of time, the new insights from additional literature most likely did not have time to negatively influence my study.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically organizing the script from transcripts, reflections, and notes related to the interviews conducted. The purpose is to increase the researcher's understanding of the data and to enable the researcher to describe the findings to others (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

There is value in a researcher discussing how the themes emerged from a research study, both with the participants and also when reporting the results of the research. Clearly describing the emergent themes increases the reader's confidence that the resultant themes came from the participants. In my study, I examined themes after each round of interviews and presented them to participants before the next round of interviews. When I briefly presented the emerging themes to the interviewees before we started the new interview, they had an opportunity to respond verbally to emerging themes. In general, I verbalized a few concepts I had heard during the previous interview and allowed the participant to respond. Basically, there was affirmation and additional explanation for the articulated emergent themes, though nothing profound resulted from these discussions. Participants often elaborated or further explained the theme mentioned. In the study conducted by Barker (1998), participants' involvement in the emerging data and themes also increased the trustworthiness of the study because all participants had an opportunity to review, respond, and verify their experience several times along the way.

The thought process of how I arrived at the themes for this study is described in the following paragraphs, as well as in Chapter 4. In that chapter, a detailed

description of the emergence of data into themes exists prior to the presentation of the emergent themes. A deeper discussion of my thought process and struggles as I chose the themes is outlined in Chapter 4.

For my research study, interview data was professionally transcribed into 639 pages of interview script. The thinking really became more intense for me at the conclusion of the interviews when I began to code and analyze the data. I then categorized prominent topics and coded the data using winMAX Software, a “code-and-retrieve” tool of text analysis for qualitative research.

Two products were created from the data. I originally planned to write a case study of each teacher leader. Instead, however, I wrote a profile of each participant. According to the definitions of each word, a “profile” describes what I want to tell my reader more than a “case study.” According to Gall, Gall, and Borg (1999), a case study is used to “describe, explain, or evaluate particular social phenomena” (p. 289). Bogdan and Biklen (1998) indicate that it is a “detailed examination” of a phenomena (p. 54). Both of these definitions describe a term that is more complex than my objective, which was to gain a biographical understanding of the participant’s most noteworthy experiences, characteristics, and achievements. In the profiles at the beginning of Chapter 4, I highlight some of the childhood background, as well as past and current accomplishments.

Data from the participant determined the text for the profile, especially discovered in the first interview. The profiles were written in an attempt to understand the context and experience from which the participant was speaking. According to Gall, Gall, and Borg (1999), the participant’s viewpoint is called the “emic perspective”

and is obtained through informal conversations with the participant (p. 293). Yin (1994) indicated that focusing on one person's perspective is the preferred strategy when "how" and "why" questions are being asked and when the "focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (p. 1). Yin discussed how to take multiple sources of evidence (e.g., surveys or interviews) and integrate them to show multiple conclusions. I believe the same is true for the profiles in this study—that my profiles fit this latter discussion by Yin, and that using profiles was a beneficial way to understand the context and experience of the participants.

When individual profiles were complete, all of the data was examined for repeating and emergent themes. Profiles were examined both in part and as a whole in an attempt to understand for these participants where they found meaning in being a teacher leader in an education reform setting. Data was organized in relation to the chosen themes and was used to build grounded theory.

When data was analyzed for my study, every attempt was made to include the teachers' voices. When writing the results of their study, Vail and Mandiloff (1995) included many quotations of teachers to illustrate stages of change experienced by the teachers. Data from Barker's (1998) study presented an immense amount of anecdotal narrative. About half of the extensive findings were direct quotations to illustrate the assertion made by the researcher. Smatlan (1993) also presented data in the form of rich descriptions. Quotations used throughout the reporting of her study gave the reader a more personal view of the participants. As a result, the interpretations of Smatlan's and Barker's studies were defensible if challenged, and there were adequate and coherent reasons to support the conclusions. Direct quotations from the

transcribed data increase the credibility of a study and have the potential to provide thick descriptions of the phenomenon being described.

The intention of my study was to include enough text to "hear" the voices of the teacher leaders who were interviewed. To make sure the reader understands the meaning the teacher leaders found in their teacher leadership experiences, I encouraged the participants to share meaningful and thick descriptions of their experiences, and the majority of my analysis incorporates anecdotal narratives and rich descriptions from the teacher leaders' own words.

Summary of Chapter

The first procedure in implementing this qualitative research study was to identify teacher leaders who could be participants in my research study. Names of teacher leaders were suggested by high school principals, site council chairpersons, and OEA representatives. To make the final selections, I considered the extensiveness of their involvement in leadership activities, based on a completed survey. I then conducted a pilot study with two teacher leaders by interviewing them in the same way I later interviewed the main participants.

In addition to the surveys identified above, participants were each interviewed three times for 90 minutes using a hermeneutic phenomenological inquiry method as developed by Seidman (1991). Open-ended questions focused on the participants' life history, details of their current experience, and reflections on the meaning of those experiences in relation to teacher leadership.

Raw data for this study was transcribed and analyzed according to one main theme and five sub-themes. In addition, a profile was written for each participant to provide a context for understanding the participant's background and experience. An important feature of the analysis was a sincere effort to "hear the voice" of the participant. Results of the findings were written in anecdotal narratives organized around the six themes.

CHAPTER 4

CONVERSATION AND INTERPRETATION: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

The study of teacher leadership should lead
to the construction of new paradigms
for leadership in schools. (C. Fay in Livingston, 1992, p. 57)

The purpose of this research was to describe the experience that leadership activities had on secondary teacher leaders who were actively involved in educational reform and change. To accomplish this purpose, qualitative interviews were conducted with four secondary teachers in Oregon who were identified as teacher leaders. This chapter begins with a brief overview of the data gathering and analysis process. The next section of the chapter includes a profile of each of the four teacher leaders who were participants in the study. The profiles provide a context from which to consider the comments made by each of the participants in the subsequent section of the chapter. The major portion of the chapter is devoted to the results of the data analysis that yielded the emergent themes from the interviewees. The chapter then presents the results of the data analysis on the research questions guiding this study. Those questions were:

- What is it like to be a teacher leader in an environment of educational reform and change?
- What do teachers find meaningful in their involvement as a teacher leader?
- What motivates their involvement and what holds them back from further involvement?

- How does their involvement contribute to and detract from their lives as educators?

The interview questions guided the discussion; however, interviewees were encouraged through the dialogue to pursue other ideas beyond the question topic. In some respects, the emphasis was on "sentiment and emotion, the unadulterated core of human experience" (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995, p. 9). Van Manen (1990) referred to this as "whatness"--what is this phenomenon, in this case, of teacher leaders' experiences? (p.33). By using Seidman's (1991) model of in-depth interviewing, the data demonstrated the personal "experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience" (p. 3).

Profiles of Participants in the Study

The four teacher leaders in this study came from four different high schools and were chosen because of their extensive involvement as teacher leaders in educational reform activities. In the profiles that follow, a brief, personal summary of each teacher leader is described. Included are some personal background, a description of their current work as a teacher, and a description of activities and involvements in their role as a teacher leader. The details that I share about each participant are a result of data from both the completed surveys and in-depth interviews. The profiles are also my impressions and interpretations after working with the participants and analyzing the data. The purpose of these profiles is to give a context for each individual teacher leader. This includes a brief summary of their childhood, past experiences, past school and work experiences, and current school involvement. The names of the participants and the high schools are all pseudonyms.

After the individual participants are profiled, the themes will be presented in a way that includes material from each teacher leader under each theme in order to show the cross-case nature of each theme.

Angie (Brentwood High School)

Angie grew up in the Midwest, the older of two children, as a part of a working class family that struggled to make ends meet. She graduated second in her high school class; her test scores and grades were high. With the exception of one aunt by marriage, no one on either side of her family had gone to college. Angie decided she wanted to become a doctor. Money was an issue in her family, yet she did not want to go to her state university even though tuition would have been less. She had grown up in a town where she knew everyone and she wanted to "go where I didn't know anybody." Because she had a "phenomenal" high school choir director who was always "bragging about" the director of the music program at a university outside her state, she applied only to this one institution in pre-medicine. Angie was accepted into this university with a scholarship, so she made the decision to go; however, after a year, her scholarship dissolved. A member of the music faculty recruited her into the music program with a different scholarship, and she "became an instant music major." She received her Bachelor's degree in Music Education, and later obtained a Master of Music degree at a state university in Oregon. Angie's teaching licenses were in Music, English, and Latin.

Of her childhood years, Angie said that her mother "took an interest" and was "active in things that went on in school." She also indicated they "did a lot of church

things." Of her leadership experiences, Angie recalled, "I have been able to get up in front of groups and get them to do what I wanted them to do ever since I was 10."

During the time of the interviews, Angie was teaching Music, Latin, and English Language and Literature at Brentwood High School in a large school district. She had come to that high school from a district middle school and, prior to that, had taught at an elementary school. She took the job at the high school to become the choir director, but later became an English teacher. Angie was currently in her second year as site council chairperson; however, she had been involved in other leadership activities at Brentwood such as grant writing, development of writing guides and handouts for the English department, and textbook evaluation. In addition, her leadership involvement outside of Brentwood included curriculum writing for an on-line writing course for the school district, establishment of PASS standards for Latin, and teaching English methods to students enrolled in a teacher education program.

Rose (Bradbury High School)

Rose grew up in a western state as the oldest of eight children. Her Catholic family moved to Canada when she was young and then back again to their previous home. Rose said her parents ran their own business and were both very "hard working." She said, "One of the things I learned most out of my family is a work ethic, that you do things for the value of doing it, not for any monetary value."

Rose's parents did not attend college, although she said her parents "valued education." Her dad always attended open houses while her mother stayed home with the young children. Only one other of her siblings later went on to college.

When Rose's parents moved their family back to the US from Canada, it was for the purpose of providing additional opportunities for their children. When Rose was 16, her mother went to work to help support the family. Being the oldest child, she had the major responsibility at home of taking care of her seven younger brothers and sisters while her mom worked: "I had an after-school job, and then I took care of the kids. I did the dinner, and I did all of that. I was a third parent." Rose also referred to her family as being a "team." The family is "like one big team ... where you have to work together--it's like a team effort."

Rose came from a family of athletes; in fact, her Dad lettered in 26 sports in high school. Rose also participated in lots of sports when she was in school. She described a time when she tried out for softball with 12- to 17- year old teenagers. Even though she was only 11, they allowed her to try out, and she made the team. She described herself at the time as a "scrawny" 100 pounds, but "tough." She looked back at those days of competition and said, "I was gutsy to do that because I can remember sweat running down out of my mask and this fear of a fast pitch coming my way from this probably 150-pound strong armed woman, but I didn't flinch." In talking about her past involvement in athletics, she said, "I think there's a certain drive in people," and they "really are driven to do it.... I've seen it in students, and that kind of fire that you have to have." Rose said she used to practice her sports 3-4 hours a day and "just loved it." During her high school years, she continued to be involved in athletics, as well as in college when she played on the tennis team.

Rose said that "school was hard," and she really "had to work at it," except for math classes--they were her "GPA raiser." Because of her family's relocation, she went

to three different schools in seventh grade. She said she "was moving all the time." In high school, she took the highest level of both Math and Science courses. In fact, she was the only girl in her Physics class. She said of that experience, "You really had to be able to hold your own."

After high school, Rose began attending a community college, got married, traveled a bit with her husband, went back to finish her degree in Math Education, and then raised two children. She said of being a stay-at-home mom that it "didn't stop me from volunteering at school" where she was PTA president and got an award for being a volunteer leader. She mentioned how often she "teamed it" [worked in teams] with other volunteers and did many activities together. Rose stayed home with her children until 12 years ago when she went back to school to become a teacher. She then got a B.S. in Mathematics and an M.S. in Curriculum and Instruction. She was licensed to teach Advanced Math and Communication Arts with a vocational certification. About 10 years ago, Rose was on a team from Bradbury High School that consulted all over the western United States giving workshops on some of the educational innovations and designs they had at Bradbury. That experience was pivotal in the development of her leadership skills.

Rose was in her 12th year of teaching at Bradbury High School at the time of the interviews. Her current teaching load included T.V. Broadcasting, Video, and Mathematics. She was very active in setting up an Arts and Communications CAM program at Bradbury. She had also been site council chairperson for two years. In addition, Rose had worked on both CIM and PASS standards, attended conferences,

been a consultant on block programs, and held a state office for a student educational organization.

Willfred (Mattridge High School)

Willfred (Will) was raised on a farm in the Midwest by a father who was a veterinarian and a mother who was trained to be a teacher but stayed home to raise her four children. Will was the oldest. When he was in elementary school, his parents moved to the West. Will said they did a bit of "pioneering" as they left a close-knit extended family in the Midwest.

During his growing up years, Will stated that his family was important. They did a lot of things together, and his parents "always stressed education." He indicated that the background of his family was "always in production, agriculture and farming," so they were very "hard working" and had a "strong work ethic." When asked what a work ethic meant, he said that it was "being able to see a task all the way through--staying on task and working."

During the summers Will worked hard on the farm. During the school year however, his parents would not allow him to work so that he could spend his time studying and being involved in many activities. He said he was involved in a "wide range of activities in high school." Will said his parents pushed him "to try different things." He said neither of his parents had been involved in athletics, but that he was "encouraged to try because they thought that was important to [my] developmental piece." In addition to participating in 4-H and FFA, he became involved with student government, Science club, yearbook staff, Boy's State, church camps, church youth

leadership training, and a Big Brother program. He said of his childhood activities that they "taught me how to be a leader." Throughout all of these activities, Will said his parents were "highly, highly, highly involved," "always there," and "would show up for any event."

During his college years, Will said he also "liked lots of activities." He was a senator for the university, Greek Council President, and an ambassador for the College of Agriculture. He served on his College's executive council and was responsible for setting up industry tours for a large conference held on campus.

Will's involvement with 4-H and FFA helped him realize that he was interested in a career in agriculture. At a state university, he had a dual major of Agriculture Resources Economics and Political Science. He then became involved politically and "managed a number of campaigns" and did a short internship with the Department of Agriculture. He said, "[I was] pretty successful, and progressed up to where I managed a local congressional race and won ... in a tough fought battle." But he said "I found politics very empty. I was very good at it, but I didn't like it."

It was at that point that Will decided to enter a master's program to become a teacher. He completed his teaching credentials in a year and at the time of the interviews, was completing his fourth year at Mattridge Valley High School. During three of those four years, he had been the site council chairperson and especially active in student leadership organizations. Will frequently spoke of making his courses "relevant" for his students.

Marie (Joseph Valley High School)

Marie was born in a European country at the end of World War II to a working class family and lived there throughout her childhood. She lived with her mother and extended family in a small village while her father was away in the army. Later, her father came home from the war, and her parents had one other daughter. Both of her parents left school when they were 14 years of age: "They came from a background of stone masons and had moved around a lot."

Marie indicated that as a child of 10, her mother was called into the headmaster's office where she was told that Marie had scored very high on intelligence tests. An all-girls grammar school--Marie described it as "a high-flying academic school"--was being recommended. The family had no money, but the school always took five children on scholarships, and Marie received one of them. She discussed how this experience influenced her to become "very independent very early" because she spent a lot of time on buses and finding her way around. Marie described her life at that time, from the age of 11 to 18, as living in two very separate and different worlds. One world was that of an ordinary working class family and one, an elite all-girls school.

Marie said that as a child, she was "very busy at school." She added, "I was also a leader by then." She went on to explain that in the private girls' school she attended, 16-year-old students were chosen to be student leaders who dealt with minor discipline problems with the younger children. She indicated that these schools were essentially in the business of training women leaders. In addition to being busy during school, Marie said she was also busy after school with various sports activities and

drama. By the time she was 14, she was teaching Sunday School to other children in her home village. Marie stated, "The feedback I got was that I was good at keeping the children interested." She had some challenging children in her class, and she didn't know how she did it, but "somehow it worked," she said.

In reflecting on her early experiences as a leader, Marie once mentioned that she was "brought up to please" other people: "We were also brought up to be leaders, and I think if you're going to be a good leader you've got to please people; otherwise nobody's going to follow you." She also discussed her "very, very solid mothering" and stated that she learned to trust others which "builds confidence when you're very young during those critical early years."

After high school, Marie went to a university in her country and got a degree in English Language and Literature with Italian as a minor. After she graduated, she got a teaching job in her home country for two years. Then because she wanted something different in her life, she took a teaching job in Kenya, Africa for two years. When that time was completed, she came to a western state in the US and began substitute teaching and quite soon after that, got a permanent teaching position. About this, Marie said she was working, going to school, student teaching in the US, recently married, and pregnant. She said, "When I look back on that, [I wonder] how did I do all that?"

At the time of the interviews, Marie was in her 20th year as a teacher. At Joseph Valley, she was teaching English Language and Literature, AP English Literature and Composition, College Writing, and Communications. Marie's teacher leadership involvement included: CIM design, CAM committee for Arts and

Communications, site council member for five years, attendance at numerous conferences, grant-writing, senior project planning committee, and hiring committees.

Common Themes

The four teacher leaders just described provide the data for this study. It was collected through a survey, in-depth interviews, e-mail reflections, and researcher reflections. The interviews were professionally transcribed and resulted in 630 pages of raw interview data. In addition, there were a total of 12 pages of e-mail reflections written by the participants and 12 pages of reflections written by the researcher.

Emergence of the Data into Themes

The interview data was read and re-read for main topics and emergent themes. Initial readings provided 77 different topics in the data. After further analysis of meaning by the researcher, topics were combined to form five main categories of topics with a total of 55 sub-categories and 17 sub- sub-categories. The main categories included childhood, personal characteristics, professional life, personal life, and other. The main categories, sub-, and sub- sub-categories can be examined in Appendix K.

After the categories of frequent topics were established, the data was coded into the categories described above with the use of winMAX Software. The coded data was then printed by the categories, which was a way to organize all the data related to each topic. The resultant 306 pages of printed data were used for the analysis.

The next task in the data analysis was to identify themes, which would describe my data. In his book on researching lived experience, Van Manen (1990) suggests that

themes are a way to get at the “notion,” describe the notion, and reduce it in content (p. 88). He said it “gives shape to the shapeless.” For Van Manen, theme-making, particularly for phenomenological studies, is a “form of capturing the phenomenon one tries to understand. Theme describes an aspect of the structure of lived experience” (p. 87). For this application, a theme would be one aspect of the teacher leaders’ experiences. In the process of identifying themes and organizing data around the themes, researchers gain insight into the notion they are addressing, in this case the meaning teacher leaders found in their involvement.

Van Manen (1990) indicated there was nothing mystical about a theme. In fact, he said that choosing themes is almost an “irrelevant” activity (p. 79). His premise was that it is a way to organize and give order to our research and writing. When researchers are analyzing a phenomenon, such as teacher leadership, they are trying to “unearth something ‘telling,’ something ‘meaningful,’ something ‘thematic’ in the various experiences” (p. 86). As researchers, when we discover themes in the data, we actually work at finding meaning in those accounts.

By immersing myself in the most prominent categories of data, keeping Van Manen’s (1990) descriptions in mind and using an inductive process for discernment, themes began to emerge from the data as I read and re-read the data. In reviewing the data on this level, the focus was on “What are these teachers telling us about the meaning behind their experiences?” Because the actual quotations provided a richness that I could not generalize, I chose to identify the prominent themes by using direct quotes from the interviewees. The resultant six themes (one main theme and five sub-themes) are a product of collapsing the original data into themes based on similar

concepts, key words, and/or similar meanings. The final themes, however, did not emerge easily. I struggled repeatedly to identify the most prominent quotations, which would summarize other comments made by the teacher leaders in my study. After about five total revisions of the themes, I was able to gain clarity in their organization.

The comments made by the teacher leaders interviewed for my study provided insight into their lives as teacher leaders. Many of their comments were rich and thoughtful in nature. Statements were not always new, innovative, or complex. Instead, they were quite simple and ordinary. As themes began to emerge for me, however, they became quite profound because of their simplicity. My interest and fascination with the lives of these teacher leaders grew as a result of getting to know them better through their ordinary, yet exceptional lives. The nature of the descriptions of the lives of each of these teacher leaders is an argument for their individual uniqueness. While seeming ordinary, there was something about them that was unique and made them want to be leaders. While the majority of the comments were seldom profound, all of the thoughts together created a useful pattern to be interpreted in order to explore the meaning in their teacher leadership involvement. In analyzing teacher leaders' statements, I was reminded of a caution made by Van Manen (1990). He stated that a danger in phenomenological research is in getting so involved with the "certain effect" one wants at the end, that sometimes we forget about the "significance that the parts must play in the total textual structure" (p. 33). He advised that "each of the parts needs to contribute toward the whole" (p. 34). As I worked at the analysis, I made a conscious effort to move back and forth between the parts and the whole of the data.

Identification of Themes

This section provides an overview of the themes and the overall design which emerged in analysis. Teacher leaders' comments during the interviews provided valuable insight into the meaning they found in their teacher leadership activities in an environment of educational reform. One main theme and five sub-themes emerged from the data. The main theme indicated that teacher leaders find satisfaction in their work, as illustrated by this statement made by one of the participants:

“My involvement satisfies me intellectually, [both] affectively and cognitively.” (A)

The five sub-themes create a nested relationship with the main theme. They partially explain the “satisfaction,” and include:

1. Enjoyment of work: “I fundamentally enjoy what I do.”
2. Rewards from students: “The biggest rewards ... come from ... making a difference with my students.”
3. Expectation for improved curriculum: “I have always enjoyed doing curriculum work.”
4. Relationships with colleagues: “I have been blessed with marvelous colleagues.”
5. Stimulation and challenge: “I need the stimulation, and I need the challenge.”

The theme statements identified above are a result of analyzing the in-depth interviews and personal reflections. They were chosen as a way to summarize the most prevalent and recurring themes. In addition to the frequency with which the themes were highlighted, references to these topics were also made with passion, enthusiasm, and pleasure.

Each theme is a direct quotation stated by one of the participants. What follows each theme is a summary of the data to further support and explain the chosen theme. For two of the sub-themes, sub- sub-themes are also included to further organize a lot of data. The quotations are each followed by a reference citation (unless identified by name), which is the first letter of the teacher's name. To further clarify, Table 1 illustrates the breakdown of the main theme into five sub-themes and two of the sub-themes divided into sub- sub-themes.

Table 1: Themes, Sub-themes, and Sub- sub-themes

Main Theme	Sub-themes	Sub- sub-themes
"My involvement satisfies me intellectually, [both] affectively and cognitively."	Enjoyment of work: "I fundamentally enjoy what I do."	
	Rewards from students: "The biggest rewards ... come from ... making a difference with my students."	~ Like students ~ Relationships ~ Making a difference ~ Teaching ~ Student achievement ~ Educational reform
	Expectation for improved curriculum: "I have always enjoyed doing curriculum work."	
	Relationships with colleagues: "I have been blessed with marvelous colleagues."	
	Stimulation and challenge: "I need the stimulation, and I need the challenge."	~ Style ~ Risk ~ Power ~ Time ~ Attitude ~ Challenges ~ Change ~ Pattern

Main Theme: "My involvement satisfies me intellectually, [both] affectively and cognitively." (A)

Throughout the interviews, the teacher leaders in this study made numerous comments about the satisfaction they experienced as a result of their leadership involvement. In addition to clearly expressing satisfaction, the participants made

frequent inferences to enjoyment, happiness, and fulfillment in their work. For this reason, I chose to make this theme the main one. All others, the five sub-themes, are an illustration or example of this expressed satisfaction. I believe the satisfaction the teacher leaders described came as a result of their background, their personalities, previous experiences in education, and current experiences in education. Teacher leadership involvement contributed to their overall personal satisfaction in life. It was Angie who said that teacher leadership was satisfying to her and because it was, she continued in that role. She stated,

“My involvement satisfies me intellectually, [both] affectively and cognitively. It would have to--otherwise I would not do it” (A)

Angie also spoke of personal satisfaction in her role as a teacher leader because she thought that her activities were helpful to others. When asked why she would spend her time helping others, she responded,

Why do I teach for crying out loud? I like being of use. Being of use is probably one of my core values down there somewhere. (A)

The sense of satisfaction Angie spoke of is also an illustration of two of the sub-themes to be discussed later. The themes are related to the rewards inherent in the role as well as the need for challenge.

Sometimes satisfaction in teacher leadership activities was a priority because it impacted everything the teacher leaders did. Marie stated that was the case for her when she said,

For me, this is a priority because it affects my job. It affects what I'm doing. (M)

One of the satisfactions identified was the reward that came from teacher leadership experiences. Sometimes the rewards were articulated as such and at other times they were not:

[There are] rewards that I get back from it ... to put together stuff and share it with the department or put into the teacher handbook or to do whatever with. (A)

Teacher leaders in this study commented that they found meaning in their teacher leadership activities as illustrated by Angie's statement,

I find meaning in these [teacher leadership] activities. (A)

Teacher leaders sometimes discussed both "satisfaction" and "meaning" in the same sentence. When asked what motivates teacher leaders to become involved in teacher leadership activities, Marie said,

I get ... personal satisfaction out of what I do....I think really what we all do as we live is try to make meaning of the things that happen to us ... that we experience, that we think about, that we make happen to us.... We somehow try to find a way of living that gives us satisfaction, and given that I need to make money and that these are the skills that by chance, partly by design, partly I have ended up with, then I continue to do this work. I think if there weren't that daily need for a salary ... I might find other ways to find meaning, but this is one way to do it. And, because I find myself now in this situation and because I feel I need to keep going for awhile longer, I continue to do it to the best of my ability and in a way that does give me satisfaction and that I think enables me to grow. (M)

In response to the same question about what motivates teacher leaders to become involved in leadership activities, another participant stated:

It keeps me alive in a very literal sense ... as well as a figurative sense. I can always be more than what I am, and part of the way I get there is by finding these things and going after them. It's interesting. (A)

My assumption is that satisfaction and meaning are closely related. Therefore, a major premise in this study is that satisfaction gives meaning, and meaning in turn gives satisfaction. It is a reciprocal relationship between the two concepts. When a person is satisfied with something (work, personal life, family, etc.), they find meaning. When a person finds meaning, they are satisfied. This theme of satisfaction demonstrates multiple sources of both satisfaction and meaning for the teacher leaders in this study. As a result, I also address comments related to meaning in this section on satisfaction.

Teacher leaders indicated they found meaning in their leadership involvements and activities:

I find meaning in these activities in part because I see myself in this job as ... being responsible for helping [Brentwood] teachers do a better job of what they want to be doing, which is teaching kids, and I find that very meaningful in the same way that I find teaching itself very meaningful. It's not that I'm teaching the staff what to do, because that's not my job, but it is my job to facilitate their finding out what they need to know and want to know in order to do a better job, and that's the piece of it that I think brought me in to that job in the first place and probably keeps me there. (A)

I think really what we all do as we live is try to make meaning of the things that happen to us ... that we experience, that we think about. [If I didn't have this], I might find other ways to find meaning, but this is one way to do it, and because I find myself now in this situation ... I continue to do it to the best of my ability and in a way that does give me satisfaction and ... enables me to grow. (M)

I think [meaning] has to do with given the situation one finds oneself in for whatever reasons, and then an attempt to do something with what is meaningful. And so if I'm ... a teacher, I want to make meaning of that for me, but also for the kids.... I think it's just a very small part of this really big piece about making meaning, and then wanting to share that somehow. (M)

When asked if she finds meaning in her work, Rose said,

Oh, yeah, because I don't think I would do this for very long if it didn't have any kind of meaning. (R)

Other teacher leaders added comments about the meaning teacher leadership experiences had for them:

I don't think I would do it if it weren't meaningful. (M)

It's so very energizing. (A)

In addition to teachers finding meaning in their work for themselves, they also were committed to helping their students find meaning in their schoolwork. Marie stated that it was important to her that her students also found meaning in their work at school:

The literature is real important to me, how people make meaning in their lives.... So I want to make meaning of that for me, but also for the kids. This has been so satisfying for me [that] I want the kids to also share it. If it works for me, maybe it will help them too. (M)

Teacher leaders frequently used the word “enjoy” as they discussed satisfaction in their involvement. They repeated the word enough to merit using it as the first sub-theme. The section that follows highlights only those comments that are exclusively related to enjoyment. There are many other examples throughout this chapter which also used the word, but they seemed to be associated more closely with another theme.

As a result, the following section is short, but soundly makes the point that teacher leaders enjoy what they do.

Enjoyment of Work:
"I fundamentally enjoy what I do." (W)

The teacher leaders in this study spoke frequently of enjoying their work, having fun doing it, and a love for their subject area. Comments made to this effect are illustrated in the following statements:

I just do stuff. I do it because I like it. (M)

I enjoy doing all of them [various jobs]. (R)

Each year I probably have two or three job offers, people trying to pull me back into industry. I've got one that doesn't expire 'til the 15th of this month, but when it hits the grindstone and comes to a decision, I love what I do and I'm going to keep doing it.... So I get to do the things I love without the business risk of losing everything. (W)

Marie frequently spoke of having fun in her work, as shown by these two statements:

I've always got something that's interesting and I'm never short of things to do... (M)

There's always something fun. (M)

Rose also talked about having fun when she made these comments:

If we can't have fun at what we do, it makes it harder to do it. ... I can't not have fun. (R)

We sometimes play jokes on people that come down here. (R)

Will, who was very involved in a student leadership organization and often took students to conferences, talked about how he made those trips fun:

You know, you need to work hard and play hard, and so ... when we go on these things, if I'm going to be gone for a weekend let's make it, you know, let's make it a good time. (W)

In addition to enjoying their jobs in general, Marie also stated a love of her subject area, as is illustrated by these statements:

There's another piece to this too, and that is that I just love literature. I mean, I love to read and I love to talk about it, and I like to discover about it, and I never get tired of doing that, and I'm fascinated with teaching writing to kids. (M)

I think that fascination with the subject matter and working with kids that are high level is another piece that I get a lot of satisfaction out of ...because I love the subject. I just love this stuff. (M)

Participants for this study participated in teacher leadership activities for which they volunteered. While choice was mentioned numerous times throughout the comments made by participants, it is not isolated as a separate theme but is embedded in other themes. Marie for example, mentioned that one of the reasons teacher leadership activities were enjoyable was because her involvement was a conscious choice. The discussion was on whether or not teacher leadership activities felt like a chore. She said,

I always choose to do it. I don't do anything I don't choose to do. (M)

At another time, Marie said that she was chair of the Arts and Communications CAM strand because she volunteered for that position. She was responsible for getting the group together that later developed the CAM program for that area, and again it was a choice.

Rewards from Students:

"The biggest rewards ... come from ... making a difference with my students." (W)

Teacher leaders in this study enjoyed working with their students. They often stated that they liked the students they taught and that was a main reason they enjoyed their work. They also discussed the rewards received by being involved with students.

Like Students

Participants commented on how their students have influenced their positive experiences as teacher leaders and as teachers:

I really have not been anyplace that I didn't like the kids. Oh yeah, there are always problems, but I can't imagine not liking my students. I can imagine that there are places where that would be the case, but I haven't been there. (A)

I really like my kids. I like my students. Even the ones that I don't like a whole lot, I like in other ways, you know, and I want things to work for them. I want things to be right for them. I want them to come out of this experience feeling as though it was worth having spent their time. (A)

I enjoy working with the kids, you know, that's why I'm in teaching and not in accounting, or something like that where I could make a lot more money.... I think I do well with the kids. (R)

I think anyone in education now really has to like students and we have people now that don't. I really think they just do it for other reasons. [But] that's not me. (R)

I really like my students as human beings--they're neat kids--all of them. (A)

I like adolescents because they're very open, and they do say what they think, and they don't let you off the hook, and I really like that. I like the openness ... and they're never boring. You can never be bored if you're with them. (M)

When I questioned Angie about the importance of liking her students, she said,

Boy, I feel very strongly about that one. (A)

Relationships

When the teacher leaders mentioned how they enjoyed their students, they discussed the positive relationships with them as well:

I spend most of my days talking with kids. Kids come see me....I'm either teaching or talking with them individually. It's all communication constantly. (M)

I like to have conversations with kids. I think that is something that we don't have enough of, of conversations where they talk, you listen, or you kind of talk. (R)

I like people. I like parties, and so I like kids ... I like to listen to their opinions because they have such a narrow knowledge base and so I like to hear what they're thinking, and they're pretty open and tell me what they're thinking. (R)

Students have the mind set, the belief, [that] for whatever reason they can come to me where they don't feel like they can go to other people. (W)

Will felt he had a unique relationship with students because of the extracurricular activities and student organizations in which they were involved. He also considered going into school administration, but decided not to because he enjoyed the classroom more. He stated,

For a very brief period of time the administration had me convinced I had to start my PSU administrative classes, [but] I decided--no way, I don't want to do that. And so I have since backed out, much to their disappointment. (W)

Making a Difference

Not only did the teachers discuss their enjoyment of working with the students and their relationships with them, they also commented that much of their satisfaction and reward came from helping their students achieve success. Will said,

For me the meaning and the reward comes in not so much ... day-to-day teaching ... but it's those few and rare occasions when you get a student coming back saying, "Wow, you know, you did help, you made a difference, and I can't believe all those times that you used to say, 'you're gonna need this in the future,' and I said 'no, I'm never going to need it in the future.' I look back and say, oh, my goodness, I'm using

what he said I was going to”.... So you know, those are the times when you know that you've helped somebody and that they're better off for it.

That's what keeps me going. If it weren't for that I would probably have to ask myself, you know, is this really worthwhile? Shouldn't I go back and do something else, but ultimately it's when you get those few rewards of a kid coming back and saying, 'Wow, that really did help, thank you.' That's what keeps me going, because in a way it's kind of repaying all of the people that did those little things that helped get me where I am. (W)

Will commented that one person could make a difference in the life of a student.

He sensed an obligation to his students and described them as his customer, as illustrated by these statements:

[Besides the community] the other customer is my students, and they're looking for the most bang for their buck. Their buck happens to be their time and their effort that they put in, and so if I don't take care of my customers somebody else will. The more opportunities I can open for them, the more they can learn from their work in my class....Whatever they want to learn, I'll teach them. It's wide open here. (W)

Teaching

This sense of responsibility to their students was articulated in other ways. The teacher leaders frequently talked about how they tried to make their classes relevant for their students:

We have to start with the students. (R)

I make it real for kids. I cannot just go in and get out the textbook. It's got to be real. (M)

I wanted to have learning be more hands-on in Math because I felt that it added more--made more sense rather than rote memorization. (R)

I hate the thought of boring kids in the class. I don't want them to be bored; I want them to be challenged.... I don't mind if they feel I'm working them too hard, though I don't want to really overwhelm them.

They need pushing too because they can achieve more than they know, just as we all can. (M)

I have very strong convictions about what kids need. So I want to make sure they get what they need. (M)

Will said he had students who take his courses because he uses an approach the students seem to like:

I've got a group of students that prefer to take my classes because it is project and action oriented, and from that they'll try and say [it's] more important than the academic portion. [But] you can't separate the two because they're essential to each other. (W)

Other statements were made by teacher leaders who sensed frustration when they didn't see assignments and class work as being relevant for the students:

The most frustrating things are ... those things that I don't see benefiting my students.... [Some other teachers] have cut and dried little curriculums.... Students walk in and they're spoon-fed a bunch of stuff, and then they generate a bunch of stuff, and we put it in a file folder and label it 'stuff,' and check it off as [done]. And what's more disheartening is when you go to colleagues who are in education and you ask a math teacher, 'how are you going to have your kids use this?' [They say] 'I don't know.' 'Why do you use it?' 'Well, it's in the textbook.' (W)

I really want to offer things to kids, and so when I see things that seem counterproductive or that seem not to be accomplishing what they ought to be accomplishing, or when I see kids who are obviously not being served in some way because they're not connecting with the system, then I want to do something about it. I want to change something in some way and make that happen. (A)

Rose put it this way as she talked about her past teacher leadership role:

My main goal was to advocate for students. I wasn't always the most liked because of my student activities, because we would do things that would help to support students, so I'd take on that goal. I'd take on their cause, and I'd become their advocate, so I'd kind of lose my role as a teacher. Our goal was not to gain notoriety necessarily; it was to have the student's benefit [in mind]. It was always for the kids, and we'd work hard for the kids. (R)

Student Achievement

For Will, there was an intrinsic reward for his leadership role because it had an influence on student achievement:

Ultimately student skills are improving, and one area that's helped is when we look at work samples for public speaking. (W)

Teachers made conscious choices in order to do what was best for their students, as is illustrated by these comments from two different teacher leaders:

[When] I got to thinking about it ... I thought ... I could probably make a bigger difference being a teacher leader [as site council chair] than I could the English department chair. So I'm still sitting here. (A)

I can't do my curriculum without doing it with kids.... I can't write curriculum in a vacuum--I have to do it with the kids. (M)

The participants were sometimes motivated to design both lessons and new programs because they thought it would be better for their students, as is illustrated by Marie's comment:

I just had the kids who did not do AP or college writing do a senior project based in the English class because I wanted something real for them to do, because kids at that age, 17- or 18-year-olds, need real value for their future, and so I tried to make it real. (M)

Rose was very involved in finding job shadowing experiences for her students. She talked about the personal reward for her in that role:

We found kids that came back so energized from it [going to a business] to learn about what it's like to become a chef, or going to a dentist's office and finding out you can't do that career, even though that's what you thought about doing all your life.... [The students] talked about how it's been one of the most valuable things they've done. What more could you ask for? (R)

Educational Reform

Teacher leaders in this study were attempting to make a difference for their students in an educational reform environment. They were working in a situation with legislated mandates from the Oregon Department of Education. Throughout the interviews, Oregon's laws and framework were integrated into the statements made by the teacher leaders and the conversation. Teacher leaders were basically supportive of educational reform efforts. In fact, some did not believe the educational reform environment was very different from what there was previous to those efforts in Oregon. They also suggested that even if they did not have the legislated mandates in Oregon, they would still be doing a lot of what they were currently doing because it was the best way to teach students. The participants were basically supportive of educational reform efforts--they made it work for their students. They made sense out of it. They took the good things from it, and they worked within the structure of it for the benefit of their students. Angie illustrated this when she said,

I think educational reform is good for kids if we capitalize on the good parts. (A)

Working within an environment of educational reform was not without its challenges. The summary of this theme ends with comments related to the challenges that accompany teaching in an educational reform environment.

Teacher leaders in this study did not care about labels for educational reform initiatives or mandates. What they cared about was kids. Teachers made comments such as:

I am so reluctant to define educational reform in terms of CIM and CAM and performance tasks ... those are nice little titles and ... worthy

goals, but it's what the student walks out of my room with that matters. I don't really care much what we call it. (A)

I think CAMs are great.... CAMs have always been around, they've just had different names. They used to call it ... work experiences, apprenticeships ... It's always been there. The name has been changing and the structure has been changing, but it's always been there in some form, and I think that's why it's valuable for kids. (R)

The CIM and the CAM is incidental. We do project-based learning. You just learn stuff that makes sense to learn. We do what we need to

do, and we fit it in with what we do, you know. It's not a big deal--not for me. (M)

As previously stated, teacher leaders in this study reported that they keep their students in mind when planning curriculum. However, comments were also made that were specifically in reference to educational reform. Teacher leaders indicated that they work with the structure of educational reform for the benefit of the students. When I asked Marie, "So you make it [educational reform] work for you," she responded,

I make it work for the kids. (M)

Similar comments from other teacher leaders were:

I think if we're not doing it because we don't think it benefits students, there's no point in it. (R)

If they say you've got to do this, [and] they're going to be tested on it, we have an obligation to make sure the kids are prepared.... But how you go about doing it is your choice.... It's what happens in the classroom...The curriculum is different from the method, right? (M)

Teacher leaders indicated where they saw value in Oregon's educational reform efforts. They made statements such as the following:

Educational reform involves all of those things that contribute to students learning things better than they did under the old system. I

mean, that presumably is what reform is supposed to do; that's the bottom line. Are the kids learning something better? Are they learning more of it? Are they learning it more thoroughly? Are they learning it ... more quickly? Whatever criterion you'd like to use to make that determination, this is a way to make that happen. (A)

It [educational reform] causes us to question what we're doing.... I mean, we talk about change. Things are changing constantly ... so it's always going to need revamping.... Maybe this is why I do so much of this stuff.... I know it makes us question what we do, and that I think is healthy. (M)

Kids have been the beneficiaries of [educational reform], and it is good for them... . We're talking about things that are for their life, and I think anything that they feel is for their life is of value. (R)

[Educational reform] is such as a minimal thing... . You can't just ignore it if they [students] are going to be tested on it. It's so basic. I mean, how could you not say it was part of what you needed to do? I mean, at least in English ... it's how you teach ... that's the critical piece, and that decision is still left to us. (M)

The other thing that is really valuable ... it's got us all talking to each other. I mean, think about what it used to be like. (M)

Marie discussed how the emphasis on assessment has been valuable to both her and her students:

One of the things that has been wonderful has been the assessment piece, not because I want kids assessed a lot, but because we tell the kids now ahead of time, 'this is what you need to know.' Before it was a mystery. You turn your essay in, and the teacher decides if it's an A or a B or a C. Now, I went through that in [my own] high school. It was not comfortable at all. I had no idea what an A paper looked like, but now kids get examples. We're always looking at this as what an A paper looks like. 'This is what you need to be doing.' I go to every AP workshop they will pay for me to go to, because the valuable thing is getting the latest sample papers, and I do that--I share those with the kids all the time. That whole assessment tool from the state is invaluable. (M)

Will talked specifically about the benefits of CAM programs. He likened it to what students would be doing in the future related to business or future careers. He said,

CAM allows [my students] to learn in depth about some subject area that they're really interested in, and it allows them to take it to whatever level they want to take it to. And so they not only can learn more in depth in the CAM area, they can learn all the career-related standards, teamwork, problem solving.... We do problem solving on a regular basis. All those related activities that make them be able to work with others in career related areas is what happens every day there, and so it is a CAM. No different than what the business group is working on trying to develop a bank. Well, it is a real bank and production area, real things will happen ... and so you have to think about what you're doing. (R)

Marie was asked if there were parts of educational reform that discouraged her or that didn't work effectively. Her reply indicates that she works within the system to teach and lead:

I don't ignore anything. I use whatever I'm supposed to.... It's such a minimal thing, you know. (M)

While Angie had concerns for a piece of educational reform mandates, specifically the testing, she also stated that she is able to take the good parts, capitalize on the benefits, and make the best of it:

The trick is to take what you need and not to worry about the part that you can't.... I do get upset when the district comes in and mandates all this off grade-level testing, because that is actually getting in the way of what I think we need, which is some real instruction time. But if you take the good things, like this is the standard, this is what a good piece of writing looks like, [and] this is how you think mathematically, and teach that to kids, I think that's wonderful. (A)

Will, who teaches elective subjects, shared his relief that he did not have to comply with all of the state-mandated laws that apply to academic subjects:

I do have the luxury of not having CIM benchmark tests looming over my head all the time and being able to document all of the kids' portfolios and have all of that [to do]. (W)

While some teachers may have felt that teaching in an educational reform environment was restrictive, Rose talked instead about the freedom she sensed in this environment when she said,

I think there's a lot of openness to education and some don't see it that way--they see they're locked into a classroom. But that's only their thinking.... I've been able to do a whole lot of other things. (R)

Both Angie and Marie indicated that being involved with educational reform had improved their teaching in the classroom:

One of the pieces of educational reform that I have become most interested in since [Brentwood] went to the block schedule has to do with *teaching* [emphasis added] as opposed to scoring guides and performance tests and that sort of thing. It has to do with what we are actually doing in the classroom. (A)

I would not have pushed so far, and I don't think I would be nearly as [intellectually] developed. (M)

The teacher leaders in this study had to make many changes in their schools related to Oregon standards and assessment, but they were not afraid of change. CIM, CAM, performance tasks, and scoring guides were seen as part of the changes they needed to make. However, these changes were not particularly seen as separate from other changes they made in their jobs. Rose articulated that perhaps the reason teacher leaders were involved in educational reform was because they didn't mind change. She said,

We [teacher leaders] considered ourselves changelings in a sense because we're always changing and renewing and doing, so reform fit us to the 'T.' (R)

The push now is--let's get the scoring guides matching up, and I'm going to have to change some of my curriculum, which is fine. I'm willing...
(R)

While the teacher leaders were basically supportive of educational reform in Oregon, they voiced concerns when they felt it was not beneficial for students:

One thing I do have a problem with...is when that becomes too entrenched as a theory. I think you lose the richness of writing spontaneously....I think there's a danger in that writing piece if it becomes too formulaic. Any kind of formula for writing could be deadly for all the kids....It's helpful for kids who are not very skilled...to give them the format ahead of time. Sure, it helps, but it's not the end. It's just a tool. (M)

[Educational reform has] made me very cynical in the fact that I constantly see good ideas made into bad decisions. (W)

There's some failure here [in Oregon's mandates]....There's some very heavy frustrations because some people just learn how to do it well, and then they change it, so that creates a real frustrating climate among teachers....[There are people who are supposed to be] part of the CAM, but we can't get them in the CAM because they're so busy with the CIM. (R)

Marie was asked if she saw a difference between her leadership activities and her educational reform activities, or if they were blended. She replied,

Everything I do is one thing. Everything is connected. (M)

Even though the teacher leaders were sometimes given mandates on what and how to teach, they found ways to adapt the requirements enough to make it work for them. When Marie was asked what she would do if the State Department asked her to do something that wouldn't work at Joseph Valley, she said,

With the CIM and the CAM and the career related learning skills and all that stuff, it makes sense, you know, and it's not everything we do. I mean, it's pretty basic stuff. So I don't have a problem with what comes from the State Department. We make sense of it. (M)

The theme just described indicates that teacher leaders discovered rewards and satisfaction from their work with students. When teacher leaders perceived that students were benefiting from their educational experiences, these teachers sensed a personal reward. Educational reform experiences were a part of the benefit for students, as perceived by the participants in this study.

Teacher leaders were involved in educational reform in many ways. One major involvement was in curriculum development. Educational reform has called for new curriculum to be written at many different levels—at the state, district, building, and classroom levels. When I was analyzing the data, I wondered if one of the reasons the teacher leaders in my study were not negative about educational reform was because it involves a lot of curriculum development, and they enjoyed that aspect of their job. All of the teacher leaders in my study had experiences creating and rewriting curriculum at one or more of these levels and either individually or collaboratively. As a result, I chose to make curriculum development another sub-theme.

**Expectation for Improved Curriculum:
"I have always enjoyed doing curriculum work." (A)**

The participants in this research study were involved in numerous kinds of leadership activities. These included curriculum development, site council chair or member, student organizations, writing grants, attending conferences, CIM, CAM or PASS standards committee chair or member, and other district and building committees.

When I analyzed the activities named above, I realized that almost all of them were related to the development and improvement of curriculum in varying ways. New or restructured classes and new or restructured programs require curriculum to be re-written. Because courses now need to be taught so that students can meet state standards, lesson plans need to be changed. Topics need to be added, covered in more depth, altered, or eliminated. In addition to required curriculum writing, the teacher leaders in this study also referred to re-writing their own curriculum and courses in order to make perceived improvements to what they currently taught.

Site councils are heavily involved in the area of curriculum. They are charged with overseeing all educational reform activities: approval of new courses, programs, and curriculums; approval of grants, many of which are for the purpose of working on curriculum or program development; and approval of allocated dollars that go toward the implementation of legislated mandates. At the present time, most professional conferences in the state of Oregon feature numerous workshops that give teachers resources, tools, and ideas for implementing required curriculum, such as teaching to state standards. In addition, committee work at the building or district level also involves making decisions about curriculum, writing or re-writing courses, or developing programs.

Teacher leaders in this study discussed curriculum writing in relation to many of their other comments. As a result, the development of curriculum would seem to be the main activity or leadership role of the participants in this study. The teacher leaders frequently described some of their work in curriculum development along with their enjoyment of it. Thus, a theme emerged that encompassed both of those

concepts. This section describes participants' enjoyment of their curriculum work, as well as some descriptions of that work.

Both Angie and Marie stated that curriculum work was one of the parts of their job that they most enjoyed, as is illustrated by these comments:

I have always enjoyed doing curriculum work, and so I suppose that's probably the area in which I've been most involved. (A)

I have always written curriculum. When I came to [Joseph Valley] I was hired to set up a new freshmen curriculum--that was the main reason they hired me. (M)

I have designed every curriculum in there. (M)

Everything I teach right now, I designed. (A)

Marie in particular talked about new programs or courses she had begun. Over the course of the three interviews, she told me of the following courses she had started:

The whole Latin program is my baby. (M)

One of the things that I've worked hard to do also is to get to a level where I'm working with kids that are high level. So one of the things that I've done at [Joseph Valley] [was to] set up the college writing program with LBCC [Linn Benton Community College].... This last year we had 59 students who took the college writing class.... 57 of them got college credit.... [I also] had 18 kids do the AP exam, and this next year we have three college writing classes. (M)

The other thing I did then besides improving the AP program and setting up the college writing program was design of the senior project. This was for everybody else ... kids who are interested in forestry, who are interested in engineering, who are not interested in the dreary writing stuff. (M)

Teacher leaders in this study were motivated to write new curriculum for a variety of reasons. One of the reasons was to benefit the school and students. When talking about course content, Will said,

There's always something better you can do. (W)

The teacher leaders were sometimes assigned the job of curriculum development. However, more often it seemed that these teachers initiated the design of new curriculum, not just when it was expected of them. An example from Marie's experience was a time the previous year when she saw something that needed to be done that wasn't getting done. At her school, they were in the process of designing an Arts and Communication CAM program and they needed a brochure to describe the program to students. Over her Christmas vacation, she worked with her adult son to develop a brochure. She was not assigned to the task, but decided it was something she wanted to do. Several months later in a meeting with all the CAM leaders at her school, a decision was made to revamp the brochure into a different format. Marie was not offended that the brochure was later revised. She fully realized that because she took the leadership and initiative to get it started, it was both finished and of better quality than it would have been otherwise.

All four participants were either on their school's site council at the current time or had been on it previously; three had been chairpersons. Because the purpose of site councils in Oregon is to oversee the work of "Schools for the 21st Century," the main role of site council could be seen as the oversight of curriculum development.

Angie, who was currently serving as the Chair at her school, stated,

I've loved it. Of all the things that go along with this job, that's [being site council chair] probably been the most fun. It's the most challenging, but it's the most fun.... That's where things happen. (A)

Angie also talked about her duties on the days when site council was held. She said,

Those were always difficult days because that meant that during that prep period I needed to get everything ready for classes, and I needed to take care of paperwork for classes. I also needed to make sure that

the agenda had been run, and that the materials had been gathered, and that everything that needed to be printed had been printed. (A)

Will, who was completing three years as site council chair, indicated that an administrator was supposed to be in charge of the various CAM areas. He explained:

This person never showed up, never facilitated, never did anything. This was up to me because I was the 21st Century Coordinator, so I helped organize all the beginning meetings, ... set them up, got [teachers] to go to conferences. (R)

Curriculum work has been addressed as a theme because of the extensive involvement of the teacher leaders in my study. As stated previously, some of the curriculum work was created individually. However, the majority of it was done collaboratively with peers and colleagues. Again, it was significant enough to include as another sub-theme theme because it illustrated the satisfaction that teacher leaders in this study felt about their involvement.

Relationships with Colleagues:

"I have been blessed with marvelous colleagues." (A)

These teacher leaders often spoke about the wonderful people with whom they worked. This section describes that mutual admiration, the importance of teamwork as perceived by the participants, and illustrates how colleagues perceive the role of the teacher leaders and affirm them as well. It also describes occasional feelings of frustration toward colleagues.

Teacher leaders made positive comments about their colleagues, as is illustrated by these teachers:

[This school] is a nice place to be. I really do like the people in this building. I have always liked my colleagues. I've been in good places; I've worked with good people, and so I really can't say what it would be [like] if I didn't, but I suspect ... I would be looking for another place. (A)

When you do activities like this, you work with like-minded people ... and socially it's a really nice support system. I feel good about working with this group of people because we're there to work together. We can do this. (R)

Teacher leaders felt that collaboration with colleagues was an important part of the role they played in their schools:

I certainly collaborate a lot with colleagues. (A)

I wouldn't proceed with that kind of an idea if I felt alone because most of those systemic changes tend not to work when they come from one person. They have to come as a result of the whole group having just kneaded this dough until it finally rose into that particular shape. And, once you look at that shape it may or may not be the cloverleaf roll you had in mind, but it's going to taste a whole lot better. (A)

We've got to lose that individual identity between the different units and start working together. (W)

Not only did the teacher leaders in this study believe collaboration with their peers was important; they also felt they had the communication and teamwork skills necessary to work together. Rose said,

You have to be a part of a team. You really have to be able to collaborate with people.... I was in a position where I needed to be able to take all the personalities that would be at a meeting and try to [put some] structure to all of this. (R)

Rose especially made a number of comments about other collaborating skills she felt were important:

You have to be able to listen--that's one important thing about leadership that I learned. You really do need to listen to all parties, whether you agree with them or not, and then you have to look at--do

they have enough information, ... and then you want it to be fun.... If you don't have all three parts, they don't want to attend [the meetings], and they're going to sabotage [you], and they don't want to do anything.... Let's bring food. Let's discuss the key points... . They really don't want to waste their time, so you want to have a meeting focused. (R)

You really need to have a commitment from the team that you work with and be able to problem-solve with them, but not use it as a power tool....There are other styles out there, but that's kind of my style. (R)

There are people here who will just kind of push their way through it and are more demanding. I don't like to be that way. I'm competitive, yes, and I know how to get what I want, but I don't like to be disliked, and I think that's what holds me in control. I have very few enemies I would consider, and usually if they're an enemy it's not because of me, it's because of some things--choices I have to make that are not pleasant. (R)

Rose also referred to colleagues she had worked with in the past and how their relationship has continued:

There were about four of us, and we're still here. We're all doing different things than what we did originally as a team, but we still find ways to get together. We're in kind of CAM areas, so we look at ways that we can develop and integrate again. I mean, you can't ... hold us down ... when we still believe in integration ... and teaming. You can't kill that. (R)

Rose said that her motivation for being active and involved as a teacher leader was more a result of her affiliation and satisfaction with her peers, than because of her administrators. I asked her how much of a teacher's motivation to be involved was a result of actions on the part of an administrator. She responded with this statement:

I can tell you right now it's not for their superiors. It's more or less who you're really working with, who can you work together with, and because you're working with these people [that] it will be successful. (R)

It seemed apparent that there was mutual respect between the teacher leaders and their fellow teachers. According to the following statements, the participants felt that fellow teachers recognized and acknowledged their leadership. Statements made to that effect were:

I seem to be good at [collaboration skills].... I like working with other people. And they seem to like working with me. (A)

I am probably pretty decent at it [collaboration], seeing as I have a number of staff members that are coming to me with collaborative ideas. I must be somewhat good at it--the fact that I have five different service learning projects that are collaborative efforts. (W)

People come to me for things.... I have been viewed as sort of a natural leader within the building. (A)

I have felt very much supported by them, not that they always agree with me, but that my input is valued and that my opinion is respected and that I can speak my peace without being afraid of what I have to say, and that's a good thing. (A)

[My colleagues] are good people, and I feel that's reciprocal. I think they like me. People seem to stop me and talk to me and seem to feel very free in coming to me and telling me things and asking me questions and sharing. (A)

I can be counted on. I've learned [from my colleagues] that I've become pretty dependable. People like to work with me because they know that I like to have fun andThey ask me to do all the projects because they know I can finish them. And the people that have been doing them can't finish them or don't, you know. [They don't] have the passion to get into it. (R)

I had a colleague that was on site council and was getting ready to rotate off.... He said, "A lot of staff members voted you in because you are neutral and no one knows you.... We need you in this position. You've got the background to really take this and run." (W)

It's been my job to review other CAM strands curriculum, things that they're looking at, [and] make suggestions. I guess in that aspect I'm a little more of a visionary, so it's been easier to have other departments be willing to let me look over their stuff because ... maybe it's my style,

and maybe it's my interests.... Because of that, I'll challenge other staff members to try and do all of that. (W)

I feel like I can go to the administration and say, 'I'm hearing this,' and 'this is not a good thing,' and 'we need to address whatever it is,' and I have the backing of my fellow teachers in doing that. (A)

Not only did the participants feel their colleagues were affirming their ability to lead, but that their administrators had also been supportive, as these teachers state:

I have certainly been encouraged by administrators to do this [teacher leadership].... [The principal] has always sent me off to stuff. (M)

One of the administrators said [to me], "I wish I could clone you." (R)

Teacher leaders may have been recognized for their leadership abilities because of their visibility. Another reason might have been that teacher leaders in this study often shared materials with their colleagues, as is illustrated by Angie:

It's mostly a sharing thing. You come in and you say, 'well, this thing that I just did with my kids was so much fun,' da-da-da.... I put all those things together and gave them out to people, just because it's one of those things that I was doing for my own kids anyway, and so you might as well come in and give it to everybody. (A)

For Marie, others' perception of her ability to lead was a surprise. She said:

I didn't know I was a leader, [but] there are people [who] say—'the other teachers listen to you,' and I said 'They do?' I haven't got a clue, you know, ... I had no idea that's what I was doing. (M)

At another time, when I mentioned to Marie that other people saw her as a leader, she said,

I don't see myself as a leader. You know what I mean? I mean, I don't know what I'm doing half the time. So I don't know what happens. I don't know how to talk about this really. (M)

Will discussed his perception of how he got into teacher leadership, even though it was not something to which he aspired:

It's one of those things ... when I got into education I didn't see myself as a leader, I really didn't. There are many times that I have tried to run from the leadership roles, believe it or not. When I got here to [Mattridge], I had a program that was pretty much dead, so I had a lot of work to do. I was really working on reviving it, and I had no interest to really pursue educational leadership whatsoever. (W)

A part of collaboration with colleagues is relationships. The teacher leaders in this study spoke of relationships they had with not only their peers, but also administrators, parents, and the community. The statements below illustrate these relationships:

Relationships in general are important to me. I mean I really enjoy communicating with people. I like to know what people think, and I can spend as a lot of time just being with folk. (M)

I try to get out and have lunch with the other departments in the building so much as they're available. Some of them aren't, some of them kind of hang out in their rooms, but I do try to get out and talk to people on an informal basis just to keep the connections going. (A)

I have a really good relationship with my principal.... We've worked very closely for seven years.... We just work well together. [It's] what makes sense for kids ... if it makes sense we do it. (M)

I wander down to the office. I chat. I walk the halls. I like to talk. I like to know what's going on.... [I often talk to] staff, or [I'm] talking with other people. (M)

I get on real well with office staff and custodians. I just love being with those folk, and I think it's probably because I come from a working class background. (M)

I remember being in committees [and]... in groups with these community people talking about what kids needed, and that to me was fascinating. The reason I always try and be on the site council [is] because I like to be able to talk to the parents and the community people about education, and ... to get to be able to do that to me is real valuable. I do not see that as a chore at all. (M)

I really do like to work with people. (M)

Rose said of her work with a team member,

We have a really good working relationship. If he shows me something and I disagree with it or want a change, he knows I'll tell him, and so that's why we can work pretty effectively together, and we do make a good team. (R)

Teacher leaders found satisfaction and reward in assisting their colleagues.

Angie indicated that she found meaning in her teacher leadership activities because she was in the position of being responsible for helping Brentwood teachers do a better job of what they want to be doing, which is teaching kids. She said,

I find that [teacher leadership] very meaningful in the same way that I find teaching itself very meaningful. It's not that I'm teaching the staff what to do, because that's not my job. ...it is my job to facilitate their finding out what they need to know and want to know in order to do a better job, and that's the piece of it that I think brought me into that job in the first place and probably keeps me there. (A)

Communication was a skill used frequently in the role of teacher leader. Marie said,

The thing I do is check whenever there has been a group meeting. I check in with people if I think something might have been going on. I tend to do that after meetings. I will check in with people. I did that recently. Something was going on again where I thought people might be concerned, and it hadn't been brought out, so I go and see how people are doing. (M)

While teachers mentioned how often they worked with others in their building, participants had a vision for working together even more. As chair of site council, Angie indicated that one of the things she wanted to work at more effectively in the coming year was making better use of the collective expertise of the staff. She felt that teachers were effective in their classrooms, but that they weren't making use of this expertise as a group as effectively or as often as possible. Her idea was to provide time

for each teacher to observe another teacher, followed by a time to discuss the lesson or class.

While Marie enjoyed her colleagues, she also made a comment that indicated occasional frustration:

I'd like more people to do what I do. I'd like to see some of these younger people doing less coaching and more focusing on [their work]. I know that they're young, and they've got young families, and they don't get paid enough. I understand that, but that is a frustration that's ... discouraging to me. (M)

Will stated that he also had high expectations of his colleagues:

I have real high expectations that they are going to do what I deem the right thing. (W)

While three of the teachers knew their colleagues well, Will mainly associated only with those who taught in his area of the building. He stated,

I'm busy with everything else that I do, and our paths just don't cross. (W)

This section summarized the collaboration that teacher leaders experienced and indicated how and why it was satisfying to them. It ended with several challenges faced by teacher leaders when working with other teachers. Whereas these challenges could be seen as negative, the participants in this study stated numerous times that they needed challenges in their lives to be content or fulfilled. During the interviews, the mention of the word “need” was evidence to me that the teacher leaders in my study had some personal traits, instinctive drives, and personality characteristics that affected the extent of their involvement in teacher leadership activities. The last theme will illustrate this outcome by giving numerous examples from the data.

Stimulation and Challenge:
“I need the stimulation, and I need the challenge.” (A)

The teacher leaders made comments indicating that their teacher leadership involvement was often a result of their personality, drives, and goals. They discussed their need for involvement, their acceptance of risk, their tolerance and even desire for change, their positive attitudes, their personality characteristics, and their drives. Each of the areas above might have been covered as a separate theme; however, because they were related to each other as an expressed “need,” I chose to combine them into the last sub-theme.

When I asked Marie why she was involved in teacher leadership activities, she indicated that it was a part of who she was. Marie said,

"It's just who I am." (M)

Her statement spoke volumes to me because it explained concisely the “why” of both involvement and satisfaction. Marie continued by saying that her involvement probably had nothing to do with the demands of her school or job, but that it was more of a reflection of who she was:

I suspect that if I did not have teacher leader work to do, something else would take care of that for me. The reason I say that is [whenever I've had student teachers] I had no trouble finding things to do during that extra time. I worked on Latin curriculum, I worked in English curriculum, I went out and got resources for things ... there was always something that ... needs to be done, so I suspect it's probably more me than it is the job itself. (M)

The sub-theme of stimulation and challenge in some ways explains the unique characteristics of the teacher leaders in this study. Participants demonstrated a distinctiveness that was categorized into sub- sub-themes.

Style

Participants demonstrated a personal style of work and operation that could be described. As teacher leaders in this study discussed their leadership activities related to needs, personal beliefs, mental processing, and personality characteristics, they further illustrated to me their need for involvement:

I don't know what it is, but I just have this inquiring mind I guess. I need to know. I just cannot stand to not do stuff ... I just do it. (M)

I need the stimulation, and I need the challenge. I teach, I believe, because I am interested, and it's not old. I enjoy it, and at the same time, I'm contributing something positive to other people, at least I hope I am. So you know, it's a win-win situation. (A)

My mind just works that way--I just like to be doing things mentally. I like problem solving. I really like problem solving and always finding more problems to solve. I think I ... find things that need solving. (M)

I think it's partly that for some reason, [I'm] hard-wired down there deep in my brain stem. I need that, and I've recognized as I've grown up that I need that. It's not something that I can put aside and say, 'I can live without this.' It's fulfilling something that I need, and I can't begin to tell you why I think I need that, but I am absolutely convinced that I do. (A)

Angie asserted that her involvement gave her energy. She compared her role as teacher leader to a physical workout by saying,

The challenges are always changing. Just when I feel like I have a handle on ... this set of challenges, a new set crops up and says, 'oh, but look, you need to ... work here, you need to develop these skills, you need to talk to these people, and go do these things,' and it's so very energizing. It's kind of like working out. It makes you tired, but it gives you energy.... I know that's contradictory, but it's absolutely true, and this is my ... professional workout. If I don't do it, just like the person who misses going to the gym and really feels like a piece is missing out of their life, a piece is missing out of my life. (A)

Sometimes teacher leaders talked about their style of getting things done.

Angie gave an example of a time when something needed to be changed, but no one took the leadership on getting it accomplished:

We did get past all the "I can't's" and [Brentwood's] web page was up and running that year because basically I went to the computer teacher and I said, 'Look, I'm tired of everybody else saying what we can't do, let's you and I sit down and see what we can do.' We did it and got clearance and got authorization and got all the paperwork done and made it happen. (A)

While the teacher leaders in the research study indicated that teacher leadership involvement fit their personal preferences and had meaning for them, some recognized the fact that it was not true for everyone. Rose talked about some of her colleagues having different interests or styles:

There are people out there that can do it too; there are others who have no ambition to be leaders--they want to be led. Just tell me what to do type of thing, and we know who they are. (R)

She also referred to some other teachers in her school as having different work values from hers and the possible difference it might mean in their teacher leadership experience:

I think when you talk to other people they're not willing to spend the time; some do, some don't--they'd rather be fishing. (R)

Marie commented that perhaps there was a gender issue here. She said,

My antennae are always going, and I think that's a female thing in some ways. I think there are some males who have it, but what I notice about some of the younger male teachers is that they tend to be less patient; they tend to be less listeners. So, you know, I think there are certain genetic things about the female way of doing things. I think it's partly the way we're brought up, but I think also there is a language communication piece that we do. I think it's a survival thing as much as anything, because we're not big, you know. (M)

Power or Control

Teacher leaders referred to words such as power, control, choices, and decisions. These words can be interpreted in different ways to mean the same thing or to have entirely different meanings. In this section, they are addressed together. Angie initiated the topic of whether or not power was a motivator for teacher leadership. She recalled the first time she remembered having a feeling of power when she got up to lead a singing group many years before:

I had everyone sing, and to have them go with me and have them start when I wanted and stop when I wanted was just this marvelous feeling of power. (A)

Rose indicated that she was not a teacher leader because of the power it gives her, but she does recognize that she has it. She gave an example:

Yesterday four teachers called me. They wanted to know ... about something.... They seek me out, and I try to wield my power in a sense. (R)

At times, a leadership position provides the power needed to make desired changes, as indicated by the other three participants:

Somehow I feel as though I have power ... that I can make things happen, and I didn't use to feel this way. (M)

Part of the reason I applied for this position was that it offered a platform from which to make these suggestions where they would count. (A)

I want to be sure we know what we're doing next year. ...I'm not going to wait for someone to tell me what to do. (M)

I get on all the hiring committees I can, ...especially if it's going to affect me. (M)

I want to make sure it gets done. I want to make sure it gets done right. And when I say 'right,' I mean that everybody has input, that we're

listening to each other, that it's not just a loudmouth that's getting their way, you know, that it really is a team decision, a team effort with kids at the center. (M)

If you get into it, you've got to do right; if you don't, it's going to look awful. (R)

I want to design it. I don't want anybody else designing it for me or telling me what to do.... It's that kind of needing to know....I can't put my fate in the hands of others. (M)

The teacher leaders frequently mentioned the choices they had made to initiate teacher leadership roles. The choices they had could be related to control because when they had choices, they had control. Comments that illustrated those "choices" have been categorized within various themes. The following statement by Will illustrates one of those statements:

I first ran for site council because I saw it as an opportunity to help build my program where I would be in some sort of leadership role. So that is one [thing] that I took on willingly of my own accord. (W)

Rose identified a different word instead of "power":

Some teachers do it for power. Some do it for accomplishment. I don't do it for power--that's not my goal here. In some sense I get recognized in good and bad ways, but that's kind of okay. (R)

A feeling of power might also be interpreted as a desire to control. Marie, in talking about herself, said,

I'm curious--some people would probably say I like control. If it's going to affect me, I want to make sure that I have my say.... And I also think I'm good at it. (M)

While one teacher referred to a feeling of power and one to control, another teacher mentioned that it might be related to ego. When he made reference to the time he was elected site council Chair, Will said,

Part of it ... was the little bit of ego rush. It's like, oh my goodness, I'm good enough that they selected me to be a leader. (W)

Attitude

One very noticeable personality characteristic of the teacher leaders in this study was the demonstration of a positive attitude as it related to their work as a teacher and as a teacher leader. They seemed to change what they could change and accept what they couldn't change. Angie verbalized that her attitude had a great deal to do with liking her students and colleagues. Teacher leaders in the study consistently displayed a positive attitude in the comments they made during the interviews, as is illustrated by the following statements:

I'm a very positive person. (M)

I don't think there's anything out there that we look at that can't drive us to despair if we let it, but you don't ... have to--I don't have to let it. Periodically [I feel despair], but not for long. I don't know about other people, but I know that I have a certain amount of control over that....It's not a habit that I try to cultivate in myself, and so I work very hard to move past that and get on to something that I can do. (A)

If you don't like it, change it. (M)

Looking for the positive aspect of the job included the classroom where the teacher leader had much more control, as indicated by both Angie and Marie:

If I pick some of the classrooms that I've had, I could look at different places in that classroom and say, 'what a rotten bunch of people these are,' but they aren't all and they aren't always, and so I'm sure that the attitude has a great deal to do with it. (A)

I can limit the things I'm upset by much more easily in my classroom than I can out there looking at the state of the schools. (M)

The teacher leaders in this study were generally positive people. They found that negativity on the part of some of their colleagues drained them of energy, as stated by Angie:

The piece of it that's draining is all the negativity and all the negative energy that circulates within any school. Some of it is tied up with school reform. There's a great deal more stress now ... on the part of teachers than there was 10 years ago because we're being asked to take our full plate and make room on it for some more things, and not always in the most positive way are we being asked. And when you're trying to make things better and there's this pervasive negative attitude about change or about what people are being asked to do or about how it's affecting the kids and the parents as well as the teachers, that in itself is very draining because then your wheels begin to spin in ruts, and you can't get out. Then you start thinking about all of the things that aren't going to get better, that aren't going to change, that you can't control, and that's very, very hard. I think many teachers who don't get involved--in part [they] don't get involved because that's one way of dealing with that negativity, just shut it off and ignore it and 'just close my door and let me teach.' And I say that [sometimes]—'just close the door and let me teach,' but I don't really mean it ... because I always wind up opening my door and walking out. (A)

An illustration of a positive attitude on Marie's part related to an administrator transfer. When she got a new administrator, she said she asked herself "What have we done to deserve this?" But then she quickly said that she was looking for something positive in the situation. She realized that perhaps the positive part was simply going to be the dynamics of seeing the three administrators work together who had entirely different personalities and styles. She indicated that maybe "stirring up the pot" is what they needed, and maybe it will be better in the future. She concluded by saying that she couldn't dwell on the negative parts.

Rose made two comments related to negative emotions. When she feels upset about something, she said,

I let it out. I talk, and then I find something funny about it. Then it's done, and so I move on. (R)

I know people get down and depressed, but it's really rare for me. I can't even think of the last time I was depressed. (R)

Change

Teachers in the research study have frequently faced change in their work environment, especially in the last few years in Oregon. Some of the changes have been mandated, and others have been a result of choice. In reading the data, I became aware that for these teachers, change was a way of life. They were not particularly bothered or discouraged by it. Teacher leaders made comments such as the following:

I don't mind change. I sort of go after it myself. (A)

To change is not a problem. (W)

My job always evolves; it's always evolving into something different. (R)

It doesn't matter to me when I walk in the door if things are different from day to day. That's what I consider the norm, that it's always different. I just assume that. (R)

I'm looking at scoring [guides] and other ways to change my curriculum. I'm always liking to change, so I want to develop [curriculum] where it meets more standards. I think I can be most effective with career related standards, and so I think that's the direction I'm going to go. (R)

I'm always finding new stuff to do. (M)

When asked if her curriculum had stayed the same over 20 years, Marie said,

No, I change it from day to day. (M)

At another time, Marie stated,

I'm revamping wherever I go. (M)

I like developing stuff--I like new--I'm always doing something new. (M)

Will made a similar statement:

I've never done the same thing every year. (W)

Not only were teacher leaders comfortable with change, but they also mentioned that they sometimes seek it out because it keeps them interested in their work. The first statement also illustrates the "need" that teacher leaders reported and was referred to previously in this section:

I did it [became a teacher leader] because I need the change, and I need the stimulation, and I need the challenge. (A)

My year to year has never looked the same since I started teaching. I just find that normal. Other people ... do the same thing over and over. I'd get really, really bored doing the same thing from year to year, using the same materials. How can you do that? (R)

There are people who are just more comfortable moving into a situation and doing what's been done, just following [directions], and asking 'what do I need to do,' whereas I like to figure [it] out. (M)

As the interviewer, I asked what it was that caused these teacher leaders to change easily. Will and Marie said,

I get bored terribly if I have the same task. Very repetitive things are extremely boring for me ... and so you're constantly thinking ... and I find that challenging. (W)

That's what I do. I move in. I develop stuff I like, and then I move on... I like developing stuff--new stuff--I'm always doing something new. (M)

Even students noticed some of these characteristics in their teachers:

One of the comments that kids make about my teaching style, is there's always something new happening. [They say] 'I have to ... stay on my toes with Mrs. ___ because you never know what she's going to do next.' (M)

These statements reveal the fact that the teacher leaders at times purposefully chose change in their lives. The statements also reveal some of the motivation for choosing to make changes in teacher leaders' lives or their jobs:

I always want to look at what we can do differently to make it better....I started looking at things like that....We need to change how we do this. (R)

I'm very committed to change, not for the sake of change but because things are always changing, and it doesn't do [any good] to imagine that everything is the same way that it was just because you want it to be. I sort of go after change for ... myself. (A)

Marie indicated that sometimes she's motivated to choose changes because she likes to try new things:

I'm just about ready to give away another course. I've been teaching technical writing to seniors, and next year I don't have room in my schedule [for it]. I started [teaching technical writing]. It wasn't my idea to suddenly start teaching technical writing. The push came from Chemeketa [Community College] to offer a 2- plus 2-course, which is community college credit level. They requested that someone come from every building and talk about it, and so I said I'd do it. Another new thing to try. (M)

Teachers in the study made statements to the effect that "if you don't like it, change it." Changing circumstances around themselves was a way to maintain some control in their lives. Angie made two comments to illustrate this idea:

It is usually the result of my seeing something I don't like or wish it was better and trying to do something about it. I was raised, born, not to have much patience with beef and moan. And teachers love to beef and moan--everybody loves to beef and moan. I'd do my share. But I really do believe that if things aren't the way they should be or the way I think they should be that it's up to me to do something about it. And that was how I got to be involved in adjudication. I was one of the first state-certified adjudicators in the state of Oregon ... we put that program together because we didn't like the way things were going. (A)

It was because I didn't like what was going on, and it didn't seem like to me that it was going to be that difficult to change. And so I just opened my mouth and stuck my foot in it, and now I am the Honors freshmen English teacher. (A)

Even though teachers spoke of making changes in their lives fairly easily, Rose admitted to at times being uncomfortable with change:

We don't always like it [change], but some of us are better adapters because we're used to change. (R)

Marie assumed that she would be changing all her life and voiced a commitment to continue to change. She said,

I think there has to be a readiness to change. I mean, I hope I'm still open to development, to change. (M)

Risk

To change often involves taking a risk. Marie realized that she had never done the same thing from one year to the next. She said she asked herself why she was doing something different every year when many of her colleagues were doing the same things they had done when they started teaching. In analyzing this situation, Marie said,

It's a matter of taking risks. (M)

Rose used exactly the same six words to acknowledge the risks she took:

It's a matter of taking risks.... I think you really have to consider it something you grow in, not that you just stay and do the same thing. It's not an assembly line unless you make it an assembly line. It's doing whatever you want to do, and I think that's what sometimes people get burned [at] their job because they are doing the same thing all the time. (R)

Rose added,

The goal was always to take a risk. If you fail, you learn something from it; you can develop it elsewhere.... I was always willing to take a risk. (R)

Will said,

[I'm] a huge risk-taker. (W)

Angie was aware that she may be a risk-taker, but she stated that sometimes it was a result of someone else pointing out to her that she took risks:

My feedback from other people tells me that a lot of what I do is risky; I just don't perceive it as risky. (A)

In our discussion, Marie said that some would see designing a new course or program as taking a risk, but she said,

I don't see those as taking risks. (M)

Not only were these teacher leaders willing to take risks, but also one of them indicated that she is even drawn to an environment where persons are free to take risks.

Rose stated,

I started working here because the environment was such that it was very comfortable for me because I'm used to taking risks and doing things, and it was encouraged. (R)

There were times when the teacher leaders made comments that indicated to me they took risks, but they may not have articulated it as a risk. An example was when Angie said she wanted to teach Latin. Her former department coordinator made an off-handed comment that motivated her to develop a Latin class. The comment was,

Put it together, put it on the table, and see what happens. (A)

Time

Teacher leaders were satisfied with their jobs despite the fact that they believed they had many things to do, as well as many hours to work in their job. They were involved in a variety of activities, as illustrated by these typical comments:

I work on sometimes five things at the same time. (R)

I never get done what I want to do. There is not enough time.... I fill my time with things that I find of value, and I never get done. I always have more things that I want to accomplish than I ever accomplish. (R)

The janitors after my first year here gave me a cot because it was not uncommon for the night crew to go home before me.... They thought that was asinine, and so they decided to give me a cot, so I could just live here. Yeah, I work a lot. (W)

There was a lot of stuff going on with the Latin kids, and stuff going with the site council--people would say, 'How are you today'? And I would say, 'I'm rather frazzled, but other than that I'm fine,' because there are days when you feel like you're being pulled six ways from Sunday to get everything done. The ability to actually sit down and give uninterrupted, concentrated thought to one thing is very rare. Those days do not happen often, and it's too bad because I like having that time to think, but it's just the way it is. (A)

Will talked about how his prep period was usually full of things to do. He said,

The last couple years my prep has been spent doing any number of site council business items, working on CAM stuff, preparing for ... classes, different competitions, things of that nature. (W)

Teachers also talked about working nights, weekends, and vacations:

I've got kids who will show up at 6:00 am on a Saturday to ... go through a practice to make sure they're ready for a contest. I'm not sure that there are many other teachers in many other subject areas that could say they'd have kids show up at 6:30 for anything. (W)

I'm one of those people that work for nothing. I have a lot of kids who come in here and do work [after school]. (R)

We do have an Arts and Communication brochure right now that I modeled on one that somebody else had. I did that over Christmas break. (M)

I try to take one day off a week [either Saturday or Sunday]. (M)

Related to rewards, Will said he found the challenges satisfying enough to give up some personal time. He went on to say,

I think if you really genuinely find something rewarding you can probably go with less leisure time than people who are doing something they don't enjoy. (W)

In general, the long hours were not a negative experience for these teacher leaders. For example Marie indicated she worked many hours beyond what was expected of her, but she also knew her limits:

I refuse to meet with kids at lunchtime because that's my only break. I will meet with them before school or after school, during my flextime, during my prep. And many of the seniors who planned minimal schedules have made the most of that opportunity. (M)

Marie recognized the work involved with grading of work samples, and she drew the line with colleagues:

There are people who [are] going to expect me to coordinate the whole thing again. I can't do that.... I'm not going to do all the presentations at the end, and I'll state that very categorically.... I can help them practice, but I'm certainly not going to be doing all. That's a lot of presentations. And I'm certainly not going to grade all the research papers--145 research papers, 2000 words each. No thank you. (M)

Will also mentioned his attempt to make certain there was a balance in his life:

It's finding a balance, and it's finding a support structure, which is something I've been working on. (W)

Probably the one thing that I professionally need to learn is ... how to relax, and ... that's come down from my principal. It's like, hey, take a vacation. It's okay. But you know, I've had a very busy life and it's

hard--it's hard to slow down. It would probably be my biggest weakness right now. (W)

With my administration, their directive is I need to learn to take time off, and so we're working on that. Several times when I finally took four days off and oh my goodness--I rediscovered hobbies! Why don't I do this more? (W)

Angie referred to the additional time it takes to be involved in leadership activities, but said that this kind of thinking had never been a problem with her for long, and that it was not enough to make her want to quit the involvement:

Yes, it takes extra hours, and yes, it makes me physically tired sometimes, and it cramps hours in my day and in my life, but that is not the big issue. That all by itself would not be something that would be so negative that I would even really stop to give it a lot of thought. Physical energy and the ability to put in the hours and put in the time to keep thinking has not ever really been a problem for me most of the times in my life. (A)

One of the reasons I was interested in teacher leader involvement was because I was aware that many of these teachers put in many hours beyond what they were getting paid. When asked if she resented the time spent on teacher leader activities, Marie said,

I don't have time for resenting things. We all make choices. (M)

Challenges

Despite consistent evidence of each of the teacher leaders having a positive attitude and stating enjoyment and satisfaction, an occasional comment demonstrated that these teachers struggle at times with their job-related circumstances. The statements were rare, perhaps because the research questions were not directed at acquiring information on factors that discouraged the participants. However, as they

discussed their role, the participants also recognized some of the challenges they faced.

Angie spoke of several difficulties she encountered:

I don't see being the teacher leader as a particularly challenging intellectual task. It has different challenges. It has people challenges and organizational challenges and long-term development in vision challenges that are different. (A)

According to Will, there was a time when he resented the additional time his job was taking:

This spring ... I was kind of getting into the little pity parties, like 'oh my goodness, I work so hard,' and this and that you know. It was easy to kind of lose sight of some of the things that I was doing. Yeah, it's a little bit frustrating ... we dismiss at 3:15. At 3:20 I'm trying to find a colleague because I need something from them, and they're gone for the day.... [Or] when I come in at 7:00 am in the morning, and I beat all of the office staff in, and ... there's only one or two other teachers that are here as early as I am ... it's a little bit frustrating. It's like, 'yeah, I wouldn't mind having that second, third, fourth cup of coffee and watch the news a little bit and get caught up on what's going on in the world.' (W)

Will also remarked that before he was site council chair, there were no bylaws, and he had a very compliant group of teachers. He sensed that some were thinking-- this is how we did it last year, so this is how we'll do it this year. He found himself working when no one else was and feeling that if it didn't matter to others, why should he work so hard? He said,

For two or three meetings I was getting the 'oh, we don't have to worry about it--[Will] will take care of it.' It's like, 'oh, no, wait a minute, wait a minute, I'm not--I'm not your mule here,' and so it was time for some new blood to come in, and it was time for me to go ahead and [let someone else]. (W)

So his summary statement was,

I'm definitely kind of on burnout.... It was time for me to step aside [from site council chair] and let some new blood come in because there was a complacency.... After three years, it's time for a break. (W)

Rose talked once about taking a break from one of her leadership roles as well because she also was feeling burnout:

I was hitting burnout, so I needed to kind of recover from it. (R)

Pattern: Past, Present, and Looking to the Future

This section of the data describes the teacher leaders' involvement as being a part of who they were. Participants indicated that involvement was a pattern in their life, both in the past, currently, and as they looked to the future. Teachers talked about being in a leadership position, not only in their own school, but also around the state. Rose cited the innovative work she had done as a part of a team from her school. This group of teachers developed programs and made presentations in Oregon as well as in other states. She said,

At [Bradbury] we were ahead of everyone else. We had people from California who were working on their Goals 2000 type of thing, and we were the model. They were excited. We were what they were trying to do with their Goals 2000. We were what Washington wanted to have happen. We were what everyone else wanted to have happen. This was before CIM and CAM. We really got good at scheduling and developing block programming for integrated curriculum.... So sometimes we'd go out as a team.... I've been to different places in Washington, and we had a conference at our school that had 200 people attending from all over the western states including Alaska.... We had people touring [the] school all the time, and we were the experts ... at looking at what they have and how they can do it, and so we helped them ... design new programs. (R)

Other teacher leaders said,

I used to present around the state on applied communication. I did that when I was at [my previous school], and that was in the early stages when English started to become applied. (M)

One of our [content area] conferences is coming up next week and ... I'll be presenting along with one of my colleagues on how to successfully integrate our curriculum with other staff members. (W)

As stated earlier, there seemed to be a pattern to teacher leadership activities.

Not only was there a past and current pattern, but these teachers saw themselves as being involved in the future as well. One of the reasons teacher leaders wanted to be involved in the future was because they had lots of ideas for what they wanted to do next. Their minds moved ahead to the next job or activity. Marie made three statements related to her ideas and plans for the following year:

I've got lots of ideas for next year. I've got two new things I'm designing this year. I've also got oodles of ideas for CAM that are very integrated (M)

I get an idea that I see somewhere and that I want to try--I want to expand it--I want to see if it works. I think ... that sounds neat. Let's try that next. (M)

I get this nugget of an idea ... and then start to think how would it work here, and what would [I do to make it happen]. (M)

Marie gave an example of an idea she had gotten at a conference she attended:

I went to this conference in Ashland and heard about a class that started at Ashland High School in the evening one day a week for three hours on women's writing.... We talk a lot about there not being enough time in the day to give kids choices.... So I've put that down as one of my goals for this next year, not to set it up, but to develop it and try to figure out how it would work.... Already our principal has said it's an interesting idea, and she's interested in that. So already I'm thinking about not just next year but the year after. (M)

When Rose was asked if she saw herself continuing to be involved in leadership positions, she indicated that it may be different each time, but that she would probably always be involved in some way. Marie also made several statements regarding her future involvement:

I think I'll never ... really give up what I'm doing.... Obviously it will change, but I'll still somehow be ... interacting with people and with books and with thinking. I'll be doing that forever.... It will always be there in some form, and if I do retire, whatever that means, I don't know what that is. Retire, what from? (M)

People say—'when are you going to retire'? I haven't got a clue. When it stops being fun. (M)

I've got lots of things I'd love to do. (M)

Teacher leaders in this study spoke of a vision and planned ahead. Angie articulated her vision by stating,

And so one of my visions is that I would like to see us teach each other more than I do.... When I look at educational reform, when I look at the CIMs and the CAMs, ... [I wonder] 'what is this going to look like when we have students who are actually doing it?' (A)

Angie had ideas for the following year:

I'm working with the administration right now for next year on two possibilities, and I'm not quite sure how all of this is going to pan out yet, but I would like to organize the staff on a volunteer basis into what I'm currently calling observation groups. Groups of teachers probably within a department who have non-common prep times and agree to let other teachers come watch them in their classroom, and then in turn to go watch the other teachers in their classroom.... We're working on devising some sort of a system whereby we can then give these teachers time to sit down and talk and share, because we get very, very isolated as you well know, and I feel very strongly about wanting to break some of those bonds of isolation. (A)

I know what I'm going to do a year from this fall. We're opening a new high school, and I'm going to apply.... I would probably, along with applying for a teaching position, put my name in the hat as a ...

department coordinator ... because I do enjoy it, and I hope that I'm doing some good for somebody. (A)

Discussion and Analysis of the Data: Researcher's Reflections

In the preceding pages, I have described a "state of affairs" for these teacher leaders during the four months the interviews took place. However, Van Manen (1990) asserts that this state of affairs can change dramatically over time and from place to place. Therefore, what existed at the time of the interviews may not exist today. But, do these teacher leaders in an educational reform environment speak for other teacher leaders in similar circumstances? Are their thoughts and feelings similar or different from other teacher leaders? What can we learn from them? How can we use what we have learned from them?

For the purposes of analyzing the data for this research, it is easy to think of the four teacher leaders as "one." That is most likely truer for the reader than it is for me. But perhaps we need also to consider the teacher leaders individually. What are the differences between Angie, Rose, Will, and Marie? If they were to meet each other and participate in a focus group, would they share similar opinions and thoughts? What difference would it make to the data?

Individual lives change. Circumstances change. And the educational environment changes. What would be the difference in the data if the research study was conducted one year prior or one year after?

Before pursuing these questions, I need to come back to the goals of this study. It is not a study about the persons of Angie, Rose, Will, and Marie. This is a study seeking to expand the understanding we have of teacher leaders in an educational

reform environment, as illustrated by the language of the four teacher leaders in this study. Although many questions could be raised, they are questions for another study. My main interest in pursuing the question for this study (Where do teacher leaders find meaning in their teacher leadership activities and involvement?) was to more fully understand myself, as well as many others with whom I work and have worked in the past. I believe the comments made in the pages of this chapter contribute to the answers.

Surprises in the Data

The purpose of this research was to discover the meaning teacher leadership involvement had for the participants in this study. An interview format was designed to address the questions. While the question of meaning was answered, other findings emerged that were totally unexpected. Participants willingly worked in an educational reform environment and made it succeed for them. The teacher leaders also demonstrated and discussed numerous similarities, both in background and personal characteristics.

Responses related to educational reform. One of the initial premises of the research study was that Oregon's educational reform efforts were at the forefront of all thoughts and actions for these teacher leaders. I thought it would be an overarching factor in everything they said in the interviews and therefore a major contributor to the data. While their leadership activities were usually related to educational reform and a result of Oregon's reform efforts, the teacher leaders did not make frequent reference to Oregon's frameworks--it was merely a part of the current job. I thought teacher leaders

in this study would frequently talk about the issues and the controversy surrounding the reform mandates. I assumed their opinions related to educational reform would be articulated numerous times. I expected to hear a comment similar to others I hear in either the educational or local community. For example, I thought I might hear:

“Decisions are made by our legislators who have no idea of what’s best for kids,” or

“Why can’t we teach kids the way we want to...these high-stakes tests are so hard on them,” or “What about the kids who can’t make it?” The teacher leaders could have made these kinds of remarks, but they did not. Why not?

My premise here is that involvement in educational reform for the teacher leaders in this study was so thoroughly integrated into their teaching responsibilities and leadership involvement, that they didn’t even consider the components as two separate parts. In considering this curiosity, I understood in a new way that educational reform is all about two things: change and curriculum development. Legislated mandates have required teachers to change, and usually those changes affect curriculum. When current teaching materials need to be aligned with standards and when assessment methods change, new curriculum needs to be conceived, created, developed, utilized, and supported. Because the teacher leaders in my research study did not mind change and because they enjoyed writing new curriculum, they were not disturbed by these tasks or their role in a reform environment. Nor did they mind spending additional time on the task because of the satisfaction they gained from it. In addition, "ideas" came easily for them. As a result, educational reform was not an issue in my study as I had anticipated. Instead, working in an educational reform environment enhanced the opportunities for participants in this study to apply their

knowledge and skills. It gave them a context that “fit” their work style and their personality during this point in time. The teacher leaders’ activities might have been entirely different had they been in an environment void of change and restructuring. Thus, the reform initiatives and their emphasis on change did not detract from these teachers’ ability to implement change. Instead, it fit their teaching, working, and personality style because it gave them a “place” to exercise those educational skills and personality needs that made them who they were.

Similarity of participants. In reading my data, another surprise for me was the similarity of the participants’ personal backgrounds, as well as their personality characteristics. As a result of using Seidman’s (1991) model of in-depth interviewing, the first round of interviews explored the participants’ background and early family life. Patterns began to surface in what the interviewees had experienced as a child. With only four participants, it is not my purpose to generalize, but it is difficult to omit the similarities in the discussion and analysis. Examples of similarities which were mentioned by two, three, or four participants and unsolicited include:

- 4/4--parents were supportive of their child’s school activities and educational experiences
- 4/4--participants were involved in activities other than school as a child or teenager (sports, piano lessons, church youth group leadership activities, summer jobs, etc.)
- 3/4--term “work ethic” mentioned
- 3/4--family either moved a lot or the participant went to a number of different schools
- 3/4--family of origin was from the working class (vs. professional with a college education)

- 2/4--attended a private school (one a girls school and one a Catholic school)

In addition, numerous common personality characteristics were evident.

Examples of similarities which were mentioned two, three, or four times and unsolicited included:

- 4/4--either oldest child (3) or an only child (1)
- 4/4--are not concerned with change
- 4/4--willing to take risks
- 4/4--self-defined as having a positive attitude
- 2/4--strive to make classes relevant and "real"

I find it difficult to interpret this finding because it could be viewed as controversial. Whatever I surmise will be met with disdain by those individuals who don't "fit" the family or personality description or who find exceptions to the results in this study. However, I find it hard to ignore this data when it seemed to be a recurring issue. So I ask many questions: Does the literature on first-born children hold any validity? What effect does the family of origin have on attitude or on a work ethic? How does a move to another city, state, or school affect later ability to take risks and embrace change? What difference in confidence level does it make to a child and future adult when a parent supports their child's education? What difference does it make to persons when as children or young adults, they were involved in sports, church activities, summer jobs, clubs, or leadership experiences? Where does the ability to work with people and be a part of a team come from? What part does nurture play? What part does nature play? Are leaders born or made?

Additional questions that are secondary in my mind are: Does "drive" or "determination" affect teacher leadership involvement? What about Marie's comment that she was brought up to please--are these teachers motivated by trying to please their administrators or peers? Does a desire to "control" cause teachers to be involved in a leadership role? Is a person motivated by a competitive nature, and if so, where does that come from? What causes a person to want to be busy or always be busy? These and other questions will go unanswered. Van Manen (1990) asserts that "phenomenology does not problem solve" (p. 23). Perhaps asking questions is as far as we should go in the interpretation.

Characteristics of Teacher Leaders

Because data in a qualitative study is emergent, it seemed appropriate to briefly consider the results of a literature search on personality characteristics or traits of leaders and teacher leaders. As stated earlier, I did not anticipate finding characteristics that were common among the participants. The addition of this section is an attempt to connect some of the literature to the results of my study. The following summary highlights three categories of characteristics: personal, professional, and workplace. Only characteristics that surfaced in the research study will be addressed.

Personal Characteristics

The current thinking about leadership is that "there is something within them [leaders]. Many believe that there is some natural, inborn element in good leaders" (Nahavandi, 1997, p. 48). However, according to Nahavandi it wasn't always the belief. In studies done as early as the 1930's, no single trait or combination of traits

was found to have a consistently strong correlation to leadership ability or effectiveness. As a result, the commonly held belief was that while individual traits were important, leadership could not be studied outside of the context or situation itself. In 1974, Stodgill (as cited in Nahavandi) did a more thorough review of traits along with other findings and reestablished the validity of the trait approach. At the present time, research is again being done to examine personal traits in relationship to leadership. Much of it not only focuses on the traits of leadership, but also considers the interaction among traits, behaviors, and characteristics (Nahavandi). In my study, I noticed numerous personal traits that were common among my participants. They are the ones listed below.

Education and Experience. In an extensive investigation of teacher leadership, Hatfield, Blakman, and Claypool (as cited in Vail and Redick, 1993) studied K-12 teachers and found that the majority of teacher leaders each had 10-18 years of professional teaching experience and a master's degree. One teacher leader in my study was completing his fifth year of teaching; the other three had 10, 20, and 27 years of experience. All four had master's degrees.

Internal locus of control. This concept was introduced by Rotter (as cited in Nahavandi, 1997). He found that this trait was an indicator of an individual's sense of control over the environment and external events. People who have an internal locus of control believe that many of the events around them are a result of their actions. They feel a sense of control over their lives and tend to attribute both their successes and their failures to their own efforts. These individuals tend to be more proactive and take more risks (Anderson, Hellreigel, & Slocum, as cited in Nahavandi, 1997).

Without exception, participants in my study had chosen their teacher leadership involvement.

Type A personality. These individuals try to do more in less time and are usually in a hurry. They have a high need for control and are impatient with delays. They measure their outcomes against those around them. Type A personalities often do high quality work, but they may also overload or burn out when carried to an extreme. They do not admit they are tired. As hard workers, they often do not understand other people's less intense approach to work (Nahavandi, 1997). It may be difficult for me to analyze whether or not the participants in this study had a Type A personality since I only saw them in an interview situation rather than in their normal day-to-day pace of life. I did not sense a "need to control" by the participants, although Marie once said that others might say she likes to control. Rather than "control," Marie said she was "curious." While several teacher leaders indicated they had power, they said it was not their goal. The participants in this study performed well on the job and produced quality work. Only one indicated he might at some time reach burnout if he continues this high level of involvement. Will once voiced frustration with teachers who didn't get involved with students, and Rose expressed impatience for teachers who didn't like change.

Self-monitoring. People who monitor themselves are an "open book," meaning that others can "read" them well. They are open in their thoughts. They are also consistent in their behavior. Researchers found that high self-monitors emerged as leaders more frequently than those who did not self-monitor at or did so less often. "This would suggest that self-monitoring may be a key variable in leadership"

(Nahavandi, 1997, p. 57). Similarly, all participants in this study were extremely open to discussing their lives and their experiences.

Charisma. This term defines the relationship between the leader and the followers. The leader is a role model and a hero. Nahavandi (1997) pointed out that most admirable leaders in history achieved the designation without being formally chosen. According to the author, characteristics of charismatic leaders include a combination of self-confidence, energy, and communication ability. Angie made numerous comments to indicate that she was a role model to her colleagues. She said she was viewed as a natural leader in the building, that her colleagues respected, trusted, and supported her in her role as a leader. Will indicated that other staff members came to him with collaborative ideas. Marie said she didn't realize she was a leader until others came to her and told her she was. Each of the participants had an ability to communicate their thoughts well.

Values. Leaders think about values and they live them. In fact, "great leaders have always known that morals and values are the cornerstone of society" (Tichy, 1997, p. 106). Livingston (1992) commented that leaders have the courage to do what is right for specific situations in which they find themselves. The goal is that leaders' values should be in alignment with an organization. If so, their values support the organization's ideas. Evidence of being aware of their values was shown by all four of the participants when they talked about the importance of their students and their dedication to help them achieve. Their sense of responsibility to the students was articulated many times and in many ways.

Efficacy. In their study of 17 teacher leaders, Lieberman, Saxl, and Miles (1988) found the teachers to have a high self-regard. Robinson and Gorrel (1994) did a study on teacher efficacy -- teacher confidence level -- during a period of extensive curriculum change. They found that among other things, teachers with a high level of efficacy are more likely to persist in implementing new programs. They were also more willing to stretch themselves and use innovative methods of teaching. Although my participants and I did not have a discussion of self-confidence, as the interviewer I saw confidence and enthusiasm for what they were accomplishing in their teacher leadership role. While Marie seemed to have confidence in her abilities, she mentioned that she doesn't always feel like a leader. When others call her a leader, she is surprised.

Energy. Leaders are highly energetic people themselves, but they also actively work to create positive emotional energy in others. That energy makes them competitive. Leaders see everything in life as an opportunity to learn and grow. They throw themselves wholeheartedly in what they do because they care deeply about their work. They believe it has value and is important, and therefore they are enthusiastic about their ideas and actions. Winning leaders do not see their hard work as a sacrifice. They work hard, but not because they have to--they work hard because they want to. They find it rewarding, and they love what they do (Tichy, 1997). Lieberman, Saxl, and Miles (1988) used the term "enthusiasm" when describing teacher leaders in their study. The above description of energy may be the one characteristic more than any other that I observed. These teacher leaders demonstrated energy and enthusiasm in their conversations, and they spoke of numerous activities and involvements that could

only be accomplished when one has the energy and enthusiasm that is required to accomplish the tasks. Angie even spoke of receiving energy from her involvement.

Determination or assertiveness. In a study done to determine the factors that affect the implementation of curriculum change in parenthood education, it was found that “teachers who accepted barriers to implementation were limited in what they could accomplish, while teachers who were more assertive looked for and often found alternate ways to reach their goals” (Langone, Cross, & Combs, 1987, p. 101). Angie spoke of what seemed to be a barrier at her school, which she decided deliberately to overcome. The work she did resulted in a permanent change for the school.

Take risks. Conley (1996) states that in a restructured school, the teacher needs to be able to take risks and have lots going on at the same time as students work collaboratively. He mentioned that when schools change, roles also change. When describing the results of their study of teacher leaders, Lieberman, Saxl, and Miles (1988) found the teachers to be risk-takers, “willing to promote new ideas that might seem difficult or threatening to their colleagues” (p. 151). All participants in this study spoke of taking risks and even indicated that it wasn’t that difficult to do so.

Other key traits as stated in the literature are: motivation, desire to lead, inspirational, supportive of others, follow through on commitments, ability to empower others, and knowledge. As the researcher, I noticed each of these traits in one or more of the participants. It is also important to note that some of the traits carried to an extreme can be detrimental to leadership. For example, a leader with too much “drive” may refuse to delegate tasks (Nahavandi, 1997). Taking too many risks may be perceived as careless and irresponsible.

Professional Characteristics

In addition to personal characteristics, writers discussed characteristics that were effective on the job.

Vision. Writers frequently stated that an essential component of being a leader is that they must have a vision for their organization or for their school. Starratt (1995) discussed the importance of a vision when he stated that leadership emerges out of a vision of what the leader and colleagues can accomplish together. He would concur with Nahavandi (1997) that a leader influences others in the goal. The vision is the source of the leader's power because it is the vision that attracts the commitment and enthusiasm of other members. The goal of leadership is not to get people to follow *the leader*; rather, the point is to get everyone to pursue a common goal (Starratt).

Teacher leaders in this study had visions for CIM and CAM in their schools, for ways to organize the staff in the future, and for themselves and their professional role as a teacher.

Communication skills. Teacher leaders need to be able to communicate their vision, thoughts and ideas. The skill may be used in a staff meeting, during a presentation, or with parents. Communicating vision or change with building and district administrators and the school board are critical as well. Being a good communicator includes being a good listener. Communication was a skill used frequently by teacher leaders in this study. Both Angie and Marie gave examples of times they checked in with others to find out what they were thinking in relation to a particular issue.

Human relations skills. Negotiation, consensus, goal-setting, and conflict resolution skills are critical to the person charting new ground in educational reform. Much collaboration goes on, and these skills will be used each time there is an encounter. Teacher leaders need to work with parents and the community as partners working toward common goals. Lieberman, Saxl, and Miles (1988) found teacher leaders in their study to possess interpersonal skills—"they knew how to be strong, yet caring and compassionate" (p. 150). The characteristic of collaboration was seen so frequently that it became one of the sub-themes for this study. Participants were members of teams and worked together with other professionals to accomplish their leadership tasks. They also mentioned ways they were respected by those with whom they worked.

Cooperation. Leaders and teachers have to be able to work together. They cannot work in isolation and still be effective (Conley, 1993). Cooperation is necessary for effective collaboration (discussed above) to take place. These skills were evident in the teacher leaders who took part in this study.

Ideas. Leaders are clear on what it takes to operate the organization and they update these ideas to keep them appropriate to changing circumstances. They also help others to develop their own ideas (Tichy, 1997). Participants in this study cited examples of innovative classroom practices that were often a result of ideas they had on their own. Will created a service learning project to incorporate Biology and Language Arts classes. Marie implemented senior projects that became examples for others in the school. Each of the participants talked about changes they made in their curriculum and the roles they played. They frequently "tried out" new ideas in order to improve

what they were currently doing or to continue the stimulation and challenge they received from innovative practices.

Other leadership experiences. In a study done by Vail and Redick (1993), it was found that additional teaching assignments (e.g., department chair, association representative, curriculum developer) increased the performance of teacher leadership activities. Each of the teacher leaders in this study participated in numerous activities outside of their teaching responsibilities. Angie's present or past involvements included: textbook evaluation, state-wide committee (PASS standards for Latin), grant writing, curriculum writing for district (on-line writing course), curriculum writing for school (writing guides and handouts used by English department), district representative for conferences, and taught English methods to Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) students at a local university. Rose's current or past involvements included: district-wide 21st Century school coordinator, CAM committee (Arts and Communication), site council, grant writing, curriculum writing for the state department (standards for Arts and Communication CAM programs), school-wide committee (block scheduling), and club advisor. Will was currently or had in the past been involved in the following leadership activities: CAM director for his high school, curriculum design for regional model, board of directors for a state student organization, site council chair, grant writing, and conference speaker at a national meeting. Marie was participating or had in the past participated in the following leadership activities: committees for her school (CAM, CIM design, search committee for new administrator, English curriculum committee), site council, grant writing, school representative to attend conferences (CAM, Advanced Placement, Technology

and Applied Communication, senior projects, peer response groups, and integrated learning), presentations to district school board (CIM design and new senior English program), and design of new curriculum set up as a new College Writing course for a local community college. These activities are all examples of ways the participants in this study were involved in teacher leadership.

Willing to make tough decisions and encourage and reward others who do the same. Leaders rarely take the easy way out. They face unpleasant situations and can make tough decisions (Tichy, 1997). Compared to many of the characteristics described in the literature, I found less evidence of the participants' making tough decisions than most of the other characteristics. They did not cite unpleasant situations, but that may be a result of the fact that involvements were by choice.

Commitment to change. Teachers are often committed to change because they personally believe a given change will be beneficial to students or to themselves" (Vail & Mandiloff, 1995, p. 79). Being willing to let go of the "old" is important. The effective leader has no problem getting rid of what worked in the past when they see that the future needs something different (Crosby, 1996). There is a distinct relationship between this characteristic and my participants. One of the sub- sub-themes is related to participants' frequency and willingness to change what they do. The most common changes for the teacher leaders in this study took place in relationship to curriculum development and implementation.

Build for the future. Leaders prepare organizations to change and sustain success. One of the components of preparing for change is that of developing other leaders (Tichy, 1997). Someone who is forward-looking and sets goals to accomplish

what needs to be done as a leader. Participants in this study were influential in helping their colleagues develop leadership skills especially when they were site council chairs, participated in CIM and CAM design, and made presentations at conferences.

Workplace Characteristics

In addition to personal and professional characteristics, factors in the workplace also affect a person's motivation to lead. These factors in the school setting that cause teachers to be more effective, more satisfied, and more open to change and improvement are: high consensus on shared goals, significant teacher collaboration, ample opportunity for teacher growth and learning, some certainty or agreement about what constitutes effective practice, and a strong sense of what actions are possible (Rosenholtz, as cited by Conley, 1993). When teachers are in this kind of an organizational environment, changes in the way they approach teaching are much more possible and likely. Workplace characteristics conducive to leadership were evident for teacher leaders in this study. The "Circle of Inquiry" model created for this study shows "school context" as an integral part of the experience for teacher leaders in this study. These teachers would not have had the leadership experiences they enjoyed without support from others, collaboration experiences, and a positive organizational environment.

A good relationship and good feelings about the principal also affect the motivation of teachers to become leaders in education reform. "Principals help implement decisions made by others, help overcome barriers, enable teachers to develop skills necessary, provide allocation of resources and deal with legal and

contractual constraints" (Conley, 1993, p. 84-85). Participants spoke highly of their principals who were particularly encouraging and supportive. If teacher leaders in this study had lacked support or had been criticized for their work, they no doubt would have ceased their voluntary commitments as teacher leaders.

A study was cited by Witherspoon (1997) that indicated the leadership behaviors of individuals. Some of the workplace characteristics included: delegation, work facilitation, planning, coordinating, and organizing.

Making Sense of the Data

So what sense can we make of the data? Where **do** teacher leaders find meaning in their activities related to teacher leadership? When I started on this journey of exploring the research question, I was confident that my study would result in some answers. As I complete the study and work on reporting the results, I am much less confident! I have my ideas, which I will share, but how do I know if that's really what provides these teachers with meaning?

'Whose meaning is it?' Seidman (1991) asks this question as a chapter subheading (p. 17). Is the meaning I make of the data mine or the participants' meaning? How do I know if my interpretation of their meaning is really their meaning? Maybe it's my meaning instead. Maybe I find meaning because the participants' stories were fascinating to me as a result of my own previous involvement as a teacher leader. Maybe it's because many of the things the teacher leaders said were also true of my own experience. It is interesting to note that if I, the researcher, was one of the participants in this study, making it five participants instead of four, every number on

the "similarities of participants" list (several pages back) would go up one integer as a result of the personal background descriptors also describing me. Or maybe it's simply because I enjoy being with people and having a dialogue about personal experiences.

Van Manen (1990) says that phenomenological discourse "simultaneously pulls us in but then prompts us to reflect" (p. 121). Perhaps that's what was happening to me--I was reflecting in a search for significance. According to Rosen (as cited in Van Manen), phenomenological research and writing also has the power "to involve us personally--one tends to search actively for the storyteller's meaning via one's own" (p. 121). Van Manen also talked about a lecture made by Buytendijk who once referred to the "phenomenological nod" as a way of indicating that a good phenomenological description is something that we can nod to, recognizing it as an experience that we have had or could have had" (p. 27). I take comfort in knowing that respected writers on qualitative research have verified what I recognize has happened to me as I attempted to interpret the results of my research. At the same time that I admit to the above thoughts, I am aware of the importance of allowing the "voice" of my participants to speak rather than that of my own. I admit my struggle and can only attempt at letting the teacher leaders in this study "teach" me as I try to make meaning out of the research data.

Recall that in Chapter 2, I referred to Seidman's (1991) assertion that meaning is made for both the interviewer and the interviewee in the interaction that takes place between them. The person interviewing is a part of the meaning-making process for the person being interviewed. As a result, it was not only me trying to find meaning in teacher leadership involvement; my participants were doing it for themselves as well.

Marie repeatedly commented that discussing her experiences was meaningful to her. Being able to articulate her experiences was significant in helping her make meaning out of them. I believe that Van Manen's (1990) words describe what happened to Marie when he discussed the importance of formulating the interview question. When I read his comments on the relationship between the research question and meaning making for the person being interviewed, I remembered Marie's comments summarized above. Van Manen wrote,

A phenomenological researcher cannot just write down his or her question at the beginning of the study. There it is! Question mark at the end! No, in his or her phenomenological description the researcher/writer must 'pull' the reader into the question in such a way that the reader cannot help but wonder about the nature of the phenomenon in the way that the human scientist does. (p. 44)

In the same way that I, the researcher, searched for meaning together with the participants in my study, Marie mentioned that she finds meaning jointly with her students. She said,

We find meaning together....We explore things together. (M)

Throughout the interviews, all participants made occasional remarks about how much they enjoyed discussing their experiences, how they were able to think of their role as teacher leaders in new and different ways, and how they realized their teacher leader role had been more significant in their lives than they previously realized. Rose referred several times to her inquiring mind. She said she was always searching for what makes sense to her. "Making sense" is making meaning from an experience. So I believe that as the teacher leaders

discussed their experiences, they were continually trying to make meaning for themselves as well.

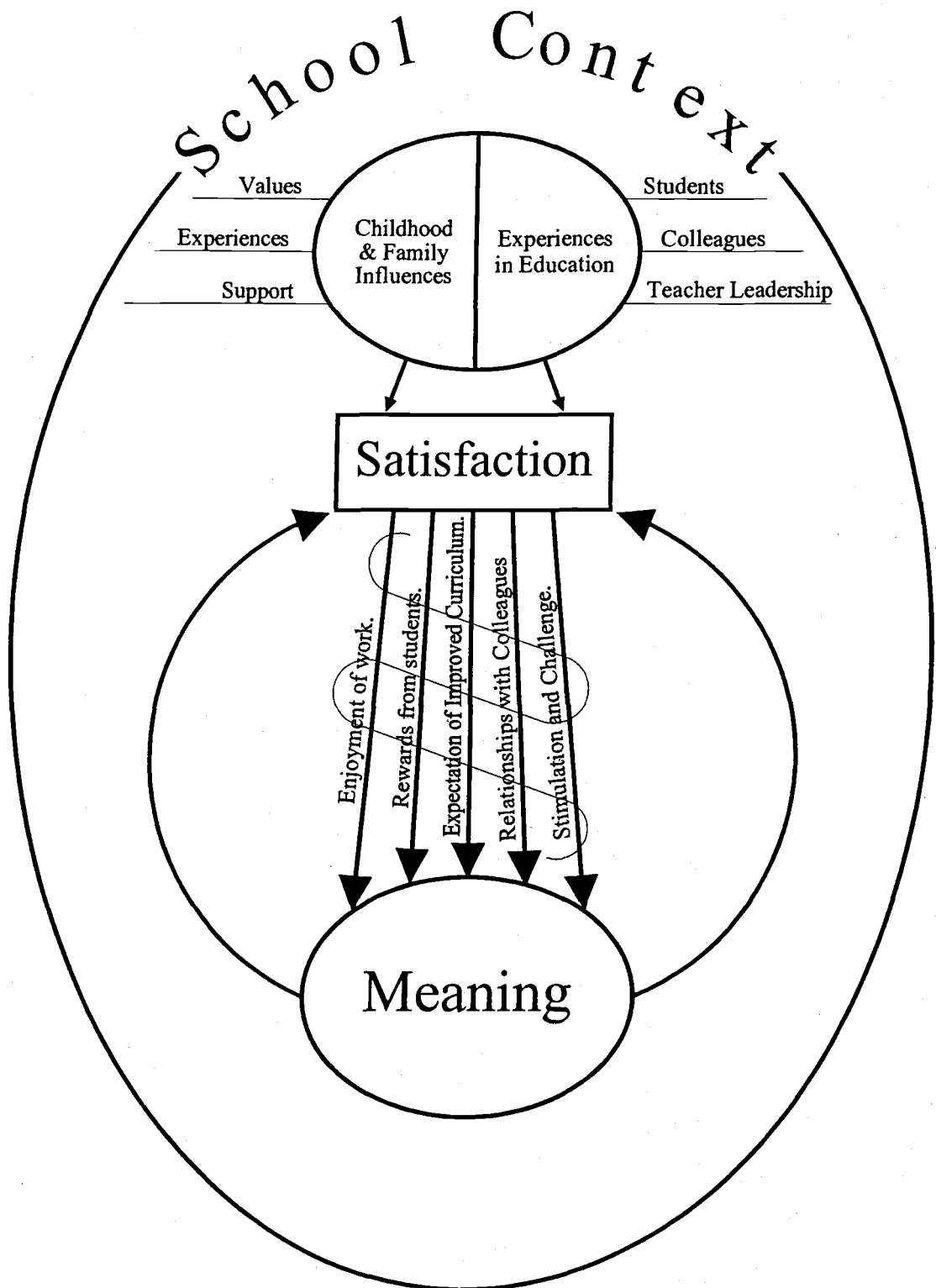
A Circular Experience: The Validating Circle of Inquiry (Van Manen, 1990).

The teacher leaders in this research study found meaning both as a result of their background and previous experiences, as well as the satisfaction and rewards they derived from these experiences. I see it as a circular pattern. They enjoyed their work and found satisfaction in it as a result of their past, but they also enjoyed their work and found satisfaction in it as a result of what they were currently doing and where they were headed in the future. Van Manen (1990) says that "a good phenomenological description is collected by lived experience and recollects lived experience--is validated by lived experience and it validates lived experience." He refers to this as the "validating circle of inquiry" (p. 27).

The figure on the next page, "A Circular Experience," illustrates the validating circle of inquiry that I envision as a result of my data. One theme validates another and together they "make meaning." The main components of the model I created are: childhood and family influences, past experiences in education, one main theme, and five sub-themes. All of the themes are connected to the main theme, the meaning is created by the connections of all the parts, and it is circular in nature. All experiences and meaning are "nested" within a school context that encourages and supports teacher leadership to exist and flourish.

I will describe the model I produced in more detail. The data labeled "Childhood and Family Influences" includes numerous factors that were a part of the

A Circular Experience: The Validating Circle of Inquiry



teacher leaders' childhood and family experiences, such as birth order, education of parents, parental support, a family move, piano lessons, instilled values, etc. These elements seem to have an influence on the teacher leaders' current experiences. In addition, another influence on the current experience and the meaning found in it was the teacher leader's "Experiences in Education." These included experiences with students, colleagues, teacher leader activities, and educational reform. Together, these influences and experiences contributed to the discovery of meaning for the teacher leaders, and to the subsequent themes that follow.

The main theme was: "My involvement satisfies me intellectually, [both] affectively and cognitively." Teacher leaders were satisfied with what they were doing and they received satisfaction from their activities and involvement with teacher leadership. Comments related to satisfaction illustrated how teacher leadership experiences also provided that meaning in their lives.

Participants' articulated comments of satisfaction became the sub-themes. Satisfaction came from the fact that they enjoyed their jobs, especially their students and their colleagues. They also enjoyed writing new curriculum and had the expectation that it could be improved. They received rewards from making a difference with their students and they were comfortable with the changing environment in which they found themselves. In addition, they both needed the stimulation and enjoyed the challenges the job created because that's who they were—there were personality characteristics noted by the teacher leaders in the description of the theme that related to their personal satisfaction. For the teacher leaders in this study, these traits included a positive attitude, openness to change or risk, identification of challenges, possession

of many ideas, and a revelation of a large time involvement with teacher leadership activities.

The five sub-themes are connected to each other with a curved line that runs through all sub-themes. The line represents the overlapping relationship between sub-themes. Many statements made by the teacher leaders in this study could have been placed in one or two of the other sub-themes. The curved line shows the link as well as the integration between sub-themes.

As seen in the figure, the teachers' enjoyment of their teacher leadership activities creates meaning, and meaning in the job results in enjoyment. Similarly, the satisfaction they derived from their teacher leadership activities provided them with meaning, and the meaning in those activities resulted in satisfaction. It went both ways. I believe meaning is found because of a blend between teacher leadership activities and the teacher leaders' personality and style. In addition, the model shows a circular experience in that the premise of each of the themes creates meaning, and in turn, the meaning re-creates the premise of the theme (satisfaction or enjoyment or need). For example, teacher leaders' childhood and family influences and their past experiences in education together influence (increase?) satisfaction in their involvement. The involvement creates enjoyment and satisfaction, which in turn creates meaning, which in turn creates enjoyment and satisfaction, which creates meaning, and on and on. . . .

As I consider again the words of Angie, Rose, Will, and Marie after analyzing them here and with this model, I am struck at how inadequate it is to explain their experience. I could spend many more hours and days attempting to find deeper meaning in their experiences. The circular experience I have described is only a small

portion of their experience as individuals and as a whole. According to Van Manen (1990), some would "insist that phenomenological research is pure description and that interpretation (hermeneutics) falls outside the bounds of phenomenological research.... From such a point of view, the notion of hermeneutics or interpretation already implies the acknowledgment of a distortion" (p. 23-24). In that light, I admit that my interpretation is therefore a distortion.

My hope is that I have justly interpreted the comments of the four teacher leaders in this research study. They represented only themselves during this time and place. If insights can be drawn for the general population of teacher leaders in an educational reform environment, it is an additional benefit to the educational community.

CHAPTER 5

CELEBRATION: SUMMARY and DISCUSSION

Colleges and universities can begin the
work of preparing teachers as leaders
early in teachers' development.
(Moller & Katzenmeyer, 1996, p. 11)

The final chapter contains a summary of each chapter, the implications for educational practice, recommendations for future research, and a brief summary of the intense respect I feel for each of my participants.

Summary of Study

The following section provides a brief summary of each of the five chapters in this research study.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 describes the research questions and discusses the context of the questions. The research questions were: What is it like to be a teacher leader in an educational reform environment? Where do you find meaning in teacher leadership activities and involvement? Four teacher leaders who were currently teaching at the secondary level in an environment of educational reform were interviewed to gain insight into these central questions.

Chapter 2

The literature review in Chapter 2 provided a knowledge base upon which my study was built. Three areas of literature are reviewed in this chapter: a) educational

reform, b) the relationship between teacher leadership and educational reform (leadership, teacher leadership, and teacher leaders in an educational reform environment), and 3) experiences and perceptions of teacher leaders in educational reform environments. This review has been conducted to provide a theoretical and practical context for the study.

Main ideas emerging from the literature review are summarized in Chapter 2.

Highlights of the summary are as follows:

1. Educational reform has called for change and the restructuring of schools in order to enhance student learning. The most common form of school reform is standards-based education, which many states in the United States have adopted (Oregon, the state in which this study took place, is one of those).
2. Educational reform has had an influence on the concept of leadership in schools. Teacher leaders are needed more than ever (Lieberman et al., 1988) and are critical to the advancement of educational reform efforts in schools (Starratt, 1995).
3. Teachers often move into positions of leadership in very informal ways. One of the main reasons for teacher leaders' involvement is to improve the performance of schools by optimizing teaching and learning.
4. Common roles that were played by teacher leaders were collaboration with peers and communication with all members of their school community.
5. There is some evidence to show that for teachers who were satisfied with their jobs, many of them were involved in teacher leadership experiences (LeBlanc & Shelton, 1997). Their involvement served as a positive force in their lives, as

well as the lives of their schools, their colleagues, and their students (Barker, 1998).

6. Of teachers involved in teacher leadership activities, some share common personal and professional characteristics (Vail, 1995).

The literature review was used as a basis for the methodology of this study.

Awareness of previous studies related to the topic of interest, procedure for the collection of data, and number of participants to be used in my study were all influenced by what I read in the literature prior to planning my research study. The review of literature particularly helped to shape the content of the interview questions.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 describes the methodology used in the study. It also includes a discussion of the basis for qualitative research. The focus of that discussion is the emphasis on the "depth of understanding," as described by Rubin and Babbie (1997, p. 26). Because this study examined the inner lives and human experiences of teacher leaders, it took a human science and phenomenological approach (Van Manen, 1990).

The purpose of this study has been to understand where secondary teacher leaders involved in educational reform activities found meaning in their teacher leadership activities. In order to discover this, four teachers with extensive involvement in educational reform and other teacher leadership activities were selected to participate in the study. Their principal and at least one other leader at their school had identified each participant as a teacher leader involved in educational reform activities. The participants completed a survey and stated a willingness to participate in

my research study. The participants in this study were interviewed three times using a model of hermeneutic phenomenology, which is a way to "hear the voice" of another person and discover the meaning that lies behind the words they say.

Chapter 4

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the data gathering and analysis process. Profiles of each of the teacher leaders as participants in the study have been created to provide a context for the statements made by the teacher leaders during the interviews. The major portion of the chapter is devoted to the results of the data gathering and data analysis, which yielded the prominent themes. These themes were extracted from the data and organized into categories. The categories were based on similar concepts, key words, and similar meanings. The themes are described with summary statements, as well as quotes from the interviewees. The richness of the data comes from the statements made by the participants. The interview questions were open-ended and guided the discussion; however, participants were encouraged to pursue topics other than the interview questions when they deemed it important.

The data describing the meaning behind teacher leaders' involvement revealed valuable insight into their lives. One main theme and five sub-themes emerged from the data. The themes raise important considerations for teacher educators and administrators. The main theme indicated that teacher leaders experienced satisfaction in their work, as indicated by this statement:

"My involvement satisfies me intellectually, [both] affectively and cognitively."

The five sub-themes include:

- Enjoyment of work: "I fundamentally enjoy what I do."
- Rewards from students: "The biggest rewards ... come from ... making a difference with my students."
- Expectation for improved curriculum: "I have always enjoyed doing curriculum work."
- Relationships with colleagues: "I have been blessed with marvelous colleagues."
- Stimulation and challenge: "I need the stimulation, and I need the challenge."

Dimensions of each theme were integrated to create a pattern that begins to answer the research question. The following summary of the themes discussed in Chapter 4 includes a brief statement of meaning for the main theme and each sub-theme:

Table 2: Themes with Interpretation of the Theme

THEME	INTERPRETATION of the THEME
<u>Main theme</u> Satisfaction: "My involvement satisfies me intellectually, [both] affectively and cognitively."	The satisfaction included enjoyment of the job and what it entailed, and of working with students and colleagues. The satisfaction resulted in personal rewards and meaning. They also had a vision and were full of ideas for the "next step."
<u>Sub-theme</u> Enjoyment of work: "I fundamentally enjoy what I do."	These teachers were having fun and expressed that they had a great place to work. They liked what they were doing and wanted to keep doing it. They were very involved in many activities and loved it.

<p><u>Sub-theme</u></p> <p>Enjoyment of work: "The biggest rewards ... come from ... making a difference with my students."</p>	<p>Teacher leaders expressed liking their students and having good relationships with them. They were also motivated to plan curriculum and lessons that were best for kids. Oregon CIM, CAM, and PASS labels were not important -- what it did for kids was important. Most felt Oregon's mandates improved teaching and learning and helped students make connections to the real world. Overall, they felt educational reform was good, as long as they capitalized on the good parts and made it benefit students.</p>
<p><u>Sub-theme</u></p> <p>Expectation for improved curriculum: "I have always enjoyed curriculum work."</p>	<p>One of the main activities of the teacher leaders was one of curriculum writing. Much of the curriculum work was related to educational reform efforts. Teacher leaders wrote during the year and in the summer. Sometimes it was formal and initiated by someone else; sometimes it was informal and they wrote curriculum for their own benefit alone. In either case, it had to do with the desire or expectation to improve the curriculum.</p>
<p><u>Sub-theme</u></p> <p>Relationships with colleagues: "I have been blessed with marvelous colleagues."</p>	<p>Teacher leaders liked their colleagues and said they had good relationships with them. They collaborated with them a lot and believed that collaboration was an important role they played.</p>
<p><u>Sub-theme</u></p> <p>Stimulation and challenge: "I need the stimulation and I need the challenge."</p>	<p>Teacher leaders felt the role of teacher leadership "fit" them. The challenge motivated them. They worked many hours, but indicated an attempt to keep a balance in their lives. Change was a frequent pattern. The purpose of change was to make things better. Teachers did not mind taking risks. Some common personal, professional, and workplace characteristics seemed to influence their enjoyment and satisfaction of activities.</p>

Chapter 5

The purpose of this chapter has been to summarize this research study, as well as to present some final thoughts and reflections related to teacher leadership. As a result of conducting this research study, I have developed a philosophy of teacher leadership, articulated the possible implications to come out of my study, and

recommended further research related to the topic. An Epilogue at the end is a way to put closure on what has been the biggest undertaking of my professional career.

Philosophy of Teacher Leadership

Most if not all future teachers write a philosophy of education in their preservice program. After analyzing the results of this study, I have developed a philosophy of teacher leadership. It includes concepts that we have no doubt heard before, but that are now affirmed in my mind. Bringing together several of my core beliefs about teacher leadership will help me and others shape an even more appropriate teacher leadership style in whatever setting we may find ourselves. For example:

1. I believe that past and present personal experiences are the lenses through which all of us make sense of our current involvements. Thus, teacher leadership is partly a result of what we have experienced in the past.
2. I believe that teacher leadership is a result of an active and on-going process that requires energy, commitment, and hard work.
3. I believe that teacher leaders create and construct experiences that provide personal satisfaction and meaning.
4. I believe that teachers experience more satisfaction when they are nurtured as well as challenged--when they are allowed to explore, experiment, and take risks. We learn when we feel good about others and ourselves.
5. I believe those school context influences teacher leaders' satisfaction and meaning of their involvement.

Implications for Practice

This research study contributes to the knowledge base on teacher leadership in an educational reform environment. Significant results of the study have implications for teacher education, administration, staff development, and professionalism.

The results of the study have implications for teacher educators who prepare future teachers, particularly at the secondary level, for leadership roles in an educational reform environment. The findings inform teacher educators of ways to help their students critique current changes or mandates in an educational reform setting by understanding the experience of current teachers who are taking leadership roles in educational reform. Knowing the perspectives of current teachers helps future teachers ask the appropriate questions in relation to their eventual role in similar educational settings, and as they plan strategies that enhance the educational experiences for those who will be their students in the future. Results from the study inform teacher educators of leadership activities that contribute to a meaningful experience for teacher leaders in a restructuring environment. Two activities in particular, curriculum writing and collaboration, are both skills, which can be learned. As a result of understanding where teacher leaders find meaning, teacher educators can encourage these kinds of activities in their preservice courses and programs, so that future teachers feel knowledgeable and confident in this work. In addition, teacher-preparation courses may need to be adapted to prepare future teachers to enter a teaching job in an educational reform environment. This would enable preservice teachers to sense an enthusiasm and confidence when teaching their own students in the classroom. By equipping future teachers with skills and encouraging them to become

involved in leadership activities, teacher educators are enabling their students to experience future satisfaction and enjoyment of their work as a teacher.

Administrators who want to encourage teacher leadership in all of their teachers may understand what motivates and what discourages teachers to become teacher leaders. When hiring future teachers, administrators may also gain a deeper understanding of what thoughts and characteristics describe persons who will be future leaders in their school. These may influence questions when interviewing prospective teachers for work in their school. Some questions may be asked to gain insight into a prospective teacher's personal background or characteristics. Using the areas of curriculum writing and collaboration as examples again, principals may wish to inquire about the teacher candidate's experience, skills, and desire to write curriculum and collaborate with peers.

As a result of this study, administrators and persons planning staff development activities may gain insight into the perceptions of teachers who are leaders in their schools and be more knowledgeable about the needs of their staff in relation to educational reform. When teacher leaders are shown to utilize specific skills frequently, workshops and training opportunities may be held to advance competence in these areas.

This study also has implications for teachers and students who perceive negative change in their educational environment. Perhaps it can be encouraging that others have found satisfaction in their activities by being proactive in their involvement and making desired changes in small ways that benefit the students, which may then have a positive influence on them as well.

It is a common assumption that in order to be professional, a person contributes to their field of work. The teachers in this study contributed to the field of education in small, informal ways. Nevertheless, those contributions were immense in the eyes of their principals and colleagues who identified them for this study. It is because of their small contributions in their immediate setting, that they have demonstrated new meaning to the word "professionalism."

Future Research

This research study opens the doors to many potential studies and further work in the area of teacher leadership. The following prospective research studies could be a direct result of the findings in this study and would make a valuable addition to the research base on teacher leadership:

1. A study of administrator beliefs, style, and actions that motivate or discourage teacher leadership. In this study, I discovered that the context of the school was important. Participants frequently spoke of how students, colleagues, and administrators influenced their satisfaction and therefore the meaning teacher leadership activities had for them. A qualitative study could be completed to explore:
 - a. How administrators view teacher leadership in their schools.
 - b. What teachers consider both motivating and discouraging actions by their principals and administrators.
2. A study of the internal organizational structure in a school building or district to determine how building climate or teaching environment affects a teacher's interest in becoming or continuing teacher leadership involvement. This is

another aspect of the context described above. Part of this study could be qualitative to discover other teachers' and students' perspectives on their school's workplace environment and climate. The study could also include quantitative data on school structure and organization.

3. A quantitative study, using the results of this study, to determine if the characteristics discovered about the teacher leaders in this research would also hold true for other teachers. For example:
 - a. Create and administer a checklist of descriptors found for the teacher leaders in this study. Examples of descriptors could include: risk-taker, positive response to change, positive attitude, first-born, etc.).
 - b. A Likert scale instrument of statements could also be created. Teachers responding to such a survey would indicate on the scale which statements they could make.
4. Administer the checklist or Likert scale described above to a group of preservice teachers to determine if what is true for teacher leaders in this study is also true for current students in their teacher education program.

Other ideas for potential research seek to further explore the same topics and questions from this study by duplicating it with different participants or in different settings. They include the following:

1. A study to duplicate this study with teachers who are identified as exemplary teachers rather than teacher leaders.
2. A study to duplicate this study with formal teacher leaders (rather than informal and voluntary) whose partial job or assignment is to lead. This would include curriculum coordinators, 21st Century Coordinators, school to work coordinators, department chairs, and other titled positions.

3. A study to duplicate this study by expanding it to teacher leaders from the elementary or middle school level. In other words, how is the experience of teacher leaders at the elementary level different from teacher leaders at the secondary level?
4. A study to duplicate or continue the work of this study by expanding it to another state that also has an educational reform agenda.
5. A study to examine the effectiveness of teacher leaders, with the perspective being that of students, administrators, and teachers who have not been identified as leaders. In my study, the participants believed they made a difference in the life of the school, for their students, and for their colleagues. This study would explore the significance of teacher leaders from the point of view of other persons in the school.

Epilogue

This research study was really about passionate teachers' lives. All of the teacher leaders in my study led lives that demonstrated commitment, contentment, learning, and hope. I am honored to have been a researcher with whom they shared their lives for a period of time. To witness their stories is to celebrate and validate teacher leadership at its finest.

Producing images of these teacher leaders on paper was a challenging undertaking. Even though I spent considerable time with them and communicated with them over a period of approximately three to four months, I admit that I saw a very brief "slice" of their life. However, as I spent time with them and then in the analysis

that followed the interviews and e-mail communication, I noticed certain patterns.

Teacher leaders share some common attributes. And even though this research study exemplifies the work of a select group of teacher leaders, it in fact validates and honors the work of *all* teacher leaders. Whether our experience derives from teaching English or History, whether it is delivered in a small school or a large one, and whether it is a teacher's fifth year or thirtieth year of teaching--we can all identify with the moments of satisfaction, struggle, change, risk, and hope that accompanies a teacher leaders' life.

My admiration for the teachers in my study was nurtured by each of them in different ways. I saw compassion when Rose described the death of a student in the previous week and the involvement she had in helping her students create a video of this student's life. I saw pride in Will as he described the state honors his students had received at national leadership conventions. Marie demonstrated humility in her work with "great kids," as well as surprise at being identified as a teacher leader by her administrator and colleagues. Angie demonstrated extreme competence in her ability to create and communicate.

The title of this chapter begins with the word "celebration." So it is that I celebrate what these teacher leaders have contributed to my life, my research study, and to the educational community--students, teachers, parents, administrators, and the local community. It is my hope that the meanings interpreted will at least add a touch of excellence to the field of education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY OF TERMINOLOGY FOR THE OREGON EDUCATIONAL ACT OF THE 21ST CENTURY*

Benchmark: A point of reference from which student achievement may be measured. A benchmark indicates the expectations and requirements at a given point in time. Oregon's benchmarks are at grades 3, 5, 8, 10, and 12.

Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM): Students achieve grade 10 state performance standards through state and local assessments. Phased in over four years, the first CIM was awarded to qualified students in 1998-1999 and will be fully implemented by 2002-2003.

Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM): Students working on a CAM will be prepared for successful transitions to next steps after high school as they demonstrate knowledge and skills related to a broad career path. They will have an opportunity to integrate their learning, connected to their interests, in a career context. Students may achieve a CAM by the year 2004-2005.

Common Curriculum Goals: The same course of study (curriculum) used in all Oregon school districts from kindergarten through grade 12. The Common Curriculum Goals include the academic content standards and essential learning skills.

Content Standards: Required student knowledge and skills. Content standards answer the question, "What must a student know and be able to do?" Content standards have been developed in English, mathematics, science, social science, second languages, and the arts. Physical education content standards will be completed by fall 2001. They are related to the statewide assessment and the CIM.

Endorsement areas: Broad grouping of related careers. They provide a context for academic study and a focus for career-related learning experiences for the CAM. The six endorsement areas identified by the state include Arts and Communications, Business and Management, Health Services, Human Resources, Industrial and Engineering Systems, and Natural Resource Systems. Endorsement areas are also called "strands."

Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century: Sets standards for students to prepare them for the challenges they will face after high school. The goal is to have classroom curriculum, instruction, and assessment work together to help students achieve the expected results. Since the act passed in 1991, teams of teachers and other experts regularly refine the content standards and streamline the material and systems used for statewide assessment. These changes are reflective of the needs of students

and the capacity of schools' understanding built on test findings and frank and vigorous feedback from educators at all levels.

Proficiency-based Admission Standards System (PASS): A point of reference that indicates the expectations and requirements for students entering Oregon's public universities.

Performance Standards: define how well students must perform on classroom assessments and state assessments leading to the Certificate of Initial Mastery. The standards are composed of two elements: the number, type and minimum scores required on classroom assessments; and the minimum scores required on state assessments.

Proficiency for Entry into Programs (PREP): Proficiencies identified by Oregon's community colleges to help students understand what it will take to succeed in the various programs offered.

Site Council: 21st Century Advisory Committees at each school site for the purpose of carrying out a School Improvement Plan (designed to improve instruction and learning for students) and plan staff development opportunities. Site councils are made up of parents, community members, certified staff, classified staff, students, and administrators.

Statewide assessments: Standardized, criterion-referenced state tests in English, mathematics, science, and the social sciences. They contain multiple choice, essay, and mathematics problem-solving questions. There will be no state tests in the arts and second languages.

*Resources for the definitions above came from: Oregon Department of Education (2001a).

APPENDIX B

LETTER: IDENTIFICATION OF PILOT STUDY PARTICIPANTS

December 2, 1999

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Principal
 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx, Asst. Principal
 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx High School
 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Dear xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx:

This letter precedes a telephone call I will make to you in approximately a week to determine if you can help me with my research study. I am in my second year as a doctoral student at Oregon State University and am beginning my dissertation research with Dr. Chris Southers, my major professor. I am particularly interested in teachers in Oregon high schools who have been extensively involved in educational reform efforts since 1991 when the Oregon Legislature passed HB 3565. Many of these teachers have taken leadership in the state mandates before implementation was required.

I am contacting you as principals of a mid-valley high school for suggestions of a teacher on your staff who may qualify for my pilot study. I am looking for a teacher who has been involved in a wide variety of educational reform activities. Although there are many more, some examples of involvement are participation in the following activities:

- Site Council
- Demonstration Site
- Curriculum writing for state-wide dissemination related to one of the six Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM) endorsement areas
- Goals 2000 grant writing
- Goals 2000 school team that implemented a Goals 2000 grant
- School-wide committee(s) related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- District-wide committee(s) related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- State-wide committee or task force related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- State-wide committee or task force related to other educational reform efforts in Oregon
- Design of a CAM program
- Teaching of a class for a CAM program or an introductory course for one or more of the endorsement areas

- Giving presentation(s) to content area peers or school building colleagues
- New Century School

Teachers that you refer will be requested to complete a two-page survey, participate in three interviews, and reflect on their experiences after each interview via e-mail. I would appreciate it if you would identify one or two teachers from xxxxxxxxxxxx who have been the most involved in educational reform efforts, and then provide me with the names of those teachers. For the pilot study, I only wish to interview one teacher from your school, but I will of course need to talk with them to assure their interest in my project. The interviews will most likely take place in January, 2000.

I assure you I will take utmost care to be sensitive to your teacher, their time, and their schedule. As you probably know, I am on a Leave of Absence from xxxxxxxxxxxx High School and know so well the demands placed on teachers. I believe the results of my research will contribute to a body of knowledge that will benefit both current and future teachers, as well as administrators and personnel who plan staff development activities.

In approximately a week, I will call one of you for the names of one or two teachers in your school who you would suggest to participate in my pilot study. I sincerely appreciate your assistance in identifying teachers who have been involved in educational reform activities and I look forward to talking with you next week. If you wish to call me, my phone number at Oregon State University is xxxxxxxxxxxx and at home is xxxxxxxxxxxx.

Sincerely,

Ginny Birky
 Doctoral Student

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

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xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

APPENDIX C

Survey of Potential Participants for Doctoral Research

As stated on the telephone, I am interested in learning more about teachers who have been involved in the educational reform environment in Oregon. To assist in establishing a list of potential participants for my doctoral research study, I would appreciate it if you would complete the survey below. The information you provide will contribute to additional knowledge in the field of education. Specific details of this information will be masked in the final dissertation. Please return the completed survey in the enclosed envelope by (date). Thank you for taking the time to assist me. Ginny Birky

Your name: _____ Phone number _____

High School: _____ E-mail address: _____

1. How many years have you been employed as a teacher? _____ years. Full or part time? _____
2. What is your age? _____
3. If you have children, please list their current ages: _____
4. What degree(s) do you hold? (Include degrees and area) _____
5. What license(s), endorsements, or certifications do you have in the area of education? _____
6. What subjects do you currently teach? Include grade levels. _____
7. If different than the previous question, what subjects have you taught in the past? Include grade levels. _____
8. Below is a partial list of activities for teachers involved in educational reform efforts in Oregon. Indicate the ones in which you have been involved by writing the number of years you have been involved in that activity.

I have participated in the following for the years (or fraction of a year) indicated below:

- _____ Site Council
- _____ Demonstration Site
- _____ Goals 2000 grant writing
- _____ Goals 2000 school team that implemented a Goals 2000 grant
- _____ Curriculum writing for state-wide dissemination related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- _____ School-wide committee(s) related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- _____ District-wide committee(s) related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- _____ State-wide committee(s) related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- _____ State-wide committee or task force related to educational reform in Oregon
- _____ Development of CIM state standards
- _____ State-wide grading of CIM tests (outside of your district)
- _____ Design of national standards or other national projects
- _____ Design of a CAM program
- _____ Teaching of a class for a CAM program or an introductory course for one or more of the endorsement areas
- _____ Giving presentation(s) to school building colleagues or content area peers
- _____ New Century School

List other activities in which you have been involved:

Feel free to use additional paper if needed. Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX D

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANT E-MAIL REFLECTIONS

Thank you again for the time you are giving to my research. As we have discussed, after each interview I would like you to e-mail your reflections to me within a week of our time together. Below are the guidelines of what to include:

1. Reactions to the interview just completed
 - Thoughts on the time, place, and other logistics of the interview
 - Your level of comfort with the process
 - Your level of comfort with the questions
2. Additional information related to the topic discussed in the last interview
 - Further thoughts or an expansion on particular comments you made (that you didn't think of at the time)
 - Clarification of something you said
 - New thoughts to answer the questions
3. Thoughts on experiences you're having since the last interview
 - Example: Today I used a new performance task with my class. The kids reactions to it were..... My reactions were.....
 - Example: Tomorrow people involved with CAM go to an all-day in-service at the district office. I.....

I prefer you cover all three areas above, but feel free to "pick and choose" if your time is limited. The third one would be my preference if you can only respond to one.

Reactions other than those outlined above are also welcome. E-mail them to me at:

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Thanks again.

Ginny Birky

APPENDIX E

Letter: Request from Principal to Identify Teacher Leaders

December 29, 1999

xxxxxxx, Principal
 xxxxxxxxxx High School
 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
 xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Dear Mr. xxxx:

This letter precedes a telephone call I will make to you the first week of January to determine if you can help me with my research study. I am a second-year doctoral student at Oregon State University and am beginning my dissertation research with Dr. Chris Southers, my major professor. I am particularly interested in identifying teachers in Oregon high schools who have been extensively involved in educational reform efforts since 1991 when the Oregon Legislature passed HB 3565. Many of these teachers have taken leadership in the state mandates before implementation was required.

I am contacting you as a principal of a mid-valley high school for suggestions of teachers on your staff who may qualify for my study. I am looking for teachers who have been involved in a wide variety of educational reform activities. Although there are many more, some examples of involvement are participation in the following activities:

- Site Council
- Demonstration Site
- Curriculum writing for state-wide dissemination related to one of the six Certificate of Advanced Mastery (CAM) endorsement areas
- Goals 2000 grant writing
- Goals 2000 school team that implemented a Goals 2000 grant
- School-wide committee(s) related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- District-wide committee(s) related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- State-wide committee or task force related to CIM, CAM, PREP, or PASS
- State-wide committee or task force related to other educational reform efforts in Oregon
- Design of a CAM program
- Teaching of a class for a CAM program or an introductory course for one or more of the endorsement areas

- Giving presentation(s) to content area peers or school building colleagues
- New Century School

Teachers who you refer will be requested to complete a two-page survey to determine the extent of their involvement in educational reform activities. From the returned surveys, I will choose a small group of teachers with broad-based and comprehensive experience in educational reform. These teachers will be invited to be the focus of my study by participating in several in-depth interviews.

I would appreciate it if you would identify those teachers in your school who have been the most involved in educational reform efforts; and then provide me with the names of those teachers. The two-page survey will be mailed in January, 2000 and the interviews will most likely take place from February through April, 2000.

I assure you I will take utmost care to be sensitive to your teachers, their time, and their schedules. I am on a Leave of Absence from an xxxxxx high school and know so well the demands placed on teachers. I believe the results of my research will contribute to a body of knowledge that will benefit both current and future teachers, as well as administrators and personnel who plan staff development activities.

In early January, I will call you for the names of one to three teachers in your school who you would suggest to participate in my study. I sincerely appreciate your assistance in identifying teachers who have been involved in educational reform activities and I look forward to talking with you. If you wish to call me, my phone number at Oregon State University is xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx and at home is xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.

Sincerely,

Ginny Birky

Doctoral Student

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

APPENDIX H

Letter: Request from Identified Teacher Leaders to Complete Survey

May 12, 2000

xxxx,

I am a teacher currently on a Leave of Absence from xxxxxxxxxxxxxx High School and working on my doctoral degree at OSU. You have been suggested by either your principal or a fellow teacher as being a teacher leader at xxxxxx High School. I am wondering if you would be willing to complete a 2-page survey for me to use for my research. To save time, I have enclosed the survey. If you are willing to fill it out, you may send the completed survey in the mail to me with the enclosed self-addressed envelope. If you would like to talk to me about my request, please feel free to contact me either by e-mail or by telephone. From the completed surveys, I will then select several teachers to interview in more depth. At this time, however, I am just asking you to complete the survey, which will take 10-15 minutes of your time.

My research relates to teacher leaders in mid-valley secondary schools in Oregon. I am interested in learning more about teachers who have been and are involved as informal leaders and would appreciate your willingness to participate in my research study. I define a "teacher leader" as one who is perceived as a leader by their peers and/or by the administration. Teacher leaders are those who choose to do additional leadership work outside of their normal teaching load. They may individually implement changes in their classroom that result in other teachers following similar practices, or they may meet collectively with other persons to develop curriculum, plan a parent-teacher conference, or make decisions related to the school. Sometimes these leadership opportunities are a result of a choice on the part of the teacher, but at other times teacher leadership is a result of a request or suggestion made by peers or administrators. Generally, teacher leaders are visible to others, influence individuals and groups within their school, and help other teachers in the establishment and achievement of their goals.

The information you provide will contribute to additional knowledge in the field of education. Specific details of this information will be masked in the final dissertation.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me. I value your perspective and hope to hear from you soon. Thank you very much.

Ginny Birky

APPENDIX I

Letter: Request for Potential Teacher Leaders to be Participants in Research Study

May 17, 2000

Dear Teacher Leader,

As stated on the telephone or by e-mail, you have been identified as a teacher leader in your school. I am interested in learning more about teachers who have been and are involved as leaders and appreciate your willingness to participate in my research study.

I define a "teacher leader" as one who is perceived as a leader by their peers and/or by the administration. Teacher leaders are usually full-time classroom teachers who choose to do additional leadership work outside of their normal teaching load. They may individually implement changes in their classroom that result in other teachers following similar practices, or they may meet collectively with other persons to develop curriculum, plan a parent-teacher conference, or make decisions related to the school. Sometimes these leadership opportunities are a result of a choice on the part of the teacher, but at other times teacher leadership is a result of a request or suggestion made by peers or administrators. Generally, teacher leaders are visible to others, influence individuals and groups within their school, and help other teachers in the establishment and achievement of their goals.

To assist in establishing a list of potential participants for my doctoral research study, I would appreciate it if you would complete the enclosed or attached two-page survey. The information you provide will contribute to additional knowledge in the field of education. Specific details of this information will be masked in the final dissertation. Please return the completed survey electronically or in the enclosed envelope within a few days. Thank you for taking the time to assist me.

Ginny Birky

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

APPENDIX J

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

- A. **Title of the Research Project.** Teacher Leaders in Educational Reform: Finding Meaning in their Work
- B. **Investigators.**
Chris Southers, PhD, Principal Investigator, School of Education
Virginia D. Birky, Doctoral Candidate in the School of Education
- C. **Purpose of the Research Project.** The purpose of this project is to understand the perspectives of those teachers who have been involved as teacher leaders within the environment of educational reform in Oregon. Participants will contribute information which will be a part of a research study through the university. Information gained will contribute to the knowledge base for teachers, teacher educators, and school administrators who plan professional development for current and future teachers.
- D. **Procedures.** I understand that as a participant in this study the following things will happen:
1. **Pre-study Screening.** In order to assure that the teachers selected to participate in this study have been extensively involved as a teacher leader, a list of criteria was developed and included on a survey mailed to me and other potential participants. The surveys, which also contained demographic data, were completed and returned by mail to the researcher. Using the criteria examples to determine extent of involvement, participants were selected according to those with the most extensive, broad-based and comprehensive involvement. Examples of the criteria included participation in:
 - Site Council
 - School-wide committee(s)
 - District-wide committee(s)
 - State-wide committee(s) or task force
 - Curriculum writing for state-wide dissemination
 - Grant writing
 - Goals 2000 school team that implemented a Goals 2000 grant
 - Giving presentation(s) to content area peers or school building colleagues
 - Serving as a school representative to attend a conference
 - Design of national standards or other national projects.

Because a limited number of participants can be interviewed, potential candidates who meet the criteria may or may not be asked to participate.

2. **What participants will do during the study.** I understand that I will:
 - Respond to interview questions with the researcher three different times for 1 to 1½ hours each time.
 - Send to the researcher via e-mail my reflections based on previous interviews as well as classroom experiences and other activities that relate to teacher leadership.
 - Read through the completed text to review, respond, and verify the accuracy of the transcription or the “meaning” I attached to those comments.

 3. **Foreseeable risks or discomforts.** For this study, there may be few if any risks or discomforts. However, being alert to possible negative feelings is beneficial before beginning the process. As a participant being interviewed, I understand that I may feel uncomfortable talking about my personal experiences related to teacher leadership or educational reform. I may especially hesitate to share negative thoughts and perceptions about my own school, administrators, and peers. It is possible I might begin to question my contributions to students or my school, sensing feelings of inadequacy in my personal involvement. It is also possible I will not “connect” with the researcher and find it difficult to spend three to four hours with her.

 4. **Benefits to be expected from the research.** As a participant in this research study, I will have an opportunity to contribute information that will benefit the field of education, specifically teacher education and staff development. The results gained will contribute to the improvement of both pre-service and in-service education. As a teacher, I will have a chance to reflect on my own experiences as a teacher leader and on my personal involvement in an educational reform environment.

 5. **Alternative procedures of course of treatment.** N/A
- E. **Confidentiality.** I understand that before being interviewed, I will be given an opportunity to read the expectations and ask questions of the process. I will have an opportunity to read and sign this “Informed Consent Document.” A variety of cautions will be taken to make me comfortable with the interview process and outcomes. A private location will be used for the interview, such as my classroom or another appropriate place. While my comments will be tape recorded, only the researcher, her major professor, and the transcriber will know my identity. As soon as the data is confidentially transcribed, tapes will

be separated from names and destroyed. In the writing of the dissertation, my name and the name of my school will be changed to protect my privacy.

F. **Compensation for Injury.** N/A

G. **Voluntary Participation Statement.** I understand that my participation in this study is completely voluntary, and that I may either choose to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. After reading this Informed Consent Document, I will be required to sign my name if I wish to participate.

H. **If You Have Questions.** I understand that any questions I have about the research study and/or specific procedures should be directed to the researcher at one of the following addresses:

Education Hall 415
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR 97331-3502
541-737-4190

birky@integrityonline.com
541-928-6415

If I have questions about my rights as a research subject, I should contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Coordinator, OSU Research Office, (541) 737-8008.

My signature below indicates that I have read and understand the procedures described above and give my informed and voluntary consent to participate in this study. I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form.

(Signature of participant)

(Name of participant)

(Date signed)

(Participant's address)

(Participant's phone number)

(Signature of Principal Investigator)

(Date signed)

SUPPLEMENT

Application for approval of the OSU Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects

1. *A brief description of the significance of this project in lay terms.*

The proposed research study will contribute to the knowledge base on teacher leadership in an educational reform environment. It is intended to help current and future teachers identify their perspectives related to their work as teacher leaders in an environment of educational reform. Results of this study will have implications for staff development and professionalism. They will also have implications for teacher educators who prepare future teachers for leadership roles in an education reform environment. The findings will inform teacher educators of ways to help their students critique current changes or mandates in an educational reform setting.

2. *A description of the methods and procedures to be used during this research project. Outline the sequence of events involving human subjects.*

Participants will take part in three in-depth interviews during the course of two months. In addition, participants will be invited to reflect on: a) their experiences during their interviews and b) their experiences in the classroom which relate to the topic of teacher leadership. The suggested format for this reflection is by e-mail. The sequence of events is as follows:

- a. Researcher identifies two teachers for pilot study and interviews them.
- b. Researcher contacts high school principals, Oregon Education Association building representatives, and Site Council chairpersons for the names of teachers who are teacher leaders in their schools.
- c. Researcher contacts the teachers whose names have been suggested.
- d. Researcher sends to identified teachers a survey of demographic data and level of involvement as teacher leader.
- e. Based on survey results, researcher selects four teachers to be participants.
- f. Selected participants are interviewed for 1 to 1 ½ hours.
- g. Participants send researcher, via e-mail, their reflections based on the interview as well as classroom experience.
- h. Participants are interviewed for a second time for 1 to 1 ½ hours.
- i. Participants again send researcher, via e-mail, their reflections based on the interview as well as classroom experience.
- j. Participants are interviewed for a third time.
- k. Participants again send the researcher, via e-mail, their reflections based on the interview as well as classroom experience.

1. Participants review, respond, and verify the accuracy of the transcription or the "meaning" they attached to those comments.
 - m. If requested, participants will be given a summary of the research study.
3. *A description of the benefits (if any) and/or risks to the subject involved in this research.*

Potential Benefits. Participants will have an opportunity to:

1. Provide data for a research study which contributes to the field
2. Reflect on their own experiences related to teacher leadership. Being interviewed will provide an audience for participants to tell their story.
3. Gain a sense of accomplishment and pride in their previous work.
4. Be recognized by their principal for their involvement as a teacher leader.

Potential Risks. Participants may:

1. Experience intimidation by researcher (positional power).
 2. Feel uneasy about sharing negative experiences.
 3. Begin questioning the value of their contributions to students, their school, and state efforts related to educational reform.
4. *A description of the subject population, including number of subjects, subject characteristics, and method of selection. Include any advertising, if used, to solicit subjects. Justification is required if the subject population is restricted to one gender or ethnic group.*

Participants for this study will be four Oregon high school teachers who have been identified as leaders in their school. They will be selected after the researcher contacts high school principals, OEA building representatives, and Site Council chairpersons to gather a list of names of teachers who meet the established criteria. The teachers may be from any subject-matter area, size of city or town, size of school, ethnic origin, gender, etc. Teachers will be mailed a survey to provide demographic data and indicate their level of involvement in teacher leadership. From the returned surveys, four teachers will be selected to participate in the study.

5. *A copy of the informed consent document. The informed consent document must include the pertinent items from the "Basic Elements of Informed Consent" and must be in lay language.*

A copy of the informed consent document is attached.

6. *A description of the methods by which informed consent will be obtained.*

Participants in this study will receive the "Informed Consent Document" prior to being interviewed.

7. *A description of the method by which anonymity or confidentiality of the subjects will be maintained.*

Participants being interviewed will be given an opportunity to read the "Informed Consent Document" and ask questions of the process prior to signing the document. A variety of precautions will be taken to make the participants comfortable with the interview process and outcomes. A private location will be used for the interview, possibly the teacher's classroom. While participants' comments will be tape recorded, only the researcher, her major professor, and the transcriber will know the identity of the participant. As soon as the data is confidentially transcribed, tapes will be separated from names and destroyed. In the writing of the dissertation, the names of persons and the schools will be changed to protect the participant's privacy.

8. *A copy of any questionnaire, survey, testing instrument, etc. (if any) to be used in this project.*

The only instrument to be used for this project is a survey for potential participants which covers demographic information and a description of their general involvement as teacher leaders. The basis for participant selection will be determined from participants' extent of teacher leadership involvement indicated as criteria examples on the "Informed Consent Document" and the survey. A copy of the survey is attached (See pages 8-9).

A protocol of questions for the interviews is attached (See page 10). These will be used only as guidelines and will be adapted to the participants' previous answers.

9. *Information regarding any other approvals which have been or will be obtained (e.g., school districts, hospitals, cooperating institutions.)*

N/A

APPENDIX K

CATEGORIES AND TOPICS IDENTIFIED FROM DATA

Childhood

- Activities
- Circumstances
- Education
 - College
 - Elementary
 - Middle/High School
- Messages
- Other
- Parents/Family/Home life

Other

- Opinions
- Participant in study
- Participant's future
- Teaching major

Personal Characteristics

- Approach to work
- Attitude
- Care about what people think
- Challenges/problems
- Change
- Communication skills
- Confidence
- Conflict/harmony
- Drive/competitive nature
- Energy
- Excellence
- Goal-oriented & vision
- Human rel./communic. skill
- Ideas
- Intelligence/ability to learn
- Lifelong learner
- Management
- Organization-structure/random
- Other
- Relationships
- Resilience
- Risks
- Satisfaction/rewards
- Self-image

Social life

- Values
- Viewed as a leader
- Work (amount and kind)

Personal life

- Leisure

Professional life

- Administrators
- Born or made?
 - Opinion
 - Self-evaluation
- Colleagues
- Daily routine
- Educational reform
 - Activities/involvement
 - Discourages (what)
 - Motivates/encourages
 - Opinion
- Job satisfaction
- Meaning
- Opinion – misc.
- Other
- Relationships
- School environment
- Teacher leadership
 - Activities/involvement
 - Curriculum
 - Department
 - Presentations
 - Site Council
 - Style
 - Discourages
 - Motivates/encourages
 - Opinion
- Teaching/work with students
 - Classroom activities
 - Concern for students
 - Teaching style
- Team - member of
- Time spent