A Narrative Exploration of Leader Perceptions and Experiences in Heritage Language Schools in the British Isles.

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Dedication.

For my father.

Abstract

Heritage language schools, also referred to as complementary or supplementary schools, offer cultural and linguistic education outside the mainstream system and play a crucial role in supporting the UK's increasingly diverse communities. Despite their contributions, these schools and their leaders remain underrepresented in educational research and policy discourse. In an era of globalisation, where multilingualism and intercultural competence are increasingly valued, national strategies for English as an Additional Language (EAL) provision remain limited, reflecting broader patterns of linguistic and cultural marginalisation.

This study presents a narrative inquiry into leadership within heritage language schools in the British Isles, addressing a significant gap in the literature. Drawing on semi-structured narrative interviews with twelve school leaders (seven Chinese, three Greek, one Italian, and one Czech), the research explores how perceptions, personal values and lived experiences shape professional identities and leadership practices.

The study investigates three central research questions:

1. How do twelve heritage leaders perceive their values and professional identities, and how have these shaped their leadership practice?

2. How do they perceive their school's context and culture, and how has this influenced their leadership practice?

3. What are each leader's perceptions and experiences of leadership learning, and what are their developmental needs?

To enrich the qualitative data, participants completed the Schwartz Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ), offering deeper insight into their motivational value systems. The integration of the PVQ results with narrative data revealed how leaders' values and school contexts inform their leadership approaches.

Findings indicate that heritage school leaders navigate complex challenges through collaborative and community-oriented practices. Key developmental needs and implications include access to continuing professional development (CPD), clearer guidance on educational policy, financial and legal frameworks, human resource management, and strategies for community engagement. The study highlights the value of culturally responsive communities of practice (COPs) and regular forums to foster mentoring and collaboration between heritage and mainstream education sectors. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of leadership in heritage language schools and the importance of supporting these vital educational spaces.

List of Abbreviations

International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP).

Values-based leadership (VBL)

The National Centre for Language and Literacy (NCLL)

China Scholarship Council (CSC)

International Study and Language Institute (ISLI: Reading University)

The Centre for Literacy and Multilingualism (CeLM)

The Association for Language Learning (ALL)

University College London (UCL) BiLingo

Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.)

Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ)

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Department for Education (DfE)

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education (NRCSE)

General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE)

Heritage Language (HL)

International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP)

British Educational Leadership Management and Administrative Society (BELMAS)

Fundamental British Values (FBV)

Self-directed learning (SDL) and Self-Directed Professional Development (SDPD)

More Knowledgeable Other (MKO)

Professional Development Programmes (PD)

Personal Practical Knowledge (PPK)

Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK)

English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

UK Federation of Chinese Schools (UKFCS)

Cyprus Educational Mission (KEA)

Social Identity Model of Identity Change (SIMIC)

Ethnic and Racial Identity (ERI)

Competing Values Framework (CVF)

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

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Contents

Chapter One.

1.1. Thesis Introduction.

This chapter is an introduction to this qualitative study exploring the perceptions and practices of heritage school leadership within twelve heritage schools in Britain, an area of study that has been relatively under-researched (Thorpe et al., 2018).

Kempster (2009) suggests that understanding effective leadership involves investigating leaders' practices and learning approaches drawn from their perceptions and life experiences. While the schools are immensely important to the UK's multicultural youth, social cohesion, and education (Cruickshank et al., 2023), little is known about those who establish and lead heritage schools (Arthur & Souza, 2020). Through a life story approach, I will comprehensively capture the subtle, unspoken experiential factors that shape heritage leadership learning and practice, responding to Kempster's (2006) observation that 'in-depth contextually based examination' is needed to apprehend lesser-known aspects of leadership (Kempster, 2006, p.6).

To establish a foundation for the study, Chapter One presents an overview of what is known about the schools, providing a context for the research aims. As a result, this chapter offers insights into the impact of heritage school leadership that extends beyond local communities to national and global contexts (Cruickshank et al., 2023; Schulze & Brooke, 2020; Steenwegan et al., 2022), indicating their importance. A brief outline of the research questions, conceptual framework, and methodology is then presented, followed by a discussion of the study's relevance. The origin of the thesis is laid out to clarify how the study links to the researcher's professional experience and personal perspectives before the thesis overview and conclusion are given.

1.2. Outlining the Problem.

1.2.1. Heritage Schools.

Complementary, Supplementary, Weekend, Saturday, and Heritage Language (HL) schools mainly operate at weekends to serve heritage learners by filling educational gaps outside mainstream education (Francis et al., 2010; Nwulu, 2015). The term complementary has been applied as the education offered enriches students' knowledge of heritage language and culture, often offering GCSEs or A-level exams in the heritage language (Francis et al., 2010; Ganassin, 2020; Li, 2006; Nwulu, 2015). The schools have also been termed supplementary as they reinforce the mainstream by teaching history, culture, language and sometimes religion (Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Ganassin, 2020; Issa & Williams, 2009). Supplementary schools play a vital role in supporting students who struggle within the UK national curriculum (Creese et al., 2006). For example, African Caribbean supplementary schools emerged due to dissatisfaction with mainstream British education and racial inequality (Maylor, 2020). The schools provide homework support and tutoring to strengthen academic performance and foster social, cultural, and political identities (Baldridge et al., 2017). As a result, supplementary students often perform well compared to their English-first-language peers. In a report to the British Academy, Woll (2019) has shown how language learning impacts other school curriculum subjects, such as the core subjects of Maths, English, and Science. Regardless of the differing terms, the schools bridge educational gaps, preserve cultural identity, and offer essential support to students who face challenges in mainstream education (Francis et al., 2010; Nwulu, 2015). In this study, due to existing literature, occasional reference may be made to complementary or supplementary schools. However, the term heritage is used herein as it implies the overarching aim of allowing students to connect with their cultural heritage and languages.

According to the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education (NRCSE), in 2018, there were an estimated 3000 to 5000 such schools in the UK (Evans &Thomas, 2015). The need for such schools is clear when we consider that from 2019 to 2020, there were a reported 1.7 million students who spoke English as an Additional Language (EAL) (Office for National Statistics, 2020). Further data indicating linguistic diversity was gathered in 2020 by the DfE's school census. This disclosed a classification of 17% EAL pupils in secondary schools, while in primary schools, the EAL classification figure rose to 21%. In 2021, according to the government's Ethnicity Facts and Figures website, ethnic minorities accounted for 18 % of the UK population, and this figure has been and is constantly increasing (Ethnicity Facts and Figures Service, 2021).

The schools are crucial for British communities for many reasons. Acknowledging the need for language skills development within the UK, the British Academy published a report in 2013 recognising that 'not enough was done to encourage or develop the skills of native or heritage speakers at the school level' (Chen & Breivik, 2013, p. 10). Since then, dwindling attention given to language policies in education has further propelled those within communities to act alone (Lamb, 2020) and establish even more heritage schools.

Although little attention has been given to understanding the management and leadership in heritage schools in the UK (Arthur & Souza, 2020; Thorpe & Karamanidou, 2024; Thorpe, 2011; Thorpe et al., 2018), research has revealed the numerous challenges leaders encounter, specific to individual schools. Many schools, often established by migrant or minority groups, face manifold challenges due to limited resources despite their efforts to teach language, culture, and religion alongside and frequently in the consolidation of state school education. Thus, heritage school stability and development are held back (Thorpe et al., 2018). Previous studies have primarily focused on pupils, staff, and community language and cultural needs rather than on what led leaders to take up the role (Mau et al., 2009; Maylor,

2010; Thorpe et al., 2018). What is clear is that effective management and leadership are crucial for the survival of these schools and require committed, dedicated leadership, given that most leaders operate with little if any financial reward (Evans & Gillian Thomas, 2015; Li, 2006; Thorpe et al., 2018).

1.2.2. Heritage School Leadership.

Research carried out by Thorpe (2011) on Chinese and Brazilian (2020) school leadership (Arthur & Souza, 2020) indicated how many leaders assumed their positions voluntarily, feeling inadequate and unprepared, but understanding that if they declined the role, the school may not survive. Many schools rely on parental financial contributions and teaching volunteers (Souza & Arthur, 2023), and yet resources for training or continual professional development (CPD) are limited if they do exist at all (Nwulu, 2015). Leaders also receive minimal remuneration, if any (Evans & Gillian-Thomas, 2015; Li, 2006), to carry out a position replete with challenges, such as having to ensure financial stability when faced with a lack of resources, such as premises for classes or training. Many of the schools aim to set up as charities, depending on financial contributions, meagre support through community organisations, charities, and religious groups (Thorpe et al., 2018). Of those that have managed to set up charitable status, many more are unable to navigate the administration to process gift aid or alternative tax relief as do other state educational institutions (Vassie, 2016). Donations and volunteering are not dependable and often not enough to cover running costs, which also include teaching resources and accreditation (Evans & Gillian Thomas, 2015; Li, 2006; Thorpe et al., 2018). Furthermore, many local authorities and mainstream schools seemingly disregard heritage educational contribution, considering the teaching of minority languages beyond the remit of state responsibility, with emphasis only given in their

schools (if at all) to modern foreign languages such as French and German (Blackledge & Creese, 2010). Research carried out in Northern Ireland (Jones et al., 2017) found that:

'….not all school principals and teachers see additional language learning as a key priority, given its absence as a statutory element of the Northern Ireland Curriculum.' (Jones et al., 2017, p. 3).

Yet, research has highlighted the cognitive, social, and functional benefits of incorporating new bilingual pupil additions into multilingual classrooms. This approach contrasts sharply with the misconception that speaking a community language is a barrier to the acquisition of the host language. Unfortunately, not all British state school leaders understand community languages as a positive resource (Garcia & Wei, 2014). This is relevant to this study as it is of interest to note the circumstances that help establish and support collaborative approaches in education. Leadership learning often involves apprenticeship or learning through collaboration (Channing, 2020), which also requires an understanding of the surrounding norms and culture. This is explored next.

1.2.3. Heritage Leadership Collaboration (and Cross-Cultural Understanding).

Previous research has shown that many heritage leaders have fragile relations with local mainstream schools if relations have in fact been established (Evans & Gillian-Thomas, 2015; Nwulu, 2015; Ramalingam & Griffith, 2015). This is because heritage school leaders often rely on collaboration with local mainstream educational leaders to secure support in the form of Saturday premises for classes. Indeed, Thorpe et al. (2018) recommend that mainstream leaders increase their engagement with local communities through the formation of heritage partnerships, also relevant here. This would appear to be a fundamental principle, especially when studies have revealed how heritage schooling has raised educational

mainstream pupil achievement (Martin et al., 2006). Heritage and mainstream leader cooperation can be hampered if either leader lacks the strategies needed for successful cross-cultural collaboration. In most cases, heritage school leaders and most stakeholders do not share the culture of the host nation. Thus, to establish relations, the heritage school's survival relies on its leader having and applying cross-cultural understanding (Epstein et al., 2018). This implies that the heritage leader must have the capacity and volition to observe and learn from the host culture or educational environment. It also implies that the state school head must be open and receptive to welcoming collaboration. This would suggest that the heritage leader relies upon invitation into an educational community of practice (COP) wherein they can observe and learn the educational expectations and protocol of the host nation. While this may not be within the experiences of the leaders in this study, it will be of interest to note if it is referenced.

1.2.4 Heritage Leadership Purpose.

Collaboration is also needed within the school. As heritage language teachers contribute with little or scant remuneration, heritage leaders must inspire through their own commitment and dedication. This is a daunting role that appears to demand unambiguous purpose. To explore purpose, Steenwegan et al. (2023) conducted a systematic study to investigate heritage school initiators' perspectives. The study offered insight into the underlying motives and the complex diversity of purposes that heritage leaders and initiators in Flanders expressed that had previously been less comprehensively disclosed. They found, as outlined earlier here, heritage initiator aims encompass supporting students' state school education (Maylor et al., 2013) along with provision to preserve heritage students' heritage language learning and culture (Creece et al., 2006; Francis et al., 2009). Additionally, heritage schools provide opportunity for certification in the heritage language (Francis et al., 2009), are spaces free of

stigmatism and racial exclusion (Lamb, 2020) and promote pride in the ethnocultural identity and heritage (Szczepek Reed et al., 2020). However, the authors' work not only offered greater insight into initiators' purposes, it also revealed the founding motives that propel many leaders' personal investment. Many schools are set up through a much more profound understanding of the educational and social needs heritage youth confront often arising from the leader's personal experience of exclusion or racism. Demographics in every nation have evolved, leading to cultural and ethnic diversity (Szczepek Reed et al., 2020). Yet leaders in Flanders felt compelled to build an understanding of values and norms whilst supporting heritage youth to successfully integrate into the host society, thus increasing their intercultural competence. Leader mission was expressed not in terms of resistance to inequality but rather on building a more cohesive and accepting community through socialisation. Leaders expressed aspirations to dispel concepts of inferiority or negative stereotypes related to the heritage culture, and instead increase a sense of pride in multiculturism, intercultural competence and multilingualism (Steenwegan et al., 2023). Where the terms complementary and supplementary may have been comprehended as inferring a lack or need to replace, these leaders stressed how their purpose and motives were to complement the mainstream by reinforcing what pupils learned there. Furthermore, through partnership and collaboration with mainstream education, many leaders perceived their heritage provision as an asset. They considered their schools a reinforcement that helped build social cohesion and a more comprehensive and inclusive educational system and experience for children from multicultural backgrounds (Steenwegan et al., 2023).

1.2.5. Problem Statement.

Heritage schools in the UK have been shown to be instrumental in addressing the diverse needs of Britain's multicultural youth (Cruickshank et al., 2023). They play a fundamental

role in safeguarding linguistic and cultural heritage, enhancing social unity, and cultivating a sense of global citizenship (Cruickshank et al., 2023), and yet little is known about the experiences and perceptions of those who lead these schools (Thorpe et al., 2018). Thorpe (2024) highlights that, even within the realm of educational leadership, there has been little research conducted despite the significant contributions of heritage schools and their leadership to education and multiculturalism. Therefore, this study responds to Thorpe's (2024) call for more research in this area and looks to examine what led UK-based heritage leaders to take up their roles: their aspirations and perceptions, and the experiences which have influenced this process.

1.3. Research Rationale: Aims and Questions.

For Schulze and Brookes (2020), disregard for the value of heritage schooling is not limited to state school leadership in local communities. Commenting on the challenges of leading and managing German heritage schools in the UK, they outline:

> '…. the contributions to language competency, intercultural awareness, and inclusion that community language schools already make to society are barely acknowledged by national governments, local authorities, and mainstream schools. It disappoints us that substantial learning and teaching resources are rarely exploited by mainstream schools for the benefit of the wider public.'

Schulze and Brookes (2020, p. 168).

The authors make clear the need for commitment from the UK government to recognise the contribution made by heritage schools, and they call for:

> '…...provision of support to sustain and expand the contributions the schools make to society, similar to that provided in Sweden and parts of Australia.'

(Schulze & Brookes, 2020, p. 168).

Their work indicates that not enough is known about UK heritage school leaders and how best to sustain and support heritage leadership. Therefore, this study sets out to answer three research questions:

1. How do twelve heritage leaders perceive their values and professional identities, and how have these shaped their leadership practice?

2. How do they perceive their school's context and culture, and how has this influenced their leadership practice?

3. What are each leader's perceptions and experiences of leadership learning, and what are their developmental needs?

Through a tripartite conceptual framework that examines each of these questions in turn, the study reveals how heritage leadership has been perceived and experienced. Before the semi-structured interview, each leader was sent a timeline and asked to note down people and events or turning points for reference in the interview. They were also sent the Schwartz (2016) Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ 21), which they were requested to return before their interview. This indirectly prompted them to think about their values and motivations. This semi-structured technique, supported by prepared questions, a timeline, and the PVQ, allowed the interviewee to relate their perceptions of how their leadership has evolved. Specifically, educational leader' perceptions of their identity and values were examined to help establish who or what had contributed to their development and practice before examination of other factors such as context, culture, and leadership learning.

1.4. Conceptual Framework.

This study examined leadership perceptions through three conceptual components to reveal how heritage leadership has been shaped. The study aimed to unearth the objectives and

incentives that drive these leaders, whose purpose seems to transcend economic benefits, given that both staff and leaders frequently operate voluntarily (Thorpe et al., 2018). The first component of the conceptual framework examines educational leader identity and values to help establish perceptions that may have shaped leadership development. As many heritage leaders do not take up their positions through conventional educational means (Thorpe, 2018), their identity formation, in particular their professional identity, may have required re-conceptualisation and change forged from their unique social and professional experiences (Johnson, 2004). Through their individual stories, the study aims to disclose leaders' perceptions of their values and what may have contributed to or helped create their leadership identity.

Secondly, the study examined how each leader has perceived the context and culture surrounding and impacting their leadership practice. It reveals how their perceptions of context have helped shape and build a sustainable practice and effective school culture. Lastly, this study examined those factors that have influenced the nature of the leadership learning each has accrued in their career trajectory. For many, their learning is mostly experiential with limited formal CPD. However, little is known as to what this might have entailed. Examining what the head teachers themselves deem significant offers relevant information relating to professional progress and possible future developmental needs. Such information may benefit those who wish to learn from established leaders in heritage education. More specifically, increased insight into the perceptions, motivations, aims, and challenges confronted by heritage leaders may prompt greater appreciation and collaboration, and elicit a re-conceptualisation of how local and national government can offer support and why. Strategies must be applied to ensure greater inclusivity of community language learning and heritage leadership (Schulze & Brookes, 2020).

1.5. Methodology, Ontology and Epistemology.

This qualitative interpretivist study aims to comprehend social phenomena by capturing individuals' perceptions and interpretations as opposed to offering explanations or shared truths. The focus is on understanding how people make sense of their social worlds through their lived experiences (Ernest, 1994). This is an inquiry into various lives and will manifest those particular lives, their experiences and reflections built within their social and cultural contexts (Clandinin, 2019). Interpretation inevitably involves researcher subjectivity, perspectives, beliefs, and attitudes. The conceptual framework alone reflects the researcher's view of exploring and discovering the 'study of being' (Crotty, 2003) and aims to disclose 'what is there that can be known' (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p. 108).

The ontological view is not definitive or generalisable across groups but relates only to the research participants and their subjective experiences (Turner & Mavin, 2008). As the inquiry examines diverse lives according to individual leaders' specific social and cultural contexts, an interpretive narrative approach was required. Life narratives provide profound access into individuals' lived experiences, self-perceptions, and personal journeys, offering invaluable insights into their identities, beliefs, and meaning-making processes, and here specifically, their beliefs relating to leadership (Shamir & Eilam, 2005). Narratives serve as the medium through which individuals imbue their lives with meaning, making narrative inquiry essential for understanding human behaviour, experiences, processes, and practice. However, this also implies subjectivity both in the stories selected by the interviewee as well as what the researcher draws attention to. This means researcher positioning must be outlined, and this is provided in Chapter 3, Section 3.4.2.1.

1.6. Contribution to Knowledge.

Being multilingual not only benefits an individual personally and professionally, it also enriches a country economically and socially. Multilingualism empowers international organisations to collaborate in seeking solutions to global issues related to the environment, climate, sustainability, and health (Stein-Smith, 2021). These are fundamental 21st-century issues (Aubakirova et al., 2019). Those who are bilingual and multilingual have been shown to exercise greater flexibility and creativity, being able to communicate with greater clarity and cultural sensitivity to a diverse audience and hence are more widely sought by employers (Garcia, 2010). Our economy is dependent on successful trade links in overseas and world markets, and yet in 2013, a British Council report stated that Britain had 'fallen behind by not devoting sufficient time, resources and effort to language learning' (Council, 2013, p. 19). Furthermore, the report warned that the resulting deficit would ultimately lead to huge losses in trade and world standing. While the importance of multilingualism is not only intensely debated around the world, globalisation and expanding migration have also led to an increased change in language education development (Yadev, 2022). Multilingualism is one of the main areas of attention in education (Aubakirova et al., 2019) as our globalised and interconnected societies worldwide demand 21st-century skills that include the ability to understand and communicate effectively. The ability to communicate in another language enables a greater depth of understanding of that culture (Okal, 2014; Philipsen, 1992). Being able to speak many languages enables communication across borders, indicative of the values of an interculturally competent global citizen (Stein-Smith, 2021). This implies that every opportunity to support multilingualism should be established within the UK. Thus, this study not only contributes to research. This study makes explicit the importance of multilingualism and sets out to reveal how best to support cultural and multilingual endeavours by providing insight into the perceptions and experiences of leaders offering heritage school provision.

Additionally, universities across the UK are increasingly incorporating intercultural competence components into degree courses in recognition of the benefits graduates gain through accruing an understanding of cultural differences. Students acknowledge the importance of intercultural communicative competence in obtaining future employment. However, developing an international mindset and global citizen values cannot be left to higher education. Dewaele and Botes (2020) have shown that multilingualism and language proficiency correlate, indicating a positive influence on personality and open-mindedness. Language learning helps us become more tolerant and receptive to the ideas of others and helps build greater understanding and openness to alternative attitudes and beliefs (Williams & Mercer, 2016). While Byram (2009) maintains that language teachers should also be teachers of culture, Sercu (2006) also sees intercultural competence as an integral part of foreign language learning and Okal (2014) acknowledges that being multilingual means also becoming multicultural as learning other languages provides the learner with insight and understanding of alternative cultures and experiences or ways to understand the world. Moreover, Chen and Padilla (2019) point out the advantages of bilingualism and biculturalism.

> 'We maintain that individuals who are bilingual and bicultural and who take an active role in the process of becoming bilingual and bicultural are more likely to experience a richer set of positive life outcomes (e.g., happiness, life satisfaction) than individuals who remain tied to a single language and culture or who give up a heritage language/culture in favor assimilating into a dominant language/culture'.

(Chen & Padilla, 2019, p.8)

It is commendable to note how heritage schools are recognised for their promotion of well-being, diversity, and inclusivity (Lamb, 2020; Smith, 2023; Szczepek Reed et al., 2020). Gaining insight into the establishment of such environments is a significant contribution to

education and leadership. In a world where competition and human capital seem to be an educational priority, I also consider it important to gain insight into those who appear to adopt a broader humanistic approach (Mincu et al., 2024), also offering imperative implications for many aspects of leadership and education and contributing to both.

1.7. Personal Background.

I grew up in Northern Ireland, the youngest daughter of four to a Presbyterian minister and his eccentric artistic wife, my mother. Although a religious leader, I consider my father more in terms of his spiritual leadership, and in my life, the original example of a 'reflective practitioner' (Schon, 1983) through what he exemplified. For many years he wrote a weekly reflective article under a pseudonym that was published in Northern Ireland's provincial newspapers and read by all denominations. His articles were deeply contemplative, often portraying his yearning for a resolution to the troubles. He believed that building a strong, inclusive community was central to mental and emotional well-being and lay at the heart of the dissolution of civil unrest and the political and religious Northern Irish conflict. The vulnerability of civil war incited suspicion and fear. No adult or child was ever safe. During approximately three and a half decades, you could be shot dead on your way to local shops or schools, obliterated in a neighbourhood pub, or annihilated in a hotel or car bomb. Surrounded by armed conflict, everyone experienced and shared threats of civil war, while suspicion and neuroticism pervaded. My father recognised that no matter how diverse the religious or political beliefs, people in a community could learn to live in acceptance and harmony. With strong ecumenical beliefs, my father was staunchly opposed to using church property for political purposes and ardently rejected Ian Paisley's requests to do so. Paisley was a Northern Irish loyalist politician and Protestant religious leader who served as leader of the Democratic Unionist Party from 1971 to 2008. At the height of Northern Ireland's

political upheaval, my father defied politics mixed with religion. Paisley's politics evoked a defensive, inward-looking unionism that deemed everyone outside its limited embrace as the enemy. This strongly contrasted with my father's values and convictions. This confrontation resulted in Paisley publicly entitling my father 'The Presbyterian minister from Rome,' insinuating my father complied with catholic nationalists and republican paramilitary organisations. This was a minacious title when belligerent antagonism existed across the religious divide. Our family became the target of political threats, and so both my brother and I were sent to boarding school in Belfast. At night, gunshots and bombs could be heard, but under school surveillance and security, we were 'safe.' My father set out to raise funds and build a community hall wherein young and old of all denominations could join in creative social and educational activities. His success in obtaining funding was because contributions poured in from every denomination and faith. This could have been a challenge, but community support evidenced recognition and trust in my father's values and principles. Consequently, in that small Irish community, mutual respect, solid relations, and friendships began to flourish, building an inclusive community that exists till today.

I am immensely proud of my father, and while he passed at the age of sixty-two from a heart attack just a week before I qualified as a teacher with a B.Ed., throughout my life, I have often retrospectively considered his example. He is an eternal source of my immense respect and reflection. This would appear supportive of Dewey's (1938) observation that 'we do not learn from experience, we learn from reflecting on experience' (p.78). After graduation, I left Northern Ireland's troubles and the shadow of war behind me and went to teach English as a foreign language in Halkida, Evia Island, Greece in 1982. I established links within the community and learned to speak Greek fluently. Experience in Greece taught me the necessity of understanding culture through language. I acknowledge that both the culture we come from and that of the surrounding environment greatly influence our values and identity.

Culture prompts questioning and reflection, sometimes leading to a recalibration or affirmation of values, purpose, priorities, and goals. I had no intention of ever returning to Northern Ireland or England, but this decision was eventually reversed. After seventeen years, I returned with my eight-year-old daughter to live and work in England in 1999. On our return, I, unfortunately, did not locate and encourage my daughter to join a heritage school. Although bilingual, my daughter regrets this decision. She remembers the struggle she confronted, particularly during the first few years when her writing and self-expression in English were limited, and she often felt misunderstood in both cultures and languages. Since 2003, I have taught at Reading University. I originally joined The National Centre for Language and Literacy (NCLL) as a teacher trainer and course director of a course for the professional development of Chinese teachers teaching English in China (China Scholarship Council course: CSC). In 2014, NCLL was amalgamated with the International Study and Language Institute (ISLI: Reading University), where I still teach.

My interest in leadership is not in the values that underpin 'correct conduct or procedure' or that align with competence models directing professional leadership practice (Carr & Skinner, 2009, p. 147). I aim to reveal the motivations, perceptions, and identity of those in lesser recognised leadership positions. I wish to explore what has given rise to the values that underpin their identities, specifically to obtain and make known their incentives for and perceptions surrounding their leadership. Their stories are a way to capture insight into their nature and motivations, including the circumstances that have driven them to their leadership roles. I acknowledge this as highly subjective. No two leaders will have identical backgrounds, culture, influences, or identities, although correlations may arise. I take up this exploration with flexibility and curiosity, receptive to whatever becomes apparent. Further discussion of how my bio may impact the data is provided in Chapter Three.

1.8. Global Implications and Overview.

Although no longer a part of the European Union, it is crucial to still uphold core values related to foreign language policies and practices. These outline respect for the unity achieved through diversity in culture, belief, customs, and language, with foreign language communication noted as a key competency in lifelong learning. We are not only citizens of Europe but citizens of the world with an ever-evolving cultural and linguistic identity necessitating a plurilingual approach to language learning (Stein-Smith, 2021). It is very positive to note efforts in higher education to confront social injustice by decolonising curricula and pedagogy, but this is not enough (Lamb, 2020). There is governmental acknowledgement of the increasing necessity for language skills in the global market. Yet many organisations have brought attention to what they have termed a 'language deficit.' This is understood as a huge barrier to employment and trade, impeding targets to secure 'a global Britain' (House of Commons Library, 2021). Given the little information available, I recognised the necessity of exploring heritage leadership and determined that the most effective strategy was to directly ask the leaders themselves about their experiences. For this reason, I have chosen a life history approach. The following literature review begins laying the foundation by looking at the subject of leadership before examining the elements that contribute to the conceptual framework and leaders' perceptions that have shaped their practice.

Chapter Two.

2.1. Literature Review Introduction.

This chapter presents the literature review. As the study specifically examines leadership, the initial search required a study of leadership theory and educational leadership before turning to consider how both relate to heritage school leadership. Therefore, the literature review is presented in two parts. The first section (2.2 – 2.2.8) discusses aspects of leadership before considering how this applies to the theoretical framework. The second section (2.3 – 2.4) outlines the rationale for each lens. It concludes with a brief discussion and reflection related to the purposes of heritage school leadership, and a 'world-centred education' (Biesta, 2022, p. 90).

2.2. Leadership.

A study of leadership requires a review of the related literature. However, investigation into leadership theories before the 1980s indicates a predominant focus on traits and characteristics or a set of actions leaders followed rather than leadership behaviour (Johns & Moser, 1989). Bennis (2009) observed that leadership is extensively researched yet remains one of the most misunderstood subjects within the social sciences. He also noted that despite the significant effort invested in studying leadership, the outcomes have often been minimal. Even if one looks for a more recent definition of leadership behaviour, there is still little agreement in reaching a consensus (Grint & Smolovic, 2016). There are many reasons why the term itself is contested (Gutterman, 2023). In the corporate world, where financial gain and competition are prevalent, there is an understandable rationale behind being able to identify, develop or produce a good leader who would ensure economic survival and business success. While leadership studies have been prolific in the realm of business, there are other

notable research directions and developments. This research is related to domains of leadership such as the military, education, and politics, all of which have influenced research and theorising (Gutterman, 2023). According to McCleskey (2014), more than two hundred leadership theories and related notions and definitions exist, and yet no singular theory can apply to all. Each theory must be examined within its context, and many theories overlap. What is clear is that the study of leadership is continually evolving, and as we gather more insight and understanding, it is interesting to examine in which direction investigation and progression are heading (Grint & Smolovic, 2016; Gutterman, 2023). This progression appears indicative of our times, a growing need for leaders who can help build a better world implying the need to look at the same phenomena (i.e., what is already known about successful leadership) from different perspectives (Hunt & Fedynich, 2019) or to seek out those examples of leadership less examined (Kempster, 2006). This progression is also pertinent here as it has been noted to underscore elements of process and practice central to this investigation and the need to examine lesser-known examples of leadership (Kempster, 2009).

2.2.1. Leadership Theory Development.

In the following section, there is a brief outline of how leadership theories have developed. However, more attention has been given to the evolution of leadership theories that hold some relevance to particular aspects of heritage school leadership to aid the exploration. There are numerous leadership theories (Gutterman, 2023). To summarise each and every one would be impossible and irrelevant. The focus here is on the progression that has taken place since Grint (2005) neatly classified varying views on leadership into four possible areas of disagreement. From this categorisation, I offer an outline of how particular theories have evolved that provide aspects relevant to the conceptual framework employed.

Grint's (2005) classification provided a means through which ambiguous areas and concepts of leadership could be categorised. These consisted of:

- the 'who' of leadership with the focus pertaining to the nature and character of the person,
- the 'what' of leadership pertaining to the achievement brought about.
- the 'where 'of leadership pertaining to a leader's position and operation within a location.
- the 'how' or process related to how leadership is carried out.

(Grint, 2005).

The 'who' of leadership encompassed traits, progressing from the Great Man theory of earlier times, according to which leadership was restricted to those born with innate or special characteristics. These leaders were select mortals possessing qualities and attributes that differentiated them from non-leaders. However, the Great Man theory was rejected as it did not allow for the notion of becoming (Van Fleet & Yukl, 1986). The 'what,' ' where' and 'how' of leadership and the ensuing analysis were more often conceptualised in situational, transactional, and transformational theories, acknowledging that leadership occurs in relationship to others (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Van Setters & Field, 1990). What these differing concepts suggested was that leadership had a different meaning for different theorists, with greater concurrence in the recognition that the concept of leadership was culturally and contextually dependent (Grint & Smolovic, 2016). Yet there was no defined conclusion as to what makes up an ideal or conducive context for leadership. Moreover, many assumptions concerning leadership tended to be indicative of the personal context and culture of one particular leader and, therefore, could not be transposed to another leader's context (Oc, 2018).

2.2.2. Authentic Leadership.

Gardner and Laskin (1995) emphasised the significance of context in understanding leadership processes, suggesting that deeper insight into these processes may foster more ethically grounded leadership. They argued that demystifying the components of leadership could enhance the likelihood of cultivating responsible leadership.

Building on this perspective, theories such as situational, transactional, and transformational leadership also incorporate elements of personal context, self-awareness, and individual traits. Authentic leadership, however, is distinguished by its emphasis on self-actualisation, conviction, and the application of personal virtues and skills in service to others (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Authentic leaders derive their motivations from internalised experiences, which shape their values and drive their engagement in purpose-driven leadership with self-concordant goals (Shamir & Eliam, 2005).

In response to corporate and military failures over the past two decades, there has been a growing demand for leaders with a strong moral compass, which is an attribute central to authentic leadership (Olsen, 2015). This theory represents a shift toward viewing leadership as a socially constructed process, integrating environmental factors, group dynamics, and purpose (Middlehurst, 2008), all of which are pertinent to this study's focus on life narratives and perceived leadership experiences.

However, critics argue that authentic leadership presupposes the existence of a "true self," a notion rooted in Western individualism and moral philosophy (Ford & Harding, 2011, p.463). This cultural bias may limit the theory's applicability across diverse cultural contexts, where collective values and relational dynamics are more prominent.

2.2.3. Leadership and Purpose.

In 2018, Jackson and Parry noted that 'where' and purpose in Grint's framework referred to both the geographical and historical composition of leadership creation. They highlighted that place or context and purpose were closely interlinked. The inclusion of purpose is pertinent as purpose is considered to spring from underlying values in the process of leadership (By, 2021). This then would be an important aspect in the investigation of values and identity when examining leaders' perceptions of those people and experiences that have influenced their process of becoming.

While Grint's 2005 classification or framework had provided a useful tool, the view of leadership as a process gained renewed interest, particularly when reinforced with the concept of purpose. So, in 2016, Grint and Smoloviv also extended the taxonomy to include purpose, which could be understood as the 'why' of leadership. Grint and Smoloviv (2016) asserted that, rather than being preoccupied with or trying to build conceptualisation of leadership traits and attributes catalysing effective leaders, researchers should instead turn attention towards leadership itself. One could then identify subsequent processes or what it is that successful leaders do and what has brought about these processes, in short, how they have learnt to lead. By including purpose, Grint was not only considering the social aspect, but he was also encompassing the related psychological phenomena a leader may experience through his recognition of purpose. This is reminiscent of the previously mentioned call made by Kempster (2009) and is precisely what this study sets out to answer, i.e. the perceptions and subsequent learning that perpetuate leadership purpose. Thus, an examination of the purpose and values that forge leadership may enable insight into how or why leadership is learnt, particularly in those contexts where financial incentives are not the prevalent motivation. It is interesting to note that, reflecting on MacIntyre's (2004) incorporation of the Aristotelian notion of 'telos', Kemspter et al. (2011) also incorporate purpose into their

discussion on leadership, particularly relevant to exploring heritage school leadership. 'Telos' refers to the sense of fulfilment or purpose gained when one is motivated to pursue what they refer to as 'internal goals,' a mission or accomplishment beneficial to a whole community. Such a mission might include the eradication of social discrimination, or social integration, awareness, justice, or equality. If one is to acquire well-being and attain or realise a true sense of purposefulness in life, one must seek out and approach one's 'telos.' While Kempster et al. (2011) acknowledge there may exist organisational constraints on purposeful leadership, they call for greater depth of investigation and understanding of such practice to prompt reflection and forge new directions for research. This prompted reflection on my first research question.

2.2.4. Leadership and Collaboration.

Northouse (2016), like Grint, argues that leadership should be understood as an evolving process rather than a fixed set of traits. Central to Northouse's perspective is the idea that leadership emerges through interactions between leaders, followers, and the broader environment. These interactions facilitate mutual influence aimed at achieving shared goals. This view reflects a broader shift in leadership studies toward emphasising collaboration, teamwork, coordination, and distributed practices, rather than focusing solely on hierarchical authority.

Kukenberger and D'Innocenzo (2020) define effective leadership as:

"an emergent and dynamic team phenomenon wherein leadership roles and influence are distributed among team members"

(Kukenberger & D'Innocenzo, 2020, p. 127).

They further contend that shared leadership arises when team members voluntarily offer influence based on expertise and are receptive to reciprocal influence (p. 131).

This framing positions leadership as a mutual process of claiming and granting influence, contingent on members' willingness to recognise and utilise each other's strengths. The authors also note that shared leadership is most effective in environments characterised by high cooperation and functional diversity, and that it positively correlates with team performance over time. Northouse (2016) also distinguishes between assigned and emergent leadership. Assigned leadership is based on formal position, whereas emergent leadership arises from interpersonal qualities (referent power) and professional competence (expert power). Through active participation and relational engagement, emergent leaders build influence and foster collaboration. Leadership, therefore, is context-dependent, and personal power exercised through social relationships enables change in others' attitudes, beliefs, and actions to achieve collective goals. While the collaborative model advanced by Northouse (2016) and Kukenberger and D'Innocenzo (2020) offers a compelling framework, its application in educational settings has drawn criticism. Harris (2004) argues that shared leadership complicates accountability. Similarly, Hallinger and Heck (2010) emphasise the need for clear hierarchies and role definitions in schools to ensure responsibility is maintained. Leithwood et al. (2007) further caution that shared leadership may overburden educators, potentially leading to resistance.

Therefore, to better understand the social interaction and approach to possible collaboration, each school's context and culture may offer and contribute relevant knowledge and understanding of heritage school leadership and practice. This implication prompted reflection on my second research question.

2.2.5. Educational Leadership.

Educational leadership is frequently acknowledged as the ability of the leader to achieve their purpose through collectively influencing and motivating those they lead (Tonini et al., 2016).

One definition of school leadership offered by Bush and Glover (2003) outlines this influence as founded on the values, beliefs, and vision of the leader, lending insight into a concept of who the leader is:

> 'Leadership can be understood as a process of influence based on clear values and beliefs and leading to a 'vision' for the school. The vision is articulated by leaders who seek to gain the commitment of staff and stakeholders to the dream of a better future for the school, its students, and stakeholders.'

(Bush & Glover, 2003, p. 31).

This implies that educational leadership is built upon a solid sense of purpose by leaders who inspire, develop, and empower both staff and students while staying true to their core educational beliefs and values. Values-based leadership (VBL) transpired from the concept of leadership purpose and emphasised the importance of educational leaders embodying the values they advocate. This not only applies to the incorporation and application of their own values but the individual values of others in the organisation and the shared values held by all (Copeland, 2014).

2.2.6. Values-Based Educational Leadership.

By focusing on the moral purpose and ethical dimensions of educational practice, values-based leadership (VBL) emphasises the importance of the leader possessing a clear set of personal values and ethical principles that guide their decisions and actions. This approach to leadership grew out of the recognition that effective educational leaders are not only those who have vision and skills. Values-based leaders embody the values that foster an inclusive, supportive, aspirational school culture through the commitment to promote positive human values such as trust, humility, compassion, joy, hope and love. They aim to create an

environment where these values are explicitly taught and embedded into the school curriculum, pedagogy, and culture. By doing so, they create a positive, supportive environment for both staff and students (Thein et al., 2023). This form of educational leadership has been recognised globally as an effective way to instil an ethical education within a supportive educational environment (Haydon, 2007; Johnson, 2012).

This form of leadership is also relevant to heritage language schools, wherein the leadership aspires to foster an inclusive environment and respects and celebrates cultural diversity. Work carried out by Thein et al. (2023) explored the perspectives of school leaders on values-driven leadership. Their results indicated that the leaders connected values directly and indirectly to themselves as leaders and recognised the significant contribution and influence of values in their schools. Thein et al. (2023) argue for a values-based leadership approach and the maintenance of a core of shared values as foundational to the sustainability of a school and the well-being of all stakeholders.

Globally, VBL has been recognised as a framework for nurturing ethical education within positive school climates (Haydon, 2007; Johnson, 2012). Its relevance is particularly pronounced in heritage language schools, where leaders may aspire to promote inclusivity. Thein et al. (2023) found that school leaders often link values to their personal identities and leadership practices, advocating for a shared core of values as essential to school sustainability.

While VBL offers a compelling ethical framework, it is not without critique. For example, Kafa and Pashiardis (2019) explored how personal values shape leadership identity and decision-making. Their findings highlighted the challenges leaders face in aligning personal values with institutional demands, particularly in stakeholder engagement and relationship-building. Their research pointed to the need for reflective practice, where leaders critically examine how their values influence their professional development and practice.

Additionally, scholars such as Fulford and Coleman (2021) argue that VBL often lacks the structural analysis necessary to address systemic inequalities, focusing instead on individual morality and interpersonal ethics rather than institutional or societal reform. Alvesson and Einola (2019) similarly critique leadership theories like VBL for their conceptual ambiguity and limited engagement with the complexities of organisational power. These critiques are particularly important in research that explores personal narratives and identity development, where the interplay between personal values and leadership practice becomes especially pronounced. Understanding how values are internalised, negotiated, and enacted by leaders is therefore particularly relevant to any study, including personal narrative that aims to capture perceptions of values and identity development and hence must be taken into consideration in the formulation of the first research question.

2.2.7. Educational Leadership Context.

To better understand the demands in the role of the educational leader, Shields (2004) concept emphasises relations in and beyond the school. Shields (2004) conceives the role as requiring the ability to:

> '……develop learning communities, build the professional capacity of teachers, take advice from parents, engage in collaborative and consultative decision making, resolve conflicts, engage in educative instructional leadership, and attend respectfully, immediately, and appropriately to the needs and requests of families with diverse cultural, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds.'

(Shields, 2004, p. 109)

This outlines how educational leadership requires more than a focus on educational aims and pupil outcomes, which is too often the main consideration of those analysing successful

leadership approaches (Mincu et al., 2024; Shields, 2004). Shields' definition points to the importance of social aspects not only within but beyond the school and makes clear the relevance and need to examine community and culture.

According to Hallinger (2018), attempts to conceptualise school leadership as universal or a shared phenomenon are counterproductive as leaders' approaches vastly differ, although it is generally accepted that operationally, school leadership is culturally specific (Bush, 2020; Ly, 2020). This is again relevant to heritage school leadership, which is fundamentally culturally orientated. Many theorists propose that educational leadership should be conceived of as integrative, as opposed to emerging from one singular approach. Thus, leadership would integrate several theories in response to the needs of all stakeholders and contexts (Daniels et al., 2019). Many support that this is actively considered, such as Piot and Kelchtermans (2016), who propose that instructional leadership, for example, and its practice, is ambiguous and requires the adoption and integration of other theories. This view is further supported by Drysdale et al. (2021) in work carried out for the International Successful School Principalship Project (ISSPP). The work investigates and presents a comprehensive international comparative study of leadership since 2001 and proposes thirteen models of successful school leadership, most of which acknowledge contextual factors or highlight the importance of context.

Schools are social interaction systems impacted by a variety of external environmental influences (Hallinger, 2018). Even within the same country, schools differ in size, location, social environment, including the community they serve: their history, organisation, staffing and experience, the values held, and the practice applied. Miller (2018) claims that successful leadership approaches in one school and context are often not applicable or productive in another. Oc (2018) also observes that, while context plays a crucial role, there is no agreement as to what constitutes leadership context. With the increasing recognition of the

importance of context, there is an emphasis that a rigid singular model of leadership and approach is both inappropriate and ineffective (Hallinger, 2018). The school's educational aims and situational needs (such as financial challenges or the need for school improvement), the socio-cultural context, and the national cultural or political context all greatly influence the nature of the leadership required within each school (Hallinger, 2018). Furthermore, there is evidence that shows the transference of educational policy relating to leadership and governance from one school to another is problematic (Harris, 2020; Hooge, 2020**).** This echoes Oc's (2018) observation that individual leadership, personal context, and culture cannot be transposed to another such role. Again, this observation is relevant here and supports a qualitative research approach.

Referencing Hallinger's (2018) keynote presentation at the British Educational Leadership Management and Administrative Society conference (BELMAS), Bush (2018) observes how multiple layers of context, coupled with individual leaders' personal resources, are all complex vital factors that make up the particular practice required for a specific school within a specific context. Hallinger (2018) conceptualises seven contextual elements that include community, personal and institutional contextual elements, along with those previously mentioned (social, cultural, and political), as all contributing to a multitude of variations and combinations in any given leadership approach. Yet while Gurr et al. (2020) observe that any study exploring leadership and context respects that every combination may require greatly differing variations, what becomes increasingly apparent is that context is not a constraint for a successful leader. On the contrary, successful leaders have flexibility and adapt to constraints or change by working within that challenging context to effectively accomplish their role and mission (Gurr et al., 2020). This is particularly relevant to heritage leadership, wherein there are numerous contextual constraints dealt with by each school leader. It is, however, important to point out that differing contexts do not automatically imply that

effective leadership requires completely differing practices for each and every context. On the contrary, Leithwood et al. (2020) claim their revised literature review indicates that successful leaders deal with context through the application of a combination of specific leadership practices, selecting and responding appropriately accordingly. Their review also implies that leaders' decisions and practices may be culturally influenced by both the school environment and as a result of the home culture. This prompted consideration of the third research question, as the emphasis and relevance of this study is not only on what school leaders do but how they perceive and respond to their contexts and stakeholders, resulting in leadership learning.

2.2.8. Heritage Leadership Context.

Investigation carried out by Simon (2023) into the purposes and social positioning of supplementary schools in England revealed a purpose that far exceeds what is most often considered their educational goal. The schools are recognised as fundamental for the psychological and educational well-being of the students within their communities and their identity formation (Francis et al., 2010; Nwulu, 2015). The schools cultivate and help preserve pride in the students' heritage language, traditions and ethnocultural identity (Szczepek Reed et al., 2020), offering a safe environment free from racism or stigmatism (Lamb, 2020; Zhou & Kim, 2006). The schools function as community hubs with attendance helping to build self-confidence and self-esteem through civic participation, cross-cultural interaction, and intercultural understanding (Simon, 2023). This can unfortunately be lacking in other educational scenarios, a child from a non-white British background may confront. Fortunately, the schools are recognised as a place of inclusion (Lamb, 2020) or as 'complex socio-political enterprises that are situated within and respond to multiple historical social and political discourses' (Simon, 2018, p. 4). Therefore, it is necessary to reflect upon what

may have provoked a need for a racial haven in certain communities and a safe place for cultural inclusion and belonging or to consider how governmental policy on education may have failed to inclusively promote the well-being of all UK citizens instead of securing social harmony and integration.

One such policy that has provoked controversy resulted from the 2011 Prevent strategy, which aimed to confront extremism and radicalisation relating to global terrorism. In 2011, it had not yet entered educational discussion, but in 2012, a new policy relating to education, namely the teaching standards of 2012, was released by the UK government's Department for Education (DfE). This governmental policy outlined the promotion of national identity and Fundamental British Values (FBV) that British teachers should ensure are promoted within the nation's schools. These values consisted of 'the rule of law,' 'individual liberty,' 'mutual respect,' and 'tolerance' of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith' (DfE, 2012). The FBVs were advanced by the then-prime minister, David Cameron, as fundamentally British principles outlining how we should attempt to lead our lives daily. Controversy stemmed from this policy due to the observation that teachers were required to enforce the politics of the state within their classrooms, while the values were not considered exclusively or uniquely British (Elton-Chalcraft et al., 2017; Szczepek Reed et al., 2020). Instead of greater cohesion and inclusion, the policy brought about an understanding of those with other religions and identities as opposing civic nationalism (Elton-Chalcraft et al., 2017) and a sense of subjugation. Furthermore, recent events have also indicated exclusion through educational discrimination. This was outlined in a report from Global Future, which was supported by the NRCSE (2021). This report detailed the circumstances and reasons for the 2020 massive drop in community language entries for GCSE exams. Supplementary schools are seldom registered as exam centres but may teach community languages for years before students register to sit their community language exam within their mainstream school, which

benefits from the exam pass rate. However, in 2020, during the pandemic, mainstream teachers were requested to register students' predicted grades as exams had been cancelled. Rather than reaching out to the supplementary schools, many mainstream teachers simply withdrew community languages from their examinations, even though concerns were raised by the NRCSE and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Modern Languages. While many supplementary schools have strong partnerships with mainstream, the consequences of those that did not resulted in 12,000 fewer student opportunities to gain a qualification in comparison to the previous year.

In a discussion on social cohesion, Healy (2019) points out how one may have a full membership, legal rights, and a sense of belonging within a community and yet not be fully accepted by that community. Thus, the distinction of belonging to a group within a location and belonging with a people in a location are two very different conceptions of belonging. To dissolve alienation and terrorism, citizens need to believe they belong, and this can only happen when people feel significant and included. Perceived belonging without mutual recognition or being accepted as having legitimate membership perpetuates our fragmented societies in which alienation, radicalisation and extremism can still exist (Healy, 2019). While for many ethnic minorities, this is elusive within their community, leaders of these schools offer a place of belonging and affiliation (Lamb, 2020). Their schools function as points of connection with language, culture, and customs, providing a haven for racial refuge (Nwulu, 2015) and a place for kinship and cultural re-connection (Lamb, 2020; Tereshchenko & Archer, 2013). The schools become a safe place where students can still retain a sense of belonging. There, students and their parents can escape from surrounding disintegrated societies that often lack social cohesion (Healy, 2019).

Simon (2023) remarks that much more attention needs to be devoted to multicultural learners, such as children from BME communities. Simon (2023) observes how the schools offer

opportunities and support students to explore the development of a dual ethnic and national identity. Furthermore, she suggests that current and future heritage learners will require hybridised identities, which they can explore through heritage educational provision. This is because in heritage schools, the emphasis is on multiculturalism and cultural exchange (Carreira & Kagan, 2011), aligning with ideals of interconnectedness and global citizenship (Irwin et al., 2017). The educational focus and aims of heritage leaders are neither on the child-centred tradition of education nor the curriculum, but on what Biesta (2022) suggests is a world-centred focus. Therein the main task of education is to help young people to be in the world (Biesta, 2022) and indicates a critical re-examination of the languages curriculum to examine historical and ongoing linguistic injustices that must be addressed (Phipps, 2021; Race et al., 2022).

This review brought to light the significance of context in analysing leadership across various domains, including general, educational, and heritage school environments (Day, 2003). It revealed the necessity of identifying leaders' perceptions of their contexts and their developing professional role within them (Carreira & Kagan, 2011). To do so, it is necessary to understand how leaders perceive their underlying values and evolving identity (Schwartz, 2010), as this will ultimately shape their leadership practice (Cruz-González et al., 2021; Miscenko et al., 2017) and reveal their leadership purpose (Kempster et al., 2011). These insights will help build an understanding of their perceptions and experiences of leadership learning and indicate salient implications for their future developmental needs. Consequently, the research questions emanating from the exploration are:

1. How do twelve heritage leaders perceive their values and professional identities, and how have these shaped their leadership practice?

2. How do they perceive their school's context and culture, and how has this influenced their leadership practice?

3. What are each leader's perceptions and experiences of leadership learning, and what are their developmental needs?

The following section outlines the study's framework, focusing on identity and values, culture and context, and leadership learning. By examining leaders' perceptions in these interconnected areas, the study aims to gain insight into how these factors have influenced their leadership practice and the resulting implications.

2.3. Conceptual Framework.
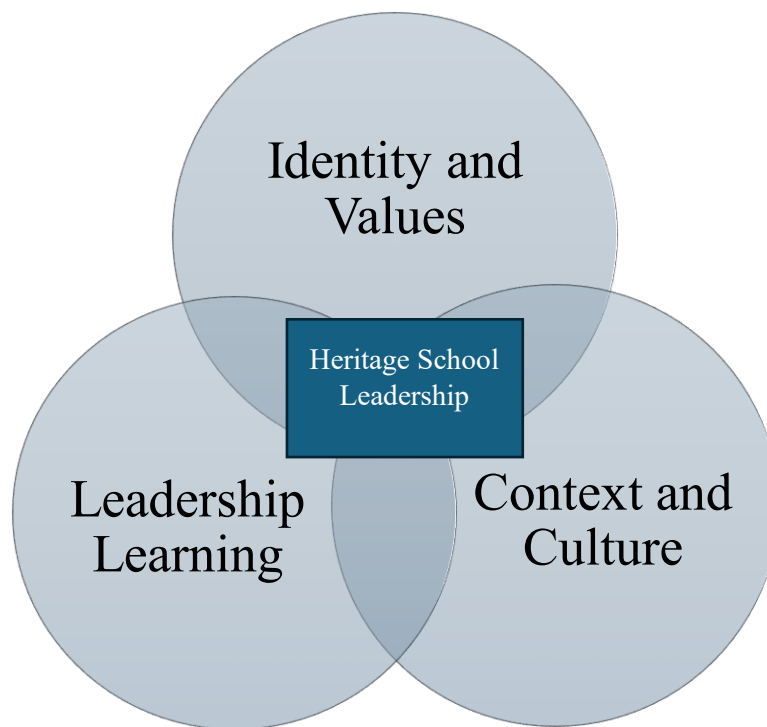
Figure 1 Conceptual Framework.

2.3.1. Identity and Values.

2.3.1.1. Professional Identity.

From a social psychological perspective, the formation of professional identity is a dynamic and socially constructed process. Social identity theory posits that an individual's identity is shaped by the social contexts and networks in which they are embedded (Tajfel, 1982), which

is also relevant to professional identity formation. Professional identity is legitimised through social interactions with others, through positions in society, and how one is seen by their peers within a community, including the various forms of membership one establishes (Sutherland et al., 2010). According to identity theory, a slightly differing perspective can be understood. Here, identity is composed of the integration of the multiple roles and positions an individual holds within cultural and social contexts, all of which contribute to their self-perception and understanding (Bentley et al., 2019; Holland & Lachicotte, 2007). Individuals adopt these self-perceptions and concepts of self and identity through an emotional attachment to their life experiences (Holland & Lachicotte, 2007). Both identity theory and social identity theory link an individual to social and cultural contexts (Hitlin, 2003). Therefore, if self-perceptions are formed through one's values and beliefs, lived experiences and relations with others (Ibarra, 1999; Slay & Smith, 2011), this implies we should examine precisely those aspects of an individual's life and experiences to gain insight into that individual. Beliefs and an understanding of why an individual holds specific values are acknowledged as fundamental when examining personal identity and how this relates to a sense of self, goals, and motivations (Schwartz, 1994). Professional identity, in particular, is seen as a malleable dynamic process (Rogers & Scott, 2008) evolving over time and through experimentation (Ibarra, 1999). As individuals confront new opportunities and meanings, they can renegotiate and re-evaluate their provisional professional self, leading to identity reinvention (Ibarra, 1999).

This is often apparent in life story research (Ibarra 1999), also observed by Rogers and Scott (2008):

> '……. identity involves the construction and reconstruction of meaning through stories over time.'

(Rogers & Scott, 2008, p. 733).

Garcia and Hardy (2007) also maintain that this process of transformation and evolution is central to the development of a positioned professional self that is identifiable and often presented or disclosed in narrative studies such as this. The development of a coherent professional identity is crucial as it helps ground individuals in the meaningfulness of their work, allowing for a sense of purpose and value, thus supporting overall well-being (Holland & Lachicotte, 2007).

In summary, identity is a dynamic, socially constructed concept that is continually shaped by one's experiences, interactions, and the social context (Ibarra, 1999). The formation of a professional identity is an active and iterative process, where individuals negotiate and resolve tensions between their personal and professional selves. Life story research is a relevant means through which to gather insight into identity development (Ibarra, 1999).

2.3.1.2. Professional Identity in Education.

Research shows that leadership identity in education is not solely based on one's position, title or personal identity but rather emerges through practising leadership roles and responsibilities in educational contexts both within and outside the classroom (Cruz-González et al., 2021; Miscenko et al., 2017).

Some of the key factors that contribute to the development and construction of professional leadership identity in education have been noted as including opportunities to take on leadership responsibilities such as serving on school committees, leading professional development, or coordinating schoolwide initiatives (Clapp-Smith et al., 2019). This could also include collaboration with other leaders in which a teacher/leader can share challenges and reflections and learn from others' leadership and experiences (Smith, 2007; Zarshenas et al., 2014). Collaboration can also encompass mentorship and coaching opportunities in which

experienced educational leaders can offer guidance, support, feedback, and advice, which can help a teacher-leader reflect on and refine their own leadership approach (Smith, 2007). According to Mpungose (2010), leadership is developed through two influential aspects. These not only include a social dimension but also internal dimensions of personal beliefs and values at the core of identity. Bandura (1989) proposes that personal beliefs include self-efficacy, the theory of which posits that belief in one's ability to meet and overcome challenges helps drive decisions, maintain a positive outlook, and motivates the leader to pursue and achieve goals. Self-efficacy helps the teacher leader form and maintain the necessary relationships for collaborative and collective production. This self-belief is fundamental in bringing about effective leadership and change (Seashore-Louis et al., 2010). On the subject of context, Bandura (1989) outlines personal agency or the 'capacity to exercise control over one's thought processes, motivation and action' as necessary (Bandura, 1989, p. 1175). If a leader has ample agency, he/she is more likely to anticipate outcomes, set and achieve high goals, and have greater motivation, resilience, and perseverance. Indeed, hardship and struggle, often referred to as 'critical events' (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 247), play a pivotal role in shaping leadership competence. Bennis and Thomas (2002, pp. 39 - 40) aptly describe these events as 'transformative experiences' or 'crucibles' or moments that propel leaders toward growth and development. Notably, critical events impact both authentic leadership and development (Avolio & Luthans, 2006). Overall, research highlights that developing a strong leadership identity is a complex, multifaceted process that requires navigating various personal, organisational, and contextual factors (Cruz-González et al., 2021; Miscenko et al., 2017; Mpungose, 2010; Seashore-Louis et al., 2010).

2.3.1.3. How Values Impact Leadership Identity.

Other aspects of personal identity have been observed as necessary for professional growth and identity development. These additional essential components have been noted as the ability to apply reasoning and professional judgement, exercise SDL (Self-Directed Learning) whilst maintaining critical self-evaluation (Tsang et al., 2002). The authors also maintain that the possession of a central identity or solid core is a necessary bedrock for professional identity development.

An individual possesses many personal identities, the most important of which can converge or conflict with professional identity formation and development (Beijaard et al., 2004). In the caring professions, such as nursing and education, an interrelationship between professional and personal identity has been noted as more often apparent (Day & Kington, 2008; Floyd & Morrison, 2014). This interrelationship, comprising a wide range of social conditions and emotive contexts, brings together practices and beliefs (Day & Kington, 2008) that reflect deeply ingrained values (Schein, 2004). Therefore, in this study, the inclusion of examining values assumes significance as the aim is to identify how leaders' perceived values have shaped the leadership role. Floyd and Morrison (2014) assert that deeply held personal values, intricately linked to professional identity, find their roots in past social interactions and life experiences. These values serve as motivational goals or guiding principles that steer an individual's life trajectory (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1990). This study looks to explore the life situations that initially propelled individuals into leadership roles. By tracing phenomena contributing to change and development throughout each participant's leadership journey, it is interesting to note if personal values play a pivotal role. Values are often inseparable from the driving force behind the actions leaders take (Avolio & Luthans, 2006). Research acknowledges that school leaders' personal values significantly influence their leadership practices in managing schools. For this reason, it is

important to understand how perceived personal values shape leadership behaviours and decision-making processes within educational settings (Hallinger, 2011; Thien et al., 2023). To directly identify leaders' values, a gender-neutralised Schwartz (2012) Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) was sent out before individual interviews. According to Schwartz et al. (2012), the PVQ is a valuable tool in the social sciences for several reasons. Schwartz (2016) posits that the ten distinct value types recognised across cultures serve as fundamental influencers of human behaviour. Schwartz's (1992) theory of basic human values provides a nuanced understanding of how high values influence attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, and identity. By examining a person's values, insight into an individual's basic motivations can be gained. The PVQ has been validated across different cultures, making it a reliable tool in cross-cultural research. The PVQ can predict various outcomes related to personal and social behaviour, making it an essential tool for understanding leadership identity and learning (Schwartz et al., 2012).

Values impact educational identity in several different ways. Values become the 'glue' that binds leaders together with the broader school community (Van Niekerk & Botha, 2017, p. 133). Shared values create a common foundation for decision-making behaviour and the realisation of the school's goals. Without a clear set of values, it is difficult for schools to function cohesively (Moeller et al., 2012). According to Hitlin (2003), values lie at the core of personal identity and play a significant role in influencing and shaping individual beliefs, behaviours and decision-making processes accumulated from professional experiences. From a sociological viewpoint, these factors are also merged with and shape personal and professional identity and lead to the formation of a sense of self (Schachter, 2005).

Values guide leaders' attitudes, decisions, and actions (Eikenberry, 2010). A leader's perceived values will shape their beliefs and attitudes, and how, in turn, they perceive their role, arrive at decisions, and conduct themselves in their leadership position (Niekerk &

Botha, 2017; Prilleltensky, 2000). Thus, clearly defined and understood values are essential for leaders to effectively develop their professional identity and that of others within their schools (Van Niekerk & Botha, 2017).

2.3.1.4. Values-Based Education and Leadership.

Value-based or value-driven leadership can be understood in terms of types of leadership that are values-oriented, such as servant leadership, ethical leadership, and authentic leadership. These leadership approaches make clear the influence and importance of integrating positive human values into educational settings (Begley, 2001). Research on values-based educational leadership highlights the significance of aligning leadership practices with values and beliefs to enhance student learning outcomes. Studies emphasise the role of values in shaping leadership, defining both the goals leaders aspire to achieve and how they work towards them (Hallinger, 2011). Leaders whose ingrained values guide how they manage and lead their schools tend to do so with greater harmony and humanity and are more willing to empower other school stakeholders (Thien et al., 2023).

While more recently there has been an increased interest in the impact values-based leadership has on teachers and school success (Liu & Yin, 2023; Sam, 2021), there are finer details of difference between values-based leadership and value-based education.

The concept of values-based education as a method goes beyond teaching about and leading from a values-based perspective. Instead, it lays a foundation for the curriculum of educational institutions with universal positive human values such as respect, integrity, honesty, and compassion. Schools that adopt value-based education experience positive effects on learning, behaviour, and school culture (Begley, 2012; Van Niekerk & Botha, 2017).

Leaders who are committed to student and staff well-being are recognised to hold values related to caring, empathy and dedication to the school community, advocating for the needs of others and ensuring their overall well-being as a core value (Leithwood, 2021; Thien et al., 2023). When leaders consistently act in alignment with their espoused values when making authentic decisions that are rooted in personal values, they earn the respect and confidence of their school community (Begley, 2001). Modelling core values like trust, empathy, adaptability, and commitment to lifelong learning allows leaders to foster strong relationships and a positive school culture (Quick, 2013).

2.3.2. Context and Culture.

No two school contexts are the same. While the individuality of a leader is considered important, consideration of contextual aspects is often overlooked, to the detriment of our understanding of leadership practice (Hallinger, 2018). This is not a new observation. In 1996, Gronn and Ribbons highlighted the necessity of examining school leadership within the diverse contexts in which it occurs. They proposed that to capture the lived everyday realities of school leadership, an interpretative approach should be used, which is of importance here. This contrasts with the more common positivist approaches that seek to measure the impact of school leaders on outcomes (Gronn & Ribbons, 1996). The authors argued that leadership cannot be fully understood without considering the specific contexts and lived experiences of those enacting it. Bossert et al. (1982) also observed the influence of context on leadership behaviour and practice. In a similar vein, more recently, Clark and O'Donoghue (2016) highlighted that to achieve school leadership effectiveness, leaders are required to respond and adapt to their unique contexts with what has been termed by Bennis and Thomas (2009) as 'adaptive capacity'. Hallinger (2018) refers to this adaptation or adjustment as necessary for success. Leaders' approaches can be heavily influenced by

various layers of context, which can include the social, cultural, political, religious, and economic context (Miller, 2018). Drysdale (2011) found that across differing countries, cultures and contexts, successful school leadership encompassed adaptation to context coupled with reflection, with leaders learning from experience and practice. This was further supported by the work of Day and Gurr (2014) in examining successful leaders across cultures. Work by Day et al. (2020) specifically indicates the inseparable nature of context and leadership. They argue that effective leaders are those who are culturally sensitive but not contextually constrained. This is relevant here as this study also considers national and local contexts and addresses the significance of leadership in maintaining success in challenging educational contexts. However, school leadership is not only impacted by the local or national context or the macro environment but is also influenced by, and influences at, the micro-cultural level (Day et al., 2020; Schein, 2004).

Both Schein's (2004) theory of organisational culture and Day et al.'s (2020) perspectives on the relationship between context and successful educational leadership provide valuable insights into understanding the unique contextual and cultural obstacles within diverse and challenging educational environments. Both recognise the importance of context. Both acknowledge the central role of leadership in developing, sustaining and potentially changing organisational culture. Both emphasise the need for leaders to deeply understand and adapt to the specific cultural and environmental contexts in which they operate (Day et al., 2020; Schein, 2004). This aligns with research on heritage language schools, as it is of interest how these schools are shaped by the specific cultural, ethnic, and linguistic contexts of the communities they serve (Thorpe, 2011).

Schein (2004) notes how effective leaders are those who deeply understand the specific cultural context and can navigate it rather than being constrained by it. Considering the balance between cultural sensitivity and contextual constraints, Day (2005) argues that

successful educational leaders are those who are culturally responsive and aware. While Day (2005) discusses various educational leadership approaches, he acknowledges that these are not mutually exclusive and can contribute to successful educational leadership in differing cultural contexts. His work highlights how effective leaders bring about positive school outcomes through the establishment of a positive school culture, particularly in challenging circumstances. This aligns with the findings that heritage schools can have positive impacts on student outcomes, often by fostering a strong sense of cultural identity and community (Simon, 2023).

Schein (2004) considers leaders as key in embedding and transmitting culture within their organisations, which he sees as arising within specific groups and teams that have spent time together. He points out that leaders need to master the art of creating a balance through their contextual practices and maintains that the micro-culture does not exist outside the group that holds it. The group accumulates shared experiences and develops a stable core. Culture is then shaped by the group's adaptation to the external environment and the challenges they face as a group (Schein, 2004).

Schein defines organisational culture as:

'...a pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered, or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration.'

Although the culture formed continually is:

'……. striving toward patterning and integration, even though in many groups their actual history of experiences prevents them from ever achieving a clear-cut, unambiguous paradigm.'

Schein (2004, p. 17)

In summary, Schein sees culture as arising within and being shaped by a specific group, its history, values and beliefs and the external environment it faces. The leader's ability to adapt to the external cultural context is a crucial factor in effectively managing, influencing, and shaping the organisational culture. The context in which the group operates is fundamentally linked to the culture that emerges within the group. Therefore, the leader must understand and adapt to the context to effectively manage and influence the micro-culture (Schein, 2004). In educational domains, this underscores the importance of leaders understanding and adapting to the cultural context or environment to effectively manage and influence the schools' organisational culture. Schein's (2004) work on organisational culture complements that of Day's in that he offers a framework through which organisational culture can be considered.

2.3.2.1 Organisational Culture.

Schein's model of organisational culture outlines three levels of culture, which he termed artifacts, espoused values, and underlying assumptions.

1. Artifacts: these are the visible elements in a school, such as the teaching materials, the structure of the classes, the physical environment, and the subjects or language taught. This would include letters, bulletins, or newsletters sent to parents and the wider community, as newsletters may contain information related to the school's activities and achievements, and reflect the school's engagement with the community.

    Within this study, artifacts can also include whatever is designed to cater for the specific needs of the learners, incorporating elements of the heritage culture.

Visual elements at this level, therefore, would also include how the school is decorated with flags or messages, the cultural activities selected and celebrated, and the community events organised. When considered under Schein's framework, artifacts provide valuable insights into the school's organisational culture as they actively shape and are shaped by the interactions and practices within the school.

2. Espoused values: these are the values, beliefs, and rules of behaviour in an organisation. These are not written procedures but can encompass the mission statements or educational philosophies, the strategies and goals, and shared aspirations relating to the educational outcomes. These values are often communicated through a mission or vision statement, intending to communicate the ambition or direction of the leadership. Pertaining to heritage schools, the espoused values may include the promotion or preservation of the heritage language and culture. The espoused values can also encompass the modelled behaviour of the leader and their commitment to understanding learning and improvement.

3. Basic or underlying assumptions: these are the deep-rooted beliefs, attitudes and unconscious thoughts that shape an organisation's culture. These assumptions are often deeply ingrained but taken for granted and rarely discussed. In relation to education and school culture, these assumptions are evident in the choice of curriculum, for example, the value of a multicultural education and the importance of language preservation, and are often taken for granted.

Schein's framework provides a suitable tool for this study, as the examination of these three levels offers insight into the organisational culture each leader has established in their individual heritage school.

In comparison to Schein, Hatch (1993) proposes a definition of organisational culture that involves the interplay between four key elements: artifacts, symbols, values, and assumptions. Specifically:

1. Artifacts: the visible, tangible, and audible results of organisational activity that are grounded in the organisation's values and assumptions.

2. Symbols: These represent conscious or unconscious associations with more abstract concepts or meanings. The symbolisation process turns artifacts into symbols through the experience of meanings.

3. Values: the social principles, philosophies, goals, and standards considered to have intrinsic worth. The manifestation process evokes specific values and behavioural norms perceptually, cognitively, or emotionally.

4. Assumptions: the taken-for-granted beliefs about reality and human nature. The realisation process expresses these underlying assumptions in organisational outcomes and actions.

Through including the fourth element of symbols, Hatch outlines a dynamic process that links all four of the cultural elements. Hatch argues that cultural changes occur through clockwise and counterclockwise influences between these four elements over time, creating a spiralling double-helix dynamic. Hatch's model highlights how organisational culture is not static. It is, rather, an ongoing interactive process of meaning-making among organisational members (Dauber et al., 2010) and is therefore useful in understanding how schools adapt and change to meet the needs of their stakeholders. Schein's model focuses on the more static levels of culture (Dauber et al., 2010) and is therefore more useful to fully capture the nuances of the

cultural dynamics relevant to heritage schools and how these have been built as opposed to how they change. Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of a leader and their practice requires consideration of their perceptions of context, culture and the learning experiences that have shaped what each has established or accomplished. These aspects are encompassed in this study's research questions.

2.3.3. Leadership Learning.

Research into professional educational development highlights the significance of reflecting on individual subjective experience to drive learning and emphasises that learning is not just about absorbing information (Day, 2003). Experiential learning requires actively engaging with one's environment and, through reflection on past experiences, creating knowledge and developing understanding (Day, 2000; 2003).

Many studies have pointed to the need for more research into how school leader professional development could be improved. It has been suggested that research should include investigating how leaders develop leadership skills (Brauckmann et al., 2020; Heffernan, Therefore, the third component in the conceptual framework examines the perceptions and experiences of leadership learning as revealed by the head teachers 2018). Literature on educational leadership and CPD highlights various barriers and challenges in CPD courses. While it is generally accepted that leadership training should result in better school performance and academic progress, there is a lack of information concerning the usefulness of leadership training programmes and how they relate to practice (Grissom et al., 2019; Pannell et al., 2015). This is particularly important as the heritage school leadership role is fraught with challenges economically, socially, and educationally (Arthus & Souza, 2017; Thorpe et al., 2018; Thorpe et al., 2020; Thorpe & Karamanidou, 2024). Such information may reveal implications relevant to educational leadership support and development and help

clarify fundamental aspects related to leadership learning in the absence of regular or formal professional career development. As these suggestions will come from the leaders themselves, there is the possibility that the information may provide implications for future support. The study aims to reveal those within leaders' communities or environments that may have supported their growth and development. This information may also benefit those interested in taking up the role or confronting related challenges. Through sharing examples of leadership learning and stories of both triumphs and challenges, valuable knowledge can be passed on to empower organisations and leaders in diverse roles brought together to learn from each other (Kaufman, 2011). If governmental discussion in education has kept heritage schools on the periphery of educational development (Mau et al., 2009; Maylor, 2010), it would appear valuable for the leaders of these schools to support each other through sharing their experiences.

It is generally accepted that a career in education entails lifelong learning (Thwe & Kalman, 2024). The role and responsibility of the educational professional extend beyond supporting student learning: teachers and leaders must also engage in lifelong education to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the profession (Friedman, 2023). Social learning theories can aid recognition and understanding of the processes involved in learning, particularly in the analysis of lived experience, which is next discussed.

2.3.3.1. Social Learning Theory and Situated Learning.

Social learning theory and situated learning theory are two distinct theories that describe different aspects of the learning process. Social cognitive theory, proposed by Bandura (1997), maintains that people learn by observing others and imitating their behaviour. This theory emphasises the role of social interaction, reinforcement, and modelling in the learning process. Bandura (1997) suggests that people are more likely to learn and adopt new

behaviours when they have observed others performing these successfully and have received positive reinforcement. Leadership learning, behaviour, and identity, then, is a product or process of later applying or modelling what has been learnt through observation and social interaction. Bandura (1997) also proposes that belief in the ability to succeed or self-efficacy is a significant influence that reinforces where attention is directed. Self-efficacy also propels a leader to meet challenges and learn and grow through confronting and overcoming them. These are important aspects to consider as heritage school leader roles are renowned for challenges such as recruitment, staff development, retention, and school economic sustainability (Thorpe et al., 2018).

Social cognitive theory is often used to explain how people learn attitudes, values, and social norms, as well as specific skills and behaviour. Whereas Bandura's (1997) social cognitive theory involves cognitive or psychological processes, there is a correlation to that of Lave and Wenger's (1991) social learning theory, incorporating situated learning and communities of Practice (COPs). Through situated learning theory, Lave and Wenger (1991) propose that learning is optimal when it takes place in the context in which it is applied. The theory emphasises the importance of authentic contexts, social interaction, and the role of communities of practice in the learning process. It suggests that learners participate through collaboration and social interaction in the process of 'becoming', referred to as 'legitimate peripheral participation.' As they gain experience and competence, they gradually move from a novice position to full participation in their community of practice. Subsequently, the novice progresses from a peripheral role to a position of expertise through collaboration, interaction, and engagement while passing on their gained experiential knowledge to newcomers. Thus, the novice builds identity and self-efficacy in increased recognition of their mounting ability. This process of becoming is essential for effective learning and professional growth (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Situated learning theory is often used to explain how people learn in real-world settings, such as workplaces, until they develop expertise in their fields and develop professionally. Therefore, social learning theory focuses on the role of observation and imitation in the learning process, while situated learning theory emphasises the importance of authentic contacts and social interaction in the learning process as the novice develops in their role and identity. Both theories have their strengths and limitations. Both can help illuminate aspects of professional development and learning, and how knowledge is transformed into practice. Both theories above encompass learning that can take place within and beyond formal CPD programmes.

2.3.3.2. Approaches to CPD.

Research and evidence from formally organised professional development programmes reflect how the varying approaches have evolved. Traditional approaches to teacher professional development emphasised teaching activities and processes: the development of classroom practice to improve student progress and exam results (Coldwell, 2017). This approach to professional development was defined by Desimone (2009) as:

> 'teachers' knowledge and skills that relate to changes in instructional practice, which increase students' learning and achievement.'

(Desimone, 2009, p.185).

However, in many disciplines, it was difficult to determine what impact such programmes had on classroom delivery, professional practice, and staff development (Chambers, 2001; Jay & Johnson, 2002). This was because for many teachers, the CPD received did not motivate the wish to change or was considered not applicable or relevant to their specific needs. As a result, in some schools, there was a shift away from employing an expert from

outside the organisation. In others, it was deemed worthwhile to bring in alternative expertise to what was within the school and already available (Cordingley et al., 2015; Dunst et al., 2015). There was also increased focus on the individual educational professional, the context, collaboration, and possibilities for self-directed learning (SDL) (Borko et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009). This is relevant to heritage language schools as it has been noted that implementing CPD in schools with limited resources requires strategic planning and utilisation of available support (Ofsted, 2007), which has been irregularly available within Britain.

2.3.3.3. Self-Directed Professional Development (SDPD).

The process of development outlined by Mushayikwa and Lubben (2009) in their model that exemplifies SDPD involves expanding individual professional skills and knowledge. Their model points to amassing personal qualities and values related to social constructivist influences (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986) through social interaction or collaboration. Vygotsky's (1978, 1986) sociocultural theory emphasises the importance of social interaction in collaborative learning environments wherein leaders and teachers can engage in dialogue, share experiences, and work together to construct knowledge that will improve practice. Vygotsky also introduced the concept of the more knowledgeable other (MKO), who plays a crucial role in facilitating learning in the context of CPD for leaders and could involve mentorship, coaching or peer support to provide guidance and expertise that enhances leadership development (Hampton et al., 2004). While the emphasis here is on collaboration, CPD provision allowed for greater initiative in SDPD. Mushayikwa and Lubben (2009) suggest that SDPD is most often apparent in contexts where teachers or professionals are working in disadvantaged environments, and as a result, it can be overlooked. Thus, any

continuous engagement and development taking place goes unseen as it has not been supported through professional development programmes.

According to Vonk (1991), professional development:

'…is taken as the process of accumulating skills, professional knowledge, values and personal qualities that enable teachers to continually adapt within the educational system.' (Vonk, 1991, p.106).

The idea of 'accumulation' and 'adaptation' also implies a form of socially constructed learning and development relating to context, taking place beyond formal PD programmes. Accumulation and adaptation also imply a relationship between experience and learning.

2.3.3.4. Experiential Learning and Reflection.

According to the work of Kolb (1984) and other scholars such as Day (2003), experiential learning requires reflection and meta-competencies such as self-management and self-evaluation. Day's (2003) study found that the most effective school leaders engage in reflection across various contexts, with reflection being integral to a leader's success, driven by personal and educative values. These successful leaders reflect simultaneously in, on, about and for their work, perpetuating self-development and lifelong learning. This reflection combines cognitive and emotional aspects, contributing significantly to their effectiveness as leaders (Day, 2003). Schon (1983) introduced the concept of reflection-in-action, suggesting that individuals can reflect during an experience to inform future actions. However, critics such as Eraut (1995) argue that true reflection-in-action is challenging due to the limited time for simultaneous conscious reflection. While Day (2003) emphasises the importance of systematic reflective practice for headteachers, he notes that such practices are not common among most leaders. Mumford's (1994) work supports this view by highlighting that

managers often learn in unplanned and erratic ways, with learning more likely to occur in challenging situations that require the individual learning to move beyond existing skills and knowledge. This includes the tacit, informal, or influential knowledge gained through experience that underlies leadership learning (Kempster, 2009) and is often only apparent through reflection on or after the event (Day, 2000). Thus, research into professional educational development highlights the significance of reflection on individual subjective experience to drive learning and emphasises that learning is not just about absorbing information. Experiential learning requires actively engaging with one's environment and, through reflecting on past experiences, creating knowledge and developing understanding (Day, 2000; 2003).

This form of experiential learning acknowledges the importance of personal practical knowledge (PPK) generated by educational professionals within specific contexts (Clandinin, 2019). Personal Practical Knowledge (PPK) is understood as that which more often remains below the plane of conscious awareness and, as a result, is elusive (Walsh, 1995), but by default may be culturally influenced (Xu &Wang, 2023). In their study exploring English as a Foreign Language (EFL) student teachers, PPK was developed through the teachers' personal experiences and reflections in their teaching practice. This knowledge was highly contextual and dynamic, shaped by the many interactions the student teachers had with students, colleagues, and the broader educational environment. The authors found that Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) (subject and pedagogical knowledge) could be transformed into PPK through a process involving several factors. Those factors included the student teachers' previous learning experiences, their expectations of the course, the degree to which they engaged with their learning resources and community and their interactions with their own students. Xu and Wang (2023) found that the transformation of knowledge was selective and heavily influenced by the student teachers' personal contexts and experiences. This suggests

that learning and leadership development are highly individualised, depending on the specific contexts, needs and challenges faced by individual leaders. Consequently, to achieve their purpose, leaders require the agency and motivation to integrate with, reflect upon, and learn from their contexts, perceptions, and experiences.

2.4. Final Reflection.

In researching purpose, Steenwegan et al. (2022) suggest a perspective on how heritage schools support multicultural young people to be in the world. Their work emphasises the need to actively confront racial challenges in societies that are increasingly culturally and ethnically diverse. Heritage schools provide opportunities for exploration of culture and identity necessary for each individual to find their place in the world, and to understand who they wish to be and the role they wish to play. While Schulze and Brookes (2020) recognise the huge contribution heritage schools and their leaders offer, the authors also point out how socialisation within society is lacking through governmental educational policy. In writing about education, Dewey (1916, 1938) repeatedly emphasises how education and learning require social interaction and integration, the school being a setting for social reform and a place where the student learns to live and exist in the world.

Having studied Dewey, Biesta (2022) writes about how he views the purpose of education and how it should be conceptualised. Like Dewey, Biesta suggests an alternative approach to being competitive, achieving learning outcomes and focusing on measurement following a curriculum-centred approach. Instead, he suggests that education should prepare us to be in the world and to do so, he introduces the concept of subjectiveness. He emphasises that subjectiveness is not concerned with the notion of identity that is formed from a representation of who I am, and how I identify and am identified by others, but instead is founded on self-understanding that translates into how I am and what I do. Thus,

subjectiveness is concerned with what an individual has learnt, the values one has, and how that applies to how one exists alongside others: the person one has become and how this is put into practice in an individual's life and relationships. This self-understanding and identity are comprehended through practice.

'…. the question of how I exist, how I try to lead my life, how I try to respond to and engage with what I encounter in my life.'

(Biesta, 2022, p. 52).

This is very reminiscent of the purposes expressed by leaders in both Steenwegan et al. (2022) and Schulze and Brooke's (2020) work. Furthermore, Biesta (2022) proposes that a world-centred education has two main purposes. One is that all educational matters are ultimately existential matters, that is, they are about how we live our lives, our relationships with others, what we do with everything we may have learned or acquired and how we become someone through this. This study sets out to explore precisely this aspect of becoming in educational leadership through an examination of individual perceptions of values and identity, culture and context and leadership learning.

Chapter Three.

3.1. Methodology Introduction

This study examines the social, psychological, and contextual factors surrounding heritage leadership perceptions and practices through a life story approach. The study responds to various calls related to the exploration of the lived experience of lesser-known examples of leadership practice (Kempster, 2009). This includes heritage school headship (Thorpe, 2011; 2018), components of effective educational leadership (Bush, 2009), and narrative inquiry into identity formation and development (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010), all indicating the relevance of this study. To do so, the study seeks to answer three main research questions:

1. How do twelve heritage leaders perceive their values and professional identities, and how have these shaped their leadership practice?

2. How do they perceive their school's context and culture, and how has this influenced their leadership practice?

3. What are each leader's perceptions and experiences of leadership learning, and what are their developmental needs?

This chapter provides an exploration of the conceptualisation of the methodology for this qualitative narrative study. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section presents the paradigm rationale and how this relates to the research questions and aims. This is followed by a discussion of the narrative approach adopted, to provide insight into how the research was conceived and offers the justification for the philosophical approach and its relevance. Next, the ontological and epistemological context is discussed to show the foundation on which the study was built. Following the first section, the second presents the procedure adopted for the pilot study and the recruitment of the participants. This is followed by an account of how the data were collected and analysed. The final section of this chapter

examines issues of credibility, ethical considerations, and discussion of 'insiderness' (Floyd & Arthur, 2012, p.171). The limitations of the research are also briefly examined and will be returned to in the concluding chapter. The final section of this chapter concludes with a summary.

3.2. Section 1.

3.2.1. Paradigm Rationale

The core of any research methodology is rooted in its foundational paradigm (Bryman, 2016). This study is situated within a social constructivist qualitative interpretive paradigm, which proposes that reality is not objective or fixed but is constructed through human interaction and shaped by cultural, historical, and social contexts (Guba and Lincoln, 1985; Crotty, 2003). Qualitative life story research is a methodological approach that aligns with the social constructivist paradigm (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). The approach facilitates subjective understanding of individuals within their social contexts or social phenomena as opposed to explanation (Ernest, 1994). Researchers adhering to this paradigm investigate human experiences, relationships, and the meanings individuals ascribe to their actions (Cohen et al., 2002). It is the meaning, or 'sense-making' (Ospina & Dodge, 2005), assigned to those actions and the selected choices a research participant makes that are important. This is because, in the context of the life story, the emphasis lies in the subjective understanding of the individual and their interpretation of their reality (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Thus, the aims and objectives of this research are to understand how the participants have perceived and made sense of their experiences and constructed their leader identities over time. Gathering rich, detailed accounts provides an opportunity to uncover and reveal the complexities of human life (Vygotsky, 1986). So, a social constructivist research method involves collecting and analysing detailed narratives of individuals' lives through in-depth

interviews (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). The exploration and disclosure of lived experiences and influences provide deep insights into self-perceptions, subjective experiences, and contextual understanding (Bruner, 1986). Additionally, life stories reveal identity and self-concept through the narratives chosen and shared (Bruner, 1986), as well as beliefs in one's own and others' leadership (Shamir & Eilam, 2005). This paradigm is particularly appropriate for research that seeks to understand individuals' lived experiences and the meanings they ascribe to them, as it allows for the exploration of subjective realities through dialogue and reflection (Creswell, 2009). The interpretive dimension acknowledges that knowledge is co-produced between researcher and participant, and that understanding is inherently influenced by both parties' positionalities and perspectives (Wibben, 2011; Vandamme, 2021). Such an approach is well-suited to narrative inquiry, where the aim is to uncover nuanced, context-bound insights rather than generalisable truths, as the focus is on understanding as opposed to explaining or predicting behaviour.

However, social constructivism and interpretivism, while foundational to qualitative inquiry, are not without significant limitations. Social constructivism's emphasis on the co-construction of knowledge through social interaction provides valuable contextual depth, yet it often leads to epistemological relativism, where the absence of objective criteria for truth can undermine the credibility of findings (Collins, 2019). Similarly, interpretivism, grounded in hermeneutics and phenomenology, offers rich insights into human meaning-making but is frequently critiqued for its subjectivity and lack of replicability (van der Walt, 2020). Researchers may adopt these paradigms without fully engaging with their theoretical underpinnings, resulting in superficial applications that fail to account for the complex interplay between data interpretation and theoretical construction. Therefore, the approach requires careful reflexivity and methodological transparency to address the inherent subjectivity and ensure the credibility of the research process (van der Walt, 2020). It also

requires careful reflexivity and methodological transparency to address the inherent subjectivity and ensure the credibility of the research process (van der Walt, 2020).

3.2.2.1. Ontology and Epistemology.

Ontology concerns the nature of reality and what can be known about the world (Guba & Lincoln, 1985; Crotty, 2003). This study adopts a relativist ontological stance and does not aim to offer a consensus or generalised truth. As this is an inquiry into lives lived and is true to those particular lives within their social and cultural contexts, the study recognises that reality is not singular or objective but is instead constructed through individual experience. This involves their unique versions or accounts, specific experiences, and how those individuals have made sense of them. No two lives (including their leadership learning and perceptions) are the same. Their worlds are diverse and unstructured in that there is no constant comparison across all the variables of personal lived experience. In line with Boyland (2019), this research acknowledges that each participant inhabits a distinct personal world shaped by their social and cultural contexts. However, it must be recognised that each individual within the research exerts some degree of influence over the research. By eliciting descriptions of participants' accounts, the research aims to develop an understanding of the perceptions and experiences of those individuals, but will inevitably contain some influence of subjectivity or researcher perspective, belief, and attitude (Cohen et al., 2011). For example, as the researcher, what I choose to focus on through the conceptual framework reflects my perspective on how to approach the exploration and discovery. Consequently, the ontological view is not definitive or applicable across groups. It is highly Individualistic, relating only to each individual who participates in the research. The aim is not to uncover a generalisable truth but to explore the lived realities of heritage school leaders and how they

perceive and make sense of their leadership journeys. These realities are inherently diverse and cannot be reduced to a single narrative or compared across uniform variables. Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that is concerned with knowledge: how it is created and what it is possible to know (Crotty, 2003). According to Meleis (2015), this philosophy covers the evolution, accumulation, and acceptance of knowledge. Similarly, Crotty (2003, p. 42) defines epistemology as 'a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know'. Both definitions imply a justification is required (Harding, 1987) or imply there will be an analysis of how the knowledge is generated. Both definitions require an acceptance or recognition of the produced information as knowledge. A constructivist concedes that knowledge generated when exploring the lives of individuals is subjective, as it is socially constructed (Cresswell, 2009). However, such knowledge has numerous variables. It is as diverse and multiple as humans themselves, their interactions, surrounding cultures, and social environments, and therefore cannot be generalised (Cohen et al., 2011). As the aim is to investigate or find out about perceptions and experiences, and the understanding or learning gained by each individual as they progress, then those who have first-hand knowledge of the specific learning or understanding must be addressed (Blumer, 1969) and their accounts elicited. Hence, meaning-making from reality, events, experiences, and subsequent actions is individualistic and is interpreted according to the perspective and context of that individual (Boyland, 2018). Their perspectives are susceptible to circumstance and open to change, dependent on those contexts and variables (Boyland, 2018). Their meanings or experiences offer knowledge that may be considered a matter of perspective, but those perspectives are the lived truths of those individuals and must be accepted as each individual's truth (Ernest, 1994). Their realities, perceptions or truths are therefore socially, culturally, historically, and context-bound (Floyd, 2012). This is particularly important here, where the context, culture, and social relations creating the leadership process and learning

are examined. As their realities or truths and meaning making lie beyond the direct experience of the researcher (although there may be parallels discussed in section 3.4.2.1), what is offered up as subjective understanding must be recognised as personal episodic sources of their learning (Cohen et al., 2011). Therefore, knowledge is not merely an accumulation of facts. The source of knowledge is experience arising from the perceived socially constructed subjective understandings accrued by social beings from within their world and lived experience (Ernest, 1994). This implies seeing the world through another's eyes, considering the variables and what has led to how they have understood and interpreted that world according to their account of it (Cohen et al., 2011).

As the researcher, I am ardent to approach the exploration with curiosity and a yearning to see into these worlds as clearly as possible through consultation. However, as a human being, it is impossible to wholly divorce my interpretation or sense-making or withhold my perspective and remain completely detached from the research process. Vandamme (2021) claims both researcher identity and perception are sociologically and scientifically important as the researcher operates within a social context and knowledge culture that lends meaning to the research subject, and this must also be acknowledged. Knowledge is understood as emerging from the interaction between the researcher and participants, shaped by both parties' perspectives, values, and experiences (Wibben, 2011; Vandamme, 2021). This approach is particularly suited to narrative inquiry, where meaning is co-constructed through dialogue and reflection. However, it also introduces limitations. The subjective nature of interpretation raises concerns about researcher bias and the replicability of findings (van der Walt, 2020). Moreover, the reliance on participants' retrospective accounts, particularly in life history or narrative approaches, may be affected by memory distortion or selective recall (Burns et al., 2022).

In the context of semi-structured interviews with heritage school leaders, these philosophical assumptions shape both the process and the outcomes of the research. Participants' accounts of their values and leadership experiences are treated as situated truths: valid within their own contexts but not necessarily transferable. The researcher's positionality, including prior experiences in education and leadership, inevitably influences the framing of questions and interpretation of responses. While this embeddedness enhances empathy and insight, it also necessitates rigorous reflexivity to ensure transparency and integrity throughout the research process (Vandamme, 2021).

This study embraces the complexity and subjectivity of human experience. The conceptual framework provides a guiding structure, but remains flexible and responsive to the emergent nature of narrative data (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The goal is not to impose theory, but to remain open to the meanings that participants construct and to represent their stories with fidelity and respect.

3.2.2. Narrative Inquiry.

Narrative inquiry, particularly through a life history approach, offers a powerful means for exploring human experience by capturing how individuals construct meaning from their lives over time (Bryman, 2016; Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Riessman, 2008; Floyd, 2012, 2016). The life story or 'narrative identity' approach allows participants to articulate how key people, events, and contexts have shaped who they are (McAdams, 2006; McAdams & McLean, 2013). Through what they relate, participants not only reveal their experiences but also their evolving self-concepts, perceptions, beliefs, and values (Bruner, 1986; McLean, 2017). In this study, the narrative approach enables heritage school leaders to reflect on and communicate their leadership journeys, offering insight into how they perceive themselves, their experiences, and their roles within culturally complex educational environments.

Reissman (2008) maintains that choosing narrative inquiry offers the potential to gain insight into identity, construction, and social interaction. The approach can provide insight into the internalised and evolving story individuals construct to explain who they are and how they have become that person (Chase, 2005; McLean, 2017). These stories are not mere recollections of events but are interpretive acts that reveal how individuals understand their past, navigate their present, and imagine their future (Sayed & Mitchell, 2015). Through storytelling, participants disclose not only what has happened to them but also how they interpret those events, what they have learned, and how they position themselves in relation to others (Bruner, 1986; Bryman, 2016, 1991; McLean, 2017). In this way, narrative inquiry enables access to the subjective meanings individuals assign to their experiences, offering rich insight into the processes of identity construction and leadership development (Holland & Lachicotte, 2007; Shamir & Eilam, 2005).

The life history approach, a form of narrative inquiry, is particularly suited to capturing the longitudinal and developmental dimensions of identity. It allows participants to reflect on key moments in their personal and professional life paths, highlighting how past experiences influence present understandings and future aspirations (Floyd, 2012, 2016; McAdams, 1999, 2001). This temporal dimension is captured through the integration of *diachronic* elements relating to how identity evolves over time, and *synchronic* elements indicating how individuals simultaneously navigate multiple roles in different social contexts (McAdams, 2001; Ricoeur, 1984, 1988). For heritage school leaders, this dual perspective is essential in understanding how cultural identity, leadership practice, and educational values intersect and shift across time and space.

Narrative inquiry also foregrounds the relational and dialogic nature of meaning-making (Vygotsky, 1978). Perceptions and experiences and not conveyed in isolation but are shaped by the interaction between teller and listener, and by the perceived purpose and audience of

the narrative (Bruner, 1991). Participants may tailor their stories to align with what they believe the researcher values or expects, and the researcher's presence, identity, and interpretive lens inevitably influence the co-construction of meaning (Wibben, 2011; Vandamme, 2021). This highlights the importance of reflexivity in narrative research, as the researcher must remain critically aware of their role in shaping the research process and outcomes. In this study, my own background in education informs my understanding of participants' narratives, but also requires careful reflection to avoid imposing assumptions or interpretations that may distort participants' intended meanings (Burns et al., 2022; McAdams & Mclean, 2013; Mclean, 2017; Vandamme, 2021; Wibben, 2011).

Despite its strengths, the life history approach also has limitations. One key concern is the reliability of memory. Participants may unintentionally reconstruct or omit aspects of their experiences, influenced by current beliefs, emotional states, or social desirability (Burns, Bell, & Vickers, 2022). The stories told are therefore not objective accounts but subjective interpretations, filtered through time and context (Ricoeur, 1984, 1988). Additionally, the selective nature of semi-structured narrative interviews such as this means that certain experiences may be emphasised while others are downplayed or excluded, depending on what the participant considers relevant or appropriate for the research setting (Bruner, 1986; McAdams et al., 2006; McLean, 2017). This selectivity is not a flaw but a feature of narrative identity, reflecting the ways individuals make sense of their lives in relation to their current roles and audiences (McAdams, 1999; McAdams et al., 2006; McLean, 2017). Another limitation lies in the interpretive nature of narrative analysis (van der Walt, 2020). The researcher's own assumptions, values, and theoretical positioning may influence how stories are understood and represented. This aspect of qualitative inquiry raises questions about the trustworthiness and transferability of findings (van der Walt, 2020). To address this, narrative researchers must engage in transparent and rigorous reflexivity, clearly articulating their

positionality and the interpretive frameworks guiding their analysis (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Vandamme, 2021).

In this study, I have sought to maintain methodological transparency by documenting the rationale for my methodological choices and by remaining open to the complexity and ambiguity inherent in participants' narratives (McLean, 2017; Vandamme, 2021). Furthermore, narrative inquiry is time-intensive and demands a high level of ethical sensitivity. Building trust with participants, eliciting meaningful responses, and analysing complex, context-rich data require sustained engagement and careful attention to issues of consent, confidentiality, and emotional well-being (Burns et al., 2022; McLean, 2017; Coupland & Brown, 2012). This is particularly important when working with participants from culturally diverse or historically marginalised communities. This may apply to heritage school leaders, whose stories may involve sensitive or identity-defining experiences (McLean, 2017). Ethical narrative research must ensure that participants retain agency over their stories and that their voices are represented with integrity and respect (Burns et al., 2022; Coupland & Brown, 2012; Holland & Lachicotte, 2007; McAdams, 2006; McLean, 2017). Nevertheless, the life history approach remains a powerful tool for educational research (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). This study provides a nuanced understanding of how heritage school leaders perceive their roles and shape their leadership practices in relation to their individual communities. It offers a rich, human-centred perspective that complements and deepens our understanding of leadership in diverse educational settings (Shamir & Eilam, 2005). It also contributes to a broader recognition of the value of lived experience in shaping educational practice and policy, particularly in contexts where cultural identity and leadership intersect in complex and dynamic ways.

3.3. Section 2.

3.3.1. Participant Recruitment.

All the participants in this study are in leading positions within heritage schools in the British Isles. While most of the schools are located in Southern England within a 30-mile radius of London, two schools are not. The identities of these schools remain undisclosed for ethical reasons. This has minimal impact on the data, as all schools are situated in urban areas, varying in affluence. Some schools operate with smaller student bodies of 20 to 30 students, while others were divided into smaller branches when numbers increased. Most of the schools are registered charities, with some holding limited company status. Purposive sampling (Cohen et al., 2017) is a non-probability sampling technique used to select participants with specific knowledge, experience or characteristics that are relevant to the research objectives and questions. This form of sampling enhances the rigour and trustworthiness of the research by aligning the selected participants with the research aims (Campbell et al., 2020; Cohen et al., 2017). The specific requirements in this study entailed finding head teachers within a 30-mile radius who ran heritage schools outside mainstream schooling hours, teaching heritage language and culture. This was because initially, the intention was to conduct interviews at the schools, as I presumed this might be more convenient. However, having experienced the convenience of online communication, all the heritage leaders preferred to be interviewed online from their homes, and most chose to have the interview in the evening when work and family duties were less demanding.

I initially aimed to only select schools with charitable status to allow insight into how the schools retain sustainability. Many of the schools are run voluntarily and were initially set up as charities, but later became limited companies (Arthur & Souza, 2023). Considering this, I recognised that obtaining information as to why the change was made might also provide insight into leadership challenges and decisions. Therefore, location and charitable status

were no longer prerequisites. Some of the schools limit their offer of tuition to language and culture, while others tutor or offer support with mainstream subjects such as maths. Again, these factors do not impinge on the leadership learning or the trajectory negatively. On the contrary, the objective is to obtain information-rich data such as how perceptions were formed, why certain decisions were made, and the motivations or ramifications of those decisions.

The pilot study helped further define objectives and refine questions and approach. As the pilot study took place during the pandemic, the only other requirement was that my interviewees would be willing to be interviewed online, which was the only acceptable option at that time. This meant finding head teachers within a 30-mile radius was no longer necessary if participants were willing to be interviewed online. As a result, while most participants in the study are located in southern England, two are located elsewhere within the British Isles. The pilot study consisted of a one-hour online interview with just one participant. While the participant was asked about her perceptions and experiences gathered in her leadership journey, she was not given the values questionnaire before the interview, and yet she clearly referred to her values in this interview. While the PVQ was not received from the piloted participant until after the interview due to personal circumstances, I ensured the main study would require the return of the PVQ beforehand. This would ensure participants inadvertently reflected upon their perceived values before the interviews took place. The pilot study also further established the necessity of building and establishing rapport, although it must be recognised that having mutual acquaintances and a familiarity with the cultures significantly helped. The planned interview schedule contained one interview per month. However, this plan was disrupted as many participants altered their availability or were unavailable due to holidays. Consequently, additional participants had to be recruited, and the schedule was frequently adjusted. Although the original plan was to

complete the interviews over a twelve-month period (January to December 2023), the delays necessitated more time for recruiting new participants, ultimately resulting in the interviews being conducted over nine months from July 2023 until early 2024, leaving nine months for write-up instead of the previously planned twelve months.

Finally, research participants were obtained through snowball sampling (Cohen et al., 2017). Through my work and personal contacts within the field of education, I was given the contact details of a small number of subjects whom I first contacted by email. These individuals, in turn, passed on other names of potential interviewees to me, having reassured me that they had discussed the study with those who would be willing to help. This process took time and required initial email contact to confirm willingness to participate in an online recorded interview before I sent out details of the study, along with ethical consent documents. The ethics forms are available in Appendix I and are discussed in detail in section 3.4.2.

3.3.2. Participant Profiles.

Participant information is presented in the table below and then discussed. Participant profiles will be referred to throughout Chapters 4, 5 and 6. Heritage schools that are affiliated with the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education are not disclosed to ensure confidentiality.

Name	Quals + title	Nationality	Subjects offered	Yrs in lead role	Size of School	Sponsorship/ affiliation/ support	Approx yr sch. was established	Ltd / Charity
Katie - Jane	PhD Head Teacher	Mandarin Chinese	Chinese, Maths + cultural aspects Open to all nationalities	20 +	300 Large sch.	UKFCS/CIEF	2001 sch. re-established. Headship est. 2002	Charity
Harriet	MBA	Mandarin Chinese	Chinese Language and Culture Open to all nationalities	10 +	20 (numbers vary in branches)	Chinese Embassy + UKFCS	2014 (1st sch.) 2018 (2nd sch. est.)	Ltd
Yvonne	Degree + Quals to teach. Mandarin	Mandarin Chinese	Chinese + cultural aspects Open to all nationalities	10+	300 + Large sch.	Overseas Community Affairs Council UKFCS/CIEF	2009	Charity

Name	Qualification	Language	Subjects/Description	Years	Size	Affiliation	Founded	Type
Zandra	PhD	Mandarin Chinese	Chinese + cultural aspects: open to all nationalities	20+	200 + Large sch.	UKFCS/CIEF	2006	Charity
Leo	PhD Principal	Mandarin Chinese	Chinese, Maths + aspects of Chinese culture, e.g. calligraphy Open to all nationalities	5+	140 approx. Large sch.	UKFCS/CIEF	2017	Charity
Ruby	MBA Headteacher	Mandarin Chinese	Chinese + cultural aspects Open to all nationalities	7+	100 + approx.	UKFCS/CIEF	2016	Ltd.
Judy	Masters + Lang. Teaching quals	Mandarin Chinese	Chinese + cultural aspects Open to all nationalities	15+	2-300 Large sch.	UKFCS/CIEF	2009	Ltd
Greg	Masters Curriculum lead	Greek Cypriot	Greek Language and Culture	4+	20 - 60 Med Sch	Cyprus High Commission Education Dept	2010 approx.	Charity
Sheila	PhD	Greek Cypriot	Greek Language and Culture	8 +	20 – 60 Med Sch	Greek Orth + Anglican Church + premises	Before 2000	Charity
Sue	PhD	Greek	Greek Language + Culture Open to all nationalities	20+	300 + Large sch.	Cyprus High Commission Ed. Dept + various public benefit foundations	Before 1990	Charity
Gracie	Masters Co-lead	Czech + cultural aspects	Czech Language and Culture	6+	100+ Large sch.	The Czech Embassy + Czech + Slovak Heritage schools Association. Local community support.	2015 In 2016: became the co-founder of the charity	Charity
Karen	PhD Founder	Italian + cultural aspects	Italian Language and Culture	13 +	70 – 80 Med sch.	Baptist Church Community Centre		Ltd

Table 1 Participant Profiles

As shown in the table above, this study includes seven Mandarin Chinese schools out of the twelve schools included in this study, all offering Mandarin Chinese. Many Chinese heritage schools were founded in 1994 under the UK Federation of Chinese Schools (UKFCS). These schools have and continue to promote Chinese language education and culture, with member numbers now reaching over eighty schools within the federation alone. Many more exist. The federation provides resources for teaching publications and professional support. It holds annual cultural events, competitions, and performances. One of the Mandarin language

schools was promoted by the Overseas Community Affairs Council, which serves as a cultural educational organisation for economic and informational exchange between those overseas and Taiwanese Chinese. There are three Greek Heritage leaders, two of whom are supported by the Cyprus High Commission Education Department and one of which is affiliated with the Orthodox Church in association with the Anglican Church of that neighbourhood. The embassy plays a significant role in maintaining connections and providing support for the Czech school. The Czech embassy also informs the school about events and important cultural celebrations. As the Italian school is a limited company, they do not receive any help or support from organised institutions. However, the school is run through a community centre in liaison with the local Baptist church.

For many nationalities, heritage school research has primarily focused on language acquisition, teacher training, and ethnic identity (Thorpe, 2011). This may partly be due to differing organisational leadership structures. Cypriot Greek heritage schools, for example, were first established in 1952 (Thorpe & Karamanidou, 2024). These schools have a complex governance structure involving multiple stakeholders, including the Cyprus Educational Mission (KEA), the Greek Orthodox Church, and various community organisations. Headteachers can be appointed by the Ministry of Education in Cyprus or directly by the community, reflecting a mix of centralised and decentralised governance. This creates a complex network of authority and influence (Thorpe & Karamanidou, 2024). While little research has been carried out to indicate the extent of the impact of the pandemic on heritage school leadership and organisation, there is growing recognition that all nationalities face sustainability issues due to financial fragility and difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff (Thorpe, 2024; Young & White, 2022).

3.3.3. Data Collection.

To adopt a 'life history approach' (Turner & Mavin, 2008, p. 382) in examining the leadership development process, I used a timeline frame sent out beforehand.
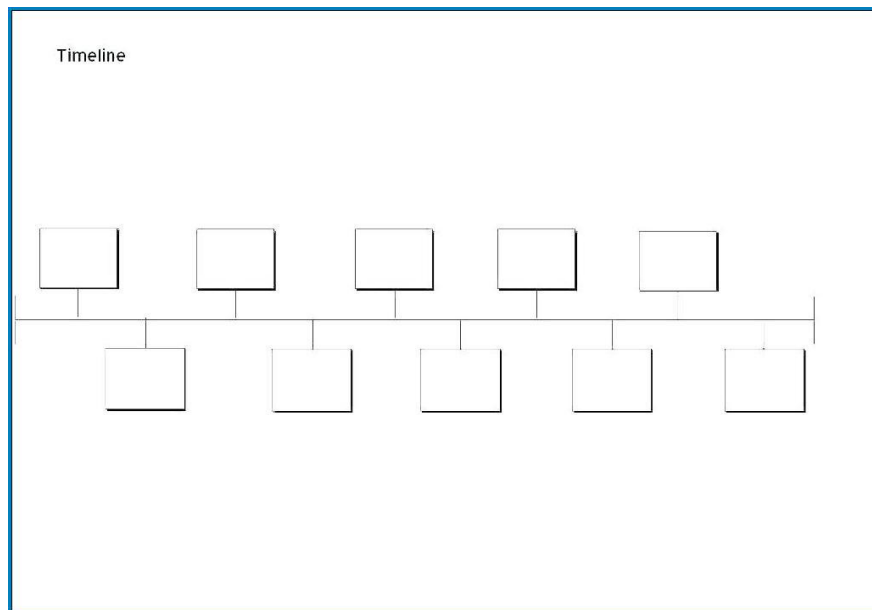
Figure 2 Timeline Frame for participants to complete.

As visual methods such as timelines can help provide greater data depth, enhance rapport with participants, and facilitate interviews with those whose expressive language may be limited (Adriansen, 2012; Kolar et al., 2015), the timeline frame accompanied the participant information, ethics, and consent forms (Appendix 1.1). Marshall (2019) points out how timelines can help participants engage more deeply with their stories and create new meanings and understanding, especially in complex topics. Thus, each participant was requested to reflect and then complete their timeline identifying significant events, people or turning points within their leadership trajectory. This supported the semi-structured approach (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, 2021) and helped elicit the events and people who may have impacted the leadership decisions and subsequent evolution. The timeline frame was accompanied by the questions participants would be asked in the interview (Appendix 1.3). This aimed to prompt each participant to reflect on particular turning points, events, or

individuals they considered important. The timeline was then returned to me before the interview, along with the completed PVQ (Appendix 1.2) and signed consent forms. The wording provided with the timeline frame requested participants to complete the timeline in the following way:

'Please reflect on your experiences and chart how influential people and events have impacted your career trajectory and career decisions. You might include key people, events, conclusions, decisions, or thoughts, etc, as you feel significant and wish to tell me about.'

In this way, participants were encouraged to reflect on their past experiences, those people, and events they regarded as of personal and professional significance. To avoid imposing inflexibility within the interview structure, I requested that the timeline be completed and returned beforehand. This meant unnecessary questions were avoided and fidelity was encouraged, providing the interviewee with considerable control over the pace and direction of the communication (Marshall, 2019). I aimed to capture the perceptions and process of leadership identity evolution and practice (Coupland & Brown, 2012). The completed timelines also provided the prompts and opportunity for clarification of specific events, dates or names if needed. Using a timeline also meant I could use a tick-box schedule and refrain from interrupting (Marshall, 2019). Following advice by Floyd (2012), notes were taken especially where there was mention of key themes or a difference in language style. If and when needed, clarification was sought through an alternative route, such as email, after the interview. Unfortunately, the completed timelines could not be included in this study as they contained names and references that could jeopardise anonymity.

3.3.4. Schwartz PVQ: Procedure and Analysis.

As mentioned above, to obtain insight into the core values held by each school leader, participants were requested to complete the Schwartz (2016) Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ-21) along with the consent forms. The PVQ 21 requires participants to respond to twenty-one items by considering how much they relate to hypothetical characters in portraits. The participants are asked to compare the portrait of a person in each of the questions to themselves rather than themselves to the portrait. The verbal portraits describe each person in terms of what is important to him or her. Thus, they capture the person's values without explicitly identifying values as the topic of investigation. From the participants' answers, we can infer their values from their self-reported similarity to the portraits described (Schwartz, 2016).

Each participant recorded their responses on a 6-point Likert-type scale, where (1) represents 'very much like me' and (6) represents 'not at all like me'. An example of the first four questions is given below. The full PVQ is contained within the ethics documentation (Appendix 1.2).

Appendix 1. Adapted from the Schwartz Questionnaire (Gender neutralised).

Here we briefly describe some people. Please read each description and think about how much each person is or is not like you. Tick the box to the right that shows how much the person in the description is like you.

	HOW MUCH LIKE YOU IS THIS PERSON?					
	Very much like me	Like me	Some-what like me	A little like me	Not like me	Not like me at all
1.Thinking up new ideas and being creative is important to him/her. She/He likes to do things in his/her own original way.						
2.It is important to him/her to be rich. He/she wants to have a lot of money and expensive things.						
3.She/He thinks it is important that every person in the world be treated equally. He/she believes everyone should have equal opportunities in life.						
4.It's important to hr/him to show his/her abilities. She/He wants people to admire what he/she does.						
5.It is important to him/her to live in secure surroundings. She/ He avoids anything that might endanger his/her safety.						

Table 2 Example of Schwartz PVQ 21, first four questions

These ratings are then used to calculate scores for each of the ten values as suggested by Schwartz (2021) in the scoring and analysis instructions. For example, according to Schwartz (2021), questions 7 and 16 indicate how much an individual rates the value of conformity. By indicating the extent to which they see the portrait as similar to themselves, they are indicating the importance and likeness they self-rate as having that value.

Values	Item number in the PVQ
Conformity	7, 16
Tradition	9, 20
Benevolence	12, 18,
Universalism	3, 8 19,
Self-Direction	1, 11
Stimulation	6, 15,
Hedonism	10, 21
Achievement	4, 13
Power	2, 17
Security	5, 14

Table 3 Schwartz (2021) Coding

Each participant's responses in the PVQ can then be assessed against the ten universal values.

3.3.5. Qualitative Interview Procedure.

Each interview commenced with a general statement, as suggested by Flick (2018), to elicit contextual information about the interviewee's school and leadership. This approach allowed interviewees to share information they felt comfortable with, facilitating a discussion about their roles and leadership before progressing to more personal details.

Interviews were conducted and recorded on Microsoft Teams, capturing words, voice, tone, and paralinguistic features. This enabled the recordings to be replayed for transcription verification and review of body language and facial expressions. During each interview, I ensured that the set questions (Appendix 1.3) were addressed while consciously refraining from interrupting participants' natural progression to allow them a sense of control over the communication. I focused on minimising my responses, asking open-ended questions, and

taking notes, especially when clarification or expansion was needed, without disrupting the interviewee's flow, as advised by Floyd (2016). Participants were generally forthcoming, leaving little opportunity for intervention. They were passionate and animated, eager to discuss their schools, motivations, and leadership journeys.

To ensure interviewees had the flexibility to express their views and share their life experiences and perceptions, I adopted an approach that balanced structure with openness to foster an optimal atmosphere. Interviews began with open-ended questions to allow the conversation to flow naturally. After gathering the initial contextual information, I followed the advice suggested by Goodson and Sikes (2016). I adapted questions based on interviewee responses, encouraged elaboration on relevant topics, and applied follow-up questions to new topics that arose. I kept track of time to ensure key questions were covered, avoiding leading questions or expressing opinions that could influence responses. If needed, probing questions were used to gather more in-depth information without steering the conversation too rigidly. Sensitive topics were approached with empathy and respect. At the end of each interview, I summarised the main points discussed to ensure mutual understanding and allowed interviewees to add additional information they deemed relevant. I expressed gratitude for their time and sharing and followed up promptly to clarify or check information if needed before full transcription and coding began. As an example, typical open-ended or more probing questions I kept on standby included the following:

- Personal experiences: 'Can you tell me more about the challenges you have faced and how you have overcome them?'

- Feelings and emotions: 'What emotions did you experience when you encountered that situation?'

- Opinions and beliefs: 'How do you believe this issue should be addressed or what action do you believe should be taken?'

- Relationships, interactions, and leadership: 'How have the interactions you have outlined influenced your perspectives and leadership?' and 'looking back, what do you recognise as fundamental to your leadership development?'

3.3.6. Qualitative Interview Data Analysis Process

For this study, I utilised Delve, a qualitative data analysis software tool, to conduct thematic analysis. Given that Delve is cloud-based, I first ensured the ethical safety with the University. I specifically sought a tool that would support rigorous and accurate analysis without the technical complications that can distract from the analytical process. Delve provided an efficient organisation process that facilitated the identification, categorisation, and refinement of themes, as well as the nesting and merging of codes as insights evolved (Saldana, 2021). This tool allowed for the structured organisation and easy retrieval of a large volume of data, which included approximately two thousand snippets and more than two hundred and fifty codes. The codes and themes derived from the qualitative data, which indicated the findings for each component of the conceptual framework, are presented in the Appendices as directed in each chapter to show the coding analysis and results. The analysis process followed the steps advised by Braun and Clark (2012), beginning with the verbatim transcription of each interview as soon as possible after recording. All identifying information, such as names, locations, and school names, were removed to maintain confidentiality. Delve significantly enhanced the analysis process in several ways. Firstly, it streamlined the importation and organisation of transcribed interviews, allowing for a logical structure that facilitated efficient data management. The platform's intuitive interface made it easy to familiarise oneself with the content, ensuring a thorough understanding of the context and nuances of the responses.

Guided by my research questions related to perceptions and experiences of values and identity, context and culture and leadership learning, I initially coded the data deductively. While the

conceptual framework and research questions provided a structure for identifying relevant information to code, I approached the data with flexibility (Boyatzis, 1998), acknowledging the necessity of both deductive and inductive approaches to ensure a rigorous and analytically sound qualitative analysis. Thematic analysis, which is considered appropriate for narrative responses (Reissman, 2008), encompassed both descriptive and narrative elements. Through the iterative process of reading and re-listening to the recorded interviews, I became increasingly familiar with each transcript, building a greater understanding of recurring phenomena and participant profiles.

As I sifted through the data, noting common themes, topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that appeared repeatedly in more than one interview, the iterative process allowed for the identification of additional codes and themes (Braun & Clark, 2012). Significant phrases, sentences, or paragraphs were identified, and codes were created by naming the themes or concepts and assigning them to the relevant sections of the text (See section 3.3.7.). Enabled by the review feature, I reviewed the codes by examining all quotes collated under each code and exploring the context behind them. Through the review feature and the easily accessible context, I could at any point check that the integrity of the data had been maintained. I then refined the codes by merging similar codes and splitting broad codes into more specific subcodes as advised by Braun and Clark (2012). I looked for commonalities and connections that indicated emerging themes whilst simultaneously noting unique perspectives. Given the extensive and demanding nature of this process, I made notes (Floyd, 2016) to understand the relevance of my findings. In many cases, this was due to the frequency of recurrence, such as the mention of similar events or thought processes that impacted the leadership. Saldana (2021) describes coding as:

> 'a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns summative, salient, essence capturing, and/or evocative attributes for a portion of language-based or visual data.'

(Saldaña, 2021, p. 5)

Consequently, I applied several methods to inductively code the recurring patterns in the transcripts, including process coding, descriptive coding, simultaneous coding, and In Vivo coding shown in the following section.

3.3.7. Coding examples.

1. <u>In Vivo Coding:</u>

    Use of the interviewee's own words: **widely undervalued.**

    Figure 3 In Vivo Coding

2. <u>Simultaneous Coding:</u>

    Involves applying multiple codes to the same text.

Figure 4 Simultaneous Coding.

3. Process Coding:

The description of a process or action that becomes a code. The example here is participants' use of the word 'Welcoming,' which then became a code.

Figure 5 Process Coding.

4. Descriptive Coding:

Summarising the primary topic of the excerpt: Trust

Figure 6 Descriptive Coding.

5. Initial Stages of Coding. Applying Codes through the process of first highlighting the relevant data before assigning or creating a code to that specific segment.

Figure 7 Initial Stages of Applying Codes

6. Initial Stages of Coding: Organisation of Codes

Aggregated coded snippets are easily accessible.
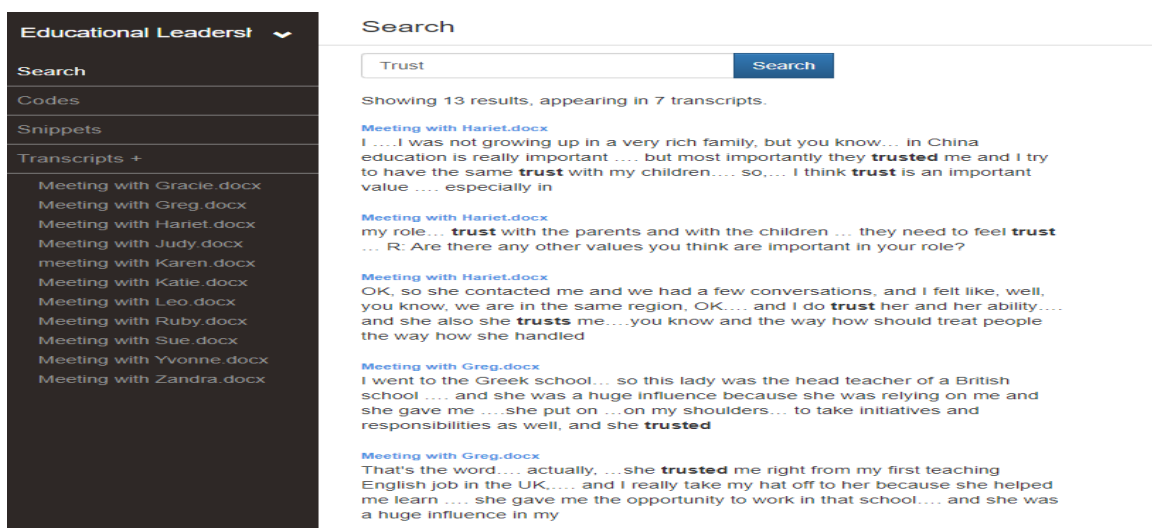
Figure 8 Organisation of Codes 1

The screenshot below, taken in the initial stages of coding, shows how many times and across how many transcripts a code has been applied.

Figure 9 Organisation of Codes 2

7. Initial Coding

In a text where simultaneous coding has been carried out or there are multiple codes, the researcher can easily identify which part of the text a code relates to by clicking on the code. This will automatically highlight the words in the text where that particular code has been applied. Codes can be dragged and dropped into groups or categories. Below are codes relating to collaboration that have been tentatively grouped.

Figure 10 Organisation of Codes and Subcodes.

This was a time-consuming process; however, Delve allows the researcher to see all quotes/ snippets collated under each code and how many times the code has been applied to each transcript and across all the data. This helps to maintain the integrity of the data. As coding progressed, I was able to differentiate which codes were too broad or too narrow and required refining. This then prompted either merging similar codes or splitting broad codes into further subcodes, as shown in Figure 9 above.

8. Developing themes and subthemes

This led to an exploration of the relationships between different codes and required searching for patterns, contrasts, and connections between the themes identified. This required many rounds of revision (Terry et al., 2017). However, eventually, the coded data helped develop insights through the identification of commonalities across interviews.

 I considered Delve a useful tool that helped to organise and analyse the data in a structured way. I followed the advice by Braun and Clark (2012) that the analysis required analytical skills and critical thinking, coupled with continual engagement, particularly as new themes emerged. Braun and Clark (2019) outline that this involves:

   "……the researcher's reflective and thoughtful engagement with their data and their

   reflexive and thoughtful engagement with the analytic process" (Braun & Clarke, 2019, p.

   594).

So, with every new code, I returned to the data and recoded or adjusted codes to maintain consistency throughout. I was particularly aware that inductive coding can involve subjective interpretation and can lean towards inconsistency in the coding and analysis (Braun & Clark,

2019). Therefore, this process required keeping a continual record so that each time I returned to the data, upon reflection, I made myself aware of what had previously taken place to avoid a lack of continuity.

One of the most useful aspects of Delve is that when I had finally surpassed saturation (Braun & Clark, 2021) and completed the coding process, I was able to export a long document that contained all my codes with their definitions, along with all of the snippets that had been coded with that code. The feature to export the coding is available in either a Word doc or an Excel spreadsheet. I found the Word doc particularly useful to refer to when I was writing on the computer, and could look simultaneously at a hard copy of my coding.

9. The Use of AI

When I began working with Delve, an AI Chat feature did not exist. However, the feature did become available in the summer of 2024. Many of the screenshots above were taken in the initial stages of data analysis, where the index under Educational Leadership shows an absence of an AI Chat function. Delve has excellent customer support, and as I had been in contact with Lai Yee, who created and is in the process of further developing Delve as a qualitative analysis tool, I had expressed my willingness to give feedback on my experience. I met online twice with Lai Yee, and while I was initially hesitant to use the AI Chat function, I expressed my interest in discovering what AI could further suggest concerning my analysis. I was reassured that if I incorporated the function and wished to remove it from the application, I would be able to. I document here my experience, as it may be helpful and relevant to future researchers considering tools for qualitative data analysis. What I found was that AI could be a useful tool if I needed certain facts or to locate specific information within the interviews. For example, I could ask Delve AI to detect where the word 'challenge' appeared across all the interviews. This was an effective use of the tool, although in Word, the find function

could also be used to perform the same or a similar task. However, when AI was given the prompt to suggest subcodes for a code, it was less effective in analysing all the relevant information. While the AI function supported conclusions to some extent, the identification of certain patterns and themes was based on a selection as opposed to all the transcripts. This can be seen in the screenshot below, wherein I asked Delve Chat AI to find snippets related to personal values and identity to examine whether anything additional could be found. When discussing reflective thematic analysis, Braun and Clark (2019) point out that the codes applied by the researcher are representative of the researcher's understanding and interpretive analysis of the emerging patterns and meanings across the data set. This means that no two researchers will reach the same conclusions. However, their combined individual analysis may result in obtaining richer interpretations. While I did not expect Delve AI to reach the same conclusions, I considered it a possibly useful tool to prompt suggestions for further reflection and analysis. The screenshot below shows the suggestions AI offered.
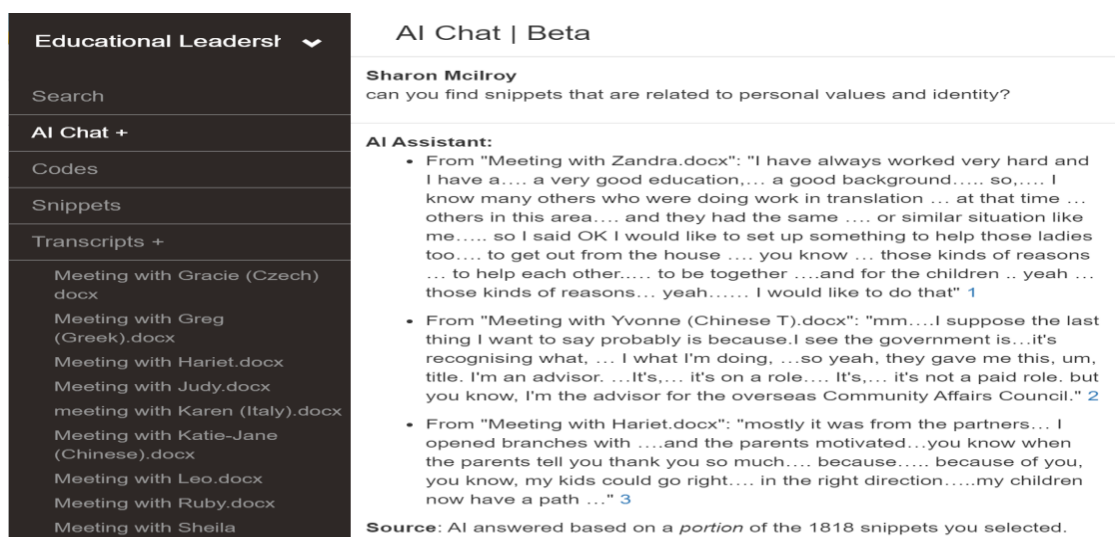
Figure 11 Organisation of Codes using Delve's AI Suggestions.

Unfortunately, Delve AI (Source) at this time did not produce anything new. As can be seen in the concluding message in Figure 11, the answer AI produced was based on a portion of the snippets. This was a recurring result that naturally deterred additional use.

 I concluded that the AI function may prompt reconsideration of coding or further categorisation similar to a form of intercoder reliability (O'Connor & Joffe, 2020), but it could not be relied upon and certainly did not offer the breadth, depth or critical analysis of understanding that an additional human would bring to the process and analysis. I recognised that AI could be considered an additional support of sorts, i.e. if checking factual details, but could not replace the evaluative ability that a human counterpart offers to qualitative coding and analysis necessary for this study. As AI is rapidly advancing, undoubtedly, this feature will be further developed shortly.

3.4. Section 3.

3.4.1. Credibility

Unlike quantitative research, which requires replicability as a basis for reliability, qualitative research does not aim for replicability in the same way (Stahl & King, 2020). When a study is replicable in quantitative research, it means that other researchers can follow the same steps and will arrive at the same or similar results, and this builds trust (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). However, in qualitative research, trustworthiness is built through transparency and rigour in the process. This involves the researcher being very clear and detailed in their documentation of the methods applied, the steps taken, and each decision reached (Barkhuizen & Consoli, 2021; Stahl & King, 2020). This methodology may also include thick description (Geertz, 2008), researcher positionality (Barkhuizen & Consoli, 2021) and detailed contextual information (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). This would require ensuring detailed information about the research context and participants is provided for others to

determine if the findings can be applied in different settings (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). In this way, the research process becomes transparent and the findings credible (Shufutinsky, 2020). Guba and Lincoln (1985) maintain that this can produce transferability, which they outline as the degree to which the findings of a study can be applied to other contexts or settings. Through the provision of detailed descriptions of the research context and settings, others can then analyse and conduct transferability (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). Furthermore, the researcher must retain consistency, maintaining coherence within the research process and findings, ensuring those findings accurately reflect the data and participants' experiences and perspectives (Barkhuizen & Consoli, 2021; Shufutinsky, 2020; Stahl & King, 2020). To enhance the credibility of the research, Guba and Lincoln (1985) outline various strategies during the research design and implementation. These strategies involve demonstrating a good understanding of the research context and pertinent literature to underpin interpretations, while also remaining attentive to any literature that challenges emerging themes. This process also involves articulating researcher interests and experiences so that any personal biases that may affect the data are made transparent (Roberts et al., 2019; Shufutinsky, 2020).

Additionally, Sandelowski (1993) advises that record keeping must be consistent and meticulous to ensure data interpretation is transparent and thought processes are made clear. Like Geertz (2008), he emphasises that during data analysis, the researcher must include documentation of participants' rich and thick verbatim descriptions. In this way, participant accounts support findings through the representation of their perspectives (Shufutinsky, 2020; Slevin & Sines, 1999). Slevin and Sines (1999) suggest comparisons should be conducted, or an analysis of similarities and differences of the participants' accounts should be shown to allow their different perspectives to be represented.

3.4.2. Ethics

Life history and narrative research necessitate a sensitive approach and require the researcher to consider the emotional impact on each participant and the continual need to protect disclosed information. Such research also requires acknowledging and being considerate of the feelings and emotions that may be brought to the surface when disclosing or relating personal information such as life history (Turner & Mavin, 2008). Establishing trust is crucial. Although initially planning in-person school visits to help aid rapport and establish greater trust, the pandemic necessitated a shift to remote communication, primarily via email or Microsoft Teams.

This posed challenges, as any queries related to the research or data collection could not be easily and quickly dealt with or quelled. Despite these challenges, participants were reassured they could reach out any time to address concerns about confidentiality, anonymity, and data storage. Also, my existing personal and professional networks positively influenced participant willingness. Microsoft Teams proved essential and meant that if a heritage leader wished to speak to me before the interview, they could not only hear my voice but could also see my face through a brief Microsoft Teams call. This was a reassuring option for those who may not have felt totally confident about being interviewed in English, which was not their first language.

The University's Code of Good Practice was adhered to, meaning that before data collection, ethical approval was sought through submission of the completed forms. Ethical approval through the appropriate University College Research and Ethics Committees was granted (Appendix 1.1). This complied with the necessary ethical policy and procedure. Throughout the study, meticulous efforts were made to maintain the anonymity of the participants and their respective schools. Data confidentiality was ensured by pseudonymising participant names and securely storing all information, both physically and electronically. Participants

had the right to withdraw at any time and were fully informed about data handling procedures. Once transcribed, audio files were removed from recording devices, and participants were informed that if they wished to withdraw at any stage, they could do so immediately. Participants were also reassured that any requests to view or withdraw personal information would also be respected. All gathered data, including transcriptions, consent forms and personal information, was stored in a securely locked private office within a locked cabinet. All electronically stored data was fully anonymised and kept password-protected and available only to me. As the data was analysed using a cloud-based online tool (Delve), I was initially concerned about the security and privacy of sensitive information. Before any information was added to Delve, it was thoroughly anonymised. This included the removal of all references to names, locations, countries, or any other information that helps identify a participant. All data stored is private, can be deleted at any time, and is password-protected and GDPR compliant. I was therefore reassured that Delve was an ethically sound tool to use, as all my submitted data would remain private to me.

3.4.2.1. Insider Research.

Although the participants interviewed in this study were unknown to me before initial contact, we do share mutual acquaintances and are connected professionally through those contacts and related institutions. While this can offer advantages to the research process, several associated challenges must be given careful consideration at all stages of the research (Floyd & Arthur, 2012). Albeit consent is obtained from the outset, throughout the research process and beyond, ethical commitment and anonymity must be maintained. This is particularly relevant in narrative research, wherein sensitive experiences are narrated along with references to people and circumstances. This can be challenging for the researcher, as they must withhold their own verbal and emotional response. As a researcher, I understood

that I should neither interrupt nor offer my reflections. As a professional, I understood I should avoid becoming involved beyond the research objectives due to potential future work-related interaction with the participant. If at any point knowledge gleaned through the research arises in later discussion, the researcher must cover up how they have obtained that information by creating an alternative fictional yet believable source or remain silent. Alternatively, they must find a valid justification for any amount of disclosure. This was not always easy and potentially ethically, morally, and professionally challenging, particularly if the fictional source could be proven fictional or disclosure unprofessional (Floyd & Arthur, 2012). However, in this study, my insider position conferred advantages. Having lived sixteen years in Greece, I speak fluent Greek, which can be understood as an acceptance and understanding of the culture. I have over twenty years of experience working with Chinese cohorts and have built a reputation for care and dedication. Interviewees were made aware of my experience in both cases through mutual acquaintances before initial contact, which helped create a rapport of trust and amenability.

3.4.3. Limitations of the Research

As I have a background in education, this may have had an influence or created a concept in the minds of the participants interviewed. As previously mentioned, many of these head teachers have come to their positions without any formal background in education or teaching. I was aware that this could create anxiety or wariness that they may be judged or evaluated. I was also conscious that they may try to fulfil what they perceived as my expectations, which could potentially impact the quality of the data gathered (Denscombe, 2003).

This problem is encapsulated here:

'Research on interviewing has demonstrated fairly conclusively that people respond differently depending on how they perceive the person asking the questions. In particular, the sex, age, and ethnic origins of the interviewer have a bearing on the amount of information people are willing to divulge and their honesty about what they reveal.' (Denscombe, 2003, p. 184).

Therefore, I was careful before the interview to dispel any concerns raised that indicated this possibility. At all times in all correspondence, I reassured participants of their options to question, reaffirm, or withdraw if at any point they did not feel comfortable with my questions or study. I reassured them that the aim was to record their stories and experiences and obtain insight into their leadership, learning and identity. A further potential limitation relates to the data collection, which was conducted through the main semi-structured one-to-one interviews. The use of a timeline beforehand supported these interviews, but was more related to the interview procedure, providing a prompt where and if required. It was not possible to include the completed timetables as they would have jeopardised anonymity; therefore, some other tool may have been more beneficial in capturing a progression that could have been included in the research findings. While I recognise the PVQ as a useful tool and have made a gender-neutral version (Appendix 1.2), I could have further adapted the questionnaire to include a choice entitled 'prefer not to say.' This is particularly relevant to one respondent (Karen) who was hesitant to rate the portrait relating to Security. Furthermore, for many of the participants, answering the PVQ did not seem relevant to their heritage school leadership. This was both an advantage and a disadvantage. The PVQ inadvertently elicits personal values, aiding the researcher in capturing relevant information. However, for some, this may appear obscure and irrelevant. I was very fortunate that, apart from one leader who was finally not included in this study, I obtained the completed

questionnaire from all twelve respondents without questioning. As I aimed to capture each leader's values without explicitly identifying values as the topic of investigation, I did not wish to insist. I did not proceed with this hesitant leader, as I considered I was imposing at a time when she had explained she had many commitments and distractions and did not feel confident about the questionnaire.

Concerning the interviews, while semi-structured interviews are acknowledged as typical for interpretive research of this nature, further triangulation, such as focus group interviews with staff, may also have provided additional evidence and insight into perceptions and practice in heritage school leadership.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the research design and methodology employed to explore the perceptions and experiences of twelve heritage leaders. The ontological and epistemological foundations are established, aligning with an interpretivist paradigm that seeks to understand the subjective realities of each. Justification is given for the qualitative research approach and methods to show how these align with the research aims. This chapter addresses issues of credibility, articulating positionality, values, and beliefs, to provide transparency. Ethical considerations inherent in qualitative research were outlined to show that appropriate measures were taken to protect the rights and well-being of each leader. The qualitative data analysis process involving systematic qualitative techniques and tools was presented, and the use of Delve as an analytical tool was outlined. Delve contributed to the credibility of the findings by supporting the identification of patterns and themes within the collected data. While limitations of the study were acknowledged, such as generalisability constraints, this chapter demonstrates the potential of the chosen methodology to generate valuable insights into the leadership perceptions and learning

experiences of each participant. Finally, this chapter provides the foundation for the presentation and discussion of the research findings in the subsequent chapters. The research design and methodology were carefully considered and justified, ensuring that the study adheres to rigorous academic standards and contributes to the body of knowledge in the field of leadership in heritage schools.

Chapter Four.

4.1. Introduction to Values and Identity.

This study examines the evolution and practice of twelve heritage school leaders. The study aims to capture this evolution through an investigation of the processes and practices, the perceptions, experiences, motivations, and decisions as disclosed by each. The study seeks to answer three overarching questions.

1. How do twelve heritage leaders perceive their values and professional identities, and how have these shaped their leadership practice?

2. How do they perceive their school's context and culture, and how has this influenced their leadership practice?

3. What are each leader's perceptions and experiences of leadership learning, and what are their developmental needs?

To answer these questions, this research has unpacked the investigation through a three-part conceptual framework (see Chapter 2.3). The following three chapters (Four, Five and Six) begin by examining the Schwartz (2012) Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ) before looking at each component of the conceptual framework in turn. Chapter four begins by discussing the PVQ to clarify its relevance, as the survey can be used to gain insight into individual perceptions of values and incentives. Each research participant completed the PVQ before being interviewed. The results are displayed in individual circular graphs, illustrating each participant's values profile. The PVQ circular graphs are presented along with a summary of what each heritage leader emphasised. This provides additional contextual participant information to the information provided in the participant profile given in Chapter Three, Table 1.

The PVQ survey graphs and accompanying information provide a basis for the proceeding results, analysis and discussion of the qualitative data obtained from the individual interviews relating to the first aspect exploring identity and values. To introduce this research, the complete qualitative results and analysis of the leaders' perceptions of their values and identity are presented in Appendix II (2.1) Table 10, along with a summarised table showing the results in codes, subthemes, and themes in Appendix II (2.2). The results analysis and discussion of the individual interviews are provided below, along with participant excerpts to exemplify the findings and conclusions for this first component of values and identity. Chapter Five focuses on the second examined aspect. This chapter discusses the findings and analysis of the individual interview data relating to the cultural and contextual factors that surround, prompt, and reinforce leadership perceptions, evolution, and practice. Chapter Six examines the third and final area researched. This chapter deconstructs and discusses the leadership perceptions that were revealed by this group of leaders and clarifies the circumstances and experiences that led to how this has impacted their leadership development. Participant challenges are presented, followed by suggestions relevant to heritage leadership in Chapter Seven. Each component or aspect of the conceptual framework commingles with the other two, providing insight into heritage leadership perceptions and practice. Results, analysis, and discussion are provided simultaneously.

4.2. The Schwartz Portrait Values Questionnaire

According to Schwartz (2012), values are central to the social sciences and offer a useful means through which one can gain an understanding of cultural groups, societies, and individuals, and explain attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour. Schwartz (2016) created several methods through which values can be measured. However, for this research, the PVQ-21 21was chosen due to the questionnaire's cultural adaptability as it reliably measures values

across different cultures, groups, and languages (Davidov et al., 2008). Despite cultural differences, societal groups have a similar hierarchical order of value priorities (Schwartz, 2016). Schwartz's (2012) theory identifies ten basic personal, yet universal, values recognised across cultures and validated across eighty-two countries.

As values operate as guiding principles in life, they indicate basic motivations (Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992), goals, attitudes (Beierlein et al., 2016) and behaviour. Additionally, the PVQ has been shown to have less socially desirable bias and therefore offers the possibility of obtaining an indirect measurement of personal values (Danioni & Barni, 2018; Maio, 2010). Based on his theory, Schwartz's model of values has been empirically supported and widely used within the social sciences to understand how individuals as well as groups in different societies comprehend their differing social realities (Roccas & Sagiv, 2010). The PVQ provides insight into the core values that guide an individual's actions, transcending specific situations. By understanding these values, we gain a deeper understanding of human behaviour, motivations, and decision-making (Floyd & Morrison, 2014; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 2009).

Schwartz represents an individual's values as a circular structure where one person's choices or answers to the questionnaire (PVQ) reflect motivational conflicts and compatibilities (Schwartz, 2016)
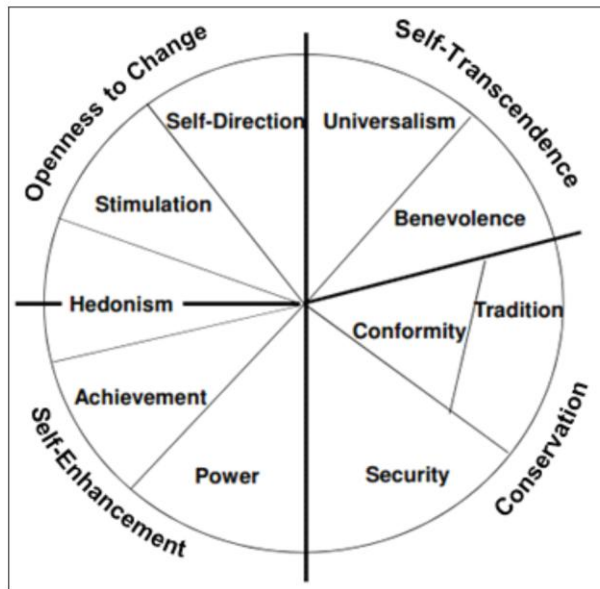
Figure 12 Schwartz's Motivational Value Types and Higher Order Value Domains Source: Schwartz (2012).

The ten basic human values each have a distinct underlying motivation or goal, which correlates divergently or harmoniously. Figure 12. presents the two-dimensional model embedding the values into four domains (self-transcendence, conservation, self-enhancement, and openness to change). Values that fall close to each other in the circle share similar motivational bases or goals. The further apart they fall, the more they differ and conflict (Schwartz, 2009). Therefore, if an individual attempts to hold two values that oppose each other, they are represented in the circle on opposite sides in opposing directions. The circular structure captures both conflicts or opposing values and compatibility or similarly motivated values. For example, values emphasising self-direction and stimulation are adjacent, reflecting their shared motivation for independence and novelty in contrast to values such as tradition and self-enhancement, which oppose each other.

Remarkably, this circular arrangement appears to be culturally universal, transcending geographical boundaries while simultaneously reflecting basic human motivation (Belic et al., 2022; Sagiv & Schwartz, 2022). Values that relate to the left-hand side of the circle: (self-direction, stimulation, hedonism, achievement, and power), are mainly related to an

individual's expression of personal interests and characteristics, whereas values on the right-hand side (benevolence, universalism, tradition, conformity and security) are indicative of how one relates to others and how this affects an individual's interests (Schwartz, 2012).

As shown in Figure 12, the ten values relate to the four domains in the following way:

1.   **Openness to change**:

Self-direction: independent thought and action- choosing, creating, exploring, self-fulfilment.

Stimulation: excitement, novelty, and challenge in life

2.   **Self-enhancement**:

Hedonism: Pleasure or sensuous gratification for oneself.

Achievement: personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards.

Power: Social status, prestige, control, or dominance over people and resources.

3.   **Conservation:**

Security: Safety, harmony, and stability of society, relationships, and self.

Conformity: restraint of actions that violate social expectations or norms.

Tradition: respect, commitment, and acceptance of cultural or religious customs.

4.   **Self-transcendence:**

Benevolence: preserving and enhancing the welfare of those in frequent personal contact (the 'In Group').

Universalism: understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection/care for the welfare of all people and nature.

Schwartz (2012) makes it very clear that values are 'desirable goals that motivate action' (Schwartz, 2012, p. 3). Therefore, it is interesting to note how these values will be rated by heritage leaders whose work, aspirations, interests, and motivations may contain commonalities.

4.2.1. Heritage Leaders' PVQ Results.

The procedure and calculation of the PVQ results are provided in Chapter 3.3.4; however, here I will briefly recap on its structure. The PVQ contains twenty-one items that contain hypothetical characters in portraits. Participants respond to each item on a 6-point Likert scale by considering how much they relate to the hypothetical characters in the portraits. Having self-rated through a comparison of the portrait description to themselves, we can infer participants' values from their self-reported similarity. Below in Table 4, the participant's overall results are provided before individual PVQ results are presented and analysed.

Question Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Participant																					
Ruby	1	6	1	6	5	2	6	1	1	6	2	1	1	1	2	6	6	1	1	3	6
Zandra	2	4	2	2	3	1	3	2	3	3	2	1	2	2	4	3	3	1	2	2	3
Leo	1	6	1	4	3	6	4	2	2	3	1	1	4	4	5	1	3	1	1	2	4
Katie-Jane	3	5	2	5	5	4	4	1	1	4	2	1	2	3	4	3	3	1	1	1	3
Hariet	1	3	2	3	4	3	4	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	3	1	3	2	2	2
Yvonne	1	6	1	2	4	5	5	2	2	5	2	1	3	1	6	3	4	1	1	2	5
Judy	1	6	1	2	2	1	3	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	2
Greg	1	3	1	3	4	4	4	2	2	3	1	2	3	3	2	3	3	1	2	3	3
Sue T	1	4	3	1	5	6	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	1	3	1	5	1	1	1	2
Sheila K	1	6	1	4	1	1	2	1	2	5	2	1	3	2	3	2	2	1	1	2	2
Gracie	2	5	1	2	2	3	3	1	4	3	3	1	2	3	2	3	2	2	1	1	3
Karen	1	6	1	3	NA	2	4	2	2	4	2	1	4	NA	3	4	3	2	2	3	4
	Self-Dir	Power	Univ	Achieve	Security	Stimuli	Conform	Universe	Tradition	Hedon	Self-Dir	Benev	Achieve	Secure	Stimulate	Conform	Power	Benev	Universe	Tradition	Secure

Table 4 Participant PVQ Results (1= very much like me, 6 = not like me at all).

Thus, we can see that Ruby has given a high rating to question one and question eleven, as she has answered very much like me (1) for question one and like me (2) for question eleven. Both question one and question eleven are indicative of the value of self-direction. If we look at Ruby's answers for questions two and seventeen, we can see she has rated both as 'not like me at all' (6). Questions two and seventeen are indicative of the power value. According to the questionnaire, this implies that Ruby has rated self-direction as a much higher value than power. However, interpreting the mean scores from the PVQ helps to clarify and compare the relative importance of different values held by an individual.

Following advice by Schwartz (2021, p.1- 4) in the repository of value scales with instructions, I have followed the steps (A, B and C) laid out on page 2 of the coding document to calculate the Mean RATing (MRAT) or centered values for each individual in the following manner. I first calculated the average for each participant by dividing their total score for all value items by the total number of those items. So, for example, for conformity, Ruby's numerical answer to question seven and her answer to question sixteen were added together. This was calculated as (6+6 = 12). As there were only two questions related to conformity, her total of twelve was then divided by two to give 6. Once this average had been calculated for each of the universal values, the average score across all 21 questions was calculated for the participant and subtracted from each of their value averages to give the final MRAT score. In this example, Ruby's average score over all questions was approximately 3.0952, and I subtracted this from her conformity score of 6 to give her an MRAT value for conformity of approximately 2.9048. I next calculated the mean of each of the centered items for each one of the 10 values for each participant. This resulted in a mean score for each of the ten values. The mean scores for each value could then be analysed to understand the value priorities of the group. In the table below, the scores in red show low importance and those in green indicate a participant's most important values.

Person	Universalism	Benevolence	Tradition	Conformity	Security	Power	Achievement	Hedonism	Stimulation	Self-Direction
Ruby	0	0	1	5	2	5	2.5	5	1	0.21
Zandra	1.71	0.71	2.21	2.71	2.21	3.21	1.71	2.71	2.21	1.43
Leo	0.62	0.29	1.29	1.79	2.79	3.79	3.29	2.79	4.79	0
Katie-Jane	0.67	0.33	0.33	2.83	3.33	3.33	2.83	2.83	3.33	1.55
Harriet	1.90	2.07	1.57	3.07	3.07	1.57	2.57	2.07	2.07	0.79
Yvonne	0.48	0.14	1.14	3.14	1.64	4.14	1.64	4.14	4.64	0.36
Judy	1.43	1.43	1.43	2.43	2.43	3.93	1.93	2.43	1.93	1.64
Greg	1.24	1.07	2.07	3.07	3.07	2.57	2.57	2.57	2.57	0.29
Sue	1.81	0.81	1.81	1.31	2.81	4.31	0.81	2.31	4.31	0.52
Sheila	0.95	0.95	1.95	1.95	1.45	3.95	3.45	3.45	1.95	1.17
Gracie	0.76	1.26	2.26	2.76	2.26	3.26	1.76	2.76	2.26	1.98
Karen	0.97	0.81	1.81	3.31	N/A	3.81	2.81	3.31	1.81	0.52

Table 5 MRAT Score for each Participant

	Universalism	Benevolence	Tradition	Conformity	Security	Power	Achievement	Hedonism	Stimulation	Self-direction
Average	1.05	0.82	1.57	2.78	2.46	3.57	2.32	3.03	2.74	0.87
Total	12.54	9.88	18.88	33.38	27.07	42.88	27.88	36.38	32.88	10.45

Table 6 MRAT Scores for Values for all Participants.

Lower scores indicate greater importance of that value to the person and may also imply a personality type (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2017; Schwartz, 2012, 2016). As there appeared to be common value patterns within the group, I totalled the scores across all the participants to see what this might show. The total scores across all the participants are shown in the table below:

Values	High score = least impt. Low score = most impt.
Conformity	33.38
Tradition	18.88
Benevolence	9.88
Universalism	12.54
Self-Direction	10.45
Stimulation	32.88
Hedonism	36.38
Achievement	27.88
Power	42.88
Security	27.07

Table 7 Overall Scores for Values for all Participants.

From these scores, one could infer that Benevolence, Universalism and Self-Direction are highly important to the majority within this group, suggesting they value helping others and personal independence. Power and Hedonism are less important, indicating that social status and pleasure are not primary motivators overall for those in this group.

4.2.1.1 Representation of Individual PVQ Results.

A Likert scale of 1-6 was used for this questionnaire and can be seen below.

Very much like me	Like me	Somewhat like me	A little like me	Not like me	Not like me at all
1	2	3	4	5	6

Table 8 Likert Scale found in the PVQ.

In the table below, these scores are inverted so that a visual representation in a graph will show a higher number for a more important value and a lower number for a less important value. However, this will also include zero to one on a graph, as it considers zero to one as a starting point. This would then be represented numerically as in the table below.

Very much like me	Like me	Somewhat like me	A little like me	Not like me	Not like me at all
5	4	3	2	1	0

Table 9 Inverted Numerical Representation

The inverted scores provide a clearer visual representation of each respondent's values. I then created individual graphs to show each participant's value profile. Below, the individual graphs showing the values profiles for each participant are presented along with a brief outline of the main points each participant communicated or emphasised in their interview. This is followed by a discussion of how this relates to motivational value types.

4.2.2. Heritage Leaders' PVQ Graphs and Summaries

1. Ruby: (7+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school)

Figure 13 Ruby's Chart
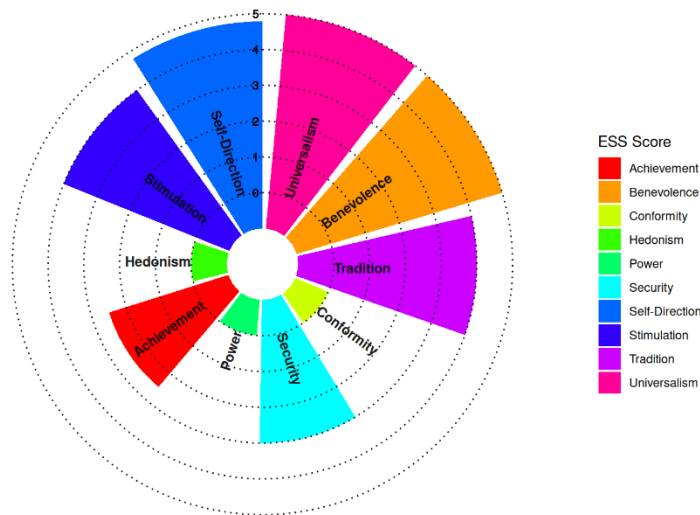
In her interview, Ruby described her upbringing, particularly her relationship with her strict grandmother and absent mother. Disillusioned with life, Ruby journeyed from China to the UK. She outlined her dedication to education and the challenges she faced in setting up the Chinese school. She emphasised the importance of traditional values, her dedication to teaching, and the resilience needed, which she believes has led to the success of her school. Throughout her story, Ruby reflects on her past experiences, hardship, determination, and a passion for education, highlighting her unique approach to teaching and the impact of her cultural background on her leadership. Ruby communicates a very caring nature and has high ideals. She emphasises that the driving force behind her leadership is her strong desire to contribute positively to British society and nurture future generations.

2. Yvonne: (10+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

Figure 14 Yvonne's Chart
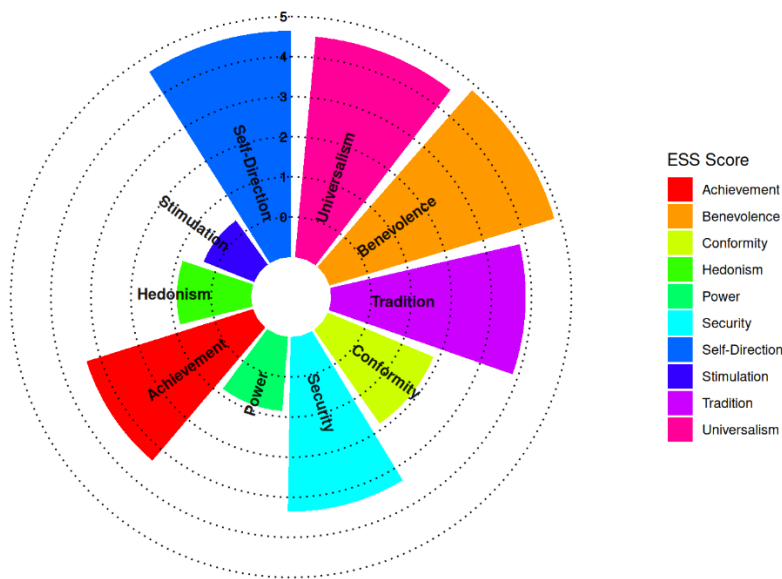
Yvonne is a dedicated head teacher who serves as an advisor for the Overseas Community Affairs Council. She teaches Chinese and focuses on promoting her culture and language through various events and workshops. Her passion lies in bridging cultures and fostering connections within the community. Yvonne's work is driven by a desire to support young people, promote diversity, and create opportunities for cultural exchange. Despite challenges in finding good teachers and managing costs, Yvonne remains committed to her mission of preserving heritage and promoting cultural understanding. She values honesty, transparency, and community support in her work. Yvonne's determination and passion for teaching and cultural exchange have shaped her journey in establishing and running a language school, emphasising the importance of language, culture, and community connections.

3. Gracie: (6+ years' experience leading a large Czech school)

Figure 15 Gracie's Chart
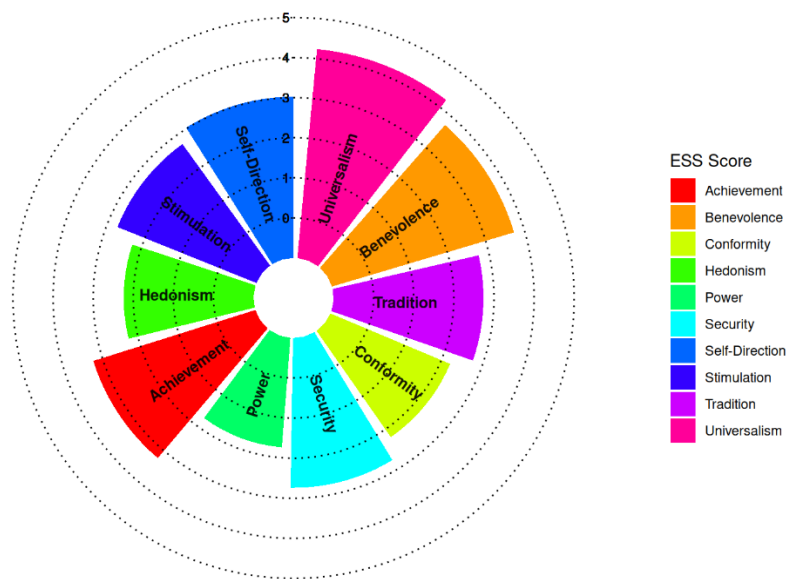
Gracie talks about the challenges she has faced in her leadership, such as Brexit, which affected student exchanges. This included the end of the Erasmus programs through which the Czech government arranged and sent student teachers to support heritage schools. She highlights the importance of community, cultural preservation, and language education for Czech children living in the UK. Gracie emphasises the need for volunteers and community support to sustain the school and ensure that Czech culture and language are passed on. Financial challenges, educational limitations like the inability to offer GCSEs in Czech, and the reliance on volunteers are also related. The school functions as a second family for many, providing a sense of belonging and connection to Czech heritage. The school collaborates with other Czech and Slovak schools in the UK and with embassies to support cultural and educational initiatives. Gracie's dedication to maintaining Czech identity and fostering a supportive community is evident throughout the interview.

4.   Greg: (4+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek Cypriot school):

Figure 16 Greg's Chart
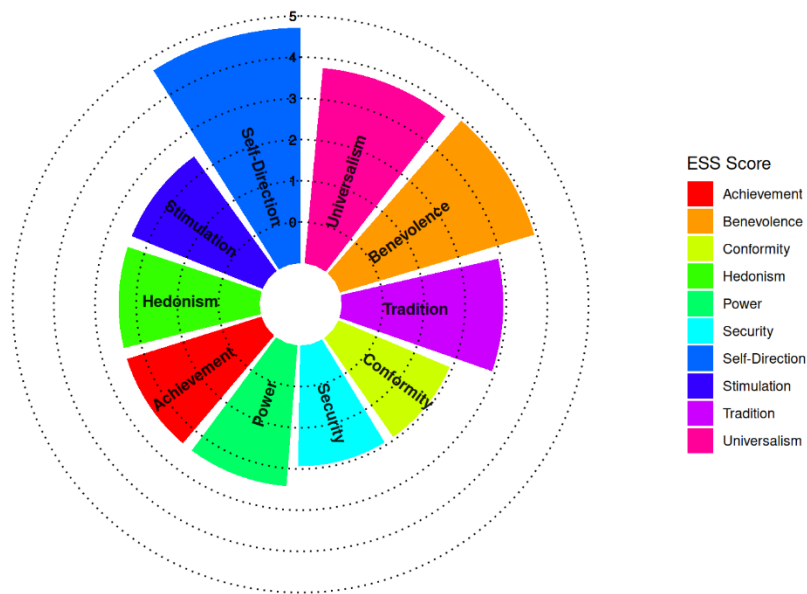
In his interview, Greg relates an interest in education and teaching from a young age. He emphasises the importance of learning from experience, mentors, and training. He portrays a determination and willingness to learn through hands-on experience and hard work. His passion, enthusiasm, commitment, diligence, and responsibility in his role as a leader demonstrate his focus on setting a positive example and fostering a dedicated work ethic among his team. He values British and Greek ethos in education and aims to improve Greek supplementary schools by advocating for larger schools with better pay for teachers. He highlights challenges in finding dedicated teachers due to low pay. Greg aspires to become a head teacher in a state school and values empathy, respect, and community in how he leads. He acknowledges the cultural significance of Greek schools in maintaining language and identity for students. Despite facing financial and staffing challenges, Greg remains passionate about education and committed to supporting students and teachers in his community.

5. Harriet: (10+ years' experience leading various branches of small Mandarin Chinese schools)

Figure 17 Harriet's Chart
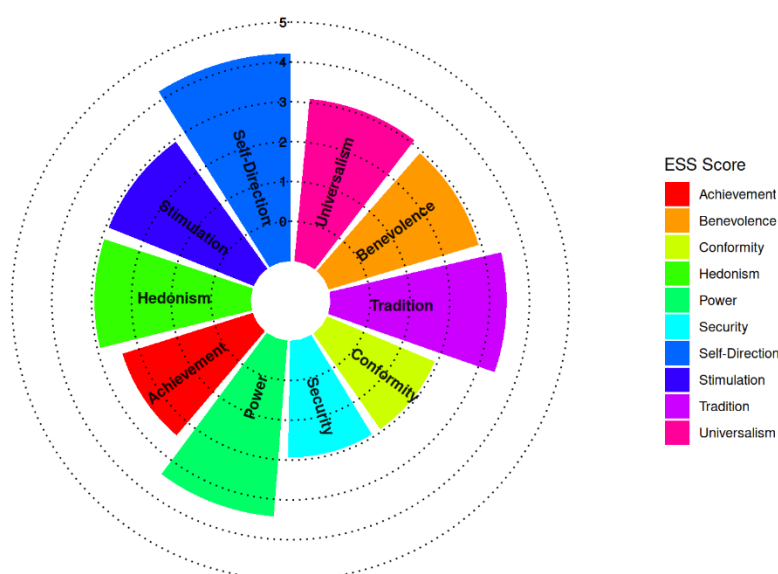
Harriet refers to herself as the founder of the Chinese language school, which now has several

branches. In the interview, she discusses her passion for education and community

involvement and emphasises the importance of supporting parents, students, and teachers.

Harriet values cooperation with local schools and cultural exchange. She expresses gratitude

for the support from parents, teachers, and the community, highlighting the positive impact

on students' education and cultural understanding. She mentions the importance of the

overseas Chinese community members who have played a significant role in her leadership

journey. Harriet acknowledges the challenges of finding good teachers and managing a team

effectively. She believes the school's mission is to provide quality education, foster

intercultural communication, and make a positive contribution to society.

6. Judy: (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school)

Figure 18 Judy's Chart
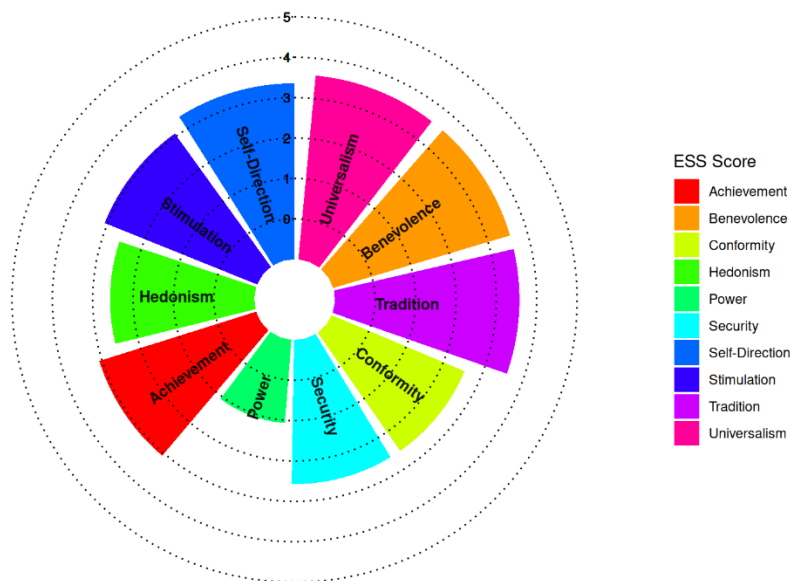
Judy discusses her journey of establishing a Chinese school in the UK without prior teaching experience, highlighting the challenges she faced, such as finding good teachers, classroom locations, and managing rapid growth. Judy mentions her prior success as a businessperson, indicating her confidence and experience in leadership roles. She discusses her experience working in a state school, where she learned about school operations, meetings, and systems, contributing to her leadership knowledge. She reflects on learning from her experience in a state school and applying this tacit knowledge to her own leadership, underscoring the significance of experiential learning in leadership development.

Judy emphasises the importance of building a supportive community within the school, fostering cultural connections, and providing opportunities for students to achieve academic success in Chinese language exams. Judy's dedication to education and community-building is evident throughout the transcript, as she shares her passion for helping children connect with their heritage and creating a warm, inclusive environment in the school.

7. Katie-Jane: (20+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

Figure 19 Katie-Jane's Chart
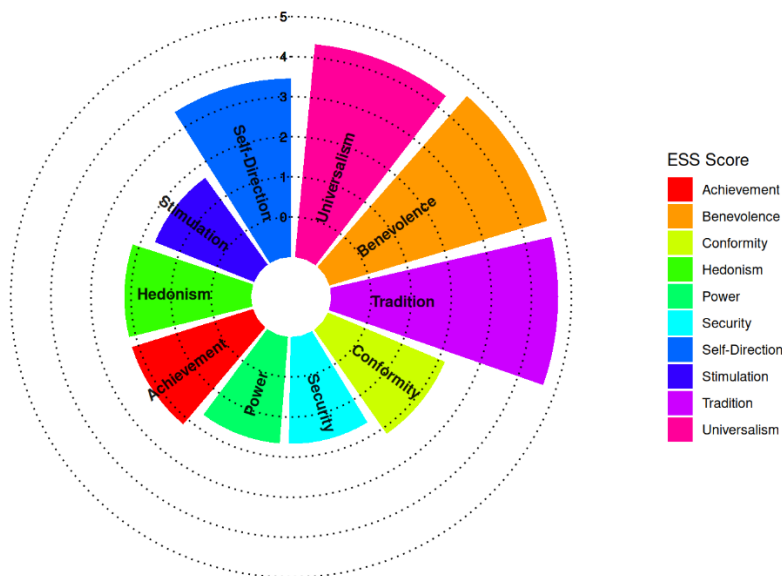
In her interview, Katie-Jane describes starting and running a Chinese supplementary school and how this has evolved over the years. Katie discusses the challenges faced in terms of funding, finding suitable teachers, and maintaining a stable staff. She emphasises the importance of cultural education alongside language teaching and the important role of the school in preserving heritage. The school's reliance on volunteer parents and the struggle to transition from charity status to charging fees are highlighted. Despite financial challenges and a shrinking student body due to the pandemic, Katie remains dedicated to providing a space for students to learn Mandarin and Chinese culture. However, when reflecting on the future of heritage provision, even though she is fanatical about the importance of education, she acknowledges that there may not be an ideal scenario. She states:

> *'…. we can't force anyone to recognise us… not mainstream or the government'*

8. *Leo: (5+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school that offers tuition in a wide range of culturally related subjects)*

Figure 20 Leo's Chart
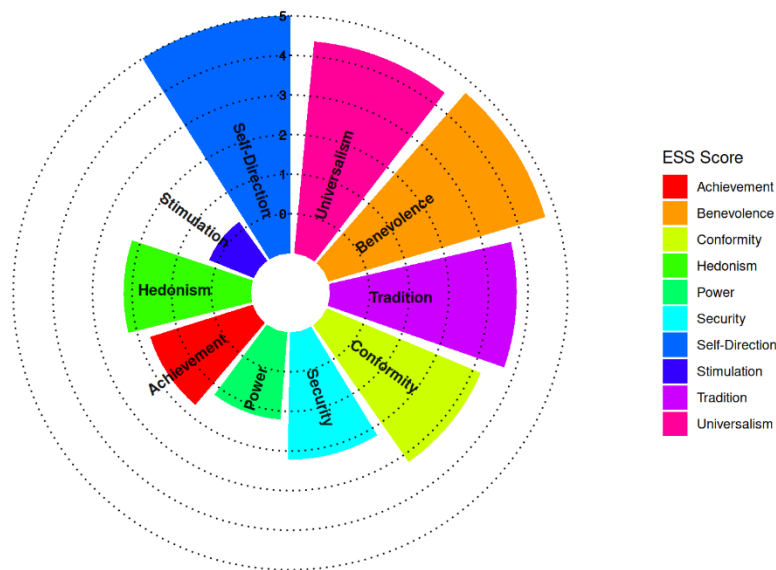
Leo discusses the importance of education and leadership in running a heritage school. He shares his background, including his academic achievements and career redirection from university lecturing in China to education consultancy in England. When reflecting on his life, his experiences helped him understand his mission and purpose as a leader. Leo emphasises the significance of celebrating diversity and promoting traditional Chinese culture through education. He highlights the challenges he faced in starting a school during the pandemic, including financial constraints and the need for qualified teachers. Leo's motivation stems from his belief in providing quality education and his passion for Chinese culture and philosophy. Throughout the interview, the importance of responsible leadership in education and the impact it has on students' lives is also stressed. Leo's dedication to his mission and vision for the school's success despite obstacles highlights his commitment to providing a valuable educational experience.

9. *Karen: (13+ years' experience leading Italian heritage schools)*
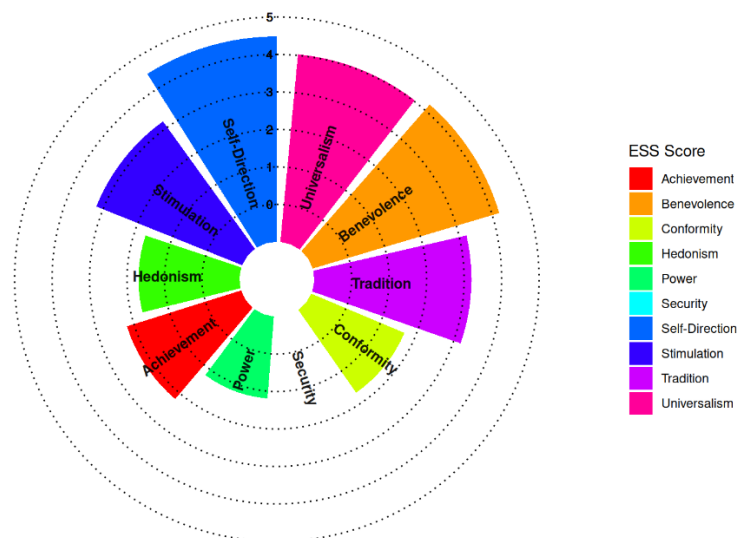
In her interview, Karen discusses the importance of preserving heritage languages, promoting multiculturalism, and creating inclusive spaces for minority languages. Karen emphasises the challenges faced by heritage schools in terms of regulation and recognition within mainstream education systems. Simultaneously, Karen expresses concern about applying the same regulatory framework used for mainstream schools to heritage schools, indicating a value for preserving the unique spirit of heritage education. She points out the need for regular communication between state schoolteachers and heritage schoolteachers to support students effectively. She stresses the significance of effective communication channels, such as websites and newsletters, to involve parents and promote heritage schools. The need for support from government and educational authorities to integrate the schools is highlighted. Additionally, Karen touches on the issues of resources, physical spaces, and communication between mainstream and heritage schools.

10. Sue: (20 + years' experience leading a very large Greek Cypriot School)

Figure 22 Sue's Chart
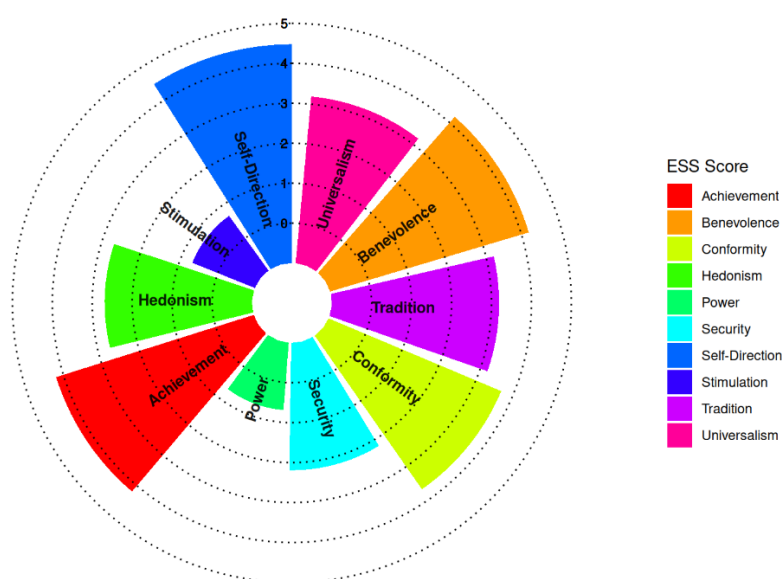
Sue is a dedicated teacher leader in a Greek supplementary school in the UK. In her interview, Sue highlights that the first-generation Cypriots founded most of the Cypriot Greek schools in England, paving the way for her leadership role. Sue mentions that the chair of the management board and two other individuals have been her support system and have contributed significantly to her leadership journey. She discusses various challenges faced by the school, such as a lack of recognition, financial struggles, and difficulties in finding qualified teachers. Sue highlights the importance of ethos, community collaboration, and the need for support and resources. Despite the challenges, Sue is motivated by her love for the community and her commitment to providing educational opportunities for students. Sue also mentions her involvement in teacher training, curriculum development, and exam coordination, outlining her highly proactive approach and dedication.

11.   Sheila: (8+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek School)

Figure 23 Sheila's Chart
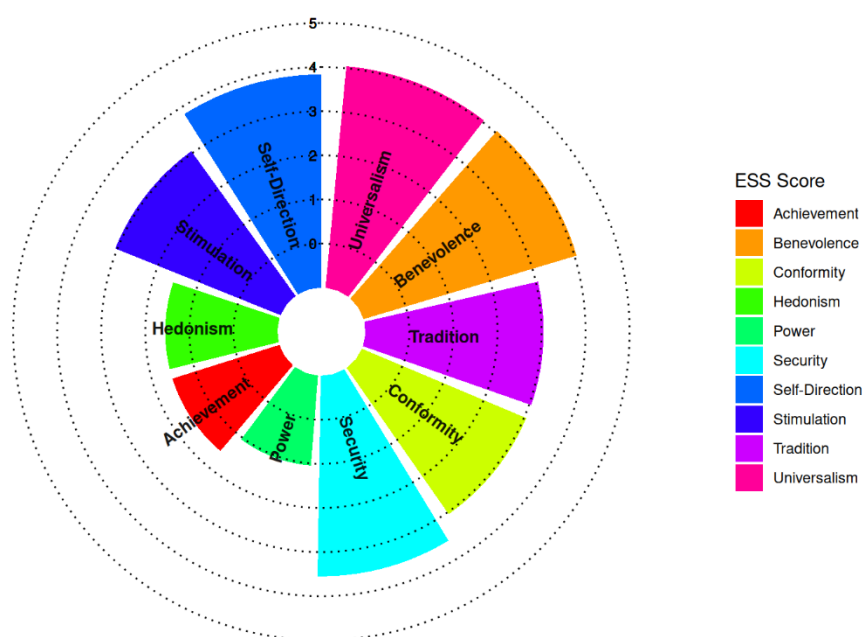
Sheila is deeply committed to serving her community through education, especially in promoting Greek culture and language. She emphasises the importance of giving back and fostering a sense of belonging and identity among community members. Sheila's leadership role involves balancing the needs of various stakeholders, such as pupils, educators, parents, the church, and the community. She highlights the challenges she faces in managing a voluntary school, including the financial aspects and the need for additional support for school leaders. Sheila's motivation stems from her belief in the value of education and her personal experiences, including her academic achievements and the support she received from her mentors. Overall, she is dedicated to providing educational opportunities and support to her community, despite the challenges she faces.

12. Zandra: (20+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

Figure 24 Zandra's Chart
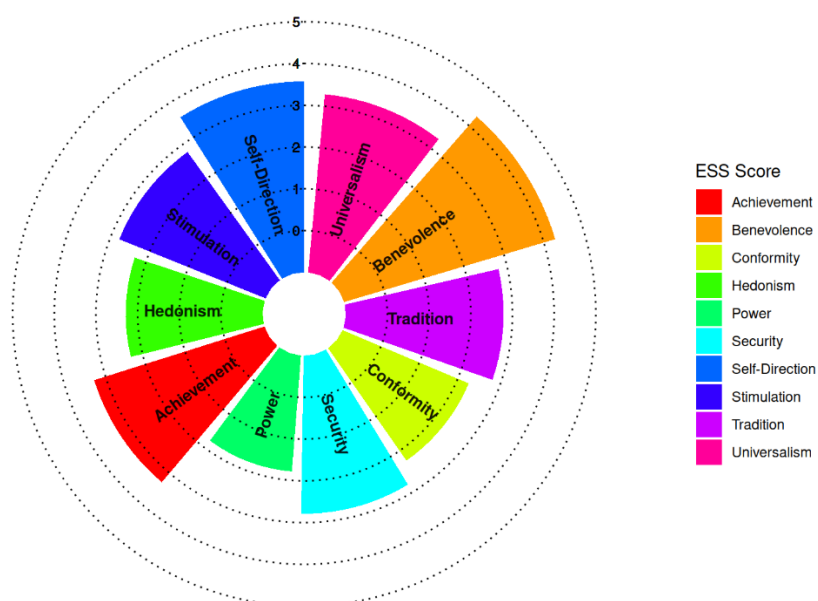
In the interview, Zandra discussed her journey in the field of education from China to the UK. She talked about her passion for education, setting up a nursery, her experiences in both China and the UK, writing books about education and adoption, and the challenges she faced in setting up her Chinese school. Her intrinsic motivation stemmed from her passion for education and her desire to help others. Zandra emphasises the importance of language learning, cultural understanding, and the impact of different education systems on children. She mentions her interactions with other educators, the challenges faced during COVID-19, and her efforts to support teachers in delivering effective lessons. Throughout the interview, Zandra's dedication to helping children, promoting multiculturalism, and improving education systems is evident. Throughout her life, her reflections and a desire to understand and improve educational opportunities have deeply influenced her leadership trajectory.

4.2.3. PVQ Analysis and Discussion.

As outlined in the methodology (Chapter 3), the results of the PVQ indicated a predominant tendency for the leaders in this study to have core values related to self-transcendence and openness to change. These quadrants, as shown in Figure 12, contain values such as benevolence and universalism and lie adjacent to openness to change, indicating a stronger connection to these values. According to Wright et al. (2017) and Huhtala et al. (2021), values like commitment, fairness, and particularly benevolence transcend the self-seeking leader aiming for a position of authority and its related privileges. Instead, these values serve as the fundamental moral drivers behind professionals' identities and actions (Arieli et al., 2020; Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016).

It is interesting to note that eleven of the twelve rated benevolence very highly. One head teacher (Harriet) with several branches (six in total) chose self-direction as her most important value. Self-direction was highly rated by seven of the others; however, overall benevolence still achieved a higher rating. Harriet also selected power as important, whereas the other eleven (whose schools could be considered as having a greater charitable orientation) have rated power as of lower value. Schwartz (2010, 2012) maintains that those prioritising values of power and achievement are less inclined to prosocial occupations. As most heritage schools are set up as charities on a voluntary basis, it is interesting to note how these findings correlate with work carried out by Hitlin (2003), who found that:

> 'Benevolence, as we might expect, is a significant (*p <.05)* and positive predictor of volunteer identity. The two values that constitute Schwartz's self-enhancement construct (power and achievement) are associated negatively with the volunteer identity as we might expect.'

(Hitlin, 2003, p. 130)

Additionally, Arieli et al. (2020) found that personal values significantly influence occupational choices and behaviours in work settings. Values guide career paths, vocational interests, and work orientations (Arieli et al., 2020; Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016).

In this study, as previously mentioned, self-direction was considered important, as can be seen in Table 6. Self-direction is indicative of a personal focus, independence, and agency, and lies in the quadrant of openness to change. This also indicates the inner desire or motivation to be guided by one's emotional interests and intellect, while the adjacent quadrant of self-transcendence strongly represents the leaders' social focus. Here we find benevolence and universalism (highly rated by most of the heritage leaders), indicating a move away from self-interest and personal gain and a focus on others' welfare. These values lie on the opposite pole of self-enhancement and the pursuit of power and success, often achieved through the dominance of others (Schwartz, 1992, 2010, 2012).

This would appear to indicate further agreement concerning the least rated values, the most obvious being power and conformity. This seems to imply (especially when reinforced by self-direction) that there is a tendency in the leaders in this study to take independent self-directed action and to be un-reliant on pre-existing structure, procedure, or expectation. It also implies such action was not motivated by an interest in power, as previously mentioned, but through self-transcendence or the welfare of others and a goal to preserve and maintain relationships.

In a literature review examining empirical research on the effect values have on attitudes and behaviours, Nazirova and Borbala (2024) consistently found evidence that points to the influence of personally held values driving human behaviour to act accordingly. Values were the motivational force influencing attitudes and actions in a variety of domains, indicating that people felt obliged or motivated to act in accordance with their values. Nazirova and Borbala's (2024) review highlights the significance of values or motivation relating to

benevolence, universalism, and self-direction not only for those in educational leadership positions but those who wish to help others in increasingly multicultural societies.

> '……individuals who attribute importance to openness to change value types (self-direction, hedonism, and stimulation) and self-transcendence value types (benevolence and universalism) support classic liberalism, were ready for outgroup contact, and supported cooperation, accepting immigrants, interpersonal trust and joining humanitarian and environmental organizations.

(Nazirova & Borbala, 2024, p. 228).

This implies a close relationship between values and motivation. In fact, Schwartz (2012) defines values as 'desirable goals that motivate action' (p. 3). He further unpacks this concept by pointing out that values and motivations are not separate but intermingle and influence each other:

> 'What distinguishes one from another is the type of goal or motivation that it expresses. The values theory defines ten broad values according to the motivation that underlies each of them.'

(Schwartz, 2012, p. 4)

The figure below presents all twelve participants' values mapped onto one graph, which makes clear the predominant values of benevolence, universalism, and self-direction. Likewise, this graph shows how all twelve responses veer heavily away from the power value, although achievement is still substantially important to leaders such as Sue and Gracie.
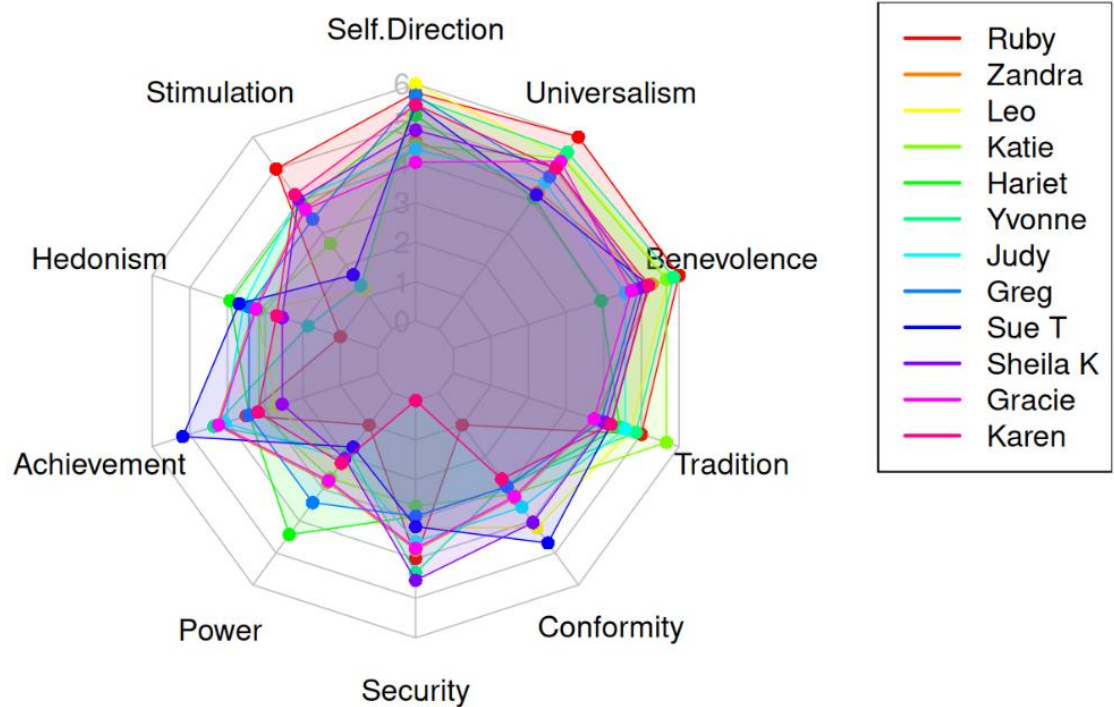
Figure 25 Value Similarities + Differences: Radar Chart

In conclusion, the PVQ is an invaluable tool, as its results may indicate possible

commonalities in values and motivations among the participants. However, this study

examines the unique stories of individuals, and the following section specifically aims to

capture each leader's values and identities in comprehensive detail. To obtain greater depth

and detail, it is essential to examine the results and findings from the twelve interviews and

the resulting qualitative data. Thus, the following section focuses on the analysis and

discussion of the interview data, exploring how the findings from the qualitative data results

can further clarify, substantiate, or possibly challenge the PVQ results.

4.3. How have Twelve Heritage Leaders Perceived their Underlying Values and Professional Identities and How Have these Shaped Their Leadership Practice: Results, Analysis and Discussion.

Based on the individual interviews conducted with the twelve heritage school leaders, the results and data analysis revealed a tendency towards prosocial humanitarianism, a finding consistent with Hitlin's (2003) observations of individuals in the voluntary sector. The results of the analysis of the qualitative data presented in themes and subthemes are provided in Appendix 2.1. and 2.2. (Tables 10 and 11). The results and analysis of the interview transcripts not only support but also reinforce the PVQ findings. Although not directly addressed, the interviews allowed each leader to articulate their concepts of values, such as benevolence, universalism, and self-direction, effectively during their interviews. They expressed these perceptions along with other aspects related to leadership identity, motivation, and belonging. Thus, the interviews provided a means through which leaders had the opportunity to communicate what they wished to be understood about their identity and values.

Additionally, data analysis revealed a cumulative effect of how their values had evolved. Most leaders mention how they had initially set up the school, motivated by the welfare of their children. This could be understood as motivation that is benevolent in nature (Schwartz, 2012). However, other salient aspects in the process of their leadership evolved. The heritage leaders' passion for education and their desire for their children's welfare ultimately benefited others who shared the same values, heritage, and interests. It was a natural progression to collaborate as a group. Schwartz's (2012) theory of basic human values suggests that values such as benevolence are initially cultivated within the family. Research by Cieciuch and

Schwartz (2017) showed that parents play a crucial role in instilling values in their children, which they then also extend to interactions within the community.

Thus, the role enabled the leaders to realise their impact extended beyond the family to the welfare of community members and society in general (universalism value). Through their efforts, they attained additional personal values of drive, agency, and accomplishment (self-direction value), giving their lives meaning and purpose. Their values and identities are exemplified in the following sections with excerpts.

4.3.1. Heritage Leaders' Values: Benevolence.

The predominant theme of 'Benevolence' is evident throughout the interviews. Gracie sees this value as fundamental:

Gracie: (6+ years' experience leading a large Czech school):

> '...I'm... human and have humanity...., humanity or how you call it.... I want to help people.... I want the children to be able to speak Czech, ...'

Zandra identifies her sense of benevolence as applicable no matter where she might be:

Zandra: (20+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school):

> '....my ...belief... basically is ...no matter where we are... no matter where I am, ... I would like doing these things I...I want to help .... I want to support these young people and their parents...'

In their investigation of the relationship between personal value priorities and 'helping behaviour' across diverse cultures, Daniel et al. (2015) found corresponding results across four cultures. Their research included university students in four countries: Germany, Scotland (UK), Israel and Turkey and highlighted the importance of understanding cultural contexts when examining the motivations behind helping behaviours. They examined the influence of the values indicated as most important in this study, i.e. the values in the self-transcendence quadrant. Daniel et al. (2015) concluded that values such as benevolence and

universalism were positively related to helping behaviour, while self-enhancement values (power and achievement) were found to be negatively related. Their research indicated that certain values consistently influence helping behaviour across cultures and implies that this could support the development of international cooperation programmes and policies that encourage altruism and mutual support. For this study and British societies, this implies that values aligned with helping behaviour can help strengthen community bonds (Daniel et al., 2015; Nazirova & Borbala, 2024). This leadership aspect appears to be acknowledged and put into practice by the heritage school leaders in this study. This is again reflected in the next major theme of universalism, in which values of benevolence and care extend to the community welfare.

4.3.2. Heritage Leaders' Values: Universalism and the Welfare of Others.

Motivated by the wish to offer support or help, the following excerpts show how the heritage leaders are guided by their personal values to contribute to preserving and enhancing the welfare of those beyond the family. The excerpts exemplify values of universalism through their contribution to the community and the welfare of others, contributing to making the world a better place. Ruby exemplifies this ideal very clearly:

Ruby: (7+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school):

> *'…. .to make a good school …. so …more children can enjoy a good education, … to be a good person…and …uh…. to care for the elders …to make this world a beautiful place with love and genuineness…. '*

When acting in concordance with her values and a desire to help, Harriet emphasises that her contribution to the community is not only for Chinese students but for everyone who would like to learn Chinese:

Harriet: (10+ years' experience leading various branches of small Mandarin Chinese schools)

> *'…. this wish to offer to… and support the community…. and to have community involvement ……is the whole purpose of why we started the school…'*

Judy also refers to being motivated by wanting to contribute to the community:

Judy (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school):

> *'....and it's kind of....an ambition thing ...basically, ... I want everybody to have this kind of experience ...this sense......a sense ...to do something for the community... to work together ... do something for the society.......'*

The head teachers repeatedly specify that the schools do not merely serve an educational purpose. They stress the significance of community involvement in achieving their goals and sustaining their initiatives. They emphasise how contributing to the community socially strengthens community bonds and social support networks. The theme of community support and collaboration is exemplified in Judy's comment, reflecting values of universalism:

Judy: (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school):

> *'.........some people say.... what's wrong with you? .... you are like an influencer or something like that...... but I am.... I know I am......I... I just say... you know.... I want to help people....and I organise people to help each other.... ...it's not just about the school... It's really about this platform and this community, and as a community, we do something to give back to society...'*

Karen also expresses finding a community that goes beyond religion and focuses on values like love and peace, which align with values of universalism (Schwartz, 2012, 2016), supporting others within the community and building a sense of belonging:

Karen: (13+ years' experience leading Italian heritage schools):

> *'... but here I found a community that was way beyond any concept of religion......it's like going back to the core of the method, like the Christian message of..., like... love and peace, peace and love, and applying it on a day-to-day basis... through community ...'*

Karen also makes it noticeably clear that the value of universalism and giving to the community is a reciprocal process: it merges with a sense of belonging and identity.

Karen: (13+ years' experience leading Italian heritage schools):

'……so, I don't think that all the schools are needed because they are teaching a heritage language… It's more to do with community…. It's more to do with finding your people and your identity…'

The third major theme evident in the data points to the various sources which drive these head teachers to take up their leadership positions examined in the next section.

4.3.3. Heritage Leaders' Values: Self-direction, Personal Drive, Motivation and Purpose.

The following excerpts show the sense of personal fulfilment, purpose, and achievement that the head teachers experience in their leadership. They emphasise feeling appreciated, taking pride in their service to others, and being motivated despite no monetary reward. This implies meaningful purpose-driven leadership (Kempster et al., 2011; Zu, 2019). This is exemplified in Karen's observation:

Karen: (13+ years' experience leading Italian heritage schools):

*'I never found joy in the MFL teaching because …it was…. it was …always perceived as instrumental towards getting more job opportunities and social mobility and …. I… always perceived this as the most capitalistic aim … you know …like …. oh let's get another skill on the curriculum so I get a better job or …I will get better pay …. better opportunities …. and this contrasts… is… **so** different with the heritage language schools…*

Yvonne's motivation is rooted in her ability to make a difference:

Yvonne: (10+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

'it's not really, em…. a money thing …em, … I suppose it's to have, … to have the power to… make a difference…'

For Sheila, personal drive emanates from many sources:

Sheila: (8+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek School):

'…. giving the opportunity to people to have … and develop …this sense of belonging, …of having an identity… of having something in common and sharing and supporting each other…. I feel I'm serving …and offering…'

By (2021) maintains that leadership integrating attitude and behaviour with values and purpose, not only benefits individuals under the leadership but society as a whole. He argues that purpose-driven leadership is inherently values-based and, through the integration of values and purpose, leaders foster meaningful relationships positively contributing to the well-being of their organisations and societies. Guided by internal goals or values, or what Kempster (2011) sees as an intrinsic sense of purpose, such leadership helps create environments that encourage and sustain cohesion and harmony that align with broader societal well-being. By (2021) links purpose and values through the Telos Leadership Lens (TLL), which is an adaptation of MacIntyre's (2004) definition of the Aristotelian 'Telos'. MacIntyre's (2004) 'Telos' signifies the sense of fulfilment or purpose achieved when a leader is driven to pursue internal goals, missions or accomplishments that are beneficial to the entire community. To attain personal well-being and realise a true sense of purpose, a leader should seek out or embrace their 'Telos' (By, 2021; Kempster, 2011; MacIntyre, 2004). Damon et al. (2003) maintain a further perspective linked to the importance of having purpose, a vision, a mission, or a cause. The authors maintain that a search for meaning in life is directly linked to purpose and brings its own rewards.

This correlation between values, purpose and seeking out 'Telos' or meaning is exemplified in Leo's leadership story. When confronted with a career crossroads in his life, Leo was certain that he needed to have a purpose and a mission for his life to have meaning. Qualified to PhD level and a university professor in China, he still felt unfulfilled and accompanied his wife to England. He describes how, acknowledging his own intrinsic desire to help, he reflected upon where his life could have meaning and purpose. His conclusions compelled him to set up a school to contribute to the education of Chinese children, whom he believed had not had a fair deal in the education they had received or had missed out. He explains how

he reflected upon the importance of having a mission, purpose, and values to give meaning to his life and leadership:

Leo: (5 + years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school that offers tuition in a wide range of culturally related subjects):

> *'.. I think everyone needs a mission…. because that gives you purpose … I have a mission…. we all have the first mission to be a human being….*
> *… I have a bag, and I put something in the bag …and it came from China to (area removed), …… I tried to find something as a meaning for… life, ….as my mission…. and the things I should do to make me very……. calm……peaceful………and finally I found out, … the things I wanted to find out…. actually, are in my bag….'*
> *…….*
> *'It's not something I can find from my environment …. It's …. something …I carry in my bag…… I … I carried it from China to here…. but I didn't really … didn't value it…. I didn't realise…… that's really important….so that's why …I found my mission…traditional…. traditional Chinese culture to promote …. promote traditional Chinese culture….and the language…. because…. you know…. teaching Chinese language basically is teaching about traditional Chinese philosophy……every single language, and culture gives insight into many philosophical thinking……. why….to find my purpose of my life?….. that's the key things…. I think for the leader…. for the leadership…first is a kind of understanding about your mission and your purpose … your values …. and also, it's your task to do correct things….So, I found out that's really… really critical things for me…'*

Judy also refers to a sense of purpose when asked why she wanted to initially set up the school.

Judy: (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school):

> *'……...actually, it's not an easy question…. I think it's……doing something for the community….and the appreciation ……this makes me feel I have purpose …it starts from having a very little mind… oh, … I just want my daughter to learn Chinese … but then you understand… how… important it is in many ways for… so many people… and it becomes a big thing… and you see the value it brings …'*

According to McKnight and Kashdan (2009), meaning and purpose are bidirectional in that meaning helps build purpose and vice versa, both feeding into and perpetuating the other. The authors also maintain that those motivated by purpose and meaning show greater persistence and resilience than those who are goal-directed (McKnight & Kashdan, 2009). This may explain why, when heritage school leaders are confronted with numerous economic

challenges, they remain motivated through purpose to persist in their leadership despite a lack of profit and stability. They understand their leadership to have meaning, purpose and value as shown in the excerpts above.

4.3.4. Important People and Events Relating to Values and Identity.

According to Ashforth and Schinoff (2016), identities are 'value-soaked' (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016, p. 122). Through deciphering the role that values and emotions play in identity formation, insight into motivation for leadership can be gained (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016). Therefore, we must look at how values may have been established to identify leadership motivation. For some, the motivation to lead can result from hardship and suffering. Ruby's decision to lead arose from negative experiences often recognised as 'critical events' (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 247) or which Bennis and Thomas (2002, p.39-40) refer to as 'transformative experiences' or 'crucibles'. Such experiences compel reflection and resolution, determination and compassion to ensure others do not undergo similar turmoil. Brought up by her grandmother, hardship in Ruby's life meant that she valued education even more:

Ruby: (7+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school):

> *'because I never allowed to read, ……and I was not able to social ….because she never allowed me to social with other kids….she thinks that's ….waste time...so I hated her…when she died….I couldn't cry…..I felt I had finally become free without her…but then after one year without her… on her anniversary,…. I couldn't stop crying………..'*
> *'...so, I started thinking, … I said ...I think when I grew up…. I just want to…….to do what I can for… children… so in life ...children don't need to suffer like me...'*

Kozminsky (2011) maintains that recognising the impact of critical events and proactively engaging with them contributes to the holistic development of leadership. Such events can also lead to changes in values (Bardi et al., 2014). This is exemplified in Karen's story. For

Karen, hardship growing up brought about an appreciation of community in later life, greatly influencing her values and leadership approach:

Karen: (13+ years' experience leading Italian heritage schools):

> '.......my childhood was very complex......it's a complicated story and I didn't have a community of support when it was very much needed......so there's a story,2 for example, of social services and tribunals and .... it was ......it's ...a.... It's a very tormented childhood...'

Her first experience living abroad provided a transformative, positive critical event that greatly influenced her leadership values and approach:

> '......the sense of community there was .... immense......
> ....the sense of care and the sense of close contact ...with humans, the...... the human goodness that I experienced ...and that my life had ...... was...... like a rebirth.... honestly...'

While the majority of leaders in this study experienced values passed on within the family, without exception, all the school leaders referenced at least one influential person relating to their education or an influential educational cooperation. Teachers can influence students through values-based education, for example, through moral and ethical discussion or subject matter within the curriculum (Kroflič & Turnšek, 2018). Herein, the leaders related how the character and behaviour of their own teachers had served as a powerful example for their trajectory and leadership. Greg described the influence of a mentor who was selfless, modest, and respectful, highlighting this example as motivation to take up a leadership role. The mentor's dedication to helping students succeed and not focusing on personal gain demonstrated qualities that inspired Greg to follow a similar path.

Greg: (4+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek Cypriot school):

> '...my teacher.... I looked at how well-organised she was, how truly committed she was, and lastly how human she was...... she showed me humanitarian values, she showed me that through education teachers can make a difference ...'

For Leo, his inspiration arose from numerous teachers:

Leo: (5+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school that offers tuition in a wide range of culturally related subjects)

> *'......so, if we go back to my experience, ...experiences in the past, ... it was my high school teacher, ...my primary school teacher.... and my teacher in the university, ...they all gave me a lot of inspiration......'*

Although he had already begun a teaching career, Greg recognises how he was further inspired through shared values and an educational leader role model:

> *'....so, the opportunity in that English school helped me because we had similar, let's say, ethos.... similar values.... because you know we were both from Greece and she would understand my mind and my thinking from the beginning and that was really helpful...'.*

Studies have shown that the personal values of school leaders play a crucial role in shaping their leadership practices, their leadership role and identity development (Hallinger, 2011; Thien et al., 2023). Therefore, in the next section, upon analysis of the data, the most prevalent aspects of identity are discussed along with their theoretical implications.

4.3.5. Heritage Leaders' Values Led Identity.

Research carried out by Rokeach (1973) on human values and belief systems highlights the significance of values in guiding behaviour and forming personal identity. Personal identity theory (Breakwell, 2014) proposes that individuals, through self-definition, present what they wish to be understood about who they are and the values they hold across their differing roles and changing relationships (Stets & Biga, 2003). Theorists understand personal identity from a viewpoint or belief of how that identity was constructed. Syed and Fish (2018), revisiting Erikson's (1968, 1997) work, emphasise how identity is shaped by external influences and personal experiences over time. Personal values will influence leadership style and behaviour, the groups a leader chooses to lead and the identity they wish to promote (Watton et al., 2018). In the previous section (4.2.1), similarities in the personal values held by the heritage

leaders were found, and there are examples of how values relating to personal identity have been influenced and/or established through family, personal and educational experiences. While many argue that personal values are too individualistic when examining identity, Hitlin (2011) challenged this notion by showing that, through the lens of values, identity can be systematically studied.

Nevertheless, to better understand leadership and identity, the themes found upon analysis can be understood through approaches to leadership based on two main theories: Identity Theory (Stryker, 2000) and Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986), which are explored in turn.

4.4. Theories of Leadership and Identity.

The two most prevalent socio-psychological theories of self and identity are those of Identity Theory (Stryker, 2000) and Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979, 1986). To understand Leadership Identity, the approach adopted from Identity Theory (IT) (Stryker, 2000) focuses on the leader's self-concept, their role identity or sense of self or self-concept in the process of leadership (Hogg, 2016; Miscenko et al., 2017). The roles a leader occupies shape their identity as a leader (Haslam et al., 2020, 2022). Alternatively, Social Identity Theory is directly related to the process of becoming and/or being a member of a social group and how this group membership influences the leadership concept and practice. Social identity theory considers how an individual creates, carries out and maintains their shared social identity within the group (Reicher et al., 2018). However, employing a Social Identity approach to leadership involves the combination of both Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Self Categorisation Theory (SCT) (Turner et al., 1987; Turner & Reynolds, 2011). Self-categorisation theory can be understood as an extension of SIT and explains how leaders

categorise themselves and others into groups (us groups) to create a sense of shared or group identity.

In the next section, I present the themes that emerged relating to leadership identity and discuss how the self-descriptions of the leaders in this study can be viewed through both the Leader Identity and the Social Identity approach to Leadership.

4.4.1. Heritage Leader Identity: Self-concept.

The themes that emerged relating to their self-concept and leadership identity indicated determination, resilience and self-worth or pride in their success. Throughout the interviews, the heritage leaders related events within their life stories that reflect aspects of their self-concept, particularly how they had begun to perceive themselves as leaders. For many, leadership identity had been established before their heritage leadership role, as in Leo's experience:

Leo: (5+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school that offers tuition in a wide range of culturally related subjects)

> '...the schoolteachers always encouraged me…... they would say, ... 'You are the captain!'. You're the captain of this class'.

and …

> '…. because they understood that I could lead, so they gave me the opportunity…. gave me the platform, gave me the stage…. You see, I could perform everything… I was confident … … so these were the… the… key people, … they gave me a lot of confidence to be a leader, and they were all in education, so… I saw their example ...and I think …. teachers are all leaders….'

Judy had also been identified as a leader in school, but this had already played out in her work in China before she came to the UK:

Judy: (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school):

> *'......well, for leadership, I think... I have to say ... since I was little.... I was always... like... the... the... how do you say... the leader of the class '*

and….

> *'I was quite a successful businesswoman in China, so…. so…. I'm not scared ...to... to be a leader of the school…. You know…. I believe I have the ability to learn leadership skills too, and I have a lot to give…'*

Having previously thrived professionally in China, Judy found it hard to be without a career when she came to England. This motivated her to consider how she could establish a leadership role in a new country:

Judy: (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school):

> *'......so.......I was…. I was so lonely…. I was so lost as well…. yeah…, as a woman ... as a career woman…. you used to be in a position... you know, …. everybody recognised you…. whatever you do... You feel useless when that's gone…'*

However, other leaders such as Ruby and Yvonne relate the challenges they overcame with pride, showing resilience and determination, both qualities identifiable as aspects of leadership (Eliot, 2020).

Ruby: (7+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school):

> *'…….so, most of Chinese Community Schools suffered badly in this (The pandemic) around the whole world, and many of them had to shut down …. but we didn't close a single day…. we went through ......through our proactive approach…. I was determined…….. even if you put me on top of the cliff or in the middle of a desert...... I'm just really strong…'*

Yvonne is very straightforward in her self-description:

Yvonne: (10+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school):

> *'I'm always a doer, ...you know, if you tell me, ...if you give me something and I think I'm really on board and I think this is important…. I'll get it done….'*

In the interviews, leaders spoke candidly of their sense of achievement and pride not only in how they had confronted and overcome challenges but how they had established and

maintained success, showing self-confidence and self-efficacy. According to Breakwell (2014), efficacy-based self-esteem, in particular, is connected to role identities and reflects the sense of competence in fulfilling role expectations. This can be understood in a further remark by Ruby, exemplifying her determination:

Ruby: (7+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school):

> *'If I do something, I want to do it properly with a determination to make it very reputable, and a quality institution.'*

Conventional role interpretations, such as a leadership identity, may be built through cultural experiences and idiosyncratic constructs, meaning that each leader's concept of what leadership is may vary (Hains et al., 2006). This is of particular interest in heritage school leadership, wherein leadership identity development has received limited attention to date (Thorpe et al., 2020). Judy shows she has a clear concept of what leadership identity should be:

Judy: (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school)

> *'……so., … I think I set an example, and my team follow …and I think that's what leadership is about…. I respect all my team... and I... I really, really appreciate everybody in my team…. we support each other …'*

Work on identity theory by Stets and Burke (2014) integrates values, showing values to be crucial for identity verification (the process of confirming one's identity through social interactions) and self-esteem. Their findings indicate that verifying one's identity in social contexts enhances self-esteem. The authors also maintain that not living authentically, or in line with one's values, can negatively impact self-esteem. People may feel inauthentic or disconnected from their true selves, leading to lower self-worth (Stets & Burke, 2014). The leaders who had a clear self-perception as leaders expressed specific concepts of what a leader should be and how they should lead. This may reflect a cultural concept and may

motivate leaders to behave in ways they conceive leadership behaviour should be (Hains et al., 2006). Leo has an unequivocal concept of his leadership role and that of his followers:

Leo: (5+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school that offers tuition in a wide range of culturally related subjects):

> *'I think that as a leader, I needed this kind of vision and also a really, really strong mindset to go…to go forward…. that's really important…'*

and

> *'…and all the parents and the students, … they join in our in…. in my school and that is based on the …understanding… eh…. about my idea… my leadership, my vision, …my philosophy, my values …about why I need to do, anyone need to do, … the, … the… the school project.'*

Whereas Harriet expresses a concept of leadership that appears more group-oriented and democratic.

Harriet: (10+ yrs' experience leading various branches of small Mandarin Chinese schools):

> *'……you have to use lots of like wisdom and skills… and good communication and make sure everyone feels they are important and included …and supported'*

According to DeRue et al. (2009), to lead effectively, a leader needs to see themselves as a leader, as the self-concept of leadership helps and supports the individual to lead. Leadership appears to be a self-perpetuating part of identity. Thus, the more an individual believes the leadership role is appropriate and is assimilated into their self-concept or schema, the more they will be motivated to conduct their role as a leader (DeRue et al., 2009). Having a leader identity can also promote the evolution of leadership in that it encourages the individual to seek out opportunities to grow and develop as a leader (Ashford & DeRue, 2012; DeRue et al., 2009). This implies that leader identity can be encouraged and cultivated, and that leaders need to adopt or build a clear concept of themselves as leaders. However, if leading from a personal concept of leadership identity, leaders may be tempted to seek out their own advantage as opposed to that of the group (Hains et al., 2006). This can result in stereotypical

leadership styles or how they conceive a leader should lead (Haslam et al., 2022). Thus, this approach to leadership could be considered incomplete, as leadership requires followers. How a leader attempts to influence can either be beneficial or detrimental, and therefore needs to work for both the leader and the follower. If both the leader's and followers' concepts of leadership align, the resulting leadership is more effective (Haslam et al., 2022).

The excerpts above exemplify individual concepts of the leadership role. Hitlin (2003) points out that one's values lie at the core of one's personal identity, and one feels authentic (Gecas, 1991) when behaviour aligns with one's values. Personal identity underlies choice of role, identity, and group affiliation (Turner, 1978; Turner, 2003). The leaders unanimously indicated benevolence and universalism as important values. This would appear to indicate that those working and leading in the voluntary sector, such as heritage education, will adopt a leadership identity that is benevolent and motivated by the welfare of others (universalism). This implies a collective benefit aligning with the Social Identity Theory Approach as opposed to leadership that is self-seeking. Throughout the interviews, reference was made to teamwork, cooperation and collaboration, indicating leadership aligning with the social identity theory approach. This is further discussed in the following section.

4.4.2. Heritage Identity Leadership (Social Identity Theory).

Identity leadership is informed by both Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Self Categorisation Theory (SCT) (Haslam et al., 2021). SIT proposes that members of a group do not define themselves as individuals. Instead, they have a sense of themselves in relation to the group that they belong to (Epitropaki et al., 2017; Tajfel, 2010; Turner, 1987, 2003). Through a social identity or group membership, a psychological connection with fellow members is formed (Haslam et al., 2021; Tajfel, 2010). Such a connection is evident throughout the interviews. The excerpts below show that this sense of group identity and belonging extends

beyond the school or staff members to the parents and their children, reflecting a community presence and strong shared identity.

Judy: (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school):

> '……and more and more parents come to me…. just to tell me how thankful they are, …. … thankful that they… they found this community in the school… they… they suddenly say, …wow, … I feel at home here'

Gracie, for example, highlights that heritage education is based on collaboration:

Gracie: (6+ years' experience leading a large Czech school):

> 'I really don't think it's about the money…. I think it's about people and community and working together …'

While Karen emphasises aspects of identity through belonging to a group:

Karen: (13+ years' experience leading Italian heritage schools):

> 'It is more to do with finding your people and your identity…'

Earlier excerpts showed how Leo tended towards an authoritative leadership style. However, the following indicates his recognition of the significance of being a team player and group member. On a return visit to China and in discussion with his childhood teacher, Leo was inspired to start up the school.

Leo: (5 + years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school that offers tuition in a wide range of culturally related subjects):

> '……he really, ……really inspired me, … he encouraged me to lead the school, ……he said there is nothing more important than education …he talked to me about the……. the general idea about …. when you are in a group…… how you should behave and be a leader sometimes ……but also sometimes be a follower'

To gain a deeper understanding of Leo's leadership approach, self-categorisation theory introduces additional dimensions next examined, followed by a discussion on the implications of the findings in this chapter for all heritage leaders.

4.4.3. Heritage Leadership and Self-categorisation Theory

Self-categorisation theory (SCT) explains how individuals categorise themselves and others into groups (Turner, 1999). SCT is an extension of social identity theory and explains how certain members of a group may be seen as more prototypical (Haslam et al., 2012). Such members better embody the group's norms, values and behaviours (Epitropaki et al., 2017). Prototypical members often emerge as leaders because they represent the group's identity (Hains et al., 2006). Leaders who effectively manage to embody the group's social identity can foster greater group cohesion, motivation, and collective action (Ge et al., 2024). In the process, leaders may seek identity verification (Ge et al., 2024; Hou et al., 2021). Just as individuals seek to verify their personal identities, leaders seek to confirm their leadership identity through interactions with followers (Epitropaki et al., 2017; Hains et al., 2006). Successful identity verification can boost leaders' confidence, legitimacy and efficacy (Ge et al., 2024; Hou et al., 2021). This process involves confirming that others view them in ways that align with their self-views. Identity verification is crucial because it helps individuals maintain a stable sense of self and can influence their behaviour and effectiveness in their roles (Epitropaki et al., 2017; Ge et al., 2024; Hou et al., 2021).

This is exemplified in Leo's story. Before setting up his school, Leo sought feedback and validation from his peers. Having worked voluntarily in another heritage school, he discussed whether he should open his own school on behalf of those who would follow:

Leo: (5 + years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school that offers tuition in a wide range of culturally related subjects):

> *'……all the teachers I spoke to... many teachers in that school …and they said ohh yes please … you must set up a school …. please…. you make a high-quality school …. our school so chaotic,…… It's not school at all... but you understand ……you are the person who will be the professional…. if you run a school… we will support you…'*

As previously mentioned, throughout data analysis, this sense of belonging and group effort is repeatedly articulated. However, there are further salient aspects of social identity theory evident in the results of this study and the leadership explored. It is generally acknowledged that leaders will be able to lead more effectively when their identity as leaders is founded upon and thus intrinsically compatible with their identity as a group member (Haslam et al., 2022). These heritage leaders share a cultural and heritage background with those who approach the school either for educational purposes or to teach. They share what Watzlawik (2012) refers to as identity markers with the vast majority of those associated with the school. They may have confronted comparable challenges or share an understanding of similar emotions, such as homesickness or a sense of being an outsider through their cultural background and experiences (Watzlawik, 2012). They understand the emotional need for belonging and the aspirations many parents have for their children, both educationally and culturally. These are important aspects that create a strong basis for shared identity, bonding, and a sense of belonging. More importantly, they express having a cause (Haslam et al., 2022; Maskor et al., 2021; Reicher et al., 2018).

Being one of the group and having a shared group identity alone is not enough (Reicher et al., 2018). When a leader is understood as being one of the group that shares values and priorities and whose actions pave the way for the group to accomplish their objectives, this results in even more effective leadership because the group has a shared purpose (Steffens et al., 2014). This can bring about motivation, collective action and group cohesion as the group works together to achieve their common goal (Haslam et al., 2022; Reicher et al., 2018). However, as Haslam et al. (2022) point out, at a deeper level, the group has a cause that is related to their shared values and personal identity. Personal and social identity combine and reinforce group cohesion, creating a sense of belonging (Steffens et al., 2014), evident in the interviews. In this way, not only is their leadership successful, but their heritage schools are

also fundamental to the social and mental well-being of the present and future multicultural groups and the youth that will be the future British society. In the twelve schools and leaders explored, young students can experience inclusion through a sense of similarity in their identity (Yuki, 2011) and belonging.

4.5. Conclusion.

This chapter has analysed the perceptions of twelve heritage leaders regarding their core values and identity. The study reveals that their perceptions of benevolence, universalism, and self-direction are dominant values integral to their leadership identity, motivation, and sense of purpose. The interviews allowed for reflection on the origins and influences of their values and leadership identity, and their recognition of the importance of belonging. These elements align with behaviours that enhance community engagement and bond stakeholders at both micro and macro levels. Driven by internal values, purpose, and personal fulfilment, their leadership approach evidences resilience and determination to achieve goals, often shaped by experiences of hardship and a mission to preserve cultural heritage. Their values reinforce their sense of authenticity and self-esteem, further solidifying their leadership identity and sense of self. Additionally, through a shared group identity, belonging, and common objectives, these leaders embody the group's social identity, further validating their leadership role.

Chapter Five.

5.1. Introduction to Context and Culture.

This chapter provides the results analysis and discussion of the collected interview data relating to the second component in the three-part conceptual framework (see Chapter 2.3). This requires examining how twelve heritage school leaders perceive their schools' context and culture and how this has shaped their leadership practice. However, the analysis here involves a two-way process that encompasses investigating how the perceived context has influenced the leadership and how the leadership has, in turn, responded to the context and shaped and influenced the culture of the school. The analysis and discussion follow the order of the coding Table 12 in Appendix III (3.1), a summary of which is in Appendix III (3.2) (Table 13) to provide a comprehensible overview and structure in answer to this second research question.

Thus, the chapter is divided into five sections as shown in the summary Table 12, each focusing on aspects of context and culture relating to twelve heritage leaders and the interrelated nature or two-way process. Elements that significantly influence processes and interactions within the schools and community are examined.

5.2. How Have Twelve Heritage Leaders Perceived their Schools' Context and Culture and How has this Shaped their Leadership Practice: Results, Analysis and Discussion.

5.2.1. Contextual Diversity and Leadership Responses.

The findings from the results relating to the second research question of perceived context and culture highlight the fundamental role of context in establishing and developing heritage

schools and their leadership. While the contexts of the leaders in this study differ, they make it unanimously clear that the schools share and serve a purpose beyond that of language learning. They emphasise many factors relating to an understanding of and an ongoing interaction with the surrounding community, often identifying as a point of contact or bridge for cultural and community cohesion. This is exemplified in Yvonne's description of her interaction within the community, in which she uses a common Chinese analogy of a bridge.

Yvonne: (10+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school):

> *'I don't know if I explain it well but for me it's like bridging the cultures…. maybe there are better ways of describing it, …. but for me…. I feel like I am a… bridge and …we are bringing cultures together … because anyone from the community can come.'*

Harriet also emphasises the importance of serving her community and highlights her passion by drawing parallels between the community and her Chinese cultural background, in which family and mutual support are significant. She desires that in her schools the young people may experience a similarly supportive environment, cooperate, and learn with and from diverse cultures. When narrating what motivated her to lead her school, she indicates the concept of family and mutual support as significant and correlates this concept with the school:

> *'……for my school? ……it's community, … I think to serve the community is my huge passion…. and that keeps me going……and I think it's …. Chinese culture… from my family …'*

Having a keen awareness of the cultural diversity in her environment, Judy describes how she felt compelled at the beginning of her leadership to bring cultures together.

Judy (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school):

> *'…. when I started the school, I was just thinking, you know, if I can provide a platform…. get the people to meet together…. so, then I found out how important it is to get the community together…. so… then that became my passion …not only for the kids to learn*

language... it was for the parents ... not just the kid's parents .... you know ...all the parents ...and the children .... everyone in the community'

All the leaders in this study had connections with those within their communities who shared their heritage and aspirations for their children. However, more importantly, these leaders had lived and/or experienced the location, they knew its people and their businesses and understood the community's needs beyond those with whom they shared a cultural background. This is highly relevant to heritage school leadership in this study. They had all employed individuals to support their schools through connections made in their communities. Like these leaders, Nye (2014) notes that contextually aware leaders are sensitive to the needs of others and thus can implement their contextual intelligence that emanates from their emotional intelligence. Their contextual intelligence is partly reliant on their analytical abilities and partly on the tacit knowledge they have accrued from experience and wise judgment (Nye, 2014). These heritage leaders have not been constrained by the diversity within their contexts, as also noted by Day (2005) and Day et al. (2020), but have instead shown contextual intelligence by adapting to the context and building both cultural and multicultural connections. Day (2005) and Day et al. (2020) make clear that this is indicative of successful educational leadership. Dysdale (2011) found that across differing countries, cultures and contexts, successful school leadership encompassed adaptation to context coupled with reflection, with leaders learning from experience and practice. Having lived and experienced the area and its residents, the leaders in this study also made use of a form of tacit or practical understanding or what Hallinger (2018) refers to as 'craft knowledge' (P. 19), arising from and coupled with their own experiences of being a foreigner living within another culture. This is further supported by the work of Day and Gurr (2014) in examining successful leaders across cultures, and is emphasised in Sheila's interview.

Sheila: (8+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek School)

'……so …….to bring together everyone …….mm…. You know …. uh… the Greeks who are here…. living and working in this area …and to have the opportunity to mingle and to exchange experiences ……and ..yeah, ….to help new Greeks get to know those who are here ….and to build relationships and friendships … between us all ………….

Through understanding the context, effective leaders like Sheila are more likely to succeed because the decisions they make are based on the particular needs and circumstances of their school and its environment (Hallinger, 2016). Norman and Gur (2020) highlight why educational leaders should be aware of and work with the context of their schools. Amongst the points made concerning heritage leadership, awareness of the school context helps leaders build trust and engage with teachers, students, and the community more effectively. Creating an inclusive environment that responds to, respects, and integrates cultural diversity is fundamental (Nordstrom, 2022). A school leader's success is dependent upon how well they can adapt their practice to respond to specific contextual factors surrounding their schools (Hallinger, 2018; Norman & Gur, 2020). As with the heritage leaders in this study, contextually aware leaders collaborate with stakeholders, which includes teachers, students, parents, and the community (Clarke & O'Donoghue, 2017), as exemplified here:

Karen: (13+ years' experience leading Italian heritage schools)

'it's… a grassroots organisation that works in a delimited geographic area, but the focus is more in-depth… into…. supporting the whole family and the community…'

5.2.2. Further contextual elements that create purpose.

However, there are further aspects beyond language learning, cultural understanding, and community cohesion that many of the leaders convey as contextual influences in their leadership. In seven of the interviews (Ruby, Katie-Jane, Gracie, Zandra, Yvonne, Judy, and Sheila), the leaders describe how their involvement with the school grew out of a desire for their own children to understand their language and culture. Gracie, for example, recognises that learning the heritage language would not only ensure her sons would be able to

communicate with relatives and grandparents, but that through language learning they would

gain self-efficacy, and an understanding of the culture and connect with their heritage:

Gracie: (6+ years' experience leading a large Czech school):

> *'The main reason was my children, ... I wanted them to be confident and to be able to speak to my mom and my dad in Czech language and to understand their culture, the way of thinking .... yeah, that was the main reason behind it all.'*

For these seven leaders, their children were from a mixed heritage background, resulting in

the formation of a dual cultural identity. In the interviews, five of these leaders in this study

specifically draw attention to how this can be challenging unless dual heritage children have

the opportunity to build friendships with others like themselves. Zandra relates how her

younger daughter was six when she set up the school and wanted to ensure that her daughter

would learn her language. Looking back and comparing how confident and secure her

daughters feel in their dual identity, she relates the difference.

Zandra: (20+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school):

> *'......my eldest ......she was born in China .... when we came here.... she was ... and even though she ......has graduated ...from (university removed) ......and ...she's got her PhD.... and......she is studying law now......but .... she still has this kind of problem .... but my youngest she was born here ... she went to Saturday school ......she has friends like her and they have both cultures ......she has no problem.'*

Gracie reflects on the aspect of multicultural identities in her interview and points out that in

her school, as with others in this study, some children are even trilingual, having parents from

two different heritage backgrounds living in Britain. Gracie's own story highlights the

struggle she understood that her son was experiencing. Before becoming involved in the

leadership, Gracie describes how her son had seemed reserved, unhappy, and overly

dependent until he began attending the school.

Gracie: (6+ years' experience leading a large Czech school):

> *'.......so, my (younger)son started.... he was in year one already and he made a tremendous improvement with his Czech...it really helped him to...., you know.... create*

the relationships and understand that there are other kids… like him ...... in the same sort of situation .... (becomes emotional) ......he was so much happier……sorry, ... I might be a little bit passionate and a little emotional... ...and …. I know there are other mums and dads like me, and children like my son ...we all need the school.'

Nordstrom (2022) outlines the observation that heritage language learners differ from other L2 learners in their motivations and needs. Apart from a sense of identity, inclusion and belonging, their motivations are most often related to the need to understand family members' culture, background, and even religion (Nordstrom, 2022). Importantly, their self-concept may be different or even conflicted by mainstream school and family. Within their homes, learners may not have mastered their parents' language and culture to full capacity because mainstream education has interrupted this development. At mainstream schools, lacking any additional parental support with homework, they may fall behind and become disadvantaged due to fewer opportunities for language support beyond school hours. Thus, they lose out on both accounts, resulting in linguistic disadvantage both at home and at school (Carreira & Kagan, 2011; Kagan, 2012).

Furthermore, many ethnic minority students may have formed peer groups and friends and wish to join in activities or customs popular with their host country peers. This is very usual of any young person who wishes to identify with and be accepted by their peer group, and yet the customs or activities of their peers may conflict with what their parents believe is appropriate or acceptable. Most parents are aware of a generation gap that challenges their beliefs about what warrants approval. In this situation, however, the gap is not only generational but may be social, cultural, and even religious. Parental disdain for this gap can be perceived by students as requiring they to adopt an 'imposed heritage identity' (Blackledge & Creese, 2010, p. 174). This can leave many heritage learners feeling there is no place they belong without an ethnic or racial identity (ERI) they can fully claim (Simon 2023). As a result, heritage learners often adopt a dual identity (both host and home culture),

and their daily experiences mean they develop strong intercultural sensitivity and competence (Carreira & Kagan, 2011). These factors all point to the emotional and psychological benefits of the heritage provision in the schools that go beyond bilingualism or language learning. This is because the schools become that safe space where their bilingual or their ERI is explored and shared in a group or community identity with other heritage learners within the school (Blackledge & Creese, 2010; Creese et al., 2006; Maylor et al., 2010; Simon, 2023). This is exemplified in Judy's interview.

Judy (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school)*:*

> *'...the children come to the school.... they start to realise... wow.... I'm not to the... the weird one... plus they also look like me... you know... that kind of thing.... and they're really... happy.... you know, kids don't like to be different, ...*

In their interviews, the leaders outlined how students benefit from numerous aspects relating to cultural identity and intercultural understanding. Eight of the leaders (Chapter 3, Table 1) specifically mentioned that their school was open to other cultures who wished to study alongside the heritage learners if they so wished. Thus, heritage students experience a shared group identity while also gaining the opportunity to learn about those belonging to other cultures. Identification and shared group identity enable the building of Ethnic and Racial Identity (ERI) (Simon, 2023) and the establishment of a sense of belonging and pride and a positive self-concept (Irwin et al., 2017) wherein, at the very least, identity is not under threat and can be explored. The leaders of these schools expressed their desire to foster pride in multiculturalism, intercultural competence, and multilingualism. By bringing an awareness of other cultures into the heritage school curriculum, while maintaining a focus on the heritage culture, intercultural understanding and inclusivity are enhanced.

Yvonne exemplifies this point. She understands how important it is for her students to understand other cultures within the community. Reflecting on this aspect, she highlights her

inclusive leadership approach to education, recognising the diverse cultural backgrounds of her students and those within the community and their needs for intercultural understanding.

Yvonne: (10+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school):

> '……communities are changing …the children want and need to understand different cultures … I don't understand why sharing different cultures isn't more in (state) schools…… so…. we bring it to ours….'

Simon (2023) remarks that much more attention needs to be devoted to multicultural learners, such as children from ethnic minority communities. Simon (2023) observes how heritage schools offer opportunities and support students to explore the development of a dual ethnic, multi and national identity and suggests that current and future heritage learners will require hybridised identities, allowing students the agency to embrace their dual identity or multicultural differences. This correlates with what the leaders in this study outline and emphasise that they offer to their students. The emphasis in many of the heritage schools herein is on multiculturalism and cultural exchange, autonomy and identity development, aligning with ideals of interconnectedness and global citizenship (Schulze & Brookes, 2020; Steenwegan et al., 2023).

Harriet: (10+ years' experience leading various branches of small Mandarin Chinese schools):

> 'we're going to need these schools more and more…. the schools are important not just for the community but for all the different people … you know … to talk to each other …. you know …different cultures everywhere in the world ….and it's getting, ……growing …. this is a need …. more and more'

Thus, the educational focus in their leadership is neither on the child-centred tradition of education nor the curriculum but on what Biesta (2022) suggests is a world-centred focus, in which the main task of education is to help young people to be in the world.

In conclusion, the above results analysis and discussion point to how the twelve leaders in this study value and draw upon the linguistic diversity of the school community that includes parents, staff, students and the members of the wider community. As in work carried out by

Carreira and Kagan (2011), Norman and Gur (2020), Simon (2023), and Szczepek Reed et al. (2020), the leaders and schools in this study appear to contribute on many levels to their pupils' growth and development. This is because the leaders herein aspire to respond to their environment by sending out a clear message about the value of preserving heritage languages and social cohesion. They strive to do so through empowering and supporting students to gain cognitively, emotionally, and psychologically through a sense of belonging, while simultaneously developing their intercultural understanding.

5.3. Heritage Leaders' Perceptions of Culture: Results, Analysis and Discussion.

5.3.1. School Culture Objectives and Actions.

The qualitative data and results of the twelve individual interviews with school leaders clarify the aims and objectives of each. Several concurrent objectives are ardently articulated across the interviews, and these make clear the primary aims and objectives that they all agree upon. Most predominantly throughout the interviews, the aim to preserve cultural awareness and establish cultural preservation is made resoundingly clear. As mentioned above, seven out of the twelve leaders specifically established their schools (or initially became involved) to support their own children's literacy, language development and cultural identity. However, all the leaders describe how, through contacts within their locality, those who had a connection or who shared their cultural background were usually invited to join them as they shared common objectives and beliefs. This means parents were directly involved. Many had made connections through friends of friends, local shops and businesses, schools, churches, and community centres. As these contacts were commonly (although not always) within the immediate vicinity, they had already established friendships or at least shared an

understanding of each other and the aims and objectives of heritage school involvement. Even when their main motive was not to support their own children's cultural and linguistic literacy, they created a culturally inclusive environment that reflected the ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds of the community, or the 'community context' (Hallinger, 2018, p.7) as shown in the previous section. In this way, the heritage leaders herein contribute to the preservation of linguistic diversity (Nordstrom, 2022), and identity, stability, empathy and development. As mentioned in the literature review, while Day et al. (2020) support the critical role of context in successful educational leadership, regarding organisations, Schein (2004) emphasises how culture arises within specific groups and teams. This is particularly relevant to the heritage school leaders in this study. Although Day et al. (2020) and Hallinger's (2018) argument appears to emphasise that leadership practices must be adapted to fit the specific constraints within their environments, this, in fact, aligns with Schein's theory of organisational culture. This is because Schein's (2004) emphasis is on understanding the deeper layers of organisational culture, particularly the underlying assumptions that shape and guide behaviour in specific contexts. Those assumptions are shaped and accepted by the group and have developed out of accumulated shared experiences, values and beliefs, created when learning to adapt to or deal with their environment (Schein, 2004).

Sergiovanni (2000) also refers to shared assumptions and highlights the importance of shared beliefs and values in shaping a positive and effective school culture.

> 'The heart and soul of school culture is what people believe, the assumptions they make about how school works. School culture revolves around the beliefs and values that are at its core and that go beyond classrooms and syllabuses.'

(Sergiovanni, 2000, p. 23).

In their work exploring the theoretical influence of culture on intercultural communication, Gudykunst et al. (1988) also refer to values, beliefs, and shared qualities unique to each group. They provide a framework for understanding how culture can be treated as a variable in research related to interpersonal communication and define culture as

> '…the learned beliefs, values, rules, norms, symbols, and traditions that are common to a group of people. It is these shared qualities of a group that make them unique. Culture is dynamic and transmitted to others. In short, culture is the way of life, customs, and script of a group of people.'

(Gudykunst et al., 1988, p. 13).

The above quote emphasises how culture can be communicated within groups. Culture develops within groups in which people participate and spend time together, and that culture in turn shapes and reinforces values, beliefs and behaviours within the organisation (Schein, 2004). Schein (2004; 2010) emphasises the importance of the leader's role in embedding and transmitting culture, which he conceives of as containing three levels. His three-level theoretical model can be applied to understand a group's deeper, often invisible layers of culture that influence organisational behaviour. These deeper layers are also noted by Clarke and O'Donoghue (2017), who stress how social, economic, political, and cultural factors can all influence leadership practices.

5.3.2. Organisational Heritage School Culture.

Therefore, to understand how heritage school leaders preserve cultural continuity, Schein's (2004) theory and three-level framework can be applied to understand the series of assumptions that make up the heritage school culture of those in this study.

Below, each of Schein's (2004) three levels of organisational culture as outlined in the literature review will be applied to the heritage schools and their leadership herein. This will enable analysis of the heritage leaders' perceptions and descriptions obtained in their interviews and their role in preserving and promoting cultural continuity.

1. Artefacts: these are the visible or easily identified elements of the school, which can be seen or heard. The language taught, teaching materials, and the physical environment can be included in the analysis of this level. While there is no standard course book or teaching materials, and heritage leaders may struggle to rent rooms from state school premises, initially, artefacts of heritage school culture can seem elusive. Leaders often cannot even request the use of a wall on which to display student work or teaching materials. Textbooks are usually selected from those designed to cater for the specific needs of heritage language learners. These may include bilingual dictionaries, grammar and storybooks and other resources that incorporate elements of the heritage culture. In larger schools, letters or bulletins sent out to parents and the wider community are also artefacts, as they may contain updates about the school's activities and reflect the school's engagement within the community, useful for examining case studies.

However, artefacts also include stories told about shared experiences, such as the community events and cultural activities conducted. This level also includes expected behaviours and experiences that school members are proud to retell, and which embody the character and personality of the school or group culture, conveying group identity and cohesion.

In this study, cultural events and activities across all twelve schools are commonly carried out. Gracie mentions celebrating name days and birthdays, stating that these events are important to individuals as they are part of their culture and identity. Yvonne highlights the importance of sharing different cultural events and supporting young people through cultural activities, as she believes this helps them to understand themselves and others.

Sue refers to the May Day festival: a huge fundraising event within the community with stalls providing Greek delicacies, and then continues to outline her rationale.

Sue: (20 years' experience leading a very large Greek Cypriot School)

'......and other cultural events……it's like promoting the culture, promoting the language, promoting the religion, all of this and ......and keeping them alive in the UK......so all of us... they have…. we have this ......as targets…. as aims… let's say, and we all work for this cause….'

Sheila, for example, describes the carnival season celebration called 'Apokries', which means abstinence from meat. The carnival takes place before the beginning of Lent, when fasting and sobriety are culturally appropriate in the spiritual preparation for Easter.

Sheila: (8+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek School)

'......for example, now we had the carnival party which we call in Greek 'Apokries' ....which again will give the opportunity… you know ......to the children and the parents …and the members of the community to be altogether... to celebrate before fasting...

Yvonne is also exceedingly proactive in organising cultural events through the school.

Yvonne: (10+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school):

'…. I do celebrations for the three main holidays, you know. I'll...... I'll do events where everybody's welcome, for example ...like, ...last Saturday, we had this Chinese character ...Han's cultural festival in conjunction with the Dragon Boat Festival, which is one of the main festivals…. and then we had 400 people booked to come and to experience this festival, ...'

According to Martin et al. (1983) and Martin (1992), stories help illustrate values characteristic of a school's culture. To illustrate her benevolent, caring school culture, Judy relates the story of how, with the help of her team and her husband included, they ensured a colleague was looked after and supported when diagnosed with cancer. Judy offers the analogy of teamwork and school culture as similar to one big family.

Judy (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school)*:*

'Three years ago…. one of our teachers had breast cancer ...and had to have, you know, the operation ...and chemo ......so we went together and ... every day we had a teacher go to the house... to bring food, ...you know… to look after her… to help her… you know… we have teamwork…. so yeah…. it's my teachers and my husband's help… like one big family ...'

Again, the stories emphasise values and a school culture that has a strong, benevolent collective community connection.

Judy (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school):

> '......so... It's just a supportive community to help each other... we have a Malaysian mom who's a great cook... and every Saturday she brings some food.'

2. Espoused values and beliefs: these lie beyond or below the artefacts, which are the sensory or visible aspects of the organisation that can include the stories that are characteristic, and the cultural events organised. Within the second level in Schein's model, the espoused values and beliefs contain the ideals and aspirations, the communicated values, and the rules of behaviour. Specific to heritage schools, this can contain mission statements, visions and aspirations, strategies, goals, and the values that underpin the motivation to confront the challenges of heritage school leadership. This level also refers to the educational philosophies wherein emphasis is given to the importance of preserving and promoting heritage languages and culture. In the interviews, the leaders refer to missions and visions as sources of their motivation and resilience underlying their leadership approach.

Greg's description of his vision and aspirations to inspire his team show his underlying espoused values and beliefs guiding his leadership and purpose:

Greg: (4+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek Cypriot school):

> '....in any job, how are you going to move on ....forward without vision... and my vision is to build cooperation ...and communication ... and community ....and all of these things I try to carry out in my role in the school.'

Leadership of this nature, as shown in the results, is similar to that characterised by Burns (2012), wherein leaders inspire and motivate through the group goals and visions to propel their followers beyond personal self-interest towards high morale and commitment:

'Leadership is the reciprocal process of mobilising, by persons with certain motives and values, various economic, politic, and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, to realise goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers' (Burns, 2012, p.425).

This can be identified in Sheila's interview, wherein she sees her leadership role as supportive of a 'good cause', echoing values of benevolence and universalism previously found in Chapter Four. In her response, she expresses the importance of creating a sense of belonging and identity within the school community, emphasising the value of sharing, supporting and being part of that common cause.

Sheila: (8+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek School)

> '...being in another country....and knowing the struggles I had………. I think it's both ...... at the same time, ...being part of the big cause, ... in a way .... and..... giving the opportunity to people to have and develop this sense of belonging, ... of having an identity, of having something in common ……and sharing ....'

Gracie echoes this sentiment again, indicating her emotional intelligence through a recognition of a sensitivity to a needed sense of belonging.

Gracie: (6+ years' experience leading a large Czech school)

> 'it's a way of connecting… and it's about the culture and the community.... you know… and belonging.'

Throughout the interviews, the recurring references to group cohesion, community and belonging within the schools indicate similarities to 'Clan Culture' (Cameron & Quinn, 2005). This is one aspect or type in the four-part quadrant of Cameron and Quinn's (2005) Competing Values Framework (CVF) that can be used to determine an organisation's culture. The four types in the quadrant represent different ways organisations operate and succeed depending on their priorities and context. Clan Culture emphasises an atmosphere of collaboration, participation, and benevolence, wherein leaders are seen as mentors and

facilitators, almost akin to a parent creating a friendly workplace similar to an extended family. There is cohesion within the organisation due to loyalty and commitment, and morale is high. The organisation values teamwork and innovation and fosters a culture of community and co-operation, which is conceived of as indicative of its success (Cameron & Quinn, 2005). Characteristics of clan culture are evident throughout the interviews: the leaders refer to values such as collaboration and benevolence, both directly and indirectly demonstrating their awareness of the importance of values underpinning their objectives. When discussing his relationship with his staff, Greg expresses values such as empathy as important in his leadership, mirroring a clan culture:

Greg: (4+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek Cypriot school):

> *'...and another thing that I think is important is empathy...... so I really try to have the empathy to understand them…. with their problems… to try to be or see their situation and help…. maybe to… to ...solve this…I think if you work with people, and you want to understand them, you need empathy to succeed'.*

Leo directly links his mission and purpose to his values, guiding his leadership in the culture he creates.

Leo: (5+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school that offers tuition in a wide range of culturally related subjects)

> *'...the Chinese school, the half of Chinese school's mission…. it's about education… what is education… and that is what you show through your school leadership … you show your values……*
> *..... education is not just about giving students knowledge… it's about how to inspire people...'*

In his discussion on the wealth of literature generated on the topic of organisational culture in schools, Torres (2022) points out that it is necessary to align school culture with values such as equity, inclusion, and democracy. He claims that to do so, it is necessary to:

> '…...delve into the deepest realms of social behaviour (values, ideologies, beliefs)'

> (Torres, 2022, p. 3).

This quote reinforces the importance of examining the values underpinning leadership and the culture created through it. Benevolence and universalism were noted as highly rated overall in the qualitative data results in Chapter Four. Coupled with examination of their espoused values, we gain a further understanding of how the heritage school leaders in this study are aligning their values of benevolence through their beliefs, social responsibility, and leadership practice.

3. Basic underlying assumptions and beliefs: The third and final component lies at the deepest level in Schein's (2004) framework and includes the underlying assumptions, which are those beliefs that are deeply ingrained and truly guide behaviour. In the heritage leadership herein, this mainly focuses on the belief in the importance of maintaining linguistic and cultural heritage and community cohesion. Identifying assumptions offers a significantly deeper indication of an organisation's culture, reflecting what those who work together really believe about what leads to success or failure in the workplace (Schein, 2004, 2010). In this study, as previously shown, the basic assumptions evident were clearly related to the belief in the value of understanding the heritage language and culture, most often so that a deeper understanding of family members could be achieved. Yvonne outlines how culture and language are interwoven.

Yvonne: (10+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

> '…. the most important thing is to keep the language going... and through the ... the language they can learn culture …and understand family.'

For Katie-Jane, the importance of understanding the Chinese language and culture extends beyond the family into disciplines relating to history, literature, and philosophy.

Katie-Jane: (20+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

> 'Chinese culture is very…. eh…. it has so many important aspects… like … I think being polite and respectful… and our way of seeing life, … and understanding the language and

the beauty of it, ... like in poetry .... or Confucius ......you cannot enjoy the… the rich culture until you know this language well…… because the language and culture are so much in it together…'

For Leo, the basic assumptions and beliefs in his school culture are directly related to his vision and philosophy and the reasons why he feels compelled to take up his leadership position. His love of both Chinese culture and its philosophy forms the foundation upon which his educational leadership purpose is built. He believes that all those who join the school, either as students, staff, or parents (who may also be involved in teaching), do so having understood his cultural and leadership approach, his vision, philosophy, and values.

Leo: (5+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school that offers tuition in a wide range of culturally related subjects):

'...and all the parents and the students, ... they join in our ...in…. in my school ...and that is based on the ...understanding... eh… the understanding about my idea, ...my leadership, my vision, my philosophy, my values about why I need to do, anyone need to do, ... the, ... the... the school project…'

As also mentioned previously, there were resounding references to the importance of cultural preservation for numerous reasons that indicate benefits beyond linguistic development. These encompass aspects such as cognitive, psychological, and emotional stability and the benefits of multicultural education and intercultural communicative competence. Karen expresses this notion directly.

Karen: (13+ years' experience leading Italian heritage schools)

'It is more to do with finding your people and your identity…'

There is also the recognised belief that bilingualism or gaining the ability to understand and communicate in an additional language, build friendships, and comprehend the history and culture of another country other than English and England, will be advantageous in the future.

Ruby: (7+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school)

> *'I also believe Chinese language is one of the most helpful languages for children's future and… …. I think it is one of the very important central languages for the future generations to learn'*

There is a wealth of research that points to the importance of second language learning. According to Bialystok et al. (2012) and Chen and Padilla (2019), having a second language or the ability to communicate in another language provides cognitive and social benefits. They maintained that bilingualism offers professional and economic opportunities for success in a globalised world. More recently, in their research into how cognitive function may be modified by bilingualism, Bialystok and Craik (2022) suggest that bilinguals have more efficient and flexible attentional control or enhanced abilities that relate to cognitive control. Their research points to the importance of and current interest in how bilingualism influences cognitive function (Antoniou & Szymanski, 2023). Kalra (2019), for example, found that bilingual individuals often exhibit enhanced cognitive abilities, including improved executive functions and cognitive flexibility. Such abilities are invaluable in international teams and support better intercultural interactions. Their research shows how bilingual individuals often have better social identity and intercultural skills, which are beneficial in any intercultural or diverse organisational setting (Kroll & Bice, 2021; Szymanski & Kalra, 2019).

Ruby's school actively promotes interculturalism, recognising the advantages of friendship and respect for and between people of diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. She expands on the concept of multicultural relations and understanding built through her school.

Ruby: (7+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school)

> *'I feel that the students get a particularly good sense of… how to communicate and socialise with other cultures too…you know…. and this is very important …. the students… they're all very good I think... because…. you know…. they are only two hours together ….and they are friends …they understand the other'*

Her school culture actively encourages aspects of interculturalism. In this way, Ruby offers students a foundation on which to build interculturality, recognised by the Council of Europe as fundamental to our future societies and intercultural dialogue.

> 'Intercultural dialogue (……) allows us to prevent ethnic, religious, linguistic, and cultural divides. It enables us to move forward together, to deal with our different identities constructively and democratically based on shared universal values.'

(Council of Europe, 2008, p. 3).

In summary, Schein's model of organisational culture helps categorise the differing layers of organisational culture and reflects the need for heritage leaders to be contextually aware and culturally sensitive both at a micro and macro level if they are to achieve optimal success and sustainability.

The following section discusses the last theme that emerged in the results relating to context and culture from the twelve qualitative interviews with heritage leaders.

5.3.3. Parental Engagement and Support.

Work conducted by Thorpe (2011) showed that many heritage leaders did not initially set up their schools. In this study, seven of the twelve leaders described how they either taught in the schools they now lead or in another heritage school before taking up their current leadership role. Their involvement began as parent-teachers. Across all the interviews, the necessity of parental collaboration is stressed. Leaders are aware that without parental support in teaching and administration, their schools would not be sustainable. In their study of Brazilian complementary schools in the UK, Arthur and Souza (2023) highlight the significant role parents play, most often voluntarily. In this study, many of the leaders referred to what they perceived to be the reasons behind such dedication and their rationale for parent-teacher

commitment. They stress that motivation for parental involvement is generated from two sources simultaneously. On a practical level, first and foremost, motivation springs from shared values and aspirations and the needs parents recognise relating to ensuring their children have the opportunity to learn their language and culture. Also on a practical level, the schools offer the opportunity to gain work experience, try out new methods of teaching and share good practice. Learning about compliance and safeguarding while becoming DBS-checked is also enabled, all of which is advantageous when later applying for positions, and they wish to show they have gained work experience within the UK in an educational setting. This resonates with research conducted by Souza (2020), who found that collaborative practice between parents, teachers and leaders fostered communities of practice (COP), enhancing teacher professional development, which was crucial for the school's success and professional growth of educators.

The second motivating source communicated in the results is more strongly connected with their psychology, values, and needs and has been highlighted throughout the results and analysis. This is the personal values parents gain, the sense of purpose and sharing and being a part of a team in which everyone collaborates and contributes. The school represents a network for advice and support if and when they confront challenges in an unfamiliar environment. The school and its leaders provide a 'bridge' and, despite the time and dedication required, a sense of community is maintained within the school culture.

5.3.4. External Engagement and Support.

Finally, the results reveal that while some heritage school leaders may know of external support, this is inconsistent across heritage backgrounds and dependent upon whether the school has been set up as a charity or is a limited company. For Chinese heritage schools set up as charities, some support is available through the UK Federation of Chinese Schools

(UKFCS), a national organisation supporting the teaching of Chinese language education and culture. Since its inception, the organisation has seen steady membership growth. Currently, it includes approximately eighty member schools, encompassing over 10,000 students.

Two of the Greek leaders included in this study are supported by the Cypriot High Commission Educational Department, employed, and contracted directly by this organisation. The third Greek school is supported by the Orthodox church within the vicinity: no other support is offered or received. The Italian school is self-supporting, whereas the Czech school has formed an association with Slovak heritage schools in the UK and Ireland, exchanging advice on how to run schools and organise events.

There is some recognition that the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education (NSCRC) offered advice on the setting up and support of teaching, offering materials and suggestions. Not all the leaders in this study knew of the centre or had accessed advice or help through it. NSCRC has now joined the Young People's Foundation Trust (YPF), a leading charity supporting heritage or supplementary education and offering a quality mark or certificate. The YPF support local authorities and community organisations. The YPF Trust framework and its related certificate show adherence to the DfE Code of Practice and safeguarding guidance to ensure quality assurance for all out-of-school educational provision. It was surprising to see that not many of the head teachers knew of the trust or the support they could obtain. While many of the leaders in this study feel cut off and unsupported, it was surprising to note how few had made use of or consulted the NSCRC or the YPF. For those schools that did not have any recognisable external support, there was an evident need communicated through their sense of insecurity. These schools indicated that more needs to be done to make known the available support that does exist alongside ensuring access to relevant information about the legalities of charity or Ltd set-up.

Karen, for example, struggled when she tried to access help and advice. She was told quite clearly that they did not know and could not advise her.

> *'Jobcentre Plus? .... and I asked if anyone could help me ...transforming this Ltd into a community interest company, ...which is a form of charity.... it's...... it's a specific form of charity for......yeah, community......for, for, for, for a business that has......the community at heart, ...and it was very complicated.... and every time I've been asking for help to get out.... of this bureaucratic .... like spider web......eh, ...no one was ever able to ...to help .... everything is so sectoral....'*

Knowing there is some form of support or connection would greatly enhance leaders' sense of possibility and agency and reaffirm the clear message that if information or support is needed, it can be found. A well-signposted free source to access help and advice needs to be readily available, accessible and communicated in any and every community centre or point for consultation or citizen advice.

5.4. Conclusion

This chapter examines how the perceived context influences leadership and shapes the school culture. The leaders, in this study, equipped with cultural awareness and contextual intelligence, create an inclusive environment that supports community engagement. Their initial motivation to help their children navigate dual or multicultural identities helps foster their students' strong intercultural sensitivity. Students may benefit from this approach by developing a shared group identity, enhancing their ethnic and racial identity, and taking pride in their heritage, multiculturalism, and multilingualism. Heritage leaders, guided by their life experiences and community needs, aim to cultivate an inclusive, caring school culture based on shared values and aspirations. This aligns with the school's objectives of interconnectedness and global citizenship. This shared identity appears to extend to staff, with leaders leveraging the school's linguistic diversity to empower and support students

cognitively, emotionally, and psychologically, fostering a sense of belonging and intercultural understanding.

The chapter also applies Schein's theory of organisational culture to analyse how leaders preserve cultural continuity within their school culture. Cultural preservation is highlighted as crucial for cognitive, psychological, and emotional stability, and for the benefits of multicultural education and intercultural communicative competence. The importance of second language learning is noted for its role in enhancing executive function and cognitive flexibility. Finally, parental engagement and motivation are shown to stem from shared values and aspirations, as well as opportunities for work experience, fostering a sense of belonging and teamwork.

Chapter Six.

6.1. Introduction to Leadership Learning.

This chapter provides the results, analysis and discussion of the collected interview data relating to the third component in the three-part conceptual framework (see Chapter 2.3). The chapter provides insight into the perceptions and experiences of leadership learning as conveyed by the twelve heritage leaders. While the results and findings conveyed numerous aspects often relating to the specific context of each school, clear themes emerged, prompting analysis and discussion. The coding for this research question can be found in Appendix IV 4.1. (Table 14), with a summary available in Appendix IV 4.2. (Table 15). The analysis and discussion follow the order of the coding in Tables 14 and 15, offering a comprehensible overview and structure for this Chapter in answer to this third research question.

The chapter is divided into three sections, with each section focusing on aspects of leadership learning as perceived and outlined by the twelve heritage leaders. Chapter seven follows this chapter, providing the conclusion and a summary of the findings for each research question. This is followed by a discussion of the implications for future training and a final reflection.

6.2. What are the Perceptions and Experiences of Heritage Leaders' Leadership Learning and What are their Future Developmental Needs: Results Analysis and Discussion.

6.2.1. Managerial and Financial Challenges.

All the school leaders in this study lamented the huge financial vulnerability they continually confront in many fundamental domains, such as locating and securing affordable premises.

When considering how many schools are run as charities, the economic drain on finances is easily recognisable. Katie-Jane explains why she believes this is the case:

Katie-Jane: (20+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

> '......to run a charity like this when we are facing the…. the … rising rent costs … and we have to pay teachers' salary…. and then…. if we just rely on the fundraising…. well, … it is very difficult, you know, … because … we are waiting for donations…'

Most of the Chinese heritage leaders in this study are members of the UK Federation of Chinese Language Schools (UKFCS) or the Chinese International Education Foundation (CIEF), through which they can request help in how to apply for grants and support. Zandra explains the necessity of grant applications.

Zandra: (20+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

> '…. for most schools it's a financial thing … sometimes they need some financial support, … I mean…... from a government or an organisation …maybe they want to have a celebration …...or to get something done, …... but for us… it's quite difficult…...

It appears that those schools most likely to survive have leaders who know how best to apply for grants from whichever sources may consider their applications. For the one Czech school in this study, Gracie, for example, describes how her summer months are spent making applications:

Gracie: (6+ years' experience leading a large Czech school):

> '......we do regularly cooperate and communicate with the Ministry of Schools of Education in the Czech Republic and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is the Czech Embassy as well…. and we ask them for what they call financial gifts…. '
> '…...so… all our summer is… is spending time doing applications…. one is for the school section which is sent to the Ministry of Education….and the other one is then regarding all the events we run throughout the year …. because we need to continually think about how to raise funds and how we will survive'

Not all nationalities have organisations or governmental support and help. For those who do, many point out that this support is limited. This is particularly hard when schools are trying

to run as charities with staff working voluntarily. If and when schools do run with voluntary

teaching staff, Gracie outlines this as impossible without financial help:

Gracie: (6+ years' experience leading a large Czech school)

'....so, ... the main challenge is financial…… I mean, we are fine running it without financial help, but that is only when you can run the school mainly with volunteers and without paying the teachers….

6.2.2. Resistance from local state schools.

When they are able to find an area or wish to establish a school in a specific community, local

state schools are not always supportive. Karen explains:

Karen: (13+ years' experience leading Italian heritage schools)

'…. you can't find the schools anywhere online …or with great difficulty ……the mainstream sends out this newsletter every week with things that are happening in the school……amazing......but there is no mention of the heritage school that is just down the road …'
'…. what the mainstream say is …. there's no space for things that are not that regulated… so complementary schools are not that regulated......so we're not gonna promote classes for heritage speakers within our premises……

When attempting to establish collaboration with state schools, some of the leaders in this

study describe meeting with a clear message of distinct disinterest. When there is

collaboration, this can also be problematic, as the concept of the heritage school and its aims

are not understood or respected.

Zandra: (20+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

'…. some surrounding schools were really helpful …. we have worked together … basically, sometimes they asked us for help with the after-school club…. and this was a really good cooperation…. but we also had problems with this ….as the after-school club ….is…. not…. serious lessons … it's… a …fun club ….

As a result, many heritage leaders seek out other locations such as church halls and

community centres. However, financial support for community groups has experienced huge

cuts, resulting in rental price hikes for premises in community centres (Vassie, 2016). Church

halls may occasionally be found for Greek heritage schools, such as Sheila's:

Sheila: (8+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek School)

'...we don't own the premises, and we are having the lessons within the church hall......eh... the Greek Orthodox Church.... they are renting the premises from the Anglicans...... and so on the day that they use the premises ...for the church..., they're also giving us the church hall for running the lessons....'

Sheila's church collaboration has added advantages relating to financially managing and running the school.

Sheila: (8+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek School)

'...for ... the Greek people... ... the first call is the church, and the second call is the school......but I get help through the church with the administrative side...., you know.... how to set up the charity and how to run the finances and get support from the bank.... '

6.2.3. Challenges during and after the pandemic.

The leaders in this study are those whose schools have survived the pandemic. This is indicative of leadership resilience, as due to enforced closure, many heritage schools had to shut down (Kromczyk et al., 2021; Young & White, 2024). When many leaders rely on strong community engagement as indicated in this study, disruption of this nature can result in difficulty maintaining operation. Their resilience seems to imply these leaders either have support available or are able to locate and take advantage of what is needed for their schools to operate. Gracie, for example, turned to her local council and expressed how their support helped further establish a feeling of connection with the community during the pandemic.

Gracie: (6+ years' experience leading a large Czech school)

'.... the (suburb removed) council was excellent.... they didn't charge us......... for the venue at the time of Covid, we... um... got Microsoft... they gave us teams... so...we really appreciated them and their support...... that's why I love this area ... they understood .... they see our contribution to the community ...

However, Gracie also explains that now, due to Brexit, a source of voluntary help supplied by the Czech Republic is no longer available. Students previously were sent by Czech

Universities to the UK on a six-month placement through the Erasmus programme, where they learnt how the school was run, helped in the classrooms and with administration.

> '......the Czech universities are choosing... not to offer.... the UK schools to the students, that is the...the (Czech) students who are studying at university to become a teacher......so... their stay was paid by Erasmus and.... they were helping in classrooms'...

The findings indicate that economic savvy, coupled with a collaborative team and shared responsibility, is vitally important. In many of the interviews, leaders expressed their need to make effective use of all sources of support. Harriet refers to this as good teamwork.

Harriet: (10+ years' experience leading various branches of small Mandarin Chinese schools)

> 'everybody's got something ....my team members.... they've got different skills.... like one's got finance skills, you know.... another one is good at writing, or administration... you know, so it's... it's... it's.... all different and I... I... need this kind of people... who have different personal skills...'

6.2.4. Financial initiatives and staff recruitment.

In all the schools, financial management and accountancy is mentioned as a crucial area of knowledge and experience that leaders have either acquired or seek in those appointed to their management boards, as deputy heads or advisors. This is particularly important if the leader lacks financial planning experience through previous work. Before taking on the leadership role, Gracie had held the role of treasurer and therefore had already understood the financial side of running the school before stepping into her leadership role.

Gracie: (6+ years' experience leading a large Czech school):

> 'I started as a treasurer and as a co-founder of the charity, ...with ...obviously, registering the charity, ...I've learned how to budget, and we had to prepare... a... business plan for the bank.... so......, we had some kind of an idea how much things are gonna cost...'

Other transferable skills relating to management, such as good organisational skills and the ability to budget and preplan creatively, with what might be considered an entrepreneurial skill, were mentioned. In their study exploring the concept of educational entrepreneurship,

Melnikova (2020) maintains that this is a new skill set worthy of more research. Shen and Yang (2022) also found qualities such as vision-driven innovation, adaptability and resourcefulness were crucial for successful school management in heritage leaders in Australia. Prior work experience also influenced leaders' entrepreneurial approaches (Shen &Yang, 2022). This implies that policy supporting heritage leaders' knowledge of creative initiatives and the ability to develop such skills would greatly benefit UK heritage leadership. However, as shown in this study, the findings also indicate that these leaders could also share their already gained knowledge with others if provided with a reliable, well-organised platform.

A further huge challenge emphatically expressed relates to staffing and staff management. Ruby identifies this as her main challenge.

Ruby: (7+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school)

'Teacher shortage… quality teacher shortage.'

Two of the three Greek head teachers in this study work under the guidance of the Cypriot Ministry of Education. Greg, for example, offers his explanation as to why recruitment and retention are still problematic. Voluntary work or low remuneration means many do not consider the responsibility of heritage school teaching a career priority.

Greg: (4+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek Cypriot school):

'…. the biggest challenge is finding teachers …… good teachers who will teach…. properly … 'and I continually struggle…. but I understand …if you don't get paid properly, then it's really hard to find those who will teach as well as they should …

The situation is further complicated due to the huge challenge of having to teach mixed-ability students within the same class:

Greg: (4+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek Cypriot school)

'......when students join the school.... they are put in with a group according to their age ... I don't agree with this .... because you end up with children who may not even be able to read anything in Greek ... some of them .... when they join... they ... don't even know the Greek alphabet'

Harriet draws attention to the fact that good teachers are easier to find if CPD is offered.

Harriet: (10+ years' experience leading various branches of small Mandarin Chinese schools)

'it's to find good teachers ...it's always a challenge…….... teachers,.. we can find all the time…., but good teachers…. is a very big challenge…… and we try and offer some CPD for teachers ………. but still ......it's difficult to find them ....'

Greg concludes that this chain of events has a domino effect.

Greg: (4+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek Cypriot school):

'......so ... it's like a chain.... the teachers are struggling to teach…. the very different levels…. for little money ......and few CPD opportunities …. after that…. you have the complaints...... and then when students go to do the GCSEs...... they get ... low grades'....

For newcomers to the country, gaining teaching experience in England can be advantageous as it enhances their applications for future positions in educational institutions. Volunteers may be willing to take on particular roles within the school, sharing responsibilities such as curriculum development or financial management, as this can be added to their CVs, showing experience gained within a UK setting, as outlined by Sheila.

Sheila: (8+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek School):

'.... we give support to teachers from Greece to get work in the UK ....to understand the needs and the system here and then to have these transferable skills in the English schools....'

However, retaining such staff is challenging. Sheila relates the consequences of her staff gaining this vital experience.

then? ......they move on…. or they get full-time jobs ... and then they don't want to work on Saturdays too ... or if they have family issues…. ..... they just say ......sorry ...... I can't come next term…….., and I think ...often... it's because they are mums... and it's the money ...'

Research carried out by Thorpe (2011), Thorpe et al. (2018), Arthur and Souza (2023), and Thorpe and Karamanidou (2024) has highlighted the various obstacles in sustaining heritage schools' leadership. When it is also challenging to retain teaching staff, the implications for sustainability throughout the school are further exacerbated. These excerpts make clear how difficult it is to retain volunteers if leaders are unable to offer some form of compensation for the time and effort devoted by their staff when there is little or no financial reward. Without committed and staff continuity, sustaining or maintaining leadership in a school is compromised. In most situations, teachers recognise the benefit of gaining experience but wish to have some form of direction or source of guidance in the form of professional development. This also indicates that having a formalised source of reliable voluntary work would be hugely beneficial, as would formalised recognition of the contribution of voluntary teaching.

6.2.5. Fragmented Sector.

Throughout the interviews, the teachers lament the lack of information and support available to those who wish to obtain advice or guidance through local authorities and national services such as Job Centre Plus. Karen relates her experience and the frustration she felt when she tried to obtain information about setting up a school as a charity.

 Karen: (13+ years' experience leading Italian heritage schools)

> *'I was never helped by the Citizens' Advice Bureau or the Job Centre, and the local authorities and the Council and the library and all of those .... I asked for help ......I asked everyone in terms of ... all the services I could get …… I had no, no help .... because the people that worked there ......and I feel... I feel really bad… to say this ...but… they didn't know… they couldn't answer ...... they couldn't help me ...*

As a result, leaders turn to those networks provided through their own cultural or heritage background, such as their embassies. This is usually for advice on the legal aspects of setting up a charity or obtaining funding, both of which are limited. Heritage leaders may also seek

out those organisations that support the teaching of heritage languages, although such organisations may require some form of payment. Fortunately, in the UK, there are CPD and training opportunities available. For example, to mention a few, the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education (NRCSE), which has now merged with the Young People's Foundation Trust (YPF), is a charity that supports heritage schools through programmes and training courses tailored to support management and those teaching in heritage schools. Their courses cover topics such as effective teaching skills, safeguarding and management. They also provide accredited qualifications such as a Level 3 Certificate in Teaching in the Supplementary Education Sector. UCL BiLingo provides research-based advice, information, and training for those involved in bilingual and multilingual education. They offer seminars, workshops, and training sessions for teachers in heritage language schools. The Centre for Literacy and Multilingualism (CeLM) at the University of Reading conducts research and provides resources to support multilingual education and offers insights into effective language teaching practices. The Association for Language Learning (ALL) also offers a variety of workshops covering a wide range of topics relevant to heritage language schools. However, while they spoke highly of the advice and support received, only one leader within this study mentioned their substantial involvement with one of the above programmes. Although supported by the Cypriot Ministry of Education, Greg draws attention to why he believes it is challenging for any organisation to connect with and support all or even the majority of heritage schools. Charitable status is difficult to obtain. With so many small heritage schools operating independently and often struggling to obtain charity status, he sees the sector and its support as highly fragmented.

Greg: (4+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek Cypriot school)

> '…. so … I think the only solution is for the smaller schools to link up … so some of the schools…. they don't have many students………. let's make tougher, … bigger Greek schools….and have more teachers with better pay ……and then we can have more CPD ……'

Having a dedicated source for consultation and support on how to access local authority funding and/or other financial legalities and advice is fundamental, and yet it is either inconclusive or non-existent. Further implications will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

6.3. Perceptions and Experiences of Leadership Learning through Pedagogical Challenges.

6.3.1. Self-directed professional development.

Ten out of the twelve leaders in this study had gained experience in teaching in a UK setting before taking up their leadership roles. Many leaders commented on the difficulty in finding those who would teach voluntarily and who also had already acquired experience teaching in the UK. Their preference for those with UK teaching experience is due to an understanding of the differences in education in the home or heritage country in comparison to education within Britain. Judy describes how even when she finds volunteers who have teacher status and qualifications from China, they still require training when they join her school.

Judy: (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school)

> '......their background is all different .... ok… some of them ......already have been teaching in China…they are graduates in teaching… …. but still, we train them and it's because the education is so different here.'

Apart from training in safeguarding and child protection, methods and approaches the heritage parent may apply are vastly different to what the students may be experiencing in the British mainstream. Such differences in teaching can be rejected by the students, who, as a result, may end up considering language learning negatively.

Gracie: (6+ years' experience leading a large Czech school):

> ' …. it's a different style of teaching…. so, when we get a student or young teacher coming from Czech Republic, who has never been involved in teaching in the UK, ….it

can actually cause the children not like to go to Czech school because they can find it very different and very hard……. the children think it's boring……'

Many of the leaders, having understood the necessity of understanding and experiencing educational differences between the UK and their home country, sought out positions within UK schools. For example, both Greg and Sue worked in the mainstream, and although Sheila had previous teaching experience in Greece, on completing her PhD with secured University work in a British university, she sought to better understand the British educational system and its governance.

Sheila: (8+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek School)

'I also taught here in England…. in a secondary school… because when I first…started lecturing at the university…. I wanted to experience and understand the secondary education…. so… …. I was a supply teacher … in several state schools and academies … huge schools……… and it was incredibly challenging …'

In their study, Yang and Shen (2021) explored the concept of pedagogical habitus derived from Bourdieu's (2005) theory of habitus. Pedagogical habitus refers to the ingrained teaching practices, attitudes and dispositions educators develop through their experiences within education. Yang and Shen (2021) maintain that educational habitus can be influenced by an educator's background and cultural experiences and can explain why teachers might approach similar teaching experiences differently. Thus, their pedagogical habitus influences their decision-making, classroom management and interaction with students. Yang and Shen's (2021) work examined three community language school teachers in Australia. They found that when the participants' previous experience was coupled with professional development, both experiences and learning could bring about change and enhance their adaptation and pedagogical habitus to align with the new educational environment (Yang & Shen, 2021).

Like the Australian context, heritage language schools in England could benefit from targeted professional development programmes to help teachers adapt to changing educational landscapes.

According to Connelly and Clandinin (1997) and Clandinin (2019), cultural background and teachers' life experiences can also influence Personal Practical Knowledge (PPK), impacting classroom practice. PPK is the evolving personal knowledge and understanding that teachers accrue from their past and current personal experience about how and what they are teaching (Xu & Wang, 2023). The authors explored how PPK is developed from theoretical Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) student teachers. In the domain of language learning, PCK is foundational knowledge that is gained through knowledge of theory within the practitioners' field (Xu & Wang, 2023). In a Heritage language setting, PCK might include areas such as instructional strategies, assessment, functional skills, and language-specific factors, along with other aspects specific to the heritage language being taught. Heritage teachers' PCK differs from EFL teachers as heritage learners have already acquired aspects of heritage language knowledge and culture from the home environment (Bowles & Torres, 2021). This is important when considering CPD for heritage leaders and teachers, as there are implications for the ability of educators to translate or build a bridge between their theoretical knowledge or PCK with their practice or PPK (Wang & Zhan, 2023) and to incorporate aspects of culture. Ucar (2022) maintains that both PCK and PPK are needed.

The field of Heritage Language (HL) teaching and acquisition has advanced within HL research (Montrul & Bowles, 2017; Bowles, 2018) to examine the impact of teaching approaches in HL learning. For example, Bowles and Torre's (2021) exploratory meta-analysis indicated that instruction could have a positive effect on Heritage students' learning. However, research is still limited, and a need for a deeper understanding of the best

approaches and conditions that take into consideration HL learners' prior language experience has been highlighted (Bowles, 2018; Sanz & Torres, 2018). This includes the need for the provision of research-supported pedagogical recommendations (Bowles & Torres, 2021). Leaders such as Judy, Katie-Jane, Yvonne, Greg, Leo, Karen, and Gracie either worked as teaching assistants or took on other roles within educational institutions. They express how this experience is useful for understanding approaches and methods in British education. However, their initiatives for appropriate materials, approaches to heritage teaching and school organisation led them to seek out advice and support from where they believed the most up-to-date materials and practice in the teaching of their heritage language could be found. To do so, three Chinese teachers describe travelling to other countries, such as America, in search of advice and teaching materials for the Chinese language. Zandra relates how her journey to America for materials also prompted her to seek out much-needed advice on how to reorganise her classes.

Zandra: (20+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

> *'……This system was founded …was created by … this American lady who is Chinese…….
> well, I met her when I went to America…….. and she has produced so many Chinese
> books… well, … when I met her…. she made such an impression on me …and this got me
> thinking about…. my system…. and how to better organise the school….*

Yvonne describes how she struggled to find the most suitable materials but chose to have training in her own country as she considered this the best available option at the time.

Yvonne: (10+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

> *'I went home …… and I did this kind of training in (country removed) for three months….
> and then …. I was kind of shopping around for different textbooks, you know looking
> ….and thinking… …. what, …I could use … '*

The experiences related above convey the challenges leaders met when initially teaching was their most pressing challenge. As their schools grow, these challenges are coupled with

challenges to leadership, school organisation and sustainability. When asked if the experience of teaching in British state schools had helped her in her current role, Sheila responded:

Sheila: (8+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek School)

> '...obviously in order to... be a leader... you need additional training for that....
> and .... I was lucky because…… through the university... I had access to this kind of
> training.... '

Other participants also mention how much their experience within British educational institutions was beneficial, and this is examined in greater detail in section 6.4. Further aspects relating to leadership learning are also outlined. Greg, for example, relates how what he learnt when working with a Greek head teacher in a British primary school helped him later deal with aspects of management and leadership which he found relevant to his current leadership role.

Greg: (4+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek Cypriot school):

> '..... mmm…you know things like behaviour management ...that includes .... things like
> how to handle the kids, how to cope with difficult situations ...... both outside and in the
> classroom...and ... you know…… boundaries between us and the parents and teachers
> and professionalism… and how to handle difficult situations with parents….and ….
> policies about safeguarding...... I didn't have any idea about British safeguarding and
> child protection policies… '

Judy highlights aspects of communication between the head teacher and staff and the importance of understanding what is happening through regularly organised meetings.

Judy: (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school)

> '...so… from that…… secondary school…. you know, it was a state school, and I learnt so
> much about how it was run … about how to do the administration and…. all that ….so I
> needed to make sure my school is running like that….'

When asked in the interviews the leaders tended to associate their own professional development with aspects related to classroom teaching as opposed to other aspects of leadership. Both Katie-Jane and Judy highlight these aspects.

Judy: (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school)

'...we need help with the teachers and training courses…. we need the opportunity to improve the teaching quality.'

Katie-Jane draws attention to the need to keep up with developments.

Katie-Jane: (20+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

'...but we also need ...some help ... some CPD... and to know more ...and ... be updated on the theories and practice too.'

As previously mentioned, research examining the best approaches in heritage language teaching is still limited (Bowles, 2018; Sanz & Torres, 2018), indicating that support from those most current in the field of research and enquiry, multilingualism and the related fields would be beneficial.

6.3.2. Responsibility, commitment, resilience, and transparency.

Throughout the interviews, the leaders in this study commented on the importance of maintaining and communicating their values, goals and mission and being explicit about what they are aiming to achieve and why. Sue and Sheila refer to their ethos, and leaders such as Greg and Leo both describe having a mission as fundamental to their leadership role. In Leo's concept of leadership, he emphasises the importance of communicating his commitment and mission to all stakeholders.

Leo: (5+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school that offers tuition in a wide range of culturally related subjects)

'...we have to be strong-minded and show what we believe in… and never give up…... believe in your mission… and tell this... .'

Others, such as Gracie and Judy, mention the importance of being honest, building trust, and communicating their passion and courage. Karen emphasises the emotional commitment that binds her to her purpose.

Karen: (13+ years' experience leading Italian heritage schools)

> *'.... the emotional social dimension of heritage language learning is so strong and so powerful and so deep and of value.'*

This highlights her focus on the intrinsic values of community and identity, rather than merely the educational or economic benefits of language learning. Yvonne refers to having standards that she believes must be made clear through her leadership.

Yvonne: (10+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

> *'I have to be upheld to my… my standard, you know, like honesty, be open… be transparent, you know…. everything you do has to be … really positive and very honest and transparent and understood…'*

In her leadership role, Harriet believes good communication is important, and along with Katie-Jane and Ruby, she emphasises the need to build and maintain trust with both the parents and students.

Harriet: (10+ years' experience leading various branches of small Mandarin Chinese schools)

> *'...my role? … trust with the parents and with the children … they need to feel trust.'*

Leighwood (2021) synthesised findings from sixty-three empirical studies identifying school leadership practices and dispositions that promote equitable leadership practice, which can be understood as creating inclusive and effective educational environments for students from diverse backgrounds and communities. In his review examining the leadership practice, approaches, and dispositions that can support equitable school success and results, Leighwood (2021) found that successful educational leaders are those who are motivated by and can communicate their values and beliefs, their visions and their strong, emotionally propelled commitment and convictions. In doing so, they make known their compassion for the futures and well-being of both students and all stakeholders, indicating their respect and care for the communities they serve. Such approaches are indicative of successful educational leadership (Leighwood, 2021).

6.3.3. Experiential learning, reflection, and transferable skills.

All the leaders mention transferable skills or ways in which previously gained knowledge and experience have been amalgamated with their current leadership roles. Leo mentions what he observed when working voluntarily in a large heritage school, and, along with Zandra and Sheila, previously taught at a university. Karen's extensive teaching in many different countries has afforded her a depth of understanding of the relevance of community and culture, along with Greg, who gained experience volunteering before taking up employment with management responsibility.

Greg: (4+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek Cypriot school):

> *'...so, volunteering in two primary schools offered me the opportunity to get involved in the celebrations and the events that those two schools in the north of (city removed) organised... ... and in the school ... the primary school ... the headmistress ...I learnt from her......I was able to observe her as well and see how she was able to manage such things.*

Leo also has knowledge of finance and accountancy, shared with Gracie, Harriet, Katie-Jane and Ruby, who mentions how she looks to learn from every potential example of educational leadership that she meets within her British environment.

Ruby: (7+ years' experience leading a large Mandarin Chinese school)

> *'I always read and observe and learn... I learn from the nursery manager of my son's nursery... how they run the nursery... how they communicate with parents, and how to get student events .... I learned from all these life experiences and then learned from my son's current head teacher.... I learn the way she speaks....so friendly in the assembly.... I even look at how she writes her newsletter...'*

Judy also highlights how, through experience working as a classroom assistant, she was able to observe and learn from her role, and this influenced her approach to education and teaching.

Judy: (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school)

'.... mm... I luckily .... I had the chance to work for a school ...a real school to get, you know... the knowledge and experience ....and I could see how they did ....'

These examples of situated learning capture how the leaders in this study sought to find and make use of what Bandura (1997) maintains is a process of learning through observation and imitation outlined in his social cognitive theory. As presented in these excerpts, the leaders in this study acquired skills and knowledge through experiences and the outcomes of applying observed or previously learned behaviours. Observing the positive consequences of our own and others' actions reinforces this learning. It fosters leadership development, enactment, and self-efficacy, as individuals assess and recognise their success in applying new knowledge or skills (Bandura,1997). The recursive process of observation followed by reflection, learning and application is indicative of Schon's (1997) 'reflection in and on action' (Schon, 1987, p.13) in learning and professional development.

6.4. Perceptions and Experiences of Leadership Learning through Collaboration and Opportunity.

6.4.1. Learning through educational institutions, e.g. state schools, other heritage schools and universities.

Although many and varied, all the leaders in this study mention gaining valuable knowledge through collaboration. Many mention opportunities pursued specifically for that reason. As previously mentioned, Sheila was able to access training through her university role.
For Greg, working alongside a primary school headmistress helped provide valuable insights into educational practices. Sue relates how she learns through consultation with committee members who are university lecturers. Leo consults his schoolteachers, and Ruby and Zandra, along with other Chinese leaders, refer to organisations such as UKFCS, although provision is limited. Katie-Jane and Judy both mention gaining knowledge and experience working in a

state school where they attended staff meetings. They both indicate that their experience as language assistants helped them understand the operation of schools better.

Judy: (15+ years' experience leading a large Chinese school)

'......I did a little bit of work ...in the secondary school ...as a.... as a language assistant, and I observed, and I learnt ... I learnt about how schools run... the protocol, about how to do the administration and…. all that'

Souza and Arthur (2020) note that the social interaction between teachers and leaders in heritage schools facilitates collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the negotiation of roles and power. Gracie describes how the Czech and Slovak heritage schools in the UK are now united in collaborating in an association to mutually support the work they are doing.

Gracie: (6+ years' experience leading a large Czech school)

'.... so, we created an association of Czech and Slovak schools in the UK… and that ... that has helped…. it really helped…. it's a partnership…. a co-operation…. so, we mutually support each other …… we see this as important ... we recognise the need for the schools…. for the children ... and we need to support and help each other'

In their discussion on career evolution, Bentley et al. (2019) outline how identity requires transition and reconstruction. Likewise, research into the Social Identity Model of Identity Change (SIMIC) by Iyer et al. (2009) propose that the experience of a life transition or professional role development entails building a new identity. The individual's well-being and ability to adjust to the new role and self-concept are more stable, given direction and confirmation if the individual can sense membership and identification with other group members (Iyer et al., 2009), which can be gained through professional collaboration. Bourdieu's (1988, 2003) theory of habitus emphasises how one unconsciously chooses to collaborate with those who are similar to us (e.g., class, religion, race), thus respecting power structures already understood and existent in social structures such as those relating to culture. It is therefore understandable that the leaders in this study have expressed seeking out group support from other heritage leaders who share their language and culture and confront the same challenges.

6.4.2. Learning through COPs, committees, and the school governor role.

As previously shown, the leaders in this study all belong to various groups that provide differing levels of advice and support, which Zandra describes:

Zandra: (20+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

> *'I think it's really important to be able to discuss and exchange ideas, you know ... I reflect ...and I ask .... like (state school head teacher name removed) it's really useful to have her and the organisation that Mr. (name removed) set up so we can ask .... we can ask advice .... or we can share ideas... yeah.... we don't feel alone, we are like a community to exchange .... and support each other ...*

However, for many leaders, support is limited, and unfortunately, since Brexit, support sources have dwindled. This can be understood through Sheila's initiative to become a school governor. Wanting to understand educational policy, Sheila identified a formally organised and regular community of practice (COP) (Lave & Wenger, 1991) to be necessary for her professional development and understanding.

Sheila: (8+ years' experience leading a medium-sized Greek School)

> *'I am also a governor at my son's school ...... and ... this is a very useful experience so I can understand the different educational systems from within ... I can experience those differences and understand them better ...and I can know more by having regular interaction with the head teacher and I can ask questions about the future of the British education since we are part of it...'*

Sheila's initiative to turn to the British educational system to seek out answers echoes the need for a platform for heritage leaders to share their practice, which cannot be emphasised enough. This is clarified through Lave and Wenger's (1991) social learning theory of situated learning. Lave and Wenger (1991) argue that learning is most effective when it occurs within the context or the profession in which it will be applied. The theory of situated learning provides a robust framework for leadership learning in heritage schools as it emphasises that learning is a social process deeply rooted in context. Many of the leaders in heritage schools began as teachers themselves, experiencing a process of Legitimate Peripheral Participation

(LPP). Through this process, the novice or newcomer becomes integrated into the community of practice (COP) and over time, as they gain experience and competence and take on more complex and central roles, they move from peripheral roles to positions of expertise or leadership. By fostering a community of practice, complementary schools can create an environment where leadership learning is continuous, contextual, and collaborative, ultimately leading to more effective and adaptive leadership. Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory is exemplified in the excerpts above as the leader's descriptions highlight that learning is inherently a social process, deeply embedded in the context where it occurs. For the leaders in this study, access to COPs for teachers would provide a source for CPD, not only enabling progress from novice to expert, but also supporting the sharing of successful leadership practice. Recognising their growing abilities boosts their confidence and effectiveness as leaders and can provide a platform for leadership itself (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Through COPs, leadership learning can be more dynamic, contextually relevant, and socially enriched, leading to more effective and confident leaders. Heritage schools confront instability through uncertain leadership succession (Thorpe et al., 2018). Greater access to regular and widescale COP provision could help support their initiatives and leadership development.

6.4.3. Learning through training offered by organisations such as embassies.

As previously mentioned, the leaders in this study maintain connections with a wide range of funding bodies and sources of information and support, although provision is limited. In this study, Judy, Harriet, and Zandra refer directly to the Chinese embassy. Zandra mentions that sometimes the Chinese government can help with teacher training by sending teachers from China for training and providing various programmes, indicating that she sees the embassy's involvement as necessary for enhancing the educational support within her school.

Zandra: (20+ years' experience leading a very large Mandarin Chinese school)

'.... yes, sometimes the Chinese government ...... they can help us.... you know ...for some teacher training, ... they send some teachers from China for training...... and they have some kinds of programmes.'

However, Judy also points out that all the schools are still fundamentally self-sufficient. She highlights the need for increased recognition and support for schools to improve their operational capabilities and emphasises the need for cooperation with local state schools to enhance teaching quality. Gracie notes that the Czech embassy has provided considerable support to her school, consistently striving to connect with all heritage schools. She emphasises that the embassy regularly informs her about significant cultural events, demonstrating its active engagement with the community and recognition of her school's contributions.

Gracie: (6+ years' experience leading a large Czech school)

'......the embassy has been a huge support and a real bridge to mm…. maintaining connections between…. not only us and the embassy but with us and other schools, and also all the Czech people and Slovakians as well...... it's because the Czech and Slovak embassies are next to each other and lots of our cultural things are connected still…. '

Sue is not so positive about the support she receives, highlighting how this has been reduced. She mentions a Cypriot educational initiative that was in place in the past, through which student teachers were sent, but this practice has since changed. She indicates that the lack of teachers is a concern for maintaining educational quality. She also mentions funding for teacher training, which she believes should be improved, as all heritage schools struggle with resources and require help with training courses to enhance the quality of the education they provide. Additionally, Sue also suggests that there should be more cooperation between heritage schools and state schools to improve teaching quality and benefit the community. Finally, Sue shows how undervalued she believes heritage schools are, and she reveals her frustration.

Sue: (20 + years' experience leading a very large Greek Cypriot School)

> *... 'our role and our experience and our professionalism is… is widely undervalued by all .... not only by our community stakeholders like the Cypriot Ministry of Education for example ... but also by the British ones, and this…. doesn't give you any motivation to work…. as I said at the beginning…. the only motivation any leader of such a school has would be personal….'*

Karen also expresses disappointment in how heritage language provision is disregarded within the British curriculum. She echoes opinions expressed by Phipps (2021) and Race et al. (2022), who discuss the need for decolonisation and a reconsideration of foreign language teaching in British schools.

Karen: (13+ years' experience leading Italian heritage schools)

> *'.... teachers and leadership in the heritage school will never be welcomed unless it's coming from above...... that's what I think ...coming from government...local authorities and the Department for Education ......in state schools ... they are learning Spanish and have a lot of friends that speak Urdu......what's the point....right.....it's just there's a lot of questions there that don't seem reasonable ....'*

This study has indicated that collaboration and support between state schools and heritage school leadership must become a governmental priority, and the language curriculum reconceptualised. In their discussion, Race et al. (2022) highlight the importance of the inclusion of diverse voices in education and the need for transformative approaches that challenge the historical dominance of Western languages and perspectives. Phipps (2021) also points out the necessity for a more inclusive and representative curriculum that values and incorporates heritage languages. Both authors draw attention to the need for an ethical approach that respects and promotes linguistic diversity, which must also encompass the addition of heritage languages to the curriculum. Apart from the fundamental necessity of a more inclusive representative curriculum, educational policy must also ensure that heritage schools and their leaders are given adequate support resources and recognition, and the inclusion of community languages brought into the curriculum (Phipps, 202; Race et al., 2022).

6.5. Conclusion.

This chapter has explored the perceptions and experiences of Heritage leaders' leadership learning and indicates potential areas of future developmental needs. The findings from this study show the multifaceted leadership learning that these twelve heritage school leaders acquired through managing complex managerial, pedagogical, and sector-specific experiences. More specifically, the findings show that their learning encompassed gaining experience through financial awareness and planning, strategic thinking and problem solving, building relationships, supporting staff, and adapting their teaching methods.

Leaders developed financial awareness by learning to manage limited resources and deal with financial constraints through strategic grant applications and resourceful financial planning. Such attributes enabled leaders to sustain their schools despite diminishing support from cultural and governmental bodies. Resistance from mainstream institutions highlighted the importance of cultivating positive relationships with local schools, councils, and community organisations. Leaders who had positive connections were better able to access support, especially during a crisis such as the pandemic. This highlighted the importance of effective communication and strategic collaboration in their leadership learning.

These leaders showed innovation and adaptability in exploiting opportunities to learn. Leadership learning was frequently referred to within experiential contexts, including roles as teaching assistants, committee members, and school governors. These opportunities enabled leaders to observe, imitate, and apply effective practices from mainstream education settings. Collaboration with universities, local schools, and cultural organisations supported their understanding of managerial operations and pedagogical practice, reinforcing the value of CoPs and opportunities for sharing and feedback in leadership development. Many of these leaders applied innovative incentives and the recognition of volunteer contributions to help deal with challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified staff. Leaders fostered a sense of

shared responsibility and professional growth by encouraging staff to document their experiences and engage in curriculum and financial planning. These practices not only encouraged staff commitment but also contributed to a psychologically supportive school culture, reinforcing the importance of leadership attributes such as empathy, adaptability, and team-building.

The fragmented nature of the heritage education sector revealed gaps in access to legal, financial, and pedagogical guidance. While some leaders turned to cultural institutions for support, the lack of consistent and accessible information from either their embassies or local authorities remained a barrier. This highlights the urgent need for coordinated leadership support and development programs and platforms for knowledge exchange, such as Communities of Practice (COPs), as such support networks help foster collective learning and sector-wide cohesion. The Czech and Slovak embassies stood out for their consistent support, offering events and advice that helped leaders connect and learn from each other. Although development programs do exist, and organisations such as the NRCSE and YPF Trust provide valuable support, offering courses in safeguarding, teaching skills, and management, along with accredited qualifications, those within this study were unfortunately either unaware of their existence or unable to invest time and money to avail themselves of this support.

Overall, the findings highlight that heritage leaders' developmental needs consist of the need to focus on practical experiences, mentoring, and collaboration. These approaches helped the leaders in this study to strengthen key skills such as strategic thinking, communication, problem-solving, and adaptability. These Leaders also expressed the need for more opportunities to learn about teaching methods specific to heritage language teaching, which differs from EFL. They called for research-supported pedagogical recommendations and training highlighting the benefits of COPs with other heritage schools and leaders. Heritage

school leaders in this study have shown great resilience and creativity. To continue thriving, they express the need for increased informed access to training and opportunities for collaboration to ensure sustainability.

Chapter Seven.

7.1. Conclusion

This narrative study explored the perceptions and experiences of twelve heritage school leaders based in the British Isles. The research responds to calls by Thorpe et al. (2018), Thorpe and Karamanidou (2024) and Thorpe (2024) for further exploration of heritage leadership and addresses Kemspter's (2009) call for more contextually based examination of lesser-known examples of leadership. The study set out to fill a significant knowledge gap by examining the values and identity, context and culture and leadership learning of heritage leaders by directly gathering their experiences and perceptions in their own words. The study therefore offers insight into thinking in the field of educational leadership within the domain of heritage and educational leadership, the voluntary sector and multilingualism.

7.1.1. Methodological Contribution.

A qualitative interpretive approach was adopted to allow for the exploration and disclosure of twelve heritage leaders' life histories. To enable insight into self-perceptions and life experiences, life history offers a suitable means for gathering insight into how identity develops (Ibarra, 1999). According to McAdams and McLean (2013), a person's life story, or 'narrative identity,' enables them to express the influences and experiences that have shaped their identity. Narrative inquiry, particularly the life history approach (Clandinin & Connelly, 1997; Floyd, 2012, 2016; Riessman, 2008), facilitates the examination of individual and subjective perceptions, providing insights into unique experiences and social phenomena through detailed personal accounts. The research design and methodology were meticulously planned and justified, ensuring the study meets rigorous academic standards and contributes to the existing but limited body of knowledge in heritage school leadership. As little is known

about heritage leaders, their thoughts and beliefs, their values and identities, it is sincerely hoped that this research will inspire further future research of those involved in and leading heritage school education.

The study develops an innovative methodological approach and contributes to knowledge by adopting a relatively unknown data analysis tool entitled 'Delve' through which the application of AI is considered and demonstrated. Delve proved to be an effective data analysis tool for qualitative research due to its intuitive interface, which simplified the coding process. This study involved over two thousand snippets and nearly three hundred codes. Delve was chosen as it offers an accessible tool that facilitates organised data analysis without a steep learning curve or unnecessary technical complications. This allowed me to focus on understanding the data rather than on the technical aspects of the tool. I acknowledge that qualitative analysis requires critical thinking and interpretation, and this choice ensured a structured way to organise and analyse the data, and engage with the material without impeding my analytical skills. Although Delve offers AI features to assist with data analysis while still allowing for human interpretation, as demonstrated in Chapter Three, I found my analysis and interpretation to be more reliable and comprehensive, encompassing all of the data rather than a selection (see Figure 11). Lastly, the use of the PVQ represents a significant methodological contribution, as it has not been previously used in studies examining heritage leadership in the UK. The PVQ offers a nuanced understanding of individuals and their motivations, making it an invaluable resource. Consequently, its application in this research, which centres on human values, perceptions and motivations, underscores the originality of this study.

7.1.2. Original Contribution to Knowledge.

While there is a growing body of research into heritage schools in Britain (Yiakoumetti, 2022), much of the research into heritage leadership has revealed leaders' concern with pedagogy and language acquisition (Thorpe et al., 2018), mirroring the leaders' preoccupation with this as a priority (Arthur & Souza, 2023). Few have researched the nature, perceptions and identity of those who lead heritage schools. Thorpe (2024) suggests this may be due to concerns about accessing leader participation and a lack of funding. This research responds by contributing insight into twelve heritage leaders themselves. It reveals important information relating to leadership and the voluntary sector, and the importance of values. As a result, this research may inspire others to consider researching heritage leaders and forge acknowledgement and re-conceptualisation of the unique examples of leadership they offer and their contribution to education, which have both remained relatively unexplored. To identify and address this significant knowledge gap, the study set out to answer three main research questions through a tripartite conceptual framework. The conclusions of the research findings are presented below.

1. How do twelve heritage leaders perceive their values and professional identities, and how have these shaped their leadership practice?
2. How do they perceive their school's context and culture, and how has this influenced their leadership practice?
3. What are each leader's perceptions and experiences of leadership learning, and what are their developmental needs?

To address the above research questions, this study employed an original tripartite conceptual framework (next shown), which facilitated the acquisition of relevant answers and therefore makes an original contribution to theoretical knowledge. Each research question and its theoretical contribution is discussed in turn.

7.2. Conceptual Framework.
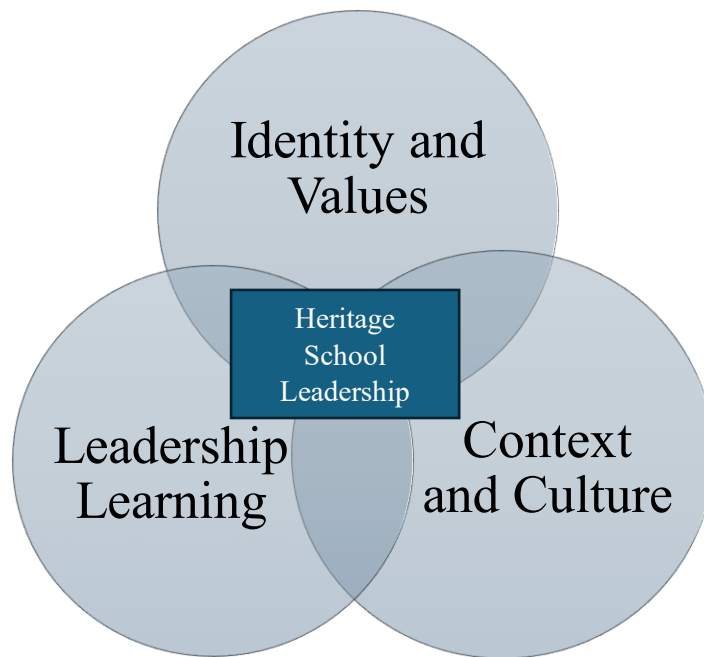
Figure 26 Conceptual Framework

7.2.1. Research Question One: The Answers and the Professional Practice Implications.

This study explores how twelve heritage school leaders perceive their values and professional identities, revealing that deeply held values, particularly benevolence, universalism, and self-direction, are central to shaping their leadership practice. These values act as motivational drivers, guiding principles, and sources of purpose, rooted in personal experiences and relationships. Leaders' identities are reinforced through authenticity, resilience, and a commitment to preserving cultural heritage, often shaped by adversity. The findings also show that their leadership is characterised by fostering community engagement, cohesion, and a shared sense of belonging, aligning with the Aristotelian notions of '*telos*' or purpose-driven action (MacIntyre, 2004). The findings suggest that professional practice in heritage

education leadership could benefit from cultivating value-driven leadership, promoting authenticity, and strengthening community ties. Supporting leaders in reflecting on and aligning their values with their practice could enhance their effectiveness and self-efficacy, reinforcing their social and leadership roles within their schools and communities.

This implies that leadership development should support value-driven practice, helping leaders align personal values with professional actions to strengthen their aims and role within schools and communities.

7.2.2. Research Question Two: The Answers and the Professional Practice Implications.

Findings from the second research question revealed that heritage school leaders develop leadership concepts shaped by personal life experiences and the needs of their communities. Despite confronting challenges, they strive to cultivate inclusive, caring school cultures grounded in cultural awareness and contextual intelligence. The findings show that their leadership fosters intercultural sensitivity and cultural preservation in their endeavours to support students' identity development, pride in heritage and a sense of belonging. Applying Schein's (2004) theory of organisational culture, the study offers original insights into the application of Schein's (2004) theory of organisational culture to analyse and clarify the ways and means through which these heritage school leaders have set out to achieve their aims and cultural preservation. Through this application, the study reveals how leaders embed cultural preservation into school structures and practices. These findings underscore the importance of culturally responsive leadership in heritage education. For professional practice, this suggests that leadership development should prioritise cultural competence, community engagement, and the intentional shaping of inclusive school cultures that reflect and celebrate diverse identities. The implication here then points to the need for professional practice to prioritise

culturally responsive leadership, encouraging inclusive environments and recognising the unique contributions of heritage education to identity formation and community engagement.

7.2.3. Research Question Three: The Answers and the Professional Practice Implications.

This study highlights that heritage school leaders primarily learn through experience, drawing on transferable skills, observation, and informal opportunities within educational settings. Formal CPD is limited, and many leaders are unaware of existing support from organisations which offer guidance on policy, procedure, and financial planning. Leaders expressed a strong need for development in financial management, strategic planning, and volunteer coordination, and increased recognition and consistent support from local authorities. Their learning is shaped by entrepreneurial approaches and collaboration with mainstream schools, which they value for enhancing curriculum understanding and teaching methods. The findings underscore the importance of creating accessible, targeted professional development pathways for heritage leaders, including training in heritage language pedagogy and opportunities to share best practices. For professional practice, this calls for greater institutional collaboration, formal recognition of heritage leaders' contributions, and structured support from government and regulatory bodies to sustain and strengthen leadership in this vital educational sector. The implication of this finding points to a pressing need for structured, accessible professional development tailored to heritage leaders, alongside greater collaboration with mainstream educational institutions and formal recognition by government and regulatory bodies.

7.3. Limitations

Further to the limitations outlined in Chapter Three (sections 3.4.2.1 and 3.4.3), this study acknowledges several constraints. Firstly, the participant group consisted primarily of Chinese heritage school leaders. While this focus offers valuable cultural insight, the findings may not be transferable to heritage leaders from other backgrounds. Future research could benefit from a broader

cultural sample, the inclusion of focus groups, or the integration of quantitative methods to explore student outcomes and leadership impact. Such approaches might also generate culturally specific resources, such as language-sensitive materials or community-based strategies for fundraising and professional networking.

In addition to these practical limitations, the philosophical positioning of this study introduces further constraints. Grounded in a social constructivist and interpretivist paradigm, the research embraces the view that knowledge is co-constructed, subjective, and context-bound (Crotty, 2003; Guba & Lincoln, 1985). While this approach is well-suited to exploring the lived experiences and perceptions of heritage leaders, it also limits the generalisability and replicability of findings. The interpretive nature of the research means that data are filtered through both participant and researcher perspectives, raising concerns about bias and the influence of positionality (van der Walt, 2020; Wibben, 2011). Moreover, the reliance on retrospective narrative accounts introduces the potential for memory distortion and selective recall, particularly within life history-informed interviews (Burns, Bell, & Vickers, 2022). These limitations do not undermine the value of the study but highlight the importance of reflexivity, transparency, and contextual sensitivity in the interpretation and presentation of findings.

7.4. Contribution to Knowledge through Implications.

7.4.1. Implications for Leadership Learning and Development.

Previous research, such as the work by Thorpe et al. (2018) , Arthur and Souza (2023), Thorpe (2023) and Thorpe and Karamanidou (2024), has indicated there is a need for the development of training programmes to address leaders' unique challenges and contexts such as stakeholder management, resource optimisation, and sustainability planning. Providing ongoing professional development opportunities for teachers to stay updated with the latest teaching methods and best practices in heritage language education is also a necessity. Research collecting evidence on those programmes currently available that are found to be

most beneficial would help inform a more inclusive, enhanced programme tailored to the needs indicated by heritage leaders themselves. Most evident in this study is the need for regular forums and workshops to foster collaboration and mutual support, such as collaborative initiatives with mainstream education. Leaders mentioned even small initiatives, such as the mention of heritage schools within the same postcode on school websites and newsletters or the invitation to join staff training days to increase mutual understanding. This study specifically highlights the need for CPD and COPs, which should be both culturally specific and with mixed heritage backgrounds. The Czech and Slovak association provides a good example. Culturally mixed COPs offer the opportunity to share an understanding of matters such as national and educational policy, financial planning, human resources, legal advice, and community engagement. Culturally specific support networks could provide mutual support and foster collaboration, offering potential solutions for materials and resource management, school organisation, examination preparation, funding opportunities, and creative and cultural initiatives. These could include elements of the students' heritage, such as history, traditions, and cultural practices. Culturally specific COPs would also support sustainability through the sharing of good practice and leadership development.

7.4.2. Implications for Community Engagement.

The initiatives of the NRCSE and similar organisations should be recognised and better supported. Some school leaders might perceive these organisations as less relevant to their specific needs or contexts. Therefore, local authorities must ensure they provide relevant information outlining available resources, such as CeLM, NRCSE, and YPF. A complete list of all the support networks should be compiled and made available as a fundamental prerequisite in community centres and through local authorities.

Additionally, a well-organised governmental support system, distinct from Ofsted, could be established. This system could collaborate with organisations like NRCSE and YPF to further support school leaders. As a prominent and well-established organisation, the NRCSE aims to help communities and prospective leaders achieve a quality mark certification. This certification enables school leaders to understand and respond to policies and procedures, potentially securing greater funding. Consequently, the work of the NRCSE part of the YcF since 2022 is invaluable. However, their work was largely unknown to those in this study, suggesting many grassroots organisations are unaware of what support is available. As a result, prospective leaders turn to their heritage and cultural associations, indicating that the availability of information and guidance for heritage school support is missing or, worse still, in many areas may be non-existent.

There seems to be a disparity in what local authorities offer and sparse, if existent, easily accessible information to increase parental awareness. It seems incredible that local authorities referred to in this study did not and could not provide the necessary advice and support. Neither could they direct, help or advise prospective leaders such as Karen, especially concerning policy and procedure, premises, and information for parents. Local authority employees must be able to advise through general enquiries, and the necessary information must be made accessible along with guidance. Furthermore, active engagement with the wider community to set up, foster and build strong partnerships with local businesses, support networks, and resources must be encouraged. Local businesses could be encouraged to adopt a school as their charity and community engagement offering work placements and apprenticeship schemes, or even help with premises.

7.4.3. Implications for Educational Policy and Practice.

To foster a more inclusive and equitable society, Biesta (2022) points out that education must embrace cultural diversity and help prepare students to develop as global citizens engaging in a connected world responsibly and empathetically. This study supports this view as the findings show how heritage school leadership explicitly sets out to help and support young people of mixed heritage backgrounds to understand and appreciate different cultural perspectives, nurturing a sense of global citizenship. Therefore, it is essential to advocate for policies that support the contributions of heritage schools and their leadership through recognition, accreditation and inclusion. The British government must demonstrate its commitment to inclusivity and diversity, acknowledging the need to invite and support communication and collaboration with heritage leaders rather than marginalising a huge percentage of Britain's young population.

The core European values of democracy, revered in the Treaty of Lisbon, present aims and values, and pledge that it will:

> 'combat social exclusion and discrimination and promote social justice and
> protection'

(Treaty of Lisbon, 2007, p. 3)

Despite no longer being members of the European Union, I would hope we continue to uphold core values of inclusion as presented above and those related to foreign language and policy, emphasising respect for unity through custom, cultural and language diversity. This is fundamental as in Britain, the growing number of young people of mixed heritage backgrounds has significant implications for education policies. Dewey (1910) emphasised that language is a tool for critical thought and interaction, not just a means to an end. Language education is a fundamental skill necessary for the global workforce. Foreign

language communication is a key competency in lifelong learning. However, the primary purpose of language education is not only to prepare students for a future workforce. Effective communication is essential for a functioning democratic society. Therefore, the role of education is to help students learn to communicate effectively and participate in the democratic life of the community (Dewey, 2016) very evidently understood by the heritage leaders in this study.

Universities can assist by collaborating with funding bodies and help establish or locate grants and financial programmes specifically for heritage schools to support leadership development and sustainability. Universities could also support research initiatives and policymakers to secure necessary resources for heritage school sustainability and leadership development. Additionally, universities offer schemes that recognise the experience students gain through voluntary work. One win-win solution could involve volunteering in heritage schools. Such placements could provide valuable insights into classroom management, school organisation, budgeting, and administration, as well as significant potential for research and development in teaching approaches for heritage language learners. Heritage schools are a huge resource for culturally related research and creative projects.

Banks (2014), a prominent figure in multicultural education, emphasises the importance of a multicultural approach to education. He advocates for education that promotes social justice and challenges systemic inequalities. Banks (2014) argues that a multicultural education framework is essential for cultivating inclusive and equitable learning environments that respect and celebrate cultural diversity. Yet in the UK, where communities are increasingly culturally diverse, education has fallen short in reflecting this diversity (Phipps, 2021; Race, 2022). As of the 2021 national census, people of mixed heritage in Britain formed 3% of the population, which is nearly 1.7 million people. Among them, 61% of mixed heritage individuals are aged 0-24, which is notably higher than the 27% of those self-classifying as

White British. In London, the percentage of mixed heritage individuals is even higher, with 5.7% of the population identifying as mixed heritage. The largest group within this category is Mixed White/ Black Caribbean (Lambeth Children & Young People's Service, 2023). The implications of these figures cannot be ignored. Incorporating Banks' observations, it becomes clear that educational policy must evolve to support a curriculum that is inclusive and representative of all cultural backgrounds. This should involve a re-conceptualisation of languages offered and taught in schools, along with a comprehensive national strategy for EAL provision, support, training and policy improvements. The curriculum should reflect the diversity of the student population and include multilingual education (Phipps, 2021; Race, 2022). Valuing and integrating heritage leaders into school training and heritage languages into the curriculum would significantly contribute to the academic and social development of students from diverse backgrounds and educational leadership. Changes must be made to ensure that mixed heritage students receive equitable educational opportunities and support to foster a more inclusive and effective educational system. Heritage schools and their leadership must receive the recognition and support long overdue. By doing so, we could advance towards ensuring that education systems are better equipped to meet the needs of all students and foster a more inclusive society.

7.5 Final Words

This study set out to explore aspects of becoming in educational leadership that relate to what Biesta (2022) proposes are the dual purposes of a world-centred education. The study illuminates how twelve heritage leaders enact leadership and reveals how they are guided by their perceptions and sense of purpose, their values and their relationships with others in their contexts and their resulting school culture. The study contributes to knowledge by offering insight into their perceptions and motivations and the resulting leadership. The study offers

clear implications for education and leadership in a present-day world where there is a need for role models that contribute to the quality of others' existence as opposed to self-seeking leadership.

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Appendices.

Appendix I

Appendix 1.1. Ethical Consent Forms and Participant Information.

<u>**Participation Information Sheet**</u>

Research Project: A narrative study exploring the values, processes and practices that are critical to leadership learning in supplementary/complementary schools through lived experience.

Researcher: Sharon Mcilroy

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study I am conducting as part of my Doctorate studies in Education.

What is the study?

I am an EdD candidate at the University of Reading, UK. I am currently researching leadership in Complementary and Supplementary schools in Britain. My research study involves narrative enquiry focusing on educational leaders in the complementary school sector to explore the practices that are critical to their effective leading and leadership learning through lived experience. I am writing to invite you to take part in this study.

Before you decide whether to take part or not, it is important for you to understand why the research is being carried out and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. The purpose of this study is to explore the values, processes and practice of Complementary School head-teacher leadership. I aim to examine and analyse the results of my research against qualitative work on leadership practice and to identify through a life story approach the key people and events that have impacted the career trajectory. This aim will be achieved through individual interviews.

Why have I been chosen to take part?

You have been invited to take part in this study because you have experience in educational leadership. I will be conducting this study with you along with a further eleven other complementary school leaders.

Do I have to take part?

It is entirely up to you whether you give your consent to participate. You may also withdraw your consent to participation at any time during the project, without any repercussions to you, by contacting Sharon Mcilroy: s.e.r.mcilroy@reading.ac.uk Tel:

What will happen if I take part?
If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in a Microsoft Teams recorded interview with me, lasting approximately fifty to sixty minutes. The interview will take place on Microsoft teams and be recorded and transcribed with your permission. The transcription will be shown to you in order for you to check its accuracy.

Before the interview I will ask you to complete a values questionnaire that should not take longer than twenty minutes to complete and return to me by email. I will also ask you to reflect on and complete a brief timeline. Again, this should not take longer than twenty minutes unless you wish to devote more time to it. This can also be returned to me by email, and you may choose to refer to it in the interview. In relation to this timeline, I would like you to reflect on your experiences and chart how influential people and events have impacted your career trajectory and career decisions.

You might include key **people**, **events**, conclusions, decisions, thoughts etc as you feel significant and wish to tell me about.

I will use the information gathered for data analysis and it will be written up as my research thesis for assessment purposes on the University of Reading Doctorate programme & conferences/ publications.

What are the risks and benefits of taking part?

In agreeing to take part in this study there will be a time commitment to consider. The individual Microsoft teams recorded interviews will require 50 minutes approx. but not more than one hour. Both the values questionnaire and the timeline should not require more than twenty minutes each to complete. While there will be a time commitment required from participants, it is felt that the benefits of involvement will outweigh the costs: your involvement will allow me to explore key issues related to school leadership that has relevance for other and future school leaders and education in England. Participants in other similar studies have found it interesting and rewarding to take part. They have valued the opportunity to reflect on their own journey to leadership and the challenges they share with other complementary school leaders. Furthermore, they have found it beneficial to gain insight into how other complementary school leaders have dealt with challenges such as financial issues concerning the running of the school and how they have established collaborations within their communities.

The information given by participants in the study will remain confidential and will only be seen by the researcher listed at the start of this letter. Neither you nor the school will be identifiable in any published report resulting from the study. Information about individuals will not be shared with the University.

What will happen to the data?

All data collected will be kept strictly confidential. To protect the anonymity of each participant, pseudonyms will be used to ensure participants cannot be identified. The school name will also be changed. Any data collected will be held in strict confidence and no real names will be used in this study or in any subsequent publications. All electronic data will be held securely in password protected files on a non-shared PC and any paper documentation will be held in locked cabinets in a locked office.

In line with the University's policy on the management of research data, anonymised data gathered in this research may be preserved and made publicly available for others to consult and re-use. All anonymised research data will be retained indefinitely whereas any identifying information such as consent forms will be disposed of securely after the research findings have been written up. The anonymised results of the study may be presented at national and international conferences, and in written reports and articles. A summary of the findings in electronic form will be made available to you if requested.

The data will be analysed and used as part of my Doctorate thesis submission. If you would like a summary copy of the research findings, these will be sent to you on request.

What will happen to the results of the research?

The data will be analysed and used in an EdD thesis. It may also be used in future publications in appropriate academic journals and/or books. If you would like a summary copy of the research findings, these will be sent to you on request.

Who has reviewed the study?

This project has been reviewed following the procedures of the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. The University has the appropriate insurances in place. Full details are available on request.

Name, position and contact address of Researcher	Name, position and contact address of Supervisor
Sharon Mcilroy Student Position: Ed D student Staff position: ISLI Lecturer ISLI: Edith Morley Office 229L University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading, RG6 6 EL. Email: s.e.r.mcilroy@reading.ac.uk Tel:	Dr Jo Anna Reed Johnston: *Programme Director of the MA in Education* Dr Rowena Kasprowicz: *Associate professor in 2nd Language Education* University of Reading London Road Campus 4 Redlands Road Reading RG1 5EX, UK Tel: +44 (0)118 378 Email : j.a.reedjohnson@reading.ac.uk And r.kasprowicz@reading.ac.uk

What happens if I change my mind?

You can change your mind at any time without any repercussions. If you change your mind after data collection has ended, we will discard your data.

What happens if something goes wrong?

In the unlikely case of concern or complaint, you can contact Sharon Mcilroy, Email: s.e.r.mcilroy@reading.ac.uk TEL:

Where can I get more information?

Please contact Sharon Mcilroy, Email: s.e.r.mcilroy@reading.ac.uk TEL:

If you are happy to take part, please complete and return to s.e.r.mcilroy@reading.ac.uk the attached consent form.

Yours faithfully

DATA PROTECTION FOR INFORMATION SHEETS

The organisation responsible for protection of your personal information is the University of Reading (the Data Controller). Queries regarding data protection and your rights should be directed to the University Data Protection Officer at   or in writing to: Information Management & Policy Services, University of Reading, Whiteknights, P O Box 217, Reading, RG6 6AH.

The University of Reading collects, analyses, uses, shares, and retains personal data for the purposes of research in the public interest. Under data protection law we are required to inform you that this use of the personal data we may hold about you is on the lawful basis of being a public task in the public interest and where it is necessary for scientific or historical research purposes. If you withdraw from a research study, which processes your personal data, dependant on the stage of withdrawal, we may still rely on this lawful basis to continue using your data if your withdrawal would be of significant detriment to the research study aims. We will always have in place appropriate safeguards to protect your personal data.

If we have included any additional requests for use of your data, for example adding you to a registration list for the purposes of inviting you to take part in future studies, this will be done only with your consent where you have provided it to us and should you wish to be removed from the register at a later date, you should contact Sharon Mcilroy Tel: , E-mail: s.e.r.mcilroy@reading.ac.uk

You have certain rights under data protection law which are:

- Withdraw your consent, for example if you opted in to be added to a participant register.
- Access your personal data or ask for a copy!
- Rectify inaccuracies in personal data that we hold about you.
- Be forgotten, that is your details to be removed from systems that we use to process your personal data.
- Restrict uses of your data
- Object to uses of your data, for example retention after you have withdrawn from a study.

Some restrictions apply to the above rights where data is collected and used for research purposes.

You can find out more about your rights on the website of the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) at https://ico.org.uk

You also have a right to complain the ICO if you are unhappy with how your data has been handled. Please contact the University Data Protection Officer in the first instance.

Consent Form

Research Project: A narrative study exploring the values, processes and practices that are critical to leadership learning in supplementary/complementary schools through lived experience.

Name, position and contact address of Researcher	Name, position and contact address of Supervisor
Sharon Mcilroy Student Position: Ed D student Staff position: ISLI Lecturer ISLI: Edith Morley Office 229L University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading, RG6 6 EL. Email : s.e.r.mcilroy@reading.ac.uk Tel:	Dr Jo Anna Reed Johnston: *Programme Director of the MA in Education* Dr Rowena Kasprowicz: *Associate professor in 2nd Language Education* University of Reading London Road Campus 4 Redlands Road Reading RG1 5EX, UK Tel: +44 (0)118 378 Email : j.a.reedjohnson@reading.ac.uk And r.kasprowicz@reading.ac.uk

This application has been reviewed by the University Research Ethics Committee and has been given a favourable ethical opinion for conduct. Please complete and return this form to: s.e.r.mcilroy@reading.ac.uk

Please tick as appropriate.

1. I have read the information sheet about the project and received a copy of it. ☐

2. I understand what the purpose of the study is and what you want me to do.
All my questions have been answered. ☐

3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

4. I agree to complete the values questionnaire and return this before the interview. ☐

5. I agree to complete a simple timeline about my journey prior to the interview. ☐

6. I agree to having an online Microsoft Teams recorded interview ☐

7. In the event that the interview cannot take place on Microsoft Teams I agree to a face to face audio recorded interview. ☐

8. I agree to to the use of anonymised quotes in publications. ☐

Name:

Signed:

Date:

Appendix 1.2. Portrait Values Questionnaire.

Adapted from the Schwartz Questionnaire (Gender neutralised).

Here we briefly describe some people. Please read each description and think about how much each person is or is not like you. Tick the box to the right that shows how much the person in the description is like you.

	HOW MUCH LIKE YOU IS THIS PERSON?					
	Very much like me	Like me	Some-what like me	A little like me	Not like me	Not like me at all
1.Thinking up new ideas and being creative is important to him/her. She/He likes to do things in his/her own original way.						
2.It is important to him/her to be rich. He/she wants to have a lot of money and expensive things.						
3.She/He thinks it is important that every person in the world be treated equally. He/she believes everyone should have equal opportunities in life.						
4.It's important to hr/him to show his/her abilities. She/He wants people to admire what he/she does.						
5.It is important to him/her to live in secure surroundings. She/He avoids anything that might endanger his/her safety.						
6.She/He likes surprises and is always looking for new things to do. He/she thinks it is important to do lots of different things in life.						
7.He/She believes that people should do what they're told. She/ He thinks people should follow rules at all times, even when no-one is watching.						
8.It is important to her/him to listen to people who are different from him/her. Even when she/he disagrees with them, he/she still wants to understand them.						
9.It is important to her/him to be humble and modest. She/He tries not to draw attention to himself.						
10.Having a good time is important to him/her. She/He likes to "spoil" himself/herself.						
11.It is important to her/him to make his/her own decisions about what she/he does. She/He likes to be free to plan and not depend on others						
12.It's very important to him/her to help the people around her/him. She/He wants to care for their well-being.						
13.Being very successful is important to him/her. She/ He hopes people will recognize his/her achievements.						
14.It is important to him/her that the government insure her/his safety against all threats. She/He wants the state to be strong so it can defend its citizens.						
15.He/She looks for adventures and likes to take risks. He/she wants to have an exciting life.						

16. It is important to him/her always to behave properly. She/He wants to avoid doing anything people would say is wrong.						
17. It is important to him/her to get respect from others. She/He wants people to do what he/she says.						
18. It is important to him/her to be loyal to her/his friends. He/she wants to devote himself/herself to people close to her/him.						
19. She/He strongly believes that people should care for nature. Looking after the environment is important to him/her.						
20. Tradition is important to her/him. He/she tries to follow the customs handed down by his/her religion or her/his family.						
21. He/She seeks every chance she/he can to have fun. It is important to her/him to do things that give him/her pleasure.						

Appendix 1.3. Interview Questions

The candidate will be advised to refer to the timeline they have shared in response to these questions.

Before we start to talk about you and your leadership practice, can you give me some contextual information and tell me about your school and leadership please?

Please tell me about your journey and experiences as a head teacher of a complementary school.

How have key people and or events, impacted your career trajectory and career decisions?

What are your greatest challenges in leading the school?

Prompt: You may like to tell me about conclusions, decisions, or thoughts etc as you feel significant or important to tell me about.

Further questions in relation to values:

From the questionnaire you have indicated certain values that are important to you in your role. Please could you tell me more?

What are the values that are important to you in relation to your role as a head teacher? (drawing on the values questionnaire already shared)

What is the benefit of schools such as these to the students who attend the school?

In your opinion how do supplementary/ complementary schools in England contribute to education within the local community?

Appendix 1.4. Timeline Frame

During our Microsoft Teams recorded interview, I will refer to this timeline. Therefore, before our Microsoft Teams recorded interview, please complete the timeline below in the following way:

Please reflect on your experiences and chart how influential people and events have impacted your career trajectory and career decisions.

You might include key **people**, **events**, conclusions, decisions, thoughts etc as you feel significant and wish to tell me about.

Timeline

Appendix II

Appendix 2.1. Results table showing sub-themes and themes for Values and Identity.

Codes	Sub-themes	Themes	Lens
Being **kind** Being **helpful** Wanting to **help** others from childhood	Wanting to help	**1.**	
Wanting to **contribute** to **society** (Being) welcoming. Wanting to **serve** the community Wanting to **give back** Offering a better **quality** of **education** **Offering** something for both the **parents** and the **children**	Having empathy	**Benevolence**	**VALUES**
Feeling **obliged** Recognising there was no one else. Being a **responsible** person	Motivated through a sense of responsibility/ wanting to help, esp. loved ones		
Making the world **a better place** **Meaningful** work **Giving** back to society **Making a difference** Creating a real **sense of community** Values related to culture and community **support**. People and community **working together.**	Idealism	**2**	
Key principles of **human connection** It's all about people and community. Wishing to promote the **culture** The school as a **community hub** **Contributing** (or aspiring to contribute) to society Community **influencer**	Motivation to care for the welfare of others in the community	**Universalism**	**VALUES**
Bridging two cultures Bringing people **together** A way of **connecting** Supporting the local **community needs** Community **contribution** award The value is **first** for the **children.**	Creating a better environment for those of heritage background		
Sense of **Purpose** and/or **Achievement** A sense of achievement Purpose and/or **vision** Personal **philosophy** 'Life has **value/quality.'** **Self-fulfilment** /**Personal fulfilment** Proud of themselves Desire for **personal growth** Finding your **identity** Willing to **learn.** **Ethos** **Destiny**	Having Purpose	**3.** **Self-Direction**	**VALUES**

Mission/ Vision Children/ family as a **motivation** **Opportune** circumstances Disillusioned in mainstream teaching.			
Feeling **Appreciated** Recognition obtained. **Reward** Community **Recognition and Support** Motivation through appreciation for the teaching **Donations**	Motivation through recognition		
Critical events **Personal hardship**/ struggle A sense of loss **Inheriting values** from parents/family **Christian values** Impt People in Childhood influencing values. Being **identified** as a leader Educational **role models** and Mentors Teacher **encouragement**/ support (or support from those involved in education) **Reflections** on leadership Parental/family encouragement	Wanting to ensure others have a better experience. Wanting to give back Mentors and Role Models	Benevolence And Universalism Leadership identity And self-direction	**VALUES AND IDENTITY** **IDENTITY**
Resilience **Determination** **Self-confidence** **Self-discipline** **Leadership beliefs/views**	Self-identification/perception /description: character Self-identification/perception leadership identity	Self-description character identity **Leader identity** Self-description Motivation	**IDENTITY**
Loyalty to the students Loyalty to the home country **Bonded to the community.**	Self-description Emotionally bonded		
Respect for their leadership (shown by children in the community) **Supporting** young people's education (having a **social responsibility**) Respect for education **Passionate** about education Motivated by offspring. (shared) Motivation to **empower**	Leader identity How they believe they are perceived	**Identity leadership**	

Table 10 Results table showing Subthemes and Themes for Values and Identity.

Appendix 2.2. Summarised Results Table for Values and Identity

Values	Values and Identity	Identity
1. Benevolence Wanting to help Having empathy Motivated through a sense of responsibility /wanting to help. esp. loved ones. 2. Universalism Idealism Motivated to care for the welfare of others in the community Creating a better environment and future for those of heritage background. 3. Self- Direction Having purpose Motivation through being acknowledged.	4. Leadership Identity and Self-direction Wanting to ensure others have a better experience / Wanting to give back. 5. Important people and events indicative of both values and Identity Mentors and Role Models Idealism	6. Leader Identity Self-identification: leadership identity Self-description: emotionally bonded 7. Identity Leadership Leader identity: How they believe others view them

Table 11 Summarised table of themes from Subthemes for Values and Identity.

Appendix III

Appendix 3.1. Results table showing sub-themes and themes for Culture and Context.

Codes	Sub-themes	Themes	Lens
Sub-themes and themes for Culture and Context.			
Embedding+ transmitting culture through language Embedding + transmitting culture through activities and celebrations Cultural artefacts/ visual elements relating to culture. Developing an understanding of cultural qualities/values Cultural ideas/beliefs Cultural Inclusion Cultural exchange	Leadership objectives to establish cultural preservation.	School culture	CULTURE
Promoting and developing cultural understanding Cultural workshop lessons: developing cultural sensitivity. Promoting multicultural awareness. Establishing respect and understanding of other cultures.	Leadership actions to promote. cultural awareness		
Friendships + cultural identity Gaining confidence through language learning. Supporting students emotionally and cognitively. Sharing language, culture, and identity. Building multiculturalism and intercultural understanding. Emotional benefits (identity, self-efficacy, confidence). Agency (heritage education as an option). Developing student autonomy. Developing cooperation with peers. Building pride in heritage. Enhancing student motivation. The benefits of bilingualism.	Benefits of Heritage school provision providing purpose for leadership.	Benefits of Heritage School culture	
Bringing cultures together in a multicultural community. Awareness of changing aspects of the community character.	Contextual elements such as cultural	School cultural context	CULTURE + CONTEXT

Community engagement (newsletters flyers etc.) Affluent location/ community. Open to all cultural backgrounds. England is diverse/ diversity within the community.	diversity impacting the leadership.		
What the school offers to the community. Serving others/Serving the community providing information or direction where needed (advice for public services e.g. health etc). Supporting the local community needs – charities and businesses. The profit is for the community: e.g. support during COVID/illness. Actively establishing community cohesion through communication. Providing a platform for the community. Being a bridge – a central point for social contact. Building connections and communication. Building community relations and sharing information. Establishing close-knit relationships and friendships. Being a connected community (for information dissemination e.g. from embassies). Accepting differing beliefs and expectations. Respecting the values of knowledge exchange.	Leadership responses to the Community (Community engagement)	Macro culture and context	CULTURE + CONTEXT
Support from external organisations. External organisations that influence the leadership trajectory. Organisation (Chinese) that supports Chinese schools. Support and training through the Chinese organisation. Organisation (Greek) to support Greek heritage. Association Czech + Slovak that supports these schools.	Leadership support from external organisations	Macro culture and context	CULTURE + CONTEXT
Creating a sense of belonging within the school: staff and atmosphere. A sense of belonging: through shared purpose.	A sense of belonging and		

Sense of community within the school: we are…' a big family.' (The school is considered a 'second family') Acknowledging shared goals, hopes and aspirations for their children. Social groups and relationships built through the school.	purpose created by the leader.	
Teamwork (like-minded people: dedicated and committed) Acknowledging the demands of a voluntary role Teamwork in maintaining a sense of community within the school.	Teamwork and roles established through the leadership	Micro Culture And context
The personal importance of the school (for staff). The acknowledged **educational/emotional** importance of the school **(parents + children)**. **Schools as hubs:** (advice and support) Parental acknowledgement (psychological + educational benefit) Parental dedication is shown in distances travelled. Parental voluntary support sharing responsibilities Everyone **involved + contributes.** Challenges for the parents (Time needed and cost of travel) Parental involvement in **operational matters.** Teacher commitment**/dedication** **Partnership support** from local schools	Parental involvement in operational matters supporting the leadership	
Opportunity for **work experienc**e through placement/ work within the school opportunity to try out **different methods** and approaches. **Teacher training** and the sharing of **good practice,** opportunity to learn about safety and **compliance/ safeguarding – DBS checks etc.**	Parental involvement and career development supported by the leadership	

Table 12 Results table showing Subthemes and Themes for Context and Culture.

Appendix 3.2. Summarised Results Table for Culture and Context

School Culture	Heritage school cultural provision	School culture + context	Culture and Context: Macro	Culture and Context: Micro
1. Leadership objectives to establish cultural preservation. 2. Leadership actions to promote cultural awareness.	3. Benefits of Heritage school provision providing purpose for leadership.	4. Contextual elements such as cultural diversity impacting the leadership	5. Leadership responses to the community (Community engagement) 6. Leadership support from external organisations.	7. A sense of belonging and purpose created by the leader. 8. Teamwork and roles established through the leadership. 9. Parental involvement in operational matters supporting the leadership. 10. Parental involvement and career development supported by the leadership

Table 13 Summarised table of Themes from Subthemes for context and Culture.

Appendix IV

Appendix 4.1. Results table showing sub-themes and themes for Leadership Learning in twelve heritage language schools.

Codes	Sub-themes	Themes	Lens
Ongoing **budgeting** challenges Challenges with **fees** Challenges with **premises** Challenges with **training** Challenges in obtaining **resources.** Applications for grants.	Financial Challenges	**Leadership Learning through Managerial Challenges**	Leadership Learning
Reluctance to collaborate (from mainstream leaders). Reluctance (of the mainstream to promote **due to non-regulation**). **No cooperation** with local schools (often despite continual attempts to establish). **No official record** of the schools. The **desire** to learn more **through observation** etc.	Resistance from local state schools		
Negative impact due to online learning (covid provoked). **Work/family conflict.** Numbers **dwindled/ lost due to disruption and loss of regular contact. Other challenges due to Brexit.** Feeling **undervalued due to loss.**	Challenges during and after the pandemic		
Challenges relating to finding and **employing** staff. Challenges relating to **voluntary** work and **staff retention**. Challenges relating to **training** and **developing** staff. School organisation: **sharing responsibilities.**	Staff recruitment and retention		Leadership Learning
The **difficulty** of **locating information** about schools in other areas. A **lack of understanding** by official bodies. **Limited** or non-existent **Go**vernmental **support.** **Tokenism** (MPS only visit before elections).	Fragmented sector		

Inconsistent or lack of knowledge for **guidance** in community centres and job centres plus etc.			
Codes	Sub-themes	Themes	
Differences in Education (bringing conflict to the teaching). The need for **training** and **professional development.** Keeping updated with teaching methods and best practices. **PPK and PCK** Class organisation /**reorganisation: differentiation.** **Classroom management**: materials suitable for mixed age and ability. Providing ongoing **professional development opportunities**: **Teaching Strategies/ methods.** **Strategies** for creating an inclusive and positive learning environment. Behaviour management. Higher Ed **CPD (leadership)** Formal **CPD (pedagogy)** **Integrating** heritage **language** and **culture** into the school curriculum **Different functions** of heritage schools. **Safeguarding Training:** understanding policies and procedures: offering this training.	Self-directed professional development	**Leadership Learning through Pedagogical Challenges**	Leadership Learning
Self-Efficacy and determination and mission. Book publishing. Being **a source for research.** Recognising the importance of **Transparency**/ Honesty Building **Trust** Cultivating a **leadership ethos** **Parental engagement – caring for all stakeholders.**	Determination and Resilience Responsibility and Transparency		
Experience gained in other countries. **Previous role/ career/ other roles** Experience gained (teaching in school now leading): **career development** (teacher becomes leader).	Experiential learning, reflection, and Transferable Skills		

Chinese Philosophy Teaching and Leadership.			
Collaboration with **other heritage** schools. **Collaboration** with the **church.** **Collaboration:** partnering with **state schools.** Collaboration with **universities.** **State** school **committees.** Learning through example or **observation** (state school) **Classroom assistant.** The need to understand **methods** and **approaches,** philosophy and theories applied.	Learning through Educational institutions e.g. state schools, churches, other heritage schools, universities	Leadership Learning through collaboration and opportunity	
Learning through being a school governor e.g. FGB meetings Learning through s**tate school COPS.** Learning through a formally organised school committee set up by a funding body: **(Heritage School Committee).** COPS with other heritage schools **Governor Training.**	Learning through COPS, committees and School governor role		

Table 14 Results table showing Subthemes and themes for Leadership Learning.

Appendix 4.2. Summarised Results Table for Leadership Learning in Twelve Heritage Language Schools.

Appendix 4.2. Summary of Results for Leadership Learning

Leadership Learning through managerial challenges	Leadership Learning Through Pedagogical Challenges	Leadership Learning through collaboration and opportunity
1. Financial challenges 2. Resistance from local state schools + establishing premises. 3. Challenges during and after the pandemic. 4. Staff Recruitment 5. Fragmented sector	1. Self-directed professional development 2. Responsibility and Transparency determination and resilience. 3. Experiential learning, reflection, and transferable skills	1. Learning through educational institutions e.g. state schools, churches, other heritage schools and unis 2. Learning through COPS, committees and school governor role. 3. Learning through training offered by organisations, embassies etc

Table 15 Summarised table of Themes from subthemes for Leadership Learning.