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Teachers' Perceptions of Psychological Services in Educational Settings in

Aotearoa New Zealand

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Abstract

Despite an increasing international knowledge base, there is a lack of New Zealand based research regarding teacher and school perceptions of educational psychology. This study discusses the findings of a survey of teachers' perceptions of educational psychology services in New Zealand. A total of 164 teachers completed the survey that yielded both quantitative and qualitative data. Findings indicate that there is considerable alignment between educational psychologists and teachers in New Zealand regarding the role of educational psychology. Teachers from this survey reported little contact with educational psychologists, and rated educational psychology services as at least 'slightly helpful'. Consultation and collaboration with both school staff and parents was recognised as the most important service educational psychologists in New Zealand should provide. The greatest barriers to educational psychology services were identified as insufficient funds, a personal lack of knowledge regarding services and referral processes, and a shortage of educational psychologists. Teachers reported feeling overwhelmed, unsupported and underequipped to properly support the wide ranging and seemingly ever increasing needs of our learners. Overall, the teachers surveyed expressed that too many students are missing out on desperately needed support. These findings suggest important implications for the future of educational psychology services in New Zealand. An increased promotion of psychological, social, and emotional health in schools is proposed as one potential area in which the role of educational psychologists in New Zealand could be further advanced.

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Teachers' Perceptions of Psychological Services in Educational Settings in
Aotearoa/New Zealand

In the most general sense, educational psychology is concerned with helping young people succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. Working within an ecological and consultative framework, the majority of work conducted by educational psychologists focuses on establishing and promoting positive or advantageous environmental conditions within which children can learn and grow (Woods, Stothard, Lydon & Reason, 2013). Legislation, funding, local and national policy, training, and educational philosophy dictate the manner within which educational psychology is conducted from one country to the next. Despite such influences, it remains constant that if effective, positive change is to occur within the learning environment of a young person, educational psychologists must maintain a close working relationship with teachers.

Over the years, a number of international studies have explored teachers' perceptions of educational psychology. These studies provide useful and important information that not only contributes to the international understanding of educational psychology but also provides teachers with a voice with regard to the educational and psychological health of our learners. New Zealand's geographical remoteness, size, and cultural makeup provide a unique context within which teachers' perceptions of educational psychology services can be studied (Black & Huygens, 2007). However, there is a current lack of New Zealand based research concerned with the nature of educational psychology in New Zealand. Specifically, there is no empirical research exploring teachers'

perceptions of such services. The following report begins by outlining the international and national influences impacting on educational psychology as a discipline before providing commentary on the context within which educational psychology in New Zealand is conducted. The report then provides a summary of contemporary literature and research regarding teachers' perceptions of educational psychology before providing an argument for the importance of the current study. The remaining sections of this report outline the research design and procedures used throughout the current study and a presentation of the results, concluding with a summary and implications of the key findings.

Development of the Role and Function of Educational Psychology

The 1989 United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child ('the Convention') embodies universal requirements for the development, learning, and quality of life for every child (UN General Assembly, 1989). The Convention boasts articles that are both specifically and generally applicable to the role that schools have in the life and development of children and young people. Schools are in a unique position in that they are the only government agency that has the opportunity and ability to both directly and indirectly influence the life and development of children and young people (Brown & Jimerson, 2015). By definition, educational psychologists use psychological skills, knowledge and understanding to benefit the learning and development of children and young people (Woods, Stothard, Lydon & Reason, 2013). Due to the expert nature of their position, educational psychologists should be considered key players in ensuring the Convention's principles and standards are upheld in the school environment.

Evidence of professionals who provide services akin to educational psychology has been identified in at least 83 countries (Jimerson, Skokut, Cardenas, Malone, & Stewart, 2008). While the core purpose of educational psychology to help students' ability to learn by strengthening their academic, social, behavioural, and emotional wellbeing remains consistent from one country to the next, paradigm shifts, legislative changes, and educational policies have an impact not only on the roles that educational psychologists provide but also the ways in which educational psychology services are conducted (Gilman & Medway, 2007). Furthermore, the variability in the development of educational psychology as a discipline has resulted in a number of differences in the training and role requirements, provision of services, and even in the title of those who provide psychological services in schools both between and even within some countries (Cook, Jimerson, & Begeny, 2010). Acknowledging such variability, the International School Psychology Association (ISPA) provides the following broad definition of school psychology:

The term school psychology is used in general form to refer to professionals prepared in psychology and education and who are recognised as specialists in the provision of psychological services to children and youth within the contexts of schools, families, and other settings that impact on their growth and development. As such, the term also refers to and is meant to include educational psychologists and others who display qualities this document associates with school psychology. (ISPA, 2016)

Within this paper, unless stated otherwise, the term educational psychologist is used to refer generically to the group of professional who provide psychology services in schools.

Despite differences in the development of educational psychology within and between countries, a number of requirements and expectations resonate internationally. Having synthesized the descriptions provided by authors from 43 countries, Jimerson, Oakland, and Farrell (2007) list the roles of educational psychologists throughout the world as: engaging in individual assessment of children displaying behavioural, emotional, social, or learning difficulties outside of developmental expectations developing; implementing and evaluating intervention programs at both primary and secondary levels; active consultation with parents, teachers and professionals within relevant agencies; research; and training and supervising other educational psychologists.

The emergent period of educational psychology during the early 20th century was, internationally, largely dominated by a special education discourse. Support of this special education discourse can be found in the history of educational psychology in America (Fagan, 1992), Australia (Oakland, Faulker, & Annan, 2005), Canada (Jordan, Hindes, & Saklofske, 2009), Denmark (Poulsen, 2007), Israel (Stein, 2007), New Zealand (Edwards, Annan, & Ryba, 2007), and the United Kingdom (Squires & Farrell, 2007) amongst many others. Special education discourse aligns with the medical model, a deficit-based paradigm. Under this model problems are viewed as being rooted within the child (Farrell, 2010). Throughout the period dominated by deficit-based discourse the focus of educational psychologists was in psychoeducational assessments, diagnosing, and the treatment of internal pathology (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000).

Following the emergence of special education was a period of mainstreaming. Mainstreaming represented a philosophical shift dominated by an equal rights discourse (Lindsay, 2007). The focus of mainstreaming was on the placement of students who were previously in special education classrooms and schools into mainstream classes with the belief that the experience would benefit their academic, social, and emotional development (Anderson, Klassen, & Georgiou, 2007). A report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) indicated how much of an international movement mainstreaming in education became during the 1980s-1990s. The UNESCO report initially contacted 90 member states to contribute to their report on the current situation of special education, 65 responded, and of those 65 integration/mainstreaming policies could be found in 60 countries (UNESCO, 1995). Integration/mainstreaming policy was reportedly absent in New Zealand. However this policy absence has been described as a result of a “highly developed special education provision” with very few students in New Zealand attending special schools (UNESCO, 1995, p.17).

Most recently, the promotion of inclusion in education has dominated education policy-making internationally. The move to educational inclusion is related to issues of social and educational inequality with an aim to ensure all students have equal access to the range of educational and social opportunities available within their school (Mittler, 2012). Inclusion goes beyond the practice of simply integrating students with higher needs into mainstream settings in the hope that they will benefit (Anderson et al., 2007). Instead, inclusion places a greater emphasis on the quality of each student’s involvement within his or her school and community. Two documents have acted as the driving force behind

many inclusive education policies: the ‘Salamanca Statement’, and the ‘Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons’. The ‘Salamanca Statement’ was an agreement drawn up by representatives of 92 governments and 25 international organisations in 1994 to “further the objective of education for all” (UNESCO, 1994, p. iii). The ‘Salamanca Statement’ called upon governments to:

- give the highest policy and budgetary priority to improve their education systems to enable them to include all children regardless of individual differences or difficulties
- adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reason for doing otherwise
- invest in greater effort in early identification and intervention strategies, as well as in vocation aspects of inclusive education.

(UNESCO, 1994, p. ix).

Signed by 145 United Nations’ States, including New Zealand, the more recent ‘Convention on the Rights of Disabled Persons’ includes a significant commitment to inclusive education. Article 24 instructs “States Parties recognise the right of persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure an inclusive education system at all levels.” (United Nations General Assembly, 2006, p. 17). Nearly all countries that have adopted, or are at least in the process of developing, inclusive education policies have done so following directions from and a commitment to these two documents (Mitchell, 2010).

Overall, the concept of inclusion reflects a shift away from the deficit/medical model towards a social/ecological model. However, despite a

general consensus regarding the philosophical position of inclusion, a number of authors suggest that this shift to inclusion still holds onto a number of philosophies related to the special education paradigm (Kearny & Kane, 2006). This perspective has been explained by Corbett and Slee (2000) as a situation where:

(...) expert professions are called in to identify the nature and measure the extent of disability. This is followed by highly bureaucratic ascertainment processes where calculations of resources, human and material, are made to support the locating of the disabled child in the regular school or classroom. (cited in Kearny & Kane, 2006, p.204).

While there may be some merit in Kearny and Kane's philosophical debate regarding the authenticity of the inclusive education paradigm, inclusive education lends itself to a more ecological model and as such considers an 'issue' within the context in which a child functions instead of assuming that an 'issue' is inherent within a child.

The ecological model is strongly influenced by Bronfenbrenner's social ecology theory (Woolfson, Whaling, Stewart, & Monsen, 2003). Bronfenbrenner's (1979) view was that an individual does not function alone; much like a set of Russian dolls, an individual is nested within a family system nested within other larger systems. From this position, it is pertinent for an educational psychologist to consider all systems that interact with and support a child. Although the role of an educational psychologist still includes assessment, under an ecological model, assessment no longer only refers to psychoeducational or psychometric testing but also refers to actions such as interviewing and observations in order to gain knowledge about a child and their environment(s).

This paradigm shift towards inclusive education has occurred internationally and has required a reconsideration of the vision for educational psychology (Mitchell, 2010). There is a call for educational psychology to move beyond providing services to those with the greatest need and move towards providing services for the educational and developmental benefit of all learners (Brown, 2010). The further educational psychology moves away from a special education discourse the more likely it is that a systems model can replace the individual, deficit-based model of traditional educational psychology narrative. An argument to which Brown (2010) supports, stating that although “there will always be a need for crisis and needy individual intervention, this work can be minimized when systematic interventions lead to effective behaviour management and effective teaching and learning” (p. 16).

In August 2016 the Ministry of Education announced their move to modernise the education system. At the core of this update is recognition that “no two children are the same” and that the support provided should reflect each child’s uniqueness rather than providing support on the proviso that children fit the criteria set by an arbitrary category (Ministry of Education, 2016a). In recognising how fragmented specialist support has become, part of the modernisation of the education system includes rebranding ‘special education’ as ‘learning support’. The current focus of the Ministry is to design a learning support programme that:

- Is recognizable, simple, and provides quality information to inform timely and appropriate interventions
- Removes the current fragmentation, inflexibility and other barriers to effective service delivery

- Improves support for teachers and parents
- Is child centred, easy to access, prompt, and that provides support that is early, uninterrupted, and for as long as it is needed
- Strengthens collaboration between educators, children, whānau, and specialists (Ministry of Education, 2015).

While this is a step further away from special education discourse and a step towards a more 'systems model' as championed by Brown above, it is still unclear what these changes will look like for educational psychologists and educational psychology in New Zealand.

Educational Psychology in the New Zealand Context

In a general sense, the role of educational psychologists in New Zealand is dictated and informed by a plethora of internal forces and external forces at the local, national and global level. Such forces include the Education Act 1989 and the New Zealand Disability Strategy both of which are guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Treaty of Waitangi, and the Code of Ethics. Further national education guidelines and policy, including SE2000, National Curriculum Statements and National Education Goals influence the ways in which psychology-based services are provided in New Zealand schools. The scope of practice within which educational psychologists in New Zealand can function is further dictated by a combination of their own level of competence and expertise and the nature of the referrals they receive. Although the service provided by an educational psychologist is limited by a number of legal and ethical standards, their practice may be limited

even further by a lack of common understanding regarding their capabilities, availability, expertise and caseload.

Due to its geographical remoteness, size, and cultural makeup New Zealand provides a unique context from which educational psychology can be studied. New Zealand is a small group of islands in the southwest Pacific Ocean. Its nearest neighbour is Australia, approximately 1,600 kilometres to the West. New Zealand is comprised of the North and South Islands along with a number of smaller islands for a combined area of 268,107 square kilometers. As of November 2016 New Zealand's estimated population was 4,728,778 (Statistics New Zealand, 2016). The main ethnic groups are identified as European or Other (74.6%), Māori (15.6%), Asian (12.2%), Pacifika (7.8%), and Middle Eastern, Latin American, African (1.2%)¹.

New Zealand's education system has three levels: early childhood education from birth to school entry age; primary, intermediate, and secondary school from 5 to 19 years of age; and tertiary or vocational education. School attendance is compulsory in New Zealand from 6 to 16 years of age, although the majority of children attend from age 5. As of July 2010, there were 953,322 students enrolled in primary and secondary schools and early childhood education centres across New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2012). Māori – medium education, which is unique to the New Zealand context, is available across all levels of education including: *kōhanga reo* (preschool), *kura kaupapa Māori* (mostly composite, years 1-13), and *wānanga* (tertiary institutions). Māori – medium education operates within a Māori philosophy. Curriculum can be

¹ Derived from the 2013 Census. Ethnic groups include people who identify with more than one ethnic group. 'Other' ethnicity includes people who identify as New Zealander (Statistics New Zealand, 2015).

taught in both full immersion (te reo Māori only) and bilingual (te reo Māori and English) settings (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Policy. The 1877 Education Act specified that education in New Zealand should be free, secular, and compulsory for all children of primary school age (Ministry of Education, 2011). The policies, practices, and curriculum set up in the early 20th century to ensure a balanced education for a wide range of students prevailed for the majority of the 1900s. A number of social changes beginning in the 1960s, including a call for women's and indigenous peoples' rights, put pressure on a education system that was considered archaic and unable to provide equal outcomes for all students (Ministry of Education, 2011). Although the first educational psychology services in New Zealand were established in 1948, a number of important government reforms occurred throughout the 1980s that impacted both the education system and educational psychology resulting in our contemporary understanding of educational psychology (Edwards et al., 2007).

The Picot Report/*Administering for Excellence and Tomorrow's Schools* set in motion a number of structural reforms in the late 1980s throughout the education system including replacing the Department of Education by a Ministry of Education and increasing local governance through elected board of trustees in individual schools (Edwards et al., 2007; Openshaw, 2014). In addition to the structural reforms of the 1980s, the national curriculum went through a comprehensive revision in the 1990s (Ministry of Education, 2011). For educational psychology these structural changes meant the dissolution of the psychological service that had previously operated as an internal agency within

the Department of Education. Educational psychology services now operated out of a multidisciplinary agency, the Specialist Education Service (SES).

The introduction of a new policy framework, Special Education 2000 (SE2000) shifted the landscape of educational psychology services in New Zealand again. Although it was designed as a funding policy, not a professional practice policy, SE2000 impacted the way in which educational psychologists provided their service (Coleman, 2011). SE2000 worked to clarify who the recipients of special education services would be and what resources would be available to them and as such required educational psychologists to work within professional and political limits to meet the needs of those with the highest needs (Coleman, 2011; Phillips, 2011).

Employment. Not long after the introduction of SE2000, SES was transitioned back into the Ministry of Education under the title of Group Special Education (GSE). Most recently, as a work-in-progress, educational service support is provided by Ministry of Education – Learning Support (previously Special Education). The majority of educational psychologists in New Zealand are employed by the Ministry of Education and are grouped in district offices throughout the country (Jimerson et al., 2009). Educational psychologists employed by the Ministry of Education provide services to children and young persons, their family, their schools, and the wider community through multidisciplinary teams that may include speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, and other advisory teams (Edwards et al., 2007; Jimerson et al., 2009).

Ministry employed psychologists fall under the category of specialist staff. Most recent estimates suggest that the Ministry employs around 820 specialist

staff, comprising of (including psychologists) speech-language therapists; special education advisors, occupational therapists, kaitakawaenga; physiotherapists; Deaf advisors; early intervention teachers; and behaviour support teachers (Ministry of Education, 2012). Specialist staff are responsible for the direct support of the top 3% of high needs students. In the year to June 2011, Ministry employed specialist staff provided service to 4,950 learners with high and complex needs; early intervention services to 13,000 children; severe behaviour services to 3,780 learners; and communication services to 6250 learners (Ministry of Education, 2012). Additionally, Ministry statistics report that, as of July 2015, a further 8,525 students were receiving support under the Ongoing Resource Scheme (ORS) (Ministry of Education, 2016c). These students represent the top 1% of the schooling population.

Service Provision. Currently, educational psychologists in New Zealand provide services across three broad categories: individual referrals, system-level interventions, and third party contracts. Educational psychologists who receive individual referrals are expected to use appropriate assessments to identify problems and areas of need in order to ascertain, implement and evaluate the most appropriate systems of support for the individual (Edwards et al., 2007). As such, educational psychologists in New Zealand require a broad range of skills and knowledge as illustrated by the New Zealand Psychologists' Board definition:

Educational Psychologists apply psychological knowledge and theory derived from research to the area of learning and development, to assist children, young persons, adults and their families regarding their learning, academic performance, behavioural, social and emotional

development, by using psychological and educational assessments and applying interventions using systemic, ecological and developmental approaches. Such practice is undertaken within an individual's area and level of expertise and with due regard to ethical, legal, and Board-prescribed standards (New Zealand Psychologists Board, 2012a, p. 2)

At the systems-level, educational psychologists in New Zealand may deliver and support the implementation of school-wide intervention plans (such as Positive Behaviour for Learning- PB4L), they may lead crisis response/traumatic incident teams, or work in a consultative capacity with a child, their family, and their teacher(s) to devise a plan to best meet the needs of the child (Bourke & Dharan, 2015; Edwards et al., 2007). Finally, educational psychologists working within the Ministry of Education may be required to conduct assessments under third party contracts. Such assessments may include establishing whether a young person meets eligibility criteria for certain youth benefits, or establishing eligibility for enrollment in correspondence schooling due to psychological and/or psychosocial constraints (Edwards et al., 2007).

In Keeping with the general international trend, New Zealand educational psychologists now practice within an ecological model. The shift away from a medical/deficit-based model towards a more social/ecological perspective is reflected in the move towards educational inclusion. This shift towards a more social/ecological model is also supported by the need to incorporate bicultural perspectives (Berman, Edwards, Gavala, Robson, & Ansell, 2015; Edwards et al., 2007). These paradigm shifts are designed to encompass the needs of those in the wider systems (the family, school, community) and, at a pragmatic level, require a systematic and collaborative approach. Unfortunately, attempts to

redesign educational psychology under such paradigms are limited due to inadequate support by current legislation and funding schemes. This mismatch between philosophy and policy has further contributed to the lack of clarity in the role of educational psychologists (Brown, 2010; Edwards et al., 2007; Gilman & Medway, 2007).

In opposition to the general international trend towards a more social/ecological practice model, there are concerns that an unfortunate consequence of SE2000 policy on the role of educational psychologists has been an emphasis on “assessments for entitlement” (Coleman & Pine, 2010, p. 20). The concern of an emphasis on assessment for entitlement is also a feature of special education services in the United States and England (Dawson et al., 2004; Farrell, Jimerson, Kalamouka, & Benoit, 2005; Kelly & Grey, 2000). Assessment for entitlement is evidenced in New Zealand by the increased needs-based assessment by educational psychologists for the purpose of screening for access to services, including: behaviour, early intervention, or communication services; teacher aid hours; or applying for Ongoing and Renewable and Reviewable Support (ORRS) (Coleman & Pine, 2010; Ministry of Education, 2012). Such an approach limits the range of students educational psychologists in New Zealand can work with to those with the highest needs, thus resulting in a lack of support for entire groups of children with learning, developmental, and mental health needs (Brown, 2010).

Training. There are currently two educational psychology training programmes in New Zealand. These are located at the Massey University Albany campus in Auckland and Victoria University of Wellington. The entry requirements into both programmes in the first instance requires candidates to

have completed a bachelor's degree with a major in psychology, education, educational psychology, or an approved teachers education and have satisfied their respective academic boards as being experienced and capable of benefiting from and proceeding with the course of study (Massey University, n.d.a; Victoria University of Wellington, 2016a). Having satisfied these requirements, candidates are eligible to enroll in the Master of Educational Psychology programme in both universities. Although slightly different in their structure, both programmes prepare students in evidence-based practice; develop skills in planning and executing applied research; and develop the skills required for assessment and intervention in educational settings.

Having completed a Master of Educational Psychology programme candidates may apply for a place in both university's Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Psychology internship programme. Admission to the internship programme is not guaranteed at either university and is subject to selected entry. Once admitted to the internship programme, students participate in an intensive one-year, supervised, full-time, practical work internship within one or more institutions approved by their university. Successful completion of this post-masterate qualification results in eligibility for registration as an educational psychologist with the New Zealand Psychologists Board (Massey University, n.d.b; Victoria University of Wellington, 2016b).

Having recognised the "ad hoc" and "tokenistic" ways in which cultural components are added to psychology training programmes in New Zealand, a number of key players in the educational psychology department at Massey University in Auckland have envisioned a programme that is "predominantly indigenously informed and driven, for application (and critique) in Aotearoa"

(Berman et al., 2015, p. 102). It is hoped that the implementation of this new programme will not only better reflect the unique nature of educational psychology in New Zealand but will also ensure that psychologists in New Zealand are better equipped to engage in culturally relevant and culturally responsive practice.

Under requirements of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 ('the Act'), the New Zealand Psychologists Board ('the Board') is under obligation to be satisfied that educational psychologists maintain the required standard of competence to practice (New Zealand Psychologists Board, 2010). In order to meet these obligations, the Board introduced the Continuing Competence Programme (CCP) in 2009. In conjunction with the CCP, the Board prescribes a set of 'Core Competencies' that are considered the minimum competencies an educational psychologist should possess at the time of registration. Drawing on this set of core competencies, the CCP requires annual self-reflection to identify gaps and opportunities for development as well as areas of relative strength to promote ongoing professional growth (New Zealand Psychologists Board, 2015). At the individual level, the ability to critically examine one's own knowledge, skills, judgment, and diligence is central in ensuring safe and ethical individual practice, accountability, lifelong learning and improvement, and competency as an educational psychologist (New Zealand Psychologists Board, 2015).

Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Educational Psychologists in New Zealand are also under obligation to honor and adhere to the principals of te Tiriti o Waitangi (the Treaty of Waitangi) (1840) in all their work (Jimerson et al., 2009). Te Tiriti o Waitangi ('te Tiriti'), an agreement between Māori and the Crown, is New

Zealand's founding document. The Royal Commission on Social Policy (1988) identified the three 'principles of the Treaty' inherent in te Tiriti that have become the common point of reference when considering, writing, and/or enforcing policies and practices that impact Māori. The first principle, 'protection', has been identified in the preamble to te Tiriti. The preamble states that the Queen's representative, William Hobson, is authorised to negotiate with nga Rangatira Māori (the Māori chief of New Zealand) The Queen's authority to exercise te Kawanatanga (the functions of government) throughout New Zealand to enable her to protect all peoples, Māori and Pākehā, from the evils that may befall them from living without law (Nairn, 2007). Later, te Tiriti, explicitly states that the Queen will "protect all the Māori people" (te Tiriti o Waitangi Article Three, cited in Nairn, 2007).

The principles of 'partnership' and 'participation' are less obvious in te Tiriti. These latter two principles are carried over from the Declaration of Independence (1835) that preceded te Tiriti. The Declaration, initially signed by 34 Rangatira (chiefs) of northern Hapū and sent to King William IV, stated that although they request King William IV to "be the parent of their infant state", kawanatanga (the functions of government) are to remain in the authority of the collective Rangatira (Orange, 1987, p. 21). The Declaration therefore asserts that no kawanatanga can occur without the express permission of the collective Rangatira. By signing te Tiriti, Rangatira gave the Crown permission to perform kawanatanga. However, it is argued that Rangatira did this under the expectation of a continued involvement in the discussion and implementation of laws, policies, and practices (Nairn, 2007). An evaluation of te Tiriti under reflection of

such expectations is therefore consistent with the principles of partnership and participation.

The Code of Ethics for Psychologists Working in Aotearoa/New Zealand (2012) explicitly recognises that te Tiriti provides the framework for ethical conduct and by doing so expects all psychologists in New Zealand develop the skills and knowledge necessary for culturally safe and competent practice. The Code of Ethics identifies four ethical principles: 1) respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, 2) responsible caring, 3) integrity of relationships, and 4) social justice and responsibility to society. The first of these principles states that psychologists working in New Zealand are to be informed about the meaning and implications of te Tiriti, including the principles of protection, participation, and partnership, across all of their work. This principle also includes sensitivity to the cultural diversity of all peoples and requires all psychologists to seek appropriate knowledge, experience, and supervision to ensure culturally safe and competent practice and research. The second principle, responsible caring, requires psychologists to “demonstrate active concern over the welfare of those with whom they work” (Code of Ethics, 2012, p. 13). Psychologists are therefore expected to recognise any group of people (individuals, groups, hapū/iwi, or communities) who may be in a vulnerable position and acknowledge their role in protecting the welfare of such groups. The third principle regarding the integrity of relationships is a reminder to ensure that psychologists will seek to do right (tika) in all relationships formed throughout their work, either with Māori or non-Māori. The fourth and final principle, social justice and responsibility to society, supports the promotion of the well being of New Zealand society in general. In New Zealand, te Tiriti is a pivotal model in social justice. In this sense,

both the Code and te Tiriti reminds psychologists of the responsibilities they have in promoting social justice, challenging unjust norms, and challenging behaviours and practices that disempowers any group of people.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health in New Zealand. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines child and adolescent mental health as the achievement and maintenance of “optimal psychological and social functioning and well-being” (WHO, 2005). Children with good mental health “have a sense of identity and self-worth, sound family and peer relationships, an ability to be productive and to learn, and a capacity to tackle developmental challenges and use cultural resources to maximize growth” (WHO, 2005). It is estimated that up to 20% of children and adolescents worldwide experience mental health disorders (WHO, 2005) but there are concerns that children and adolescents in New Zealand have a relatively higher rate of mental health issues compared to other developed countries (Office of the Prime Minister’s Science Advisory Committee, 2011). In New Zealand, the closest estimation suggests that 29 percent of New Zealand youth (16-24 years) have some kind of mental disorder in any 12-month period (Mental Health Commission, 2011). Latest statistics indicate that 38,807 children and youth in New Zealand (aged 0-19 years) used secondary mental health services (Ministry of Health, 2015) in the year ending June 2012. This number is likely to be an underrepresentation of the number of young people accessing mental health services as it, for example, does not include those school-aged children who accessed primary health care providers for mental health concerns.

The Mental Health Commission has identified that schools play an important role in the identification and referral of children with mental health

issues in New Zealand (2011). In adhering to the principles and standards expected by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child all governments should be explicitly addressing the five domains of child development: physical, mental (psychological), social, spiritual, and moral (UN General Assembly, 1989). While this can be achieved through a number of legislations and initiatives, there is increasing evidence that systematic school-based interventions that focus on improving and developing the mental health of children result in improved academic performance, increased positive behaviours, and improved social skills (Corcoran & Finney, 2014; Nelson, Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 2002; Owens & Murphy, 2004; Scott & Barrett, 2004). The United Kingdom's Department for Education and Skills (DfES) has recognised that strategies to promote mental health employed in school settings leave a positive impact on "children's learning and behaviour, staff performance and morale, and the overall ethos and success of the school" (p. iii DfES, 2001).

Unlike the New Zealand Psychologists Board definition of educational psychology, the American National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) includes mental health in their formal definition of educational psychology. The NASP explain that psychologists within educational settings "apply expertise in mental health, learning, and behavior, to help children and youth succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally" (NASP, 2015). There may be room for the argument that mental health concerns are better served by clinical psychologists in New Zealand. However, in light of the aforementioned positive impact that addressing mental health in schools can have, alongside the concerning number of reported mental health concerns in New Zealand school

children, there may be room to grow the role of educational psychologists in New Zealand.

One of the key goals in the reconsideration of the Ministry's educational support services includes working closer with the health sector to ensure that educational progress and achievement is a focal element in all health and wellbeing plans for children (Ministry of Education, 2015). What this will mean for Ministry employed educational psychologists in New Zealand is yet to be announced.

Perceptions of Psychology Services in Educational Settings

Despite developments in standards for training and practice, and professional roles and expertise internationally, educational psychology is yet to reach its full potential (Cummings et al., 2004). One factor restraining educational psychology's growth is the "notable mismatch between what educational psychologists think they should be doing and what users perceive their role to be" (Farrell et al., 2005, p. 527). In order for educational psychologists to provide effective and beneficial services to children, families, and schools it is vital that there is a mutual understanding between all professionals with whom educational psychologists work of their role and the work that they do.

The majority of studies reviewing education providers' perceptions of psychology services in educational settings were conducted decades ago and were predominantly conducted in America (Abel & Burke, 1985; Baker, 1965; Dean, 1980; Ford & Migles, 1979; Gilmore & Chandy, 1973; Styles, 1965). A summary of the findings from some of the original research into school staff

perceptions of psychology services suggest that the primary role of an educational psychologist is thought to be diagnostic assessment (Abel & Burke, 1985; Baker, 1965; Gilmore & Chandy, 1973). Frequency of contact with an educational psychologist appears to be positively related to their degree of helpfulness as perceived by school staff members in a number of studies (Abel & Burke, 1985; Gilmore & Chandy, 1973) and a recurring theme is a desire for increased consultation (Abel & Burke, 1985; Baker, 1985).

A number of studies have appeared more recently as a result of dissatisfaction with the lack of recent empirical studies investigating education professionals' perceptions of school psychology services. Watkins et al. (2001) surveyed 522 school staff from a suburban southwestern school district in America and concluded that school staff desired an increase in services from and more contact time with school psychologists. Despite international calls for a reduction in individual psychological assessments and an increase in consultation, prevention, and intervention services (Cummings et al., 2004; Farrell et al., 2005; Ysseldyke, Burns, & Rosenfield, 2009), participants in Watkins et al. study expressed a desire for a continuation of assessment activities as well as the provision of additional services by educational psychologists in their schools.

Gilman and Gabriel (2004) examined the responses on the *School Psychology Perceptions Survey* (designed by the authors of the study) of 1,533 teachers and 90 administrators' (principals and assistant principals) from eight school districts across four states in America. Gilman and Gabriel hypothesised that years of experience working in education settings would influence the degree of knowledge of educational psychology. Their findings supported this

hypothesis showing that teachers with more than 16 years reported significantly greater knowledge of educational psychology than their less experienced counterparts, defined as those with between 5 and 16 years, and less than 5 years experience.

Consistent with earlier studies (e.g., Abel & Burke, 1985), Gilman and Gabriel reported significantly lower ratings of educational psychologists' helpfulness by teachers compared to administrators. Furthermore, teacher ratings of the helpfulness of educational psychology services remained significantly lower than administrative staff ratings regardless of years of experience and job specialty. Teachers also reported significantly less knowledge of educational psychology services compared to administrators; teacher self-perceptions roughly equated to "somewhat knowledgeable" compared to administrator self-perceptions roughly equating to "pretty knowledgeable". At least one third of teachers and administrators in the schools studied expressed a desire to see increased involvement by psychologists in assessment tasks, and over half (62% of teachers, 63% of administrators) wanted psychologists to be more involved in teacher consultation. Gilman and Gabriel conclude their report by suggesting that in order to increase consumer knowledge and satisfaction [educational] psychologists should educate administrators on the full spectrum of roles and functions they are capable of providing.

Farrell et al., (2005) invited teachers from America, Cyprus, Denmark, England, Estonia, Greece, South Africa, and Turkey to complete a survey on their perceptions of the role of educational psychologists and educational psychology services in order to ascertain the needs-to-service gap of psychology services in

schools. A summary of their findings suggests that although teachers value the service they receive from psychologists they would like to see more of them.

Farrell et al. note their surprise that although nearly 90% of teachers in their study would like to see an educational psychologist more often, the average rating for quality of work is well above 'satisfactory'. In five of the eight countries surveyed, over 50% of participants rated the quality of educational psychologist's work as 'good' or 'excellent'. The American cohort provided the most positive ratings of quality of work with an 'excellent' rating of 56.9%. While Cyprus reported the least satisfaction with the majority of respondents rating the quality of work as 'poor' (38.3%) or 'extremely poor' (23.4%).

Over 90% of responses from the South African participants commented on the lack of psychologists as negatively impacting on the quality of services received. Similar results were found in the cohorts from Cyprus and England where over 95% and 60% of respondents (respectively) complained about the shortage of psychologists in school. Such complaints are unsurprising given that the vast majority of schools from the South African, Cyprian, and England cohorts report seeing an educational psychologist for less than one hour a week; a sentiment that is reflected in their desire to see an increase in the amount of time spent in their schools by an educational psychologist (South Africa and Cyprus both 89.7% and England 98.8%). Despite receiving a higher frequency of school visits, the view that a lack of psychologists negatively impacts the quality of services received was also evident amongst 60% of teachers from the Estonia cohort, over half from America, and a third of teachers from Turkey.

Specific to respondents from England and America in Farrell et al. (2005) were concerns that psychologists in schools spent too much time testing and

assessing for special education services. One respondent from America voiced the opinion that “[educational] psychologists could do so much more but they are basically gate keepers to special education” (p. 539). One respondent from England stated, “the [educational] psychologist should visit regularly [...] working with children and not just testing them”, a sentiment that Farrell et al. described as fairly typical from the England cohort (p. 539). Farrell et al. propose that the practice of assessing students for special education services is a result of the legislative and statutory duties and expectations of educational psychologists in both these countries.

More recently, Reinke, Stormont, Herman, Puri, and Goel (2011) assessed 292 teacher’s perceptions of the needs for educational psychology services based on types of mental health issues and concerns, the role of educational psychologists, and the barriers to educational psychology services across five school districts in Missouri, USA. Teachers were first asked to indicate whether they had taught a student with a specific behavioural or mental health concern in the past year. More than 90% of respondents reported working with or teaching a student with disruptive behaviours, problems with inattention, hyperactivity, defiant behaviours, and family stressors. More than 50% reported concerns that included peer problems, aggressive behaviour, anxiety issues, bullying (aggressor or victim), and depression. The top five mental health concerns of their students were reported, in order, as: (1) Disruptive, defiant, aggressive, and conduct behaviour problems, (2) hyperactivity and inattention, (3) significant family stressors, (4) social skills deficits, and (5) depression.

Teachers were asked to rate the extent to which they perceived responsibility for certain roles lay with themselves or with an educational

psychologist. Results showed that teachers perceive educational psychologists as having primary responsibility for screening for mental health problems, conducting behavioural assessments, referring students and families to both school-based and community-based services, and teaching social-emotional lessons. The only role teachers rated more highly as their responsibility was implementing classroom behavioural interventions.

The teachers in Reinke et al's study were also asked to report on the reasons they believed children requiring mental health support "fall through the cracks" (p. 5). A lack of adequate parent support programmes (67%); lack of prevention programmes for students with externalising (62%) and internalising (61%) behaviours; and a lack of staff training and coaching (51%) are reported as the top reasons students fall through the cracks. While the top three barriers to services were reported to be: a shortage of mental health professionals (82%), lack of teacher training in dealing with student mental health needs (78%), and inadequate funding for school-based mental health (66%).

One area of these results Reinke et al. discuss further is the finding that teachers perceive social-emotional lessons as a role more appropriate for an educational psychologist. Reinke et al. draw on the connection between social and emotional wellbeing and potential for academic success (McClelland, Morrison, & Holmes, 2000) and propose that future researchers and educational psychologists may wish to engage in supporting teachers in integrating social-emotional lessons into the classroom. They further suggest that supporting teachers in engaging with issues of social and emotional wellbeing within their classrooms may also aid in bridging the gap between educational and mental health systems, concluding that, overall, teachers believe the role of educational

psychologists needs to be more expansive than supporting mental health services. Educational psychologists should be more involved in conducting assessments, screening, and supporting and consulting with teachers in the implementation of interventions in the classroom in order to better support the mental- and educational- wellbeing of all students and decrease the number of students who fall through the cracks (Reinke et al., 2011).

In Finland, Ahtola and Kiiski-Mäki (2014) explored which factors affect school professionals' perceptions of the role of educational psychologists. 547 school professionals, including teachers, principals, school nurses, and physicians, from 67 regular education schools completed an online questionnaire. Results of their study revealed that school professionals value the work of educational psychologists but that they value systems-level work the least. Their findings also supported Alport's (1954) "contact hypothesis" (cited in Gilman & Medway, 2007). That is, as the frequency of contact time with educational psychologists increased, school professional's perceptions of the function of educational psychology services increased.

Additionally, this study also found that each category of school professionals' differed in their general perceptions of educational psychologists. For example: compared to classroom teachers, principals rated assessments more important but rated therapy less important; classroom teachers rated all educational psychology services and roles more important compared to special education teachers; while the only educational psychology role school physicians rated as more important compared to classroom teachers in the study was that of systems-level work. While the age of the school professional had no significant effect, gender had a significant effect on ratings of therapy, assessment, and

consultation. Women rated each of these roles more important compared to the men in the study. Of particular interest was the finding that the therapeutic role of an educational psychologist was rated as less important by all groups of professionals that do not have daily contact with class groups. It was suggested that as classroom teachers have daily contact with students they are likely to have a greater awareness of and sensitivity to the emotional and social problems of children (Ahtola & Kiiski-Mäki, 2014).

A group of researchers from China sought to contribute to the predominantly Western conceptualisation of educational psychology through examination of Chinese teachers' perceptions of educational psychology service providers in Beijing (Wang, Ni, Ding, Yi, 2015). Wang et al conducted a semi-structured interview of 94 teachers from 92 schools in Beijing to explore their perceptions of the roles of educational psychologists, the barriers to educational psychology services, and their satisfaction of educational psychology services. The most commonly identified roles of educational psychologists in Wang et al. were consultation/support for teachers (45.74%), services for all students (36.17%) and group and/individual counseling (35.11%). A theme of the role of educational psychologists in prevention was indicated in Wang et al's data with 28.27% of participants suggesting that educational psychologists should work with students from at-risk environments. Similar to previous research, over half of the teachers interviewed expressed either having no contact with educational psychologists or were dissatisfied with the services they had received. Despite a number of differences in the reality of educational psychology in China such as no minimum training requirement for educational psychology and differences in the schooling context (larger class sizes, discipline, cultural expectations), the

findings in Wang et al's study are consistent with the findings from the aforementioned, Western, studies.

Although they do not report on teacher's perceptions of educational psychology, two recent studies about educational psychology in New Zealand have added to the international literature. Jimerson et al. (2009) adopted the *International School Psychology Survey* (ISPS) used previously by Farrell et al. (2005) to gather information about the practice of educational psychology in New Zealand. Jimerson et al. (2009) suggest that the majority of findings from the New Zealand cohort they surveyed are consistent with those from other countries. Their findings indicated that educational psychologists in New Zealand, like their international counterparts, spent the greatest proportion of their time working in a consultative capacity with young people, families, and teachers. One distinctive point of difference that emerged about New Zealand educational psychology practice was that relatively less time was spent engaged in psychoeducational evaluation and more time providing consultation and direct intervention compared to their international counterparts. Jimerson et al also asked their participants to indicate both internal and external challenges that they believe to jeopardise service delivery. The top three internal challenges include professional burnout (25%), a loss of experience from the profession (25%), and a lack of professional leadership (23%). The top three external challenges include a lack of money to properly fund services (31%), low salary (22%), and conflicting roles with other professional groups (20%).

More recently, Bourke and Dharan (2015) developed a survey to identify the assessment practices of educational psychologists in New Zealand. Findings by Bourke and Dharan (2015) complement the summary provided by Jimerson

et al. Educational psychologists surveyed by Bourke and Dharan identify interviewing, observation, and collaboration as key assessment practices. Despite not being a prerequisite to service attainment in New Zealand, over half of the educational psychologists in Bourke and Dharan's cohort reported experiencing constraints (66%) or dilemmas (70%) often in response to feeling pressured to use normative instruments for evaluative purposes. Specifically, psychologists in Bourke and Dharan's study indicate their discomfort in using normative assessments as their development has occurred in other countries and are therefore informed by different cultures, values, knowledge, skill and expectations. Bourke and Dharan acknowledge the increasing expectation for educational psychologists in New Zealand to engage in proactive and systemic work with schools and the wider community. They conclude that the assessments educational psychologists in New Zealand utilise most frequently in their practice are well suited to the formative and collaborative expectations of professional practice within an ecological model.

Purpose of the current study

The primary purpose of this research project is to contribute to New Zealand knowledge and the current conceptualisation of educational psychology. Educational psychologists provide the majority of their services to students within educational contexts. As such, teachers and other educational professionals provide a critical role with regards to both knowledge of their students and the implementation of interventions or other recommendations. As the literature has shown, when consumers do not understand the role of the educational psychologist then the effectiveness of their service is compromised

(Bell & McKenzie, 2013; Farrell et al., 2005). Therefore, exploring the nature of psychology services in New Zealand schools from the perspective of teachers and staff adds to the literature and also provides practical and contextual information regarding the educational and mental health needs of students and staff in New Zealand schools.

The current study appears to be the first exploration into teachers' perceptions of the nature of educational psychology services in New Zealand. In light of common themes throughout recent literature the first goal of the current study was to gain understanding of teachers' perceptions of the role of educational psychologists in New Zealand. This goal included an exploratory enquiry into the process, use of, and teacher-initiated referrals to psychological services within New Zealand schools.

The second goal was to explore teachers' perceptions of the helpfulness of current educational psychology services. This goal involved ascertaining whether current services are deemed by teaching staff to be fitting to the needs of current students in New Zealand schools.

The third goal of the study was to explore teacher and school staff perceptions of the current barriers to psychology-based services in their school. This goal included determining whether the perceived barriers to educational psychology services are tangible (e.g., funding) or intangible (e.g., inadequate understanding of the referral process).

A key theme emerging throughout the international literature is that there is a disconnect between the services teachers think educational psychologists do and should provide and the services educational psychologists themselves think they do and should provide (Farrell et al., 2005; Gilman &

Medway, 2007). Collectively, the previously mentioned goals, work together to ascertain whether this same disconnect exists between teachers and educational psychologists in New Zealand.

The following research questions were addressed in order to generate information appropriate to the study's goals:

Research Questions

1. What do teachers in New Zealand consider the role of an educational psychologist to be?
2. How helpful do teachers and other school staff in New Zealand find educational psychology services?
3. What are the barriers to educational psychology services in New Zealand?
4. What are the frequently identified psychological needs of children in New Zealand schools?
5. Are the psychological needs of New Zealand school children being met?

Educational Significance

Educational psychology is a developing profession not only within New Zealand but also within psychology (Brown & Jimerson, 2015). This study is significant to the field of educational psychology as it provides important data pertinent to a local understanding of school-based psychological services in New Zealand. It also contributes to the international literature regarding the nature, variety, and expectations of school-based psychology services throughout the world. In line with the international literature but specific to the New Zealand

context this study will contribute to current knowledge regarding teachers' expectations of educational psychology as a service and educational psychologists as service providers. Where inconsistencies exist between teacher expectations and current service provision it is hoped that information obtained in the current study may help to inform possible areas of development and reconciliation. Furthermore, the current study may help to identify current strengths and weaknesses in the New Zealand educational psychology environment. Perhaps most importantly, it is hoped that by gaining a better understanding of teacher perceptions of educational psychology services, current and future students in New Zealand will receive the appropriate services that enable them to reach their best potential.

Method

This study utilised a questionnaire that aimed to identify the current use and perceptions of educational psychology services by New Zealand teachers, what the barriers to educational psychology services are, and whether current services fit the needs of children in New Zealand schools. This section includes a summary of the chosen research design; the procedures used for data collection; and the procedures used to create the final database.

Research Design

Survey research was identified as the most suitable and effective method to collect the data required in answering the research questions of this study. A web-based survey was utilized in the current study. The primary advantage of this method of collecting survey information and data is its low cost and its

ability to reach a large number of potential respondents in the shortest time. A web-based survey also allows for participant anonymity and flexibility for participants as they are able to fit participation around their own schedule (Nardi, 2015). Further advantages of survey research include: the ability to reach a larger sample of the intended population; the ability to address multiple topics; and its ability to remove expectation and prejudice from an interviewer (Dillman, 2007; Nardi, 2015). Web-based surveys can also allow for greater aesthetic, instructional, and coding options compared to the more traditional, mail-based, survey method. Added benefits to web-based surveys include: the ability to load skip patterns that are invisible to respondents; pop-up instructions for individual questions; and drop-down boxes with extensive lists of answer choices which allow for immediate coding - this is especially advantageous to certain questions that are usually asked in an open-ended manner (Coolican, 2009; Dillman, 2007).

Participants

Teachers, Principals, SENCOs, and other staff members of New Zealand schools who have contact with educational psychology services were invited to complete a questionnaire on their perceptions of psychological services provided in their schools. Questionnaires were distributed to a wide range of schools covering the diversity of New Zealand schools via school email addresses obtained from the New Zealand Schools public directory on the *Education Counts* webpage (Education Counts, 2016). This directory included primary, intermediate, secondary, state, pre-school, alternative learning, kura, state-integrated, and private schools within both urban and rural settings.

Inclusionary criteria for participation included: being currently employed in a predominantly teaching capacity, or in a position of close contact with children who have higher needs; and being proficient in the English language. All ethnicities, genders, and ages were invited to participate in the study in order to ensure that the respondent sample adequately represent the wider population of educational professionals across New Zealand schools.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to commencing data collection, the research project was reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (application number NOR 16/17). There was deemed to be no risks to participants undertaking this study beyond those of everyday living. Participation in the survey was completely voluntary and participants were reminded of their right to withdraw without consequence at any time by exiting the survey with all responses being confidential and only anonymised and amalgamated data being reported. The information collected about participants' demographic details and employment settings were used explicitly to provide indication about the extent to which the profile of respondents are reflective of the wider population of the New Zealand school workforce. To ensure confidentiality of participants' information and data, Survey Monkey's privacy policies were reviewed. Amongst other security features, Survey Monkey offers Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption. SSL is a protocol developed for transmitting private documents or information via the Internet. It creates a secure connection between a user and a server, encrypting sensitive information that is being transmitted through the

web page. Survey Monkey automatically turns on SSL encryption for all surveys (Survey Monkey, 2016).

Documents

Two documents were used in the current study. The first was an information letter to explain the purpose of the study and invite participants to partake in the survey. The second document was the survey used to obtain information pertaining to teacher's perceptions of the nature of educational psychology in New Zealand.

Information letter. An information letter introducing the principal investigator and the purpose of the study alongside an accompanying web link was distributed via email to potential participants. The information letter described the purpose of the study and its significance to obtaining a greater understanding of educational psychology services in the New Zealand context. It invited participants to partake in the survey by clicking on the link provided. Recipients of the information letter were reminded that participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw at any stage without consequence by exiting the webpage. The information letter reinforced that all information would remain confidential and that only amalgamated and anonymised data would be reported. The information letter clarified that consent to participate in the study and the use of data was assumed by them clicking on the link and submitting the completed survey (appendix A).

Survey. The *Perception of School Psychology Services Questionnaire* (appendix B) was developed by the principal investigator to study teachers' perceptions of educational psychology in New Zealand.

Survey development. Following discussions with the Educational Psychology team at Massey University the basic premise of this survey was developed and the principal investigator formulated questions to build the survey specific to the population of interest. A review of the professional literature related to the current study guided the second stage of the survey's development. Studies by Gilman and Medway (2007), Reinke et al. (2011) and Watkins et al. (2001) were used to ensure items included in the current study aligned with items in previous research to allow for a comparison of New Zealand data against international trends.

A pilot study was conducted to help inform the structure, length, response options, and clarity of the questions individually and the survey as a whole. Following the review and recommendations of a number of the pilot participants the final form of the survey was developed. The completed survey includes the following sections: a) demographic information of the participant, b) demographic information of the school, c) in school psychological service provision, d) referral issues, e) the perceived role of educational psychologists, and f) barriers to psychological services.

Data Cleaning

Prior to beginning data analysis the data set was scanned for incomplete questionnaires. The purpose of this exercise was two-fold: first, as a condition of participation in the research, participants were informed that they could remove consent for the use of their data simply by exiting the survey at any stage. Therefore, in order to comply with the ethics of this project it was essential to remove the data of any participant who exited the survey before completion.

Secondly, inclusion of the data from a participant who failed to complete the survey in final analyses may lead to a failure to accurately estimate effect sizes and response patterns. Survey monkey deemed a survey as 'complete' only when a response was provided on every question. For the purpose of this research however, a participant's data was included in analysis if it was clear that the participant had made a reasonable attempt to complete the survey. Based on the skip patterns of the participants who exited the survey early, completed surveys were defined as those where: participants did not skip more than five of the core 25 questions (demographic questions not included); and/or did not skip an entire section; and/or answered at least one question in the final section of the survey.

These initial data cleaning steps were employed to ensure the data fairly represented the population it purports to and thus determining whether or not the results obtained in the study can be applied or generalized beyond the sample population (Osbourne, 2013). Further to these data cleaning steps, tests of assumptions (assumptions of normality and variance of homogeneity) were calculated on all relevant quantitative analyses conducted. Such tests are vital to the external reliability of the study. These are reported below alongside their respective analyses.

Data Analysis

The research questions were answered using a combination of descriptive statistics as well as quantitative, qualitative and thematic analyses. A number of statistical analyses were utilized in order to answer this study's research questions and to ensure alignment with previous research on this topic.

Specific analyses included frequency distributions, measures of central tendency and dispersion, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) in order to summarise response patterns and to allow for comparisons to the wider literature.

Thematic Analysis. Qualitative analysis demands flexibility in order to fit each individual piece of research (Braun & Clarke, 2012). An inductive approach to thematic analysis translates to a 'bottom-up' or data-driven analysis. In contrast to a deductive approach, where a researcher codes and interprets the data using their own concepts or ideas, an inductive approach is inherently linked to the semantic content of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2012). As the purpose of the open comments section in the current study was to capture the voice of the participants in depth, under the assumptions of flexibility provided by the thematic analysis approach, it was decided that an inductive thematic analysis at the semantic level would be appropriate in analyzing the data set obtained from the 'further comments' section in this study's questionnaire.

Responses in the 'further comments' section were analysed using the six-phase approach to thematic analysis described in Braun and Clarke (2006). Data was first read carefully to generate initial codes in order to organise the data into meaningful categories. The second phase involved consideration of how different codes contribute to overarching themes. Data points dealing with the same theme were categorised and given interim definitions. Categories were not mutually exclusive in that the same data point could be included in more than one category. Next, themes were reviewed to ensure that there was adequate data to support each theme. Unlike quantitative analyses, adequate data does not equate to a number or a percentage. Instead, adequate refers to there being a convincing pattern across the data set and that the data within a theme is not too

diverse. Having reviewed the data within each theme, definitions and names for each theme were refined ensuring that the spirit of each theme was captured.

86.36% of the data in the 'further comments' section was included in the analysis, resulting in 13 categories that were then grouped into four key themes.

Results

A total of 267 participants responded to the survey. After examination of the data for incomplete responses and random responding, data cleaning resulted in the removal of 103 responses from final analysis. From this, 164 completed the survey resulting in a 61.42% completion rate. Primary analyses were conducted to find whether or not there was a pattern to cessation of participation. These are discussed later. Unless otherwise stated all results presented below are based on the 164 participants who provided completed questionnaires to a degree that was deemed to satisfy the requirements of quality and consent.

Demographics

The survey yielded responses from 32 (19.51%) males and 131 females (79.88%). The majority of participants identified as New Zealand/European (85.98%), followed by Māori (12.80%) (Table 1). The greatest number of participants have been teaching for 25 years or more (26.99%), followed by those who have been teaching for between 11 and 15 years (20.25%). The largest professional category was classroom teachers (52.44%). The next largest professional category was 'other' (24.39%). The large number of 'other' responses prompted further investigation into potential categories that may

have been included in the questionnaire. Within the 'other' responses there are a clear cluster of respondents who identified their role as Assistant Principal ($n=8$), and either as Head of Department/Faculty or Team leader ($n=13$). The remaining responses included classroom relief teachers, support staff, careers advisors, and counselors (Table 1).

Table 1

Participant Gender, Ethnicity, Role, and Years Employed in an Educational Setting.

| Variable | Responses | Percentage |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 32 | 19.51% |
| Female | 131 | 79.88% |
| Prefer not to answer | 1 | 0.61% |
| Total | 164 | |
| Ethnicity* | | |
| Māori | 21 | 12.80% |
| NZ/European | 144 | 87.80% |
| Pasifika | 3 | 1.83% |
| Prefer not to answer | 2 | 1.22% |
| Other** | 9 | 5.49% |
| Total | 164 | |
| Role | | |
| Principal | 34 | 20.73% |
| Deputy Principal | 17 | 10.37% |
| Dean | 12 | 7.32% |
| SENCO | 20 | 12.20% |
| Classroom teacher | 86 | 52.44% |

| | | |
|-------------------|-----|--------|
| Special Education | 5 | 3.05% |
| Other | 40 | 24.39% |
| Total | 164 | |
| Years Teaching | | |
| < 5 | 16 | 9.82% |
| 6-10 | 20 | 12.27% |
| 11-15 | 33 | 20.25% |
| 16-20 | 29 | 17.79% |
| 21-25 | 21 | 12.88% |
| > 25 | 44 | 26.99% |
| Total | 163 | |

*Participants were able to select more than one response ** Other answers

included European/British ($n = 7$)

The greatest numbers of participants were employed in full primary (33.54%), contributing (years 1-6, 26.22%), and secondary (years 9-13, 25.00%) schools. The vast majority of participants were employed at state integrated schools (65.85%) with a smaller number of state not-integrated (29.27%) and private (3.66%) schools. The majority of respondents came from schools that had an average school role between 101-250 students (25.61%) and between 251-400 students (23.17%). School location was evenly spread between urban (25.61%), suburban (37.80%) and rural (36.59%) areas and school decile rankings were fairly evenly spread across all 10 deciles with the largest number of participants placed in deciles 5 and 8 schools (14.63%). School demographics are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2

Summary of the Demographic Profile of Schools as Represented in the Current Study

| Variable | Responses | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| School Type | | |
| Full Primary | 57 | 34.76% |
| Kura Kaupapa Māori (primary/wharekura) | 1 | 0.61% |
| Contributing (years 1-6) | 43 | 26.22% |
| Composite (years 1-13) | 5 | 3.05% |
| Intermediate | 7 | 4.27% |
| Secondary (years 7-13) | 6 | 3.66% |
| Secondary (years 9-13) | 41 | 25.00% |
| Special School | 1 | 0.61% |
| Teen Parent Unit | 1 | 0.61% |
| Other* | 2 | 1.22% |
| Total | 164 | |
| School Authority | | |
| State Integrated | 108 | 65.85% |
| State Not-Integrated | 48 | 29.27% |
| Private | 6 | 3.66% |
| Other | 2 | 1.22% |
| Total | 164 | |
| School Location | | |
| Urban | 42 | 25.61% |
| Suburban | 62 | 37.80% |
| Rural | 60 | 36.59% |

| | | |
|---------------|-----|--------|
| Total | 164 | |
| Decile Rating | | |
| 1 | 7 | 4.27% |
| 2 | 9 | 5.49% |
| 3 | 18 | 10.98% |
| 4 | 15 | 9.15% |
| 5 | 24 | 14.63% |
| 6 | 16 | 9.76% |
| 7 | 16 | 9.76% |
| 8 | 24 | 14.63% |
| 9 | 16 | 9.76% |
| 10 | 16 | 9.76% |
| Unknown | 3 | 1.83% |
| Total | 164 | |

* Other included Kura Reo e Rua (full immersion and Bi-lingual Māori) and Private (years 3-13).

A summary comparison of the demographic character of the New Zealand teaching force according to the Ministry of Education statistics and the demographic character of participants in the current survey is shown in Figure 1 below. As data regarding teachers who are not employed by the Ministry of Education, such as Private schools, is not included in these statistics caution should be taken when interpreting these results. Whilst considering the above caveat, Figure 1 depicts a noticeably similar looking demographic make-up between the wider teaching population and that of the participants in the

current study indicating that the participants in the current study are a fair representation of the New Zealand school workforce as a whole.

Ministry of Education statistics reported a total of 53,861 (14,303 male and 39,558 female) members of teaching staff in state and state integrated schools in 2015 (Ministry of Education, 2016b). The majority of state and state integrated school teaching staff in 2015 fell between the ages of 35-44 (26.04%). The largest ethnic group represented is European/Pākehā (72.87%). The next largest ethnic group is Māori (9.82%). Secondary (Year 9-15, 29.15%), contributing (26.17%), and full primary (21.08%) make up the largest percentage of school types in New Zealand.

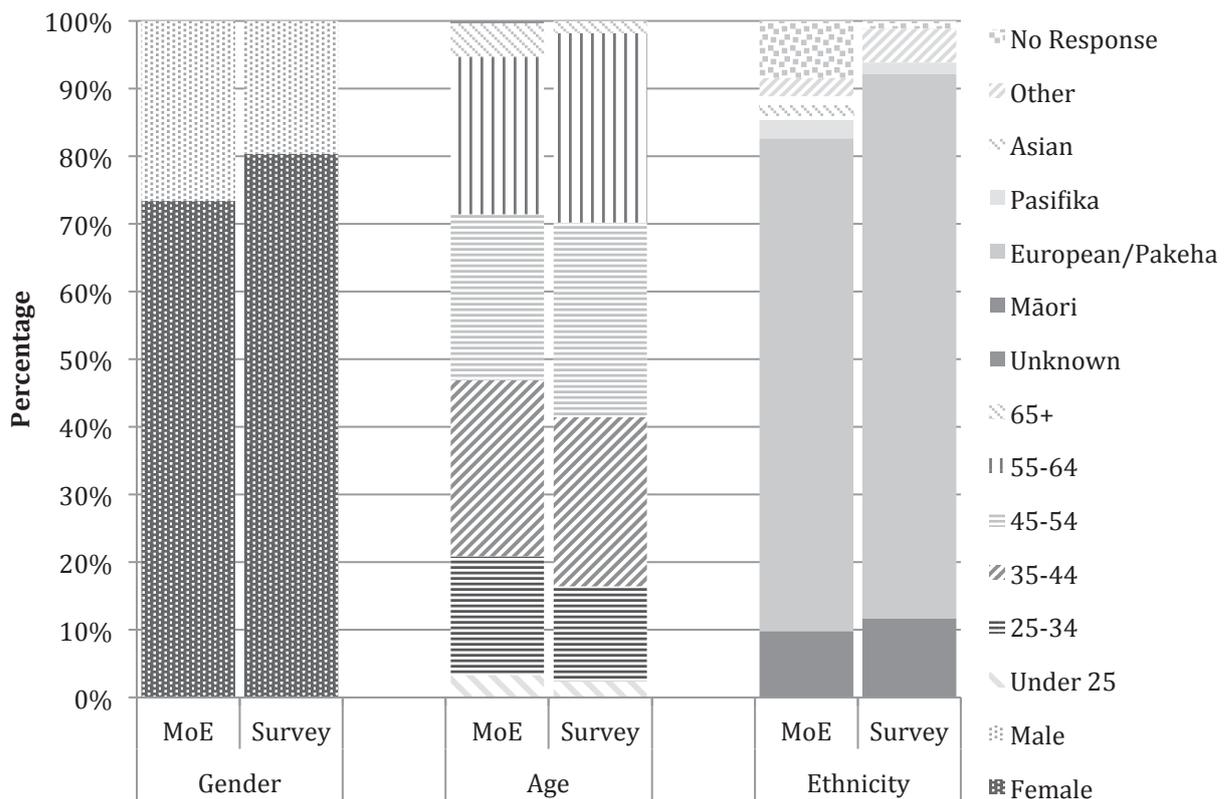


Figure 1. Survey participants' demographics compared to the wider New Zealand teaching population demographics

Research Questions

Research Question 1. *What do teachers in New Zealand consider the role of an educational psychologist to be?*

Research question 1 aimed to explore teachers' perceptions of the role of educational psychology in New Zealand to ascertain whether a mismatch between educational psychologists and teacher perceptions of the role of educational psychology exists. Previous studies internationally have reported a notable mismatch between teacher's and educational psychologist's perceptions of their roles (Farrell et al., 2005). The current study was unable to locate any research from the New Zealand context regarding teachers' perceptions and expectations of educational psychology. In the current study, over half of the participants rated themselves as 'somewhat knowledgeable' regarding the role of educational psychologists. Consultation and collaboration with school staff and parents to develop and coordinate intervention plans was the service most recognised as being provided by educational psychologists in New Zealand and was also ranked the top service that educational psychologists should provide in schools.

To answer research question one, participant responses from questions 28, 29, and 31 in the survey were analysed. Question 28 required participants to rate their own knowledge of the role of educational psychologists. Perceived knowledge was assessed using a likert scale where each response was represented by a numeric rating: 1 = No knowledge, 2 = Somewhat knowledgeable, 3 = Pretty knowledgeable, and 4 = Extremely knowledgeable. All 164 participants responded to this question. The overall weighted average was 1.98 corresponding to a 'somewhat knowledgeable' self-rating of the role of

educational psychologists. Over half ($n = 90$) of the participants rated themselves as 'somewhat knowledgeable' regarding the role of educational psychologists. 39 participants rated themselves as having no knowledge and 35 participants rated themselves as being 'pretty knowledgeable'. No participants rated themselves as 'extremely knowledgeable' regarding the role of educational psychologists.

Separate analyses were conducted to determine whether years of experience as an educator would yield different self-ratings of knowledge of the role of educational psychologists. It was hypothesised that more experienced educators would rate their knowledge of educational psychology higher than their less experienced counterparts. A one-way between groups analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to investigate the impact that years of experience had on perceptions of personal knowledge of the role of educational psychology. The skewness and kurtosis statistics for all six groups were all fairly close to zero indicating that all six groups of data are approximately normal. Levene's statistic was non-significant, $F(5, 157) = .771, p = .572$ therefore the assumption of homogeneity of variance was not violated meaning that all groups presented with the same variance, thus allowing for appropriate use of conclusions drawn by the F statistic.

The ANOVA was statistically significant, indicating a statistically significant difference between the perceived knowledge ratings of at least two of the groups, $F(5, 157) = 4.181, p = .001$. Post hoc comparisons revealed a statistically significant difference between the mean ratings of the most experienced school staff (> 25) and the three most inexperienced groups (< 5 Sig = .015, 6 - 10 Sig = .026, 11 - 15 Sig = .031). These differences were all

statistically significant at the .05 level. The mean knowledge scores for each group are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Self-Rated Knowledge of Educational Psychology by Years of Teaching Experience

| Years of experience | M Rating | SD | 95% CI | | n |
|---------------------|----------|-----|-------------|-------------|----|
| | | | Lower bound | Upper bound | |
| < 5 | 1.63 | .72 | 1.24 | 2.01 | 16 |
| 6 – 10 | 1.70 | .66 | 1.39 | 2.01 | 20 |
| 11 – 15 | 1.79 | .65 | 1.56 | 2.02 | 33 |
| 16 – 20 | 2.00 | .71 | 1.73 | 2.27 | 29 |
| 21 – 25 | 2.14 | .57 | 1.88 | 2.40 | 21 |
| > 25 | 2.25 | .58 | 2.07 | 2.43 | 44 |

n = 164

Further analyses were conducted to determine whether age, gender, ethnicity, school location, or school decile would impact on ratings of perceived knowledge. In these analyses, group membership (age, gender, ethnicity, location, decile) served as the independent variable and knowledge was the dependent variable for each analysis. Non-significant results were obtained for each of these analyses and are presented in Table C1 (Appendix C).

Using a condensed list of services and supports provided by educational psychologists in New Zealand, question 29 required participants to select the roles they were aware were provided by educational psychologists in New Zealand, while question 31 required participants to rank the top three most important services an educational psychologist should provide in schools. Analysis of responses to question 29 shows that out of the total respondents more than two thirds were aware of the consultative and collaborative services

provided by educational psychologists to develop and coordinate intervention plans. Approximately half of the respondents were aware that educational psychologists provided counseling services, crisis intervention, used psychoeducational assessment tools, developed and implemented Individual Educational Programs, and developed and implemented behavioural management interventions. Response rates for each service are shown in Table D1 (Appendix D).

15 participants chose to respond to question 29 in the open comments section from which a generally negative theme emerged. Comments typical of this question included a lack of information regarding educational psychology services, *“I have received no information about [educational psychology] services”*, *“I know none of these”*; and reservation regarding the types of services provided, *“I doubt [educational psychologists] develop and implement IEPS”*, *“It has been impossible to access these services so I wouldn’t know what they offered”*.

The top three services that an educational psychologist provides were determined by the calculating the accumulated percentage of respondents ranking a service in their top three. The top three educational psychology services were identified as: consultation and collaboration with school staff and parents to develop and coordinate intervention plans/curricula/environmental changes; psychoeducational assessment; and staff support and development regarding specific learning needs and mental health topics. Participant ranked ratings of educational psychology roles presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Participants' Ranked Ratings of Services Provided by Educational Psychologists in New Zealand

| Service Type | % Ranked in Top 3 | % Ranked 1 | % Ranked 2 | % Ranked 3 |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Consultation and Collaboration | 24.02 | 41.61 | 19.88 | 10.56 |
| Psychoeducational Assessment | 14.49 | 16.77 | 19.25 | 7.45 |
| Staff Support and Development | 12.84 | 8.07 | 13.04 | 17.40 |
| Counselling | 11.80 | 13.04 | 16.15 | 6.21 |
| Behavioural Intervention | 9.11 | 3.11 | 10.56 | 13.66 |
| Parent Education and Support | 8.49 | 3.11 | 6.21 | 16.15 |
| Crisis Intervention | 8.28 | 8.70 | 6.21 | 9.93 |
| Develop and Implement IEPs | 5.80 | 2.48 | 4.34 | 10.56 |
| School-wide Interventions | 2.28 | 1.86 | 1.86 | 3.11 |
| Tier 3 Interventions | 1.66 | 0.62 | 1.86 | 2.48 |
| Develop and Implement IFSPs | 1.04 | 0.62 | 0.62 | 1.86 |
| Other | 0.21 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.62 |

n = 161

Research Question 2. *How helpful do teachers and other school staff in New Zealand find educational psychology services?*

Research question number two aimed to explore how helpful teachers and other school staff in New Zealand find educational psychology services. To answer this question, participant responses from questions 14, 15, and 18 were analysed. Overall, despite very little contact with educational psychologists, each psychology service provider was found to be at least 'slightly helpful'.

Questions 14 and 15 were concerned with the frequency of contact school staff have with educational psychologists. Over half of the respondents report having either no contact or having rarely had contact with an educational psychologist in the past year. The weighted average of 1.68 corresponds to having 'occasionally' had contact with an educational psychologist in the past year. 35.98% of respondents ($n = 164$) disclosed that their school has not paid for any psychological services in the past year while 32.32% admit not knowing whether or not their school had employed any psychological services in the past year.

Question 18 required participants to rate the general helpfulness of six psychological service providers (Ministry of Education local office and national office, local DHB child development and CAMHS units, registered psychologist, and 'other') on a likert scale where each response was represented by a numeric rating: 1 = No help, 2 = Slightly helpful, 3 = Moderately helpful, 4 = Very helpful, and N/A. A total of 154 participants responded to this question. Registered psychologists (paid for by family or other third party) received the highest average weighting of 2.89 corresponding to a rating of their services as 'moderately helpful'. Weighted averages for both Ministry of Education offices (local office, 2.43 and national office, 2.13) and both Local DHB services (child development unit, 2.49 and CAMHS, 2.34) correspond to a service rating of 'slightly helpful'. 'Other' yielded a weighted average of 2.71 corresponding to a 'moderately helpful' service rating and included Child Youth and Family services (CYFs) and Resource Teacher Learning and Behaviour staff (RTLBs). A full break down of responses by number and percentage is provided in Table E1 (Appendix E).

Inspection of skewness, kurtosis, and Shapiro-Wilk statistics indicate that the assumption of normality was not supported across these groups. Most of the ratings were moderately or mildly skewed and kurtotic. Additionally, the Shapiro-Wilk statistic was significant at the .05 level across each of the groups suggesting that the distribution was not normal across any of the groups. Due to these findings, the median may be a more useful measure of central tendency for this data set. Despite a change in measurement metric, it is apparent that respondents rate both Ministry of Education service providers and both DHB service providers as ‘slightly helpful’. While registered psychologists and other service providers are rated as ‘moderately helpful’. A summary of the numeric ratings for the helpfulness of each service is provided in Table 5 below.

Table 5

Participant Ratings of the General Helpfulness of Psychological Service Providers

| Service | <i>M</i> Rating | Median | <i>SD</i> | <i>n</i> |
|---|-----------------|--------|-----------|----------|
| Registered Psychologist | 2.89 | 3 | 1.04 | 46 |
| Other | 2.71 | 3 | 1.01 | 21 |
| Local DHB (child development unit) | 2.49 | 2 | .85 | 53 |
| Ministry of Education (local office) | 2.43 | 2 | 1.01 | 81 |
| Local DHB (CAMHS) | 2.34 | 2 | 1.00 | 58 |
| Ministry of Education (national office) | 2.13 | 2 | 1.12 | 32 |

n = 154

Research Question 3. *What are the barriers to educational psychology services in New Zealand?*

Research question three aimed to identify what teachers perceive to be the greatest barriers to educational psychology services in New Zealand. To

answer research question 3, participant responses from questions 32 and 33 in the survey were analysed. Across the two questions, the most commonly identified barrier was insufficient funds for services from district administration.

Question 32 required participants to rate factors that act as barriers to educational psychology services on a likert scale where each response was represented by a numeric rating: 1 = Not a barrier, 2 = Slight barrier, 3 = Moderate barrier, 4 = Significant barrier, 5 = Extreme barrier, a final option of N/A = I have not personally experienced this as a factor was also provided. A summary of the numeric ratings for each barrier is presented in Table 6. A full break down of responses by number and percentage is provided in Table F1 (Appendix F). Excluding 'other', all items had a minimum numeric rating of 1 and a maximum numeric rating of 5. Two items received mean numeric ratings that corresponded to a 'significant barrier': insufficient funds for services from district administration (weighted average 4.32) and shortage of educational psychologists (3.81). The remaining items received mean numeric ratings corresponding to a 'moderate barrier'.

Table 6

Participant Ratings of Barriers to Educational Psychology Services in New Zealand

| Barrier | <i>M</i> Rating | <i>SD</i> | <i>n</i> |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|----------|
| Insufficient funds | 4.32 | .95 | 143 |
| Shortage of educational psychologists | 3.81 | 1.21 | 122 |
| Administrative process | 3.25 | 1.21 | 148 |
| Too many high need students | 3.13 | 1.38 | 150 |
| Personal unawareness of services | 3.10 | 1.22 | 159 |
| Lack of knowledge of referral process | 3.10 | 1.29 | 158 |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|------|------|-----|
| Insufficient parental support | 2.88 | 1.31 | 145 |
| Other | 4.75 | .46 | 8 |

The 'other' category received a mean numeric rating that corresponded to an 'extreme barrier', however due to the small number of responses, this item was not deemed comparable to the other items. Despite this decision, the comments section found a small number of participants chose 'other' to voice their concern with the Ministry of Education. Participant responses include: *"reluctance of local MoE to actually engage face to face with students"*, *"not enough suitably qualified and experienced psychologists to do the job adequately in schools via MoE"*, and *"service over-subscribed. Criteria within the MoE is too great- school [is] just left to sort things out themselves"*. A number of respondents made reference to timeliness of services acting as a barrier to services: *"inability to access [psychological] help quickly and easily"*, and *"timely interventions"*. While other participants suggest school support and personal development are barriers to these services. One participant commented that a *"lack of belief that it will make a difference"* was a genuine barrier to educational psychology services.

The top three barriers to educational psychology services were identified through ascertaining the percentage of respondents that ranked each of the services as first, second, and third on question 33. Participant responses can be seen in Table 7. The top three most commonly ranked items, as determined by the highest percentage of respondents ranking it in their top three, are: insufficient funds for services from district administration (19.21%); a personal unawareness of the psychological services that educational psychologists can provide (15.74%); and an insufficient understanding of referral process to

psychological services (15.05%). Answers from those participants who selected 'H – Other' as a barrier to educational psychology services include: “*uncertainty of success*”, “*processing time between referral and acceptance*”, “*student ‘not bad enough’ to receive help (criteria)*”, and “*insufficient support from school SENCO*”. A number of responses were deleted from final analysis due to either a lack of clarity in response (selecting more than three in a category) or due to participants responding with the same barrier for each category. Although such responses were not included in the below analysis they are important to acknowledge. Two participants answered with all 'G – Shortage of educational psychologists' and one with all 'D – insufficient funds' suggesting a strong opinion on the matter in favour of those barriers.

Table 7

Participants' Top Three Ranked Barriers to Educational Psychology Services

| Barrier | % Ranked in Top 3 | % Ranked 1 | % Ranked 2 | % Ranked 3 |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Insufficient funds | 19.21 | 20.83 | 22.22 | 14.58 |
| Personal unawareness of services | 15.74 | 31.25 | 5.56 | 10.42 |
| Lack of knowledge of referral process | 15.05 | 9.03 | 26.39 | 9.72 |
| Too many high need Students | 14.58 | 13.19 | 17.36 | 13.19 |
| Shortage of educational psychologists | 13.43 | 14.58 | 11.11 | 14.58 |
| Administrative process | 10.65 | 5.56 | 7.64 | 18.75 |
| Insufficient parental support | 9.26 | 5.56 | 9.03 | 13.19 |
| Other | 2.08 | 0.00 | 0.69 | 5.56 |

n = 144

Research Question 4. *What are the frequently identified psychological needs of children in New Zealand schools?*

Research question 4 aimed to explore what the frequently identified psychological needs of New Zealand school children are. To answer this question participant responses from questions 25 and 26 were analysed first, followed by responses to question 27. Over 90% of respondents report teaching a student that they perceived as having either a serious educational concern or a mental health concern in the last year. The most commonly reported concern amongst participants was learning difficulties.

Question 25 asked participants if, “since the beginning of 2015 until today”, they have taught a student with what they perceived to be a serious educational concern in need of specialist assessment, to which 90.85% ($n = 149$) of participants responded ‘yes’. Question 26 asked participants if, “since the beginning of 2015 until today”, they have taught a student with what they perceived to be a mental health concern to which 94.51% of participants ($n = 155$) responded ‘yes’.

Participants were next provided with a list of problems for which children in New Zealand are commonly referred to psychological services and were required to list, in ranked order, those problems that correspond to the three types of student problems they have most commonly experienced in the last year. The top three problems were identified after ascertaining the percentage of respondents that ranked each of the problems as the first, second, and third most experienced problem in the last year. Participant responses can be seen in Table 8. The top three most commonly ranked items, as determined by the highest percentage of respondents ranking it in their top three, are: learning difficulties

(21.80%); anger/aggression (12.58%); and general anxiety (9.85%). Followed closely by familial concerns (9.22%) and continued disobedience (general conduct, talking back, disrespect) (9.01%). All five participants who selected ‘T – Other’ listed a derivative of Autism Spectrum Disorder for their answers.

Table 8

Top Three Ranked Problems Seen in the Student’s in Participants’ Care

| Problem | % Ranked in Top 3 | % Ranked 1 | % Ranked 2 | % Ranked 3 |
|---------------------------|-------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Learning problems | 21.80 | 47.17 | 11.32 | 6.92 |
| Anger/agression | 12.58 | 14.47 | 13.84 | 9.43 |
| General anxiety | 9.85 | 8.18 | 10.69 | 10.69 |
| Familial concerns | 9.22 | 4.40 | 8.81 | 14.47 |
| Continued disobedience | 9.01 | 5.66 | 13.21 | 8.18 |
| ADHD | 7.55 | 3.77 | 8.81 | 10.06 |
| Perceived social concerns | 6.50 | 3.14 | 6.29 | 10.06 |
| Lack of motivation | 4.82 | 2.52 | 4.40 | 7.55 |
| Depression | 3.56 | 0.63 | 6.92 | 3.14 |
| Bullying | 3.35 | 1.26 | 5.03 | 4.40 |
| Trauma | 2.73 | 3.77 | 3.14 | 1.26 |
| Truancy | 2.73 | 1.26 | 1.26 | 5.70 |
| Internalising concerns | 1.26 | 0.00 | 1.26 | 2.52 |
| Eating problems | 1.05 | 0.63 | 1.89 | 1.26 |
| Other | 1.05 | 0.63 | 0.00 | 2.52 |
| Grief or loss | 0.84 | 0.63 | 1.89 | 0.00 |
| Sexuality | 0.84 | 0.63 | 0.63 | 0.63 |
| Self harm | 0.63 | 0.63 | 0.00 | 1.26 |
| Suicidality | 0.42 | 0.63 | 0.63 | 0.00 |

| | | | | |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|
| Substance user | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|

Research Question 5. *Are the psychological needs of New Zealand school children being met?*

An important goal of this study was to identify whether or not teachers believe that the psychological needs of New Zealand school children are being met. To help answer this question, participant responses from questions 22, 23, 24, 19, and 20 were analysed. Findings suggest that unmet educational needs for students are a weekly topic of discussion amongst teachers and that there is not a consensus as to whether psychological services in New Zealand are culturally relevant and responsive or not. Furthermore, from this sample of answers, 13 referrals a year, on average, do not result in a service provision and at least 32 students are not being referred to psychological service providers each year, despite there being a perceived likelihood that they would benefit from such services.

Participants were asked to state how frequently unmet educational needs for students were a topic of discussion in the staffroom or with other members of staff on a likert scale where each response was represented by a numeric rating: 1 = Never, 2 = Once a month, 3 = Once every two weeks, 4 = At least once a week, 5 = Everyday. 164 participants responded (Table 9). The majority of participants (35.98%) discuss the unmet educational needs of their students with other staff members at least once a week while 27.44% disclosed that they discuss the unmet educational needs of their students daily. Question 22 resulted in an average weighted score of 3.62 suggesting that, on average, educational

professionals in New Zealand discuss the unmet educational needs of students at least once a week.

Table 9

Time Spent Discussing the Unmet Educational Needs of Students in School Staffrooms or with Other Members of Staff.

| Frequency | Responses | Percentage |
|----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Never | 10 | 6.10% |
| Once a month | 27 | 16.46% |
| Once every two weeks | 23 | 14.02% |
| At least once a week | 59 | 35.98% |
| Everyday | 45 | 27.44% |
| Total | 164 | |

Question 23 asked participants whether or not they thought educational psychology services provided in New Zealand are culturally relevant, 64.02% answered 'yes' ($n = 105$) and 35.98% answered 'no' ($n = 59$). Question 24 asked participants whether or not they thought educational psychology services provided in New Zealand are culturally responsive, 57.32% answered 'yes' ($n = 94$) and 42.68% answered 'no' ($n = 70$). Separate one-way between groups ANOVA were conducted with ethnicity, gender, age, and years of experience serving as the independent variable. The dependent variable for each analysis was a) cultural relevance and b) cultural responsiveness. A summary of results are presented in Table G1 (Appendix G) and Table H1 (Appendix H). From the eight comparisons, only one ANOVA was statistically significant: Cultural relevance verses age, $F(5, 158) = 3.138, p = .01$. However, Levene's test of

Homogeneity of Variance for this analysis was significant ($F = 11.186, sig = .000$) meaning the assumption of homogeneity of variance was violated. Due to this violation, a more robust test of the equality of means, the Brown-Forsythe test, was conducted. The Brown-Forsythe F-ratio was found to be significant at the .05 level. $F(5, 18.529) = 2.876, p = .043$. Due to the difference in sample sizes, the Hochberg's GT2 post hoc comparison was employed to locate where the difference between groups exists (using an α of .05). Post hoc analyses revealed that school staff aged 35-44 view educational psychology practices in New Zealand as more culturally relevant than school staff aged 55-64 ($sig = .040$). No further significant differences were revealed during post hoc comparisons. A table of multiple comparisons for all age groups is presented in Table I1 (Appendix I).

Participants were also invited to comment following both questions regarding cultural relevance and cultural responsiveness. This section provided some interesting qualitative findings, which were similar to the quantitative results in that no definitive conclusions emerged from this data. A number of participants used the comments section to signal that they were unsure whether services are culturally relevant, for example: *"not sure what cultural services are available"*. Others expressed that they expect services to be culturally relevant, *"I certainly hope they are!"* and that they assume educational psychologists are trained to ensure culturally relevant practice, *"I assume that their training ensures this"*. A theme regarding school locality emerged in this additional comments section with a number of participants making reference to their location to explain their answer, including: *"Unsure as I have not had much experience with these services – too remote and rural"* and *"Yes, from our*

perspective as a South Island rural school". Only one participant voiced concern regarding a lack of cultural relevance citing that they *"have had difficulties with [educational psychologists] not being able to pronounce children's names"*.

Similarly, in the additional comments section following the question of cultural responsiveness, participants predominantly used this section to declare that they were not sure whether educational psychology services in New Zealand are culturally relevant or not. Beyond this theme of uncertainty, participants comments include reference to positive attempts at cultural relevance, *"not always, even with the best of intentions"* and *"some are trying"*, and a lack of cultural responsiveness, *"our school roll is 25% Māori and 15% ESOL – there are no [educational psychology] people available to us that can be as culturally responsive as we need"*.

Question 19 asked participants to list how many children they referred to psychological service providers in the last year that did not receive support. Participants were advised to leave blank if not applicable to them. A total of 47 participants responded to at least one category in this question. A summary of the responses is provided in Table 10 below. At least one child was referred to each of the Ministry of Education (local office), Ministry of Education (National office), Local DHB (child development unit), Local DHB (CAMHS), registered psychologist, or 'other' service providers in the last year but did not receive service support following their referral.

Table 10

Number of Referrals within the Sampled Population that did not Result in Service

Support since the Beginning of 2015 until July 2016

| Frequency | Responses | Total Number | Average Number |
|---|-----------|--------------|----------------|
| Ministry of Education (local office) | 21 | 41 | 1.95 |
| Ministry of Education (National office) | 6 | 7 | 1.17 |
| Local DHB (child development unit) | 17 | 32 | 1.88 |
| Local DHB (CAMHS), | 17 | 37 | 2.18 |
| Registered psychologist | 6 | 18 | 3 |
| Other | 9 | 25 | 2.78 |
| Total | 130 | 160 | 1.23 |

n = 47

Question 20 asked participants to list how many children they did not refer to psychological services despite a perceived likelihood that the child would benefit from such services. Participants were advised to leave blank if not applicable to them. A total of 86 participants responded to at least one category in this question. A summary of the responses is provided in Table 11. On average, four children in the past year were not referred to each of the listed psychological service providers despite participants perceiving that the child would benefit from such services.

Table 11

Number of Children not Referred to Psychological Services Despite a Perceived Likelihood that they would Benefit from such Services

| Frequency | Responses | Total Number | Average Number |
|---|-----------|--------------|----------------|
| Ministry of Education (local office) | 42 | 284 | 6.76 |
| Ministry of Education (National office) | 13 | 39 | 3 |
| Local DHB (child development unit) | 27 | 142 | 5.26 |
| Local DHB (CAMHS), | 34 | 138 | 4.06 |
| Registered psychologist | 33 | 111 | 3.36 |
| Other | 8 | 25 | 10.88 |
| Total | 157 | 739 | 4.70 |

n = 86

Further Comments

A number of key themes pertaining to the perceptions teachers have regarding the nature of educational psychology services in New Zealand have been identified in the 'further comments' question data set. Prevalence of a theme was determined by counting the number of different participants who either implicitly or explicitly expressed the theme across the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The most prevalent theme that emerged in this data set was service provision failures with 43 data points aligning with this theme. Other themes captured include: unfamiliarity with educational psychology; a desire for a more systems-level approach; and the increasing needs of students.

Service Provision Failures. The most common theme occurring throughout the 'further comments' section centered on service provision. Seven sub-themes contributed to this overall theme, the most dominant of which is that

services are insufficient for need (13): *“[there is] not enough suitably qualified and experienced psychologists available to schools via the Ministry of Education to support staff, students, and whānau”*. Accessibility to services (10) encompasses issues of, timeliness: *“many students who have been referred do not receive the support required in time to be useful”*; locality: *“rural schools often miss out and feel isolated”*; and process: *“we can never access anything suitable when we need them”*. There was a lot of synergy between issues of insufficiency and accessibility to warrant their inclusion under the umbrella theme of service provision failures: *“[we need] more trained providers to cover not only high population areas but also the geographically challenged rural areas”*.

Respondents expressed their frustration regarding the criteria for service (6) suggesting that, *“the criteria to access psychological services is becoming more and more difficult”* Service criteria is forcing schools to *“prioritise”* despite having increasing numbers of students *“who present with very complex needs”*.

Dissatisfaction and disillusionment with the quality of service received when able to access it was vocalized by a number of respondents (6), aligning with the insufficiencies of service: *“poor quality psychologists and fragmented and sparse support”* with one respondent suggesting that, *“the quality of the service needs to be reviewed (...) the psychologist needs to bring more expertise to the situation than the school staff can provide themselves”*. Additional categories within this theme make reference to issues in funding: *“grossly underfunded”* and interagency communication: *“we get shuffled between agencies that don’t communicate”*.

Knowledge of Educational Psychology. This theme contains two levels: explicit ignorance (8) and implicit ignorance (6). A number of respondents used

the 'further comments' section to make note of their own ignorance towards the field of educational psychology: *"I am totally unaware of how to refer", "I don't know anything about services available to our school at all"*. Two participants commented explicitly regarding their knowledge of educational psychology: *"(...) my ignorance despite working in a school"* and, *"I have a major ignorance of this whole area"*. The category of implicit ignorance encompasses those comments that contain information revealing a lack of a knowledge of the role or discipline of educational psychology: *"my experience is that they are fixated with addressing the ecological issues at school rather than trying to identify and address the psychological issues the students present. It presumes the problem is with the teacher/school and often it is not"*.

Mental Health Needs of Students. A recurring theme throughout the 'further comments' section was the increasing numbers of issues students are presenting with and the inability of schools to adequately support these needs (12): *"more and more student are presenting with issues related to mental health every year"*. Respondents indicate that, *"life is getting harder and harder for kids of the current generation"* and that schools *"lack the skill and expertise"* to support these students who are struggling to learn as a result of *"extreme stresses", "anxiety", "social pressures", "family breakdown", "poverty", and "lack of parenting skills"*. With one respondent summarising that, *"to be frank, it needs to be sorted out. Children are entering our education settings with more and more problems. I hope this survey helps in some [way] but things need to be done and changed"*.

Desire for a Systems-Level Approach. In conjunction with the explicit expression of the increased need for psychological support in response to the

increasing number of issues students are presenting with, this theme encompasses data that expresses an implicit desire for an increase in systems-level services (10). One participant states that, *“it is the larger number of other children that suffer from learning disabilities, anxiety, behavioural problems, attachment issues and struggling families that are of a huge concern because they need more help than schools can give”*. This sentiment is supported by another participant who suggests that a large number of students are *“struggling to learn because of extreme stresses in their lives and what they have been born into”*, further expressing: *“how schools are supposed to just educate children without taking into account all the other needs these children have is impossible”*.

While one participant suggests that *“teachers need training to deal with behavioural issues”*, a larger number of respondents refer to a need for not just school-wide but community-wide education and awareness to better support all learners: *“advice and information needs to be provided around both mental and physical health (...) to enable children to feel safe and supported”*. One participant concludes that, *“teachers, parents, and kids all need more help than ever and it would be good for this to be recognised”*.

Other. Two categories were not included under the final themes, or as a theme on their own, due to insufficient data points to justify recognising them as an overarching theme. However, it is worth acknowledging that a number of participants made reference to their appreciation of psychologists who have a background in teaching or at the very least who have competency and knowledge of the realities of working in a school: *“If psychologists have some idea or recent background in teaching they know what is realistic and what is not”*. Additionally, it is worth noting that the feedback was not all negative, in fact a

number of participants explicitly voiced their appreciation of the services they have received from educational psychologists (5): *“The service that we have received, when a referral has been accepted, has been excellent. Insights and expertise offered is on a different level”*. Although lacking in support, comments regarding psychologist knowledge of school domains and demands and positive perceptions of educational psychologists remain relevant and interesting both in their own right and in relation to the topic of this study.

Deleted Responses

Having been deemed as non- or in- complete responses, the data set from 103 participants was deleted. Prior to deletion, primary analyses were conducted to find out whether or not there was a pattern to cessation of participation. Basic summary data provided by Survey Monkey analysis show that a large proportion ($n = 86$) of participants lost interest at question 16, ‘Since the beginning of 2015 until today, to which of the following services have you sent referrals for children?’ It becomes clear from visual analysis of patterns of participation in successive questions that these first 86 participants genuinely dropped out of the questionnaire. By question 28, ‘How would you rate your own knowledge of the role of educational psychologists?’, the 103 participants who would come to be deleted from further analyses ceased to answer any additional questions.

Perhaps of note are the following additional response patterns recognised throughout this stage of data analysis. Questions 19 and 20, enquiring as to the number of children referred to specific psychological services who did not receive support and the number of children perceived as needing psychological

services who were not referred (respectively) were the most skipped questions in the survey. 204 participants skipped question 19 and 167 skipped question 20. Such patterns indicate either methodological error in construction of the measurement instrument, i.e., question development (Punch, 2014) or errors related to cognitive theory such as comprehension of the question, retrieval from memory of relevant information, or an inability to match a response to the categories given by the survey question (Willis, 2004).

Discussion

The following discussion will explore findings from the current study alongside international trends. Through the synthesis and evaluation of the data that has emerged, it is hoped that the current study will contribute to both the local and international conceptualisation of educational psychology. The overall pattern of results indicate that the majority of teachers in New Zealand have minimal understanding of the role of educational psychologists, that access and funding to psychological services is insufficient for the ever-increasing need of such services, and that when services are provided they are only perceived as slightly helpful. Despite this grim perception of educational psychology in New Zealand, a number of key findings in the current study align with the proposed direction that learning support in New Zealand is heading. This alignment suggests a degree of similarity in the perceptions of teachers and education policy makers in New Zealand but goes no further in suggesting what this might look like for educational psychologists.

Research question 1 explored what teachers in New Zealand consider the role of educational psychologists to be in order to ascertain whether a mismatch

exists between educational psychologists and teacher perceptions of the role of educational psychology. Results relevant to this line of enquiry indicate that the average teacher in New Zealand rates themselves as 'somewhat knowledgeable' regarding what the role of an educational psychologist is and that they consider consultation and collaboration with school staff and parents to develop and coordinate intervention plans to be the most important role of an educational psychologist.

The Ministry of Education in New Zealand employs an ecological approach to intervention, favouring a consultative and collaborative approach to service delivery. Such an approach demands the inclusion of all major players across a child's or young person's environments. Purposeful inclusion of school staff allows for increased opportunity for teaching staff to understand the "depth and breadth" of educational psychology services (Gilman & Gabriel, 2004, p. 282). Teachers are the group of professionals with whom educational psychologists spend the majority of their time (Farrell et al., 2005). It is therefore concerning that nearly 25% of participants in the current study rated themselves as having no knowledge of educational psychology. An exploration into the possible reasons behind this lack of knowledge, perceived or real, will occur later in the discussion.

Similar to the international literature, the more experienced teaching staff in the current study reported higher self-ratings of educational psychology services (e.g., Gilman & Gabriel, 2004). This finding suggests that experience with children who have additional learning needs increases teacher exposure to educational psychologists and therefore increases awareness of the services provided. In opposition to the international literature, comparisons of findings

within the current study and summary findings presented by Bourke and Dharan (2015) and Jimerson et al (2009) suggest that role expectations of educational psychologists in New Zealand are similar between teachers and educational psychologists themselves. Bourke and Dharan (2015) and Jimerson et al (2009) indicate that a point of difference in New Zealand educational psychology practice compared to their international counterparts is the emphasis on and preference for consultation, collaboration, and interviewing over psychological assessments. Teaching staff surveyed in the current study recognised consultation and collaboration as a key services provided by educational psychologists in New Zealand. Consultation and collaboration was also ranked as the top service Educational psychologists should provide.

This finding is perhaps unsurprising given that educational psychology in New Zealand has not had to undergo the same dramatic paradigm shifts as have the majority of the countries from which the international literature originates. Although educational psychology in New Zealand first emerged as an answer to the growing special education requirements, unlike their international counterparts, New Zealand was relatively late in establishing formal educational psychology services and therefore such services were less entrenched within the medical model (Oakland et al., 2005). Additionally, as psychometric assessment is not a prerequisite to service attainment in New Zealand, school staff in New Zealand have presumably had less exposure to the use of psychometric tools in educational psychology and more exposure to ecological assessment tools (Bourke & Dharan, 2015). These findings form the initial basis of the assumption that the disconnect between the service and role expectations of educational psychologists versus teachers in New Zealand is not as large as described in the

literature. However, this assumption will be tested further in the discussion to come.

Participants in the current study were asked to rate the helpfulness of six psychological service providers in New Zealand (Ministry of Education - local office, Ministry of Education - national office, local DHB child development unit, local DHB CAMHS unit, registered psychologist paid for by family or other third party, and other). Each service provider was found to be at least 'slightly helpful', with registered psychologists receiving the highest rating of 'moderately helpful'. However, these results need to be considered alongside the finding that over half of the participants report having had little to no contact with educational psychologists in the past year and over a third report that their school has not engaged in the services of an educational psychologist in the past year. These findings align with Alport's idea of contact hypothesis: that the frequency of contact time with educational psychologists appears to be positively related to their degree of helpfulness as perceived by school staff (cited in Gilman & Medway, 2007). Therefore, the overall 'slightly helpful' rating educational psychology services received may be, at least partially, a result of infrequent contact with such services.

A number of qualitative reports throughout the current study add support to the above findings. Similar to the quantitative summary that school staff perceive private psychologists as more helpful than Ministry provided psychologists, a number of participants remark on the variability of Ministry help. Comments from participants tend to favour the services of private psychologists compared to Ministry provided services, with one participant explaining that they "*have found private psychological services exceptional*

compared to what has been Ministry provided in the past". There is a somewhat negative feeling regarding the quality of the services provided by the Ministry with one participant stating that, *"information/help given has been pretty below par"* and another suggesting that, *"the quality of the service needs to be reviewed"*. Overall, the qualitative reports suggest that quality of services is impacting on the perceived helpfulness of Ministry-provided services. Additionally, a number of participants made direct comment to their own ignorance regarding educational psychology, for example: *"as a general staff member, classroom teacher, I'm of the understanding that no one knows who they are, or what they do, or how to use them"*. These findings add support to Farrell et al's (2005) assertion that if educational professionals do not understand the role and function of educational psychologists then they cannot value their help.

A degree of cognisance was revealed within the participants surveyed regarding how their lack of personal awareness of educational psychology services may act as a barrier to accessing these services. Participants rated personal unawareness as a 'moderate barrier' and, when asked to rank their top three perceived barriers to educational psychology services, nearly a third of participants ranked personal unawareness as the number one barrier. Comments from participants requesting a need for *"more awareness of what these services are, what they provide, [and] how they can support teachers, caregivers, and whānau"* and *"more education for school staff regarding locally available services"* indicate that their ignorance of this area is not intentional. These findings suggest that development and support both internally and from the Ministry would go a long way to increase school staff knowledge and awareness of educational psychology and the services provided, thereby

increasing accessibility to such services for students. Such education and support would likely see a favourable increase in the perceived helpfulness of such services (Farrell et al., 2005).

Despite the greatest percentage of participants ranking their personal unawareness as the number one barrier to accessing educational psychology services as well as personal unawareness of services being rated as a 'moderate barrier', it was not identified as the greatest barrier to services overall. Across the quantitative questions directly measuring barriers to service, insufficient funds for services measured as the greatest barrier to services. The barrier 'insufficient funds' was one of only two barriers to receive a rating equating to a 'significant barrier'. Additionally, insufficient funds received the highest percentage of respondents ranking it within their top three barriers to educational psychology services. Further support for the perception that insufficient funds act as a considerable barrier to educational psychology services in New Zealand was identified during qualitative analysis with a number of participants making reference to services being "*grossly underfunded*".

The second barrier to receive a rating equating to a 'significant barrier' was a shortage of educational psychologists. A shortage of educational psychologists being a barrier and a genuine concern of teaching staff is not a surprising finding in the current study given that workload, case expectations, and a shortage of educational psychologists are running themes throughout the literature (Bourke & Dharan, 2015; Cummings et al., 2004; Edwards et al., 2007; Farrell et al., 2005; Farrell et al., 2007; Gilman & Medway, 2007; Jordan et al., 2009; Kelly & Grey, 2000; Reinke et al., 2011). Participants both from within the current study and the international literature make additional reference to the

idea that the lack of psychologists in school environments negatively impacts on the services received (Farrell et al., 2007; Gilman & Gabriel, 2004). Such as one participant in the current study who states that educational psychologists “*are spread too thinly and can’t provide depth of service*”. Despite a predominantly pessimistic view on the quality and quantity of services received, a handful of remarks in the current study such as, “*they are overworked and hamstrung to a certain extent and sometimes they don’t really understand how secondary schools work but they try their best*”, suggests that perhaps the negative view of educational psychologists and their services stems less from an appreciation of the value of their role and more from systemic and/or bureaucratic failures that are out of educational psychologists’ hands.

The top two barriers identified by school staff in the current study are mirrored in Jimerson et al’s (2009) review of educational psychology in New Zealand. The educational psychologists surveyed by Jimerson et al identified a lack of money to properly fund services (31%) as the greatest challenge to service delivery. Further challenges jeopardizing service delivery identified by Jimerson et al’s participants relate to work pressures: including professional burnout (25%) and a loss of experience from the profession (25%). For New Zealand, the considerable alignment in the top two barriers/challenges identified in both Jimerson et al’s study and the current study arguably closes the gap further on the assumed disconnect between teacher and educational psychologist perceptions.

An important qualitative theme to emerge was that schools are not coping with an increase in student needs. A real concern in this regard appeared in the emotive responses from participants, such as the participant who states, “*we are*

seeing greater numbers of children (...) who are struggling to learn because of extreme stresses in their lives and what they have been born into. How schools are supposed to just educate children without taking into account all the other needs these children have is impossible” and another who claims that, *“it is the larger number of other children who suffer from learning disabilities, anxiety, behavioural problems, attachment issues and struggling families that are of a huge concern because they need more help than schools can give”*. These findings suggest a need for educational psychologists to promote their services more proactively at schools within their service areas as well as advocating for further funding to support schools in serving the increasing number of students requiring additional help (Reinke et al., 2011).

Additional aims of the current study were to establish the psychological needs of children in today's schools and to ascertain whether teachers believed the psychological needs of New Zealand school children were being met. A number of questions in the current study contribute to this discussion. Not surprisingly, given that the cohort surveyed are school staff who function within an environment concerned with educating students, participants in the current study rated learning difficulties as the problem most commonly seen in children in their care. Perhaps also unsurprisingly, over 90% of participants responded 'yes' to having taught a student with what they perceived to be a serious educational concern requiring specialist assessment in the past year. Furthermore, the unmet educational needs of students are, at the least, a weekly topic of discussion amongst the educational professionals surveyed in the current study. Participants were also questioned on the mental health of their students. 94.51% responded 'yes' to having taught a student what with they

perceived to be a mental health concern in the past year. The highest ranked mental health concerns (in terms of frequency seen in the classroom) identified in the current study were issues relating to anxiety and social concerns. Less common but still ranked highly were issues of motivation and depression.

These are concerning figures and the high number of affirmative responses is reflected throughout a number of related quantitative and qualitative questions throughout the survey. However, what is perhaps most concerning is that, in total, the participants involved in the current study report not referring 739 students onto psychological services despite a perceived likelihood that the student would benefit from such services. As only 86 participants responded to this question this is likely an underestimate of the number of students who are not being referred on for specialist assessment each year in New Zealand. While the aforementioned barriers (lack of personal awareness, funding, and a shortage of educational psychologists) may go some way to explain the number of non-referrals indicated by participants, further comments made by participants throughout the survey offer additional explanations. Other reasons for not referring students on for specialist assessment include: criteria, *“student ‘not bad enough’ to receive help”*; prioritization, *“I feel we have students who present with very complex needs at a rate of about 5-10% and there are simply not the services to cope with this so we are forced to prioritise to worst case scenarios”*; and belief, *“uncertainty of success”*, *“lack of belief that it will make a difference”*.

Currently, children need to match certain criteria or fall into particular categories in order to receive support. It appears that the Ministry’s projected ‘Learning Support’ intends to move away from categories and criteria towards

teaching and support that supports each child's individual potential. While the specifics of these changes to the way students are supported are yet to be specified it is likely that 'Learning Support' will go some way to combat issues of criteria and prioritization. The Ministry has recognised that the "system has become very fragmented" and that "access to support is complicated for parents and schools" (Ministry, 2016e). Part of the revamp of the Special Education system involves earlier and better support for teachers as well as training and professional development, including online information and practical guidelines. While these changes may go some way to mitigate teacher reservations regarding the success of the current intervention system, it is likely that issues of belief may be best attended to through educating school staff in what services are available to them and their students as well as professional development targeting learning and mental health interventions. The Ministry has not announced whether systems-level interventions are a part of their new and improved 'Special Education' system. However, if such interventions were introduced across schools, not only would this be cost-effective but it would also benefit the greatest numbers of students, thereby reducing issues related to criteria and prioritization (Farrell et al., 2007; Herman et al., 2004; Strein, Hoagwood, & Cohn, 2003).

Specific to psychological health and access to services, a lot of similarity can be found between the quantitative and qualitative responses in the current study and the findings in Reinke et al's (2011) study. Reinke et al's top three identified barriers were inadequate funding, inadequate teacher training in dealing with student mental health needs, and a shortage of mental health professionals. In explaining their findings and offering suggestions for future

directions Reinke et al. draw on the connection between social and emotional wellbeing and potential for academic success (McClelland, Morrison, & Holmes, 2000). They propose that future researchers and educational psychologists may wish to engage in supporting teachers in integrating social-emotional lessons into the classroom. Reinke et al. further suggest that supporting teachers in engaging with issues of social and emotional wellbeing within their classrooms may also aid in bridging the gap between the educational and mental health systems.

Findings in the current study support Reinke et al's position and further corroborate previous research indicating that students in today's classrooms are presenting with increasingly diverse needs (Hawkin, 2006; Herman, Merrell, Reinke, & Tucker, 2004; Ross, Powell, & Elias, 2002; Suldo, Friedrich, & Michalowski, 2010). Throughout the current study's results there was a recurring theme amongst participants regarding the inability of schools to support the increasing numbers of students who are presenting with mental health and educational concerns. Additionally, as both quantitative and qualitative results indicate, it is not merely specific learning difficulties that teachers identify as concerns in their classrooms. Teachers also identify difficulties related to mental health that are impacting on the education of their students. Comments including: *"more and more students are presenting with issues related to mental health every year"* and *"the larger number of other children that suffer from learning disabilities, anxiety, behavioural problems, attachment issues and struggling families are of a huge concern because they need more help than schools can give"* are representative of this theme that schools,

parents, and students need increasing help to support the rising needs of our learners.

As difficulties that traditionally fall under the category of mental health are known to act as barriers to positive engagement in school life (Weare, 2000) it is hard to find the merit in the current bureaucratic dichotomisation of mental health and education (Farrell, 2007; Gott, 2003; Meldrum, Venn, & Kutcher, 2009; Suldo et al., 2010). Davis and Koroloff (2006) remark that, although categorisation of health services is designed to help providers prioritise and make decisions, the dichotic organisation of the mental health and educational health systems is an example of “categorising a developmental process which is in fact a continuous phenomenon” (p.71). Davis and Koroloff’s position summarises the ecological belief that you cannot provide appropriate and effective care without taking into consideration every variable that impacts on an individual’s functioning (Woolfson, Whaling, Stewart, & Monsen, 2003). As one participant in the current study posited, *“how schools are supposed to just educate children without taking into account all the other needs these children have is impossible”*. What we have at the moment is a system that forces a process, and that process inhibits a truly ecological approach to prevention, intervention and management.

The current study failed to find a consensus on whether or not psychological services in New Zealand are culturally responsive and culturally relevant. Specifically, only 57.32% of participants believe educational psychology services in New Zealand are culturally responsive and 64.02% believe educational psychology services in New Zealand are culturally relevant. The participant commentary in the additional comments section for both of the

culturally responsive and culturally relevant questions mirrored the uncertainty indicated by the quantitative data. However, of concern is the large number of participants who commented, or inferred, that they “don’t know”. This finding suggests that perhaps ‘I don’t know’ (or some derivative of) should have been an answer option in the question itself in lieu of forcing a yes/no answer from participants. It is unclear in what way the high percentage of pākehā respondents may have influenced the uncertainty of results in this section.

Despite this lack of definitive results with regards to teachers’ perceptions of the cultural relevance and responsiveness of educational psychology, it is reasonable to suggest that these findings indicate a failure in the bicultural focus and expectations enforced by both the Ministry and the New Zealand Psychologists Board. This conclusion is drawn from the face-value finding that over one third of participants do not believe educational psychology services in New Zealand are culturally relevant and nearly half of the participants do not believe that services are culturally responsive. Taken collectively, there is a very real concern that there is a lack of culturally appropriate services available to students in New Zealand. Future research should investigate further issues of cultural responsiveness and relevance to ascertain those service areas that require improvement and/or reconsideration.

Having collectively considered the current study’s findings in conjunction with the international literature, this discussion returns to the original assumption that a disconnect exists between teacher and educational psychologist perceptions of educational psychology services in New Zealand. Initial indications suggest that, in contrast to the international literature, there is a degree of alignment between the perceptions of teachers surveyed in the

current study and the perceptions of educational psychologists reviewed throughout New Zealand research. Conversely, this alignment was challenged by the self-reported lack of knowledge expressed by participants regarding educational psychology services in New Zealand. Therefore, the current study cannot unequivocally claim that the presumed disconnect does not exist between teachers and educational psychologists in New Zealand. However, the current study can confidently conclude that there is a concerning disconnect between the services teachers in New Zealand want and need to help their students achieve to their best potential and those services that they are currently receiving.

Limitations

Although a generic email was distributed to the email addresses of schools made public on the Ministry website, an unknown number of participants were recruited through contacts known to the primary investigator throughout the country. Additionally, in one instance, the primary investigator was recognised by a potential participant as an ex-student. This familiarity, either directly or indirectly, to the primary investigator may have biased some responses. Although the vast majority of participants were likely unknown to the primary investigator, there is no way to measure what percentage of participants may have enthusiastically completed and forwarded on the survey to colleagues. There is also no way of measuring the degree to which such familiarity may have influenced overall participation and ratings.

A number of methodological issues act as a limitation in the current study. For example, by allowing participants to select all roles that they assume within their schools, the current study was unable to use role data in comparative

analyses. It would have been interesting and beneficial in regards to both the study itself and to the application of any findings to the wider population had the study been able to, for instance, analyse whether job position effected perception of knowledge. This particular demographics question may have been more functional had it been conceptualised as, “please select your *primary* role within your school”. Had ‘role’ been conceptualised differently in the questionnaire the current study would have been able to contribute to the literature on whether or not there is a difference in perceived knowledge of services and helpfulness of services amongst different school staff in New Zealand.

Additional methodological limitations became evident when looking for patterns in incomplete questionnaires and participant dropout. A large proportion of participants lost interest at question 16 (‘Since the beginning of 2015 until today, to which of the following services have you sent referrals for children?’). Although the way the question was framed was done so in an effort to reduce the number of questions in the survey, it is likely that, based on participant dropout, question 16’s structure was either uninviting or confusing to participants. Asking about each service individually may have been clearer to participants, for example: ‘Since the beginning of 2015 until today, have you sent a referral to your local Ministry of Education Office- yes or no?’ and, in doing so, been more beneficial to the study overall.

Further limitations regarding design and data collection may limit generalisability. The selected method of distribution ensured random and anonymous participation while the demographic questions regarding individual and school characteristics allowed for comparison of results using certain group membership to serve as independent variables. Despite the above, the study is

unable to claim unequivocally that each region in New Zealand was fairly represented. This is important in New Zealand as service availability, especially those provided by the Ministry, is seen to be highly variable depending on location (*“rural schools often miss out and feel isolated”*). For example, there is half the amount of special education and district offices in the South Island compared to the North Island. Arguably, as roughly 25% of the population resides in the South Island and the remainder resides in the North, the number of district offices may fairly represent the population split (Statistics New Zealand, 2015). However, it is hard to say, given the geography of the South Island, that adequate services are able to reach the population. Future research may wish to explore the perceptions of educational psychology services in New Zealand by closer analysis of locality and what part location plays in the accessibility to and quality of services.

Implications for Practice and Future Directions

The needs of schools, teachers, and students are changing and it is important that educational psychology urgently adapts to these changing needs. Educational psychology has been championed in the past in regards to its adaptability as a discipline in the face of the evolving philosophies of education. Concerning however, is the finding that for over two decades researchers have been contending the need for a revision of the practice of educational psychology to align more closely to the role expected by consumers and the increasing needs of students (Braden et al., 2001; Herman, Merrell et al., 2004; Sheriden & Gutkin, 2000; Ross et al., 2002). These same researchers contend that educational psychologists continue to practice in a reactive manner that, despite being

conducted under an assumed ecological model, involves engaging in assessment at the individual level. Although non-traditional roles for educational psychologists are being championed in the literature and in projected policies, the deliberate employment and targeted expansion of such roles for educational psychologists is yet to emerge in their training.

To promote effective support of services in schools, both teachers and educational psychologists could receive additional training in each other's respective areas. Both individual practitioners and the Ministry as a whole could be more proactive in the education of schools and teachers regarding the range of services educational psychologists in New Zealand are able to provide (Ross et al., 2002). Additionally, there is the possibility that educational psychologists could play an effective role in the teaching of teachers. Teachers in the current study and those throughout the literature express a desire to receive professional development and increased support in understanding, recognising, and managing mental illness within their schools (Whitley et al., 2012).

Additional reconceptualisations of the role of educational psychologists may look to ensure targeted training in the principles of schooling, teaching, and the curriculum itself. Knowledge and awareness of the realities of teaching and understanding how schools work will aid educational psychologists in providing services that are realistic and helpful for teachers. As one participant in the current study expressed, "*if psychologists have some idea or recent background in teaching they know what is realistic and what is not*". Although it was not identified as a theme, a number of participants voiced their opinion regarding educational psychologists lack of in-school knowledge. This view adds to the discussion regarding where educational psychologists are located and whether

they are best incorporated into schools. Braden et al (2001) suggest that when psychologists serve just one school it allows for more effective service delivery due to the psychologist having an intimate understanding of the school system within which they are working, and daily contact with both students and teachers – all of which increases the likelihood of effective and efficient service delivery. These findings add to the discussion that there is a scope for the reconceptualisation of the role of educational psychologists within our schools in order to provide greater support for students and staff.

Aligning with the international literature, the current study indicates that there is need for a reconceptualisation of all child-based services in New Zealand. New Zealand's current psychology service provision sees separate silos created for mental health and education when in fact mental health and education are complementary and both can be seen to mediate success in the other (McClelland, Morrison, & Holmes, 2000; Meldrum et al., 2009; Weare, 2000; Whitley, Smith, & Vaillancourt, 2012). Wearne (2000) asserts, "it is vital that those who seek to promote high academic standards and those who seek to promote mental, emotional, and social health realize that they are on the same side, and that social and affective education can support academic learning, not simply take time away from it" (p.5). Fortunately, a shift towards acknowledging the role mental health has in the academic environment is reflected in recent policy and research internationally, including England (DfES, 2004), Scotland (SEED, 2005), Canada (Teen Mental Health, 2012), and Australia (Jorm et al., 2010). These policy and research initiatives work to promote emotional, social, and psychological wellbeing within schools and are shown to have positive

results both in the professional development of teachers and in the academic success and psychological wellbeing of students.

As shown in the literature, school-wide interventions that focus on mental health generate positive results across other areas including academic success and general school spirit (Corcoran & Finney, 2014). In New Zealand, the government initiative Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) is heading in a similar direction providing students and schools with the skills and tools to develop a positive learning environment. The reasoning behind PB4L is that positive behaviour is a prerequisite to academic engagement and achievement. Based on the Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports framework implemented in thousands of schools across America, PB4L offers a number of programmes and tools for individuals, groups, teachers, schools, parents, and whānau to support positive behaviour. PB4L School-Wide specifically is a long-term approach to help schools develop a culture that supports positive behaviour and learning across the whole school. Currently, there are over 600 schools in New Zealand employing School-Wide (Te kete ipurangi, n.d.). International research indicates that despite variability in the effectiveness of school-wide positive behaviour schemes amongst schools, there are notable decreases in behavioural problems (Savage, Lewis, & Colless, 2011). Although PB4L does not directly target mental health in schools it is a local example that shows school-wide interventions can result in positive transformations across students, staff and the school as a whole.

Ministry employed educational psychologists are the current implementers of PB4L in schools across New Zealand but Brown (2010) wants to see educational psychologists in New Zealand play a bigger role in the

“professional development and the advancement of educational achievement and social wellbeing for all students and teachers”. As previously referenced, a plethora of studies contend that educational psychologists are in the best position to implement school-wide preventative strategies that provide emotional, social, and behavioural support for all students (Hawkin, 2006; Ross et al., 2002; Strein et al., 2003; Suldo et al., 2010). In order to do this, there needs to be greater legislative, training, and practice alignment with the ecological model than there currently is. This would require a reduction in individual-level work and an increase in systems-level work by educational psychologists (Kaufman, 2013). Considering both the literature and the current study report on concerns of the stretched workload of educational psychologists in New Zealand and the restrictive capacity of working one-on-one, an increased systems-level approach would likely be received favourably by New Zealand teachers and schools (Braden et al., 2001; Curtis, Grier, & Hunley, 2004; Edwards et al., 2007; Farrell et al., 2005; Reinke et al., 2011; Strein et al., 2003).

In a truly ecological sense, the role of educational psychologists in prevention should extend beyond the school and into the community (Herman et al., 2004). Results from the current study also indicate that teaching staff in New Zealand not only desire greater involvement school-wide but also that there needs to be greater collaboration between educational psychologists, schools, and local communities. One participant expressed that there are “*some great people working in this area and when schools work within their local community I think greater success is achieved*”. The current focus on individual casework however does not, directly, allow for wider involvement within schools let alone wider communities.

The literature continues to champion a reconceptualisation of the role of educational psychologists to better align with the ecological model. Such a reconceptualisation needs to include more than simply changing the way educational psychologists act, it requires a change in the way services are both delivered and received. Statutory changes and legislative focuses in the United Kingdom following the implementation of the Every Child Matters campaign has seen educational psychologists become more community focused. The shift towards providing services in the community has led to the more effective delivery of services to the benefit of more children (Farrell et al., 2007). It is not just the literature acknowledging the benefits of working proactively with the school population instead of reactively with individuals (Braden et al., 2001; Strein et al., 2003). Teachers within the current study explicitly expressed the urgent need for greater support for schools, students, parents, and whānau in addressing the increasing needs of our children. As one participant so eloquently stated: *“we have the makings of a generation of children that will struggle with the realities of life unless there is more support for them to be self managing, motivated, resilient, and engaged in their learning and community”*. The level of affect expressed throughout the current study indicates just how important this conversation is and, critically, just how important it is that changes are made to address the increasing needs of our learners.

Although the specific focus of the current study was regarding school staff perceptions of educational psychology in New Zealand, both local and international understanding of the status of educational psychology in New Zealand would benefit from future research that investigates and compares the perceptions of other groups including educational psychologists, parents,

students themselves, and even policy-makers. Gaining insight from each of these groups will not only help in creating a clear image of what educational psychology in New Zealand looks like but also will allow for greater insight into service-needs gaps and insight into areas that would benefit from attention and development.

Conclusion

The level of affect shown in the written responses and commentary from participants throughout this study shows how important this conversation is. Educational psychology both as a discipline and an occupation has continued to evolve internationally since its inception during the early 1900s. Educational philosophy as well as both domestic and international policy and expectations appear closely aligned to, if not directly influential in, the establishment of and ensuing developmental trends in educational psychology. It is possible that current policies and models in New Zealand have created an image of educational psychology that does not align with the expectations of those receiving their services. The current study suggests that the increasingly dominant ecological perspective has triggered a philosophical shift towards providing services that will benefit all learners but that such views are not supported by current legislation and funding. The Ministry's new 'Learning Support' initiative looks to take a further step towards the ecological model and as such will likely require another reconsideration of the vision for educational psychology - what exactly this will look like appears to still be up for discussion.

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Appendix A

Invitation to Participate

Introduction

Tēnā koutou katoa

Ko Ruapehu te māunga

Ko Manawatu te awa

Ko Williams me Balmer te whānau

Nō Aorangi ahau

Ko Olivia tōku ingoa

The current research is being conducted by Olivia Williams as part of the requirements for completion of the Master of Educational Psychology with Massey University. The research involves an online survey of current teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand. This research aims to learn more about the nature of educational psychology in New Zealand schools by collecting information regarding teacher knowledge and perceptions of educational psychology services in their current school. The survey results will provide important quantitative and descriptive data that will contribute to a local understanding of school-based psychological services in New Zealand.

This research is being conducted under the supervision of Dr Judith Ansell and Mr Terence Edwards of Massey University, who both have extensive experience in the field of educational psychology. The remainder of this information sheet provides full details on the study as well as contact details for the principal investigator (Olivia Williams) and the two project supervisors, should you have any questions.

Participant Identification and Recruitment

Teachers, Principals, SENCOs, and other school staff members in New Zealand who have contact with students and school psychology services have been invited to complete this online survey on their perceptions of psychological services provided in their schools. Invitations to participate in this survey have been distributed to schools throughout New Zealand to ensure the diversity of New Zealand schools is appropriately covered. It is hoped that the survey will reach as many members of staff from primary, intermediate, secondary, state, integrated, private, urban, and rural schools with varying student populations and decile ratings in order to capture the nature of educational psychology in New Zealand.

You are in no way obliged to take part in this study. Participation is completely voluntary and you can withdraw, without penalty, simply by exiting the survey prior to submitting it at any time. You are also welcome to contact either the primary investigator or either supervisor with questions or queries prior to consenting to participate in the study, or at any stage throughout or after completion of the survey.

Data Management

All responses will be confidential and no recorded data is kept with names or any other identifying information. Only amalgamated and anonymised data will be analysed and reported. If you provide your name, email address, or other identifying information this will be kept confidential and will not be reported.

Once responses are submitted data will be unable to be removed. Data will be stored electronically on a password-protected private computer. This will be securely stored whilst the research is being carried out and after completion of the study the data will be securely sent to my lead research supervisor, Dr Judith Ansell, for storage within the Massey University secure storage facility. Data will be destroyed three years after publication of the researcher's thesis.

Collective data and analyses will be included in a thesis, journal publication, and possibly a conference presentation. You may request a summary of the research findings by indicating so at the end of the study. The summary will be emailed to you at the conclusion of the project.

Project Procedure

If you agree to participate you will need to read all of the information in this information sheet. Using the provided electronic link to access the survey is deemed to imply you consent to participate in the research and agree with the terms of confidentiality, data collections and data reporting as outlined in this information sheet. Participation in this study requires responding to questions online. The length of your participation in this survey is dependent on how you respond to some questions, however, it should take you around 25 minutes to complete.

Risks and Benefits

There should not be any risk to participants undertaking this study beyond those of everyday living. There are no direct personal benefits to participating in this study. However, your involvement will provide important quantitative and descriptive data that will contribute to a local understanding of school-based psychological services in New Zealand and will help to inform discussions to further develop services.

Your Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation.

If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- Ask questions on any aspect of the project at any time, and we will do our best to answer them to your satisfaction.
- As a participant in the study you will provide information on the understanding that any identifying information will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher.

- Withdraw from the study at any time prior to submitting your responses, without giving a reason and without penalty.
- Be given access to a summary of the project findings upon conclusion of the study.

Ethics

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 16/17. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Andrew Chrystall, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, telephone 09 414 0800 x 43317, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.

Contacts and Questions

If you have any questions regarding this project or your rights as a participant please feel free to contact the principal investigator (Olivia Williams) or either of the project supervisors (Dr Judith Ansell and Terence Edwards) using the contact details at the end of this information sheet.

Survey Link

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/F5CJY55>

Thank you for considering participation in this survey.

Principal Investigator

Olivia Williams (MEdPsych Candidate)

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Supervisors

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Educational Psychologist and Lecturer

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Phone: +64 (0)9 212 7024 x 49024

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Appendix B

Teacher Perception of Educational Psychology in New Zealand: Questionnaire

The Nature of Educational Psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand - Teacher's Perspectives

Survey Information and Consent

If you agree to participate you will need to have read all of the information in the information sheet provided. Using the electronic link to access the survey is deemed to imply you consent to participate in the research and agree with the terms of confidentiality, data collections and data reporting as outlined in the information sheet.

This questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw, by cancelling out of the survey at any time, without penalty. Your responses will be confidential and anonymized. Only amalgamated and anonymized data will be used within the Master's thesis to which this study relates and may be used for further publication.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application NOR 16/17. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Andrew Chrystall, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, telephone 09 414 0800 x 43317, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.

Thank you in advance for your time and assistance with this research project.

- Olivia Williams, Massey University

The Nature of Educational Psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand - Teacher's Perspectives**A. Demographic Information**

1. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to answer

2. What is your age?

- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 or older

3. What is your ethnicity? (Please select all that apply.)

- Asian
- Maori
- New Zealand European
- Pacific Island
- Prefer not to answer
- Other (please specify)

4. How many years have you been employed in an educational setting? (including the present year)

- < 5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21-25 years
- > 25 years

5. What is your current role in your wharekura/school? (select all that apply)

- Principal
- Deputy Principal
- Dean
- SENCO
- Classroom teacher
- Special Education teacher
- Other (please specify)

The Nature of Educational Psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand - Teacher's Perspectives**B. Wharekura/School Demographics**

6. What *type* of school are you currently employed at?

- Full primary
- Kura Kaupapa Maori (primary)
- Contributing (Years 1-6)
- Composite (Years 1-13)
- Kura Kaupapa Maori (/Wharekura)
- Intermediate
- Secondary (Years 7-13)
- Secondary (Years 9-13)
- Special School
- Teen Parent Unit
- Other (please specify)

7. What is your *school's* Authority

- State Integrated
- State Not-Integrated
- Private
- Other (please specify)

8. What Gender does your school serve (select all that apply)

- Co-Ed
- Single Sex- Girls
- Single Sex- Boys
- Other (please specify)

9. What is your school's current *decile ranking*?

10. Where is your school *located*?

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural

11. In the last school year, what was your average school role number?

The Nature of Educational Psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand - Teacher's Perspectives**C. Psychological Service Provision**

*****Please answer all questions based on your experiences since the beginning of the 2015 until today*****

12. Since the beginning of 2015 until today, how many times has your school employed Educational Psychologists as members of staff?

- 0
- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5+
- unknown

13. Since the beginning of 2015 until today, how many times has your school board/senior management team considered employing an educational psychologist as a member of staff?

- 0
- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5+
- unknown

14. Since the beginning of 2015 until today, how many times has your school paid for psychological services NOT provided by staff members- either alone or in conjunction with another funding source? (e.g., RTLB or parents)

- 0
- 1-2
- 3-4
- 5+
- unknown

15. Since the beginning of 2015 until today, how often have you had contact with an educational psychologist?

Never/Rarely

Occasionally

Often

Very Frequently



16. Since the beginning of 2015 until today, have you made any referrals to mental health services?

Yes

No

The Nature of Educational Psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand - Teacher's Perspectives

C. Psychological Service Provision (continued)

****Please answer all questions based on your experiences since the beginning of 2015 until today****

17. Since the beginning of 2015 until today, to which of the following services have you sent referrals for children? *(select all that apply)*

- Ministry of Education (Local Office)
- Ministry of Education (National Office)
- Local DHB (Child Development Unit)
- Local DHB (CAMHS)
- Private Psychologist (Paid for by family or other 3rd party)
- CYFS
- Other (please specify)

18. Since the beginning of 2015 until today, how many children did you refer for psychological services to the following sources? *(leave blank for 0 or insert the number 1, 2, or more of students referred to for each service selected)*

| | |
|--|---|
| Ministry of Education (Local Office) | <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> |
| Ministry of Education (National Office) | <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> |
| Local DHB (Child Development Unit) | <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> |
| Local DHB (CAMHS) | <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> |
| Private Psychologist (Paid for by family or other third party) | <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> |
| CYFS | <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> |
| Other | <input style="width: 100%; height: 20px;" type="text"/> |

19. Please rate the general helpfulness of each of the following psychological services providers to your students' educational well-being

| | No help | Slightly helpful | Moderately helpful | Very helpful | N/A |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Ministry of Education (local office) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Ministry of Education (national office eg IWS) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Local DHB (child development unit) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Local DHB (CAMHS) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Registered psychologist (paid for by family or other 3rd party) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other | <input type="radio"/> |

Where you selected "Other" please specify the service provided

20. Since the beginning of 2015 until today, to the best of your recall, how many children did you refer for psychological services from these sources who did NOT receive support? (Leave blank for 0 or insert the number 1, 2, or more of students referred to for each service selected)

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Ministry of Education (local office) | <input type="text"/> |
| Ministry of Education (national office eg IWS) | <input type="text"/> |
| Local DHB (child development unit) | <input type="text"/> |
| Local DHB (CAMHS) | <input type="text"/> |
| Registered psychologist (paid for by family or other 3rd party) | <input type="text"/> |
| Other | <input type="text"/> |

21. Since the beginning of 2015 until today, to the best of your recall, how many children did you PERCEIVE as needing psychological services from the following sources but did NOT refer? (insert the number e.g., 0, 1, or more of students for each response)

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| Ministry of Education (local office) | <input type="text"/> |
| Ministry of Education (national office eg IWS) | <input type="text"/> |
| Local DHB (child development unit) | <input type="text"/> |
| Local DHB (CAMHS) | <input type="text"/> |
| Registered psychologist (paid for by family or other 3rd party) | <input type="text"/> |
| Other | <input type="text"/> |

22. What was your reason for NOT referring children in your school for psychological services despite there being a perceived likelihood that they would benefit from such services? (select all that apply)

- Process was too onerous (e.g., too much paperwork)
- No expectation that the referral would be accepted/actioned
- Issue was really parental responsibility
- Referral problem was being managed in other ways (e.g., teacher aide, counsellor, pastoral care)
- No NZ registered psychologists employed by agencies such as MoE or DHB in the area
- Referral process not understood
- Other (please specify)

23. How frequently are unmet educational needs for students a topic of discussion in your staffroom/with other member's of staff?

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Never | Once a month | Once every two weeks | At least once a week | Everyday |
| <input type="radio"/> |

Comment (optional)

24. Do you think educational psychology services provided in Aotearoa New Zealand are culturally relevant?

Yes

No

Comment (optional)

25. Do you think educational psychology services provided in Aotearoa New Zealand are culturally responsive?

Yes

No

Comment (optional)

The Nature of Educational Psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand - Teacher's Perspectives**D. Referral Issues**

26. Since the beginning of 2015 until today, have you taught a student with what you perceived to be a serious educational concern? (*in need of specialist assessment*)

Yes

No

27. Since the beginning of 2015 until today, have you taught a student with what you perceived to be a mental health concern? (*including but not restricted to: ADHD, ASD, anxiety, depression*)

Yes

No

28. The following is a list of problems for which children in Aotearoa New Zealand are commonly referred to psychological services.

Please list three letters (e.g., a, m, s), in ranked order, that correspond to the three types of student problems you have experienced most in your classroom/school in the last year (*beginning 2015 until today*):

- a. Learning problems
- b. Sexuality
- c. Anger/aggression
- d. ADHD
- e. Bullying (victim or aggressor)
- f. Depression
- g. Suicidality
- h. Self harm
- i. Eating problems
- j. General anxiety
- k. Familial concerns (e.g., divorce, parent mental health)
- l. Continued disobedience (e.g., general conduct, talking back, disrespect)
- m. Perceived internalising concerns (e.g., flat/negative affect, withdrawn behaviours)
- n. Grief or loss
- o. Perceived social concerns (e.g., peer rejection, poor social skills)
- p. Lack of motivation
- q. Substance use
- r. Trauma (e.g., sexual, emotional, physical)
- s. Truancy
- t. Other (please specify in your answer)

1.
2.
3.

The Nature of Educational Psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand - Teacher's Perspectives

E. The Role of Educational Psychologists

29. How would you rate your own knowledge of the role of educational psychologists?

No knowledge Somewhat knowledgeable Pretty knowledgeable Extremely knowledgeable

30. The following is a condensed list of services and supports provided by Educational Psychologists in Aotearoa New Zealand. Select those roles you were aware are provided by Educational Psychologists in NZ (*select all that apply*):

- Consultation and collaboration with school staff and parents to develop and coordinate intervention plans
- Consultation and collaboration with school staff and parents to develop and coordinate curricula suit learners with diverse needs
- Consultation and collaboration with school staff and parents to develop and coordinate environmental changes to support learners with diverse needs
- Counselling (individual, group)
- Crisis intervention
- Psychoeducational Assessment
- Develop and implement Individual Educational Programs (IEPs)
- Develop and implement Individualised family Service Plans (IFSPs)
- Develop and implement Behavioural Management Interventions
- Implement School-wide interventions (e.g., PB4L)
- Develop and implement Tier 3 Interventions
- Staff support and development regarding specific learning needs and mental health topics
- Parent education and support regarding specific learning needs and mental health topics

Comment (optional)

31. Please select whether or not, to your knowledge, an Educational Psychologist has provided the following services in your school since the beginning of 2015 until today

| | Yes (service provided) | No (service not provided) | Unknown |
|---|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Consultation and collaboration with school staff and parents to develop and coordinate intervention plans | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Consultation and collaboration with school staff and parents to develop and coordinate curricula to suit learners with diverse needs | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Consultation and collaboration with school staff and parents to develop and coordinate environmental changes to support learners with diverse needs | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Counselling (individual, group) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Crisis intervention | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Psychoeducational Assessment | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Develop and implement Individual Educational Programs (IEPs) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Develop and implement Individualised family Service Plans (IFSPs) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Develop and implement Behavioural Management Interventions | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Implement School-wide interventions (e.g., PB4L) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Develop and implement Tier 3 Interventions | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Staff support and development regarding specific learning needs and mental health topics | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Parent education and support regarding specific learning needs and mental health topics | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

32. Using the list below, please state the top three most important services an Educational Psychologist should provide in schools *(please list the letters, e.g., a,f,k, in rank order)*

- a) Consultation and collaboration with school staff and parents to develop and coordinate intervention plans/curricula/environmental changes
- b) Counselling
- c) Crisis intervention
- d) Psychoeducational assessment
- e) Develop and implement IEPs
- f) Develop and implement IFSPs
- g) Develop and implement behavioural management interventions
- h) Implement school-wide interventions
- i) Develop and implement Tier 3 interventions
- j) Staff support and development regarding specific learning needs and mental health topics
- k) Parent education and support regarding specific learning needs and mental health topics
- l) Other (please specify in your answer)

1.

2.

3.

The Nature of Educational Psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand - Teacher's Perspectives

F. Barriers to Psychological Services

33. To what extent do you perceive each of the following factors presents as a barrier to Educational Psychology services in Aotearoa New Zealand?

| | Not a barrier | Slight barrier | Moderate barrier | Significant barrier | Extreme barrier | N/A |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| A personal unawareness of psychological services that Educational Psychologists can provide | <input type="radio"/> |
| A lack of personal knowledge regarding the referral process to psychological services | <input type="radio"/> |
| Administrative process (e.g., too much paperwork) | <input type="radio"/> |
| Insufficient funds for services in your school from district administration | <input type="radio"/> |
| Too many students at your school in need of psychological services | <input type="radio"/> |
| Insufficient support from parents during psychological service intervention efforts at your school | <input type="radio"/> |
| Shortage of educational psychologists in your area | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other (please specify) | <input type="radio"/> |

Where you answered "other" please specify

34. Please list three letters (e.g., a, c, g) in ranked order, that correspond to the three barriers to educational psychology services you have experienced most in the last year (beginning 2015 until today):

- a. Unaware of psychological services that Educational Psychologists can provide
- b. Insufficient understanding of referral process to psychological services
- c. Administrative process (e.g., too much paperwork)
- d. Insufficient funds for services from district administration
- e. Too many students in need of psychological services
- f. Insufficient support from parents during psych service intervention efforts
- g. Shortage of educational psychologists in the area
- h. Other (please specify)

1.

2.

3.

The Nature of Educational Psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand - Teacher's Perspectives**F. Other**

35. Is there anything else you think we need to know about psychological services available to your school or to schools in Aotearoa New Zealand generally?

36. Would you like to receive a summary of the results?

Yes

No

The Nature of Educational Psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand - Teacher's Perspectives**F. Other (continued)**

37. You selected 'yes' to receiving a summary of the results. Please provide your email address below.
(Please note: Your email address will be stored separately to your questionnaire responses)

Appendix C

Table C1

One-way Between Groups ANOVA Comparing Group Membership (age, gender, ethnicity, school location and school decile rating) with Perceived Knowledge of Educational Psychology in New Zealand.

| | df1 | df2 | F | Sig. |
|-----------|-----|-----|-------|------|
| Age | 5 | 158 | 1.775 | .121 |
| Gender | 1 | 161 | 1.519 | .220 |
| Ethnicity | 3 | 160 | .314 | .815 |
| Location | 2 | 161 | .224 | .799 |
| Decile | 9 | 151 | 1.067 | .390 |

Appendix D

Table D1

Participant Response Rate for Awareness of Provision of Services Provided by Educational Psychologists in New Zealand

| Service | Responses | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Consultation and collaboration with school staff and parents to develop and coordinate intervention plans | 121 | 73.78% |
| Consultation and collaboration with school staff and parents to develop and coordinate curricula suit learners with diverse needs | 81 | 49.39% |
| Consultation and collaboration with school staff and parents to develop and coordinate environmental changes to support learners with diverse needs | 68 | 41.46% |
| Counselling (individual, group) | 96 | 58.54% |
| Crisis intervention | 94 | 57.32% |
| Psychoeducational Assessment | 82 | 50.00% |
| Develop and implement Individual Educational Programs (IEPs) | 101 | 61.59% |
| Develop and implement Individualised family Service Plans (IFSPs) | 35 | 21.34% |
| Develop and implement Behavioural Management Interventions | 98 | 59.76% |
| Implement School-wide interventions (e.g., PB4L) | 72 | 43.90% |
| Develop and implement Tier 3 Interventions | 35 | 21.34% |

| | | |
|--|----|--------|
| Staff support and development regarding specific learning needs and mental health topics | 57 | 34.76% |
| Parent education and support regarding specific learning needs and mental health topics | 50 | 30.49% |

(*n* = 164)

Appendix E

Table E1

*Participant Ratings of the General Helpfulness of Psychological Service Providers
by Number and Percentage of Response (N/A removed)*

| No Help | | Slightly Helpful | | Moderately Helpful | | Very Helpful | | Extreme barrier | | n |
|---------|-------|------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|--------------|-------|-----------------|-------|----|
| # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | |
| 15 | 18.52 | 32 | 39.51 | 18 | 24.84 | 51 | 22.22 | 16 | 19.75 | 81 |
| 11 | 34.38 | 11 | 34.38 | 5 | 23.60 | 51 | 15.63 | 5 | 15.63 | 32 |
| 6 | 11.32 | 21 | 39.62 | 20 | 29.38 | 39 | 37.74 | 6 | 11.32 | 53 |
| 13 | 22.41 | 21 | 36.21 | 15 | 8.18 | 41 | 25.86 | 9 | 15.52 | 58 |
| 6 | 13.04 | 9 | 19.57 | 15 | 20.63 | 38 | 32.61 | 16 | 34.78 | 46 |
| 2 | 9.52 | 8 | 38.10 | 5 | 0.00 | 2 | 23.81 | 6 | 28.57 | 21 |

| |
|---------------------------------------|
| Items |
| Ministry of Education (Local) |
| Ministry of Education (National) |
| Local DHB (child development unit) |
| Local DHB (CAMHS) |
| Registered Psychologist |
| Other |
| <i>n</i> = 154 |

Appendix F

Table F1

*Participant Ratings of Barriers to Educational Psychology Services in New Zealand
by Number and Percentage*

| Slight barrier | Moderate barrier | | Significant barrier | | Extreme barrier | | N/A | | n | Weighted average |
|----------------|------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|-----|-------|-----|------------------|
| | # | % | # | % | # | % | # | % | | |
| 18.01 | 40 | 24.84 | 51 | 31.68 | 18 | 11.18 | 2 | 1.24 | 161 | 3.10 |
| 14.29 | 38 | 23.60 | 51 | 31.68 | 20 | 12.42 | 3 | 1.86 | 161 | 3.10 |
| 13.75 | 47 | 29.38 | 39 | 24.38 | 25 | 15.63 | 12 | 7.50 | 160 | 3.25 |
| 3.77 | 13 | 8.18 | 41 | 25.79 | 80 | 50.31 | 16 | 10.06 | 159 | 4.32 |
| 14.37 | 33 | 20.63 | 38 | 23.75 | 29 | 18.13 | 10 | 6.25 | 160 | 3.13 |
| 23.60 | 27 | 16.77 | 36 | 22.36 | 18 | 11.18 | 16 | 9.94 | 161 | 2.88 |
| 7.59 | 24 | 15.19 | 33 | 20.89 | 46 | 29.11 | 36 | 22.78 | 158 | 3.81 |
| 0.00 | 0 | 0.00 | 2 | 7.14 | 6 | 21.43 | 20 | 71.43 | 28 | 4.75 |

| Items | Not a barrier | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|-------|
| | # | % |
| Personal unawareness of services | 21 | 13.04 |
| Lack of knowledge of referral process | 26 | 16.15 |
| Administrative process | 15 | 9.38 |
| Insufficient funds | 3 | 1.89 |
| Too many high need students | 27 | 16.88 |
| Insufficient parental support | 26 | 16.15 |
| Shortage of educational psychologists | 7 | 4.43 |
| Other | 0 | 0.00 |

Appendix G

Table G1

One-way Between Groups ANOVA Comparing Group Membership (age, gender, ethnicity, experience) and Cultural Relevance of Educational Psychology Services in New Zealand

| | df1 | df2 | <i>F</i> | <i>Sig.</i> |
|------------|-----|-----|----------|-------------|
| Age | 5 | 158 | 3.138 | .010 |
| Ethnicity | 3 | 160 | .243 | .866 |
| Gender | 1 | 161 | .057 | .812 |
| Experience | 5 | 157 | 1.628 | .156 |

Appendix H

Table H1

One-way Between Groups ANOVA Comparing Group Membership (age, gender, ethnicity, experience) and Cultural Responsiveness of Educational Psychology Services in New Zealand

| | df1 | df2 | <i>F</i> | <i>Sig.</i> |
|------------|-----|-----|----------|-------------|
| Age | 5 | 158 | 1.257 | .285 |
| Ethnicity | 3 | 160 | .239 | .869 |
| Gender | 1 | 161 | .248 | .619 |
| Experience | 5 | 157 | 1.085 | .371 |

Appendix I

Table I1

Hochberg's Post Hoc Comparison of Age and Ratings of the Cultural Relevance of Educational Psychology Services in New Zealand (using an α of .05).

| (I) Age | (J) Age | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. | 95% Confidence Interval | |
|---------|---------|-----------------------|------------|-------|-------------------------|-------------|
| | | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| 18-24 | 25-34 | .076 | .253 | 1.000 | -.67 | .83 |
| | 35-44 | .055 | .244 | 1.000 | -.67 | .78 |
| | 45-54 | -.218 | .243 | .999 | -.94 | .50 |
| | 55-64 | -.250 | .243 | .995 | -.97 | .47 |
| | 65-74 | -.083 | .356 | 1.000 | -1.14 | .97 |
| 25-34 | 18-24 | -.076 | .253 | 1.000 | -.83 | .67 |
| | 35-44 | -.021 | .121 | 1.000 | -.38 | .34 |
| | 45-54 | -.294 | .119 | .191 | -.65 | .06 |
| | 55-64 | -.326 | .119 | .098 | -.68 | .03 |
| | 65-74 | -.159 | .286 | 1.000 | -1.01 | .69 |
| 35-44 | 18-24 | -.055 | .244 | 1.000 | -.78 | .67 |
| | 25-34 | .021 | .121 | 1.000 | -.34 | .38 |
| | 45-54 | -.273 | .100 | .097 | -.57 | .02 |
| | 55-64 | -.305* | .100 | .040 | -.60 | -.01 |
| | 65-74 | -.138 | .279 | 1.000 | -.97 | .69 |
| 45-54 | 18-24 | .218 | .243 | .999 | -.50 | .94 |
| | 25-34 | .294 | .119 | .191 | -.06 | .65 |
| | 35-44 | .273 | .100 | .097 | -.02 | .57 |

| | | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|------|------|
| | 55-64 | -.032 | .097 | 1.000 | -.32 | .26 |
| | 65-74 | .135 | .278 | 1.000 | -.69 | .96 |
| 55-64 | 18-24 | .250 | .243 | .995 | -.47 | .97 |
| | 25-34 | .326 | .119 | .098 | -.03 | .68 |
| | 35-44 | .305* | .100 | .040 | .01 | .60 |
| | 45-54 | .032 | .097 | 1.000 | -.26 | .32 |
| | 65-74 | .167 | .278 | 1.000 | -.66 | .99 |
| 65-74 | 18-24 | .083 | .356 | 1.000 | -.97 | 1.14 |
| | 25-34 | .159 | .286 | 1.000 | -.69 | 1.01 |
| | 35-44 | .138 | .279 | 1.000 | -.69 | .97 |
| | 45-54 | -.135 | .278 | 1.000 | -.96 | .69 |
| | 55-64 | -.167 | .278 | 1.000 | -.99 | .66 |

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.