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**LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT IN EARLY
CHILDHOOD CENTRES: A QUALITATIVE
CASE STUDY**

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Abstract

The provision of education and care for young children in Aotearoa/New Zealand has evolved in a haphazard manner for more than a century, with a marked increase in the number of childcare centres in the last decade. The present study was designed to use the concept of organisational culture to examine leadership and management practices from the perceptions of those involved in childcare centres, to compare these practices with the international literature on leadership and management, and to develop a theoretical model which could inform concepts of quality management in centres of the future. The underlying assumptions, beliefs and values of the organisational culture shared by those within each centre were mostly based on those originally articulated by the founder, and were taught in subtle ways to new staff and parents. An analysis of those assumptions revealed traces of many different historical, political, educational and theoretical influences that formed the image of the child and of childhood held by the adults in each centre. It was argued that the organisational culture and organisational structure of a centre, based on an unconsciously held image of the child and childhood, and influenced by external societal forces and beliefs, shaped the environment in which each child's learning took place. Perceptions of good leadership and management practice were contextually based. The study argues that a model for developing or reviewing practice in centre leadership and management should begin with a conscious consideration of the image of the child and childhood held within the centre. It is claimed that the influence of this image on the ways in which children learn and are taught should be central to leadership and management functions that govern and shape centre structures and activities. At the macro-level, however, our society also must address the hegemonic practices that underpin its treatment of young children so that children are seen as unique, with interests and rights rather than needs, and as competent, rich, strong and powerful.

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GLOSSARY

- Centre:** Used to denote a chartered early childhood organisation that is licensed to provide education and care for children up to the age of five years. In this study, the term excludes “Free” Kindergartens, Ngā Kōhanga Reo, Playcentres and family daycare.
- Centre personnel:** Used in the present study to denote all who work in a centre.
- Community centre:** An early childhood centre that provides sessional and/or full time care and education. It is a not-for-profit organisation, usually operated by a city council and administered by a management committee.
- Corporate/
institution centre:** An early childhood centre that provides sessional and/or full time care and education, and which is part of a corporation or an institution such as a school. While some such centres are open to the public, others are provided for the use of employees of a corporation or employees and students of an institution. It may operate for-, or not- for- profit.
- Curriculum:** In relation to early childhood education, the sum total of the experiences, activities and events, whether direct or indirect, which occur within an environment designed to foster learning and development in early childhood education centres.
- The Education
Review Office
(ERO):** A government organisation established under the 1989 education reforms, responsible for ensuring accountability within schools and early childhood services.
- Grounded theory:** A qualitative method of examining data in order to develop theory. The theory is developed as the researcher systematically examines everyday behaviours or organisational patterns.
- Charter:** An undertaking by an early childhood service (or umbrella organisation) to the Minister of Education that designates the special character of the centre and specifies the steps that the management will take to reach standards beyond licensing requirements.
- DOPs:** The Statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices (DOPs) articulates the government’s expectations of early childhood education providers and specifies guiding principles and goals for the delivery of early childhood education and care.

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| Kaupapa: | Philosophy, principles, plan, purpose. |
| Kindergarten: | An early childhood centre provided under the auspices of the Free Kindergarten movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Usually offers sessional programmes, is a not-for-profit organisation. |
| Licensee: | In relation to a licensed centre, the holder of the license for that centre. |
| Māori | A member of the aboriginal race of Aotearoa/New Zealand; tangata whenua, or people of the land. |
| Manager: | A term often used interchangeably with “supervisor”. A manager can “manage” a centre without early childhood qualifications but must employ a “person responsible” (see below) if government funding is to be obtained. |
| Ministry of Education: | A Government organisation established during the 1989 reforms, responsible for providing policy advice to the Minister of Education, ensuring the implementation of national policies, overseeing the provision of funding, and negotiating charters. |
| Ngā Tikanga Māori: | Māori cultural practices. |
| Ngā Kōhanga Reo: | An initiative aimed at reviving Māori knowledge and cultural practices which has resulted in the development of language nests or centres in which whānau development is nurtured and where young children are immersed in te Reo Māori and ngā Tikanga Māori. |
| NUD.IST: | A computer package designed to aid users in handling non-numerical unstructured data by indexing, searching and theorising. |
| Pakeha | An Aotearoa/New Zealand person of non-Māori descent. |
| Person responsible: | In relation to a licensed centre, a person directly involved in, and primarily responsible for, the day-to-day care, comfort, education, health and safety of the children. The “person responsible” must have 100 licensing points, or, from 2001 if a new appointment, and for all centres from 2005, a Diploma of Teaching (ECE) or equivalent.. |
| Private centre: | An early childhood centre which offers sessional or full time care and education. It is privately owned and operates for profit. |

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| Staff member: | A person employed to work in an early childhood centre who is not the owner, licensee or supervisor. |
| Supervisor: | Term used to denote the person “in charge” of a centre. The position may include the responsibilities of “person responsible”, licensee and/or owner of the centre. Sometimes (outside of this study) the term is used interchangeably with director or manager. |
| Tangata whenua: | Native, aborigine, local person (in Aotearoa/New Zealand, usually a person of Māori ancestry). |
| Te Reo Māori: | Māori language or speech. |
| Te Tiriti o Waitangi: | The Treaty of Waitangi. |
| Te Whāriki: | The mat (also the metaphor of woven mat chosen as the title for the Aotearoa / New Zealand early childhood curriculum document). |
| Whānau: | Members of an extended family and its support network who form a context for the care and guidance of the child. |
| Qualified: | In early childhood teaching terms, a person who holds a Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood Education) or a Teacher Registration Board-approved degree and is a registered teacher or able to apply (having completed an approved programme of teacher education) to become one. |

CHAPTER ONE

This is the place to start, for that is where the children are. For only a hard look at the world in which they live - a world we adults have created for them in large part by default - can convince us of the urgency of their plight and the consequences of our inaction. Then perhaps it will come to pass that, in the words of Isaiah, "A little child shall lead them".

Urie Bronfenbrenner (in Suransky, 1982, p. 165).

Provision for early childhood education and care in Aotearoa/New Zealand has evolved in a haphazard manner for more than a century. The evolutionary process has been influenced by the historically fragmented nature of the sector, societal and legislative changes, changing political climates and, latterly, a quest for quality. Western theories and traditions underpin the evolution of the early childhood movement in this country, except for the development, from the 1980s, of the “total immersion” ngā Kōhanga Reo movement (Jenkins & Ka'ai, 1994).

Against this background, the present study was designed to explore the ways in which a variety of Aotearoa/New Zealand licensed childcare centres (hereafter called centres) are currently led and managed. The aims of the project were to:

- identify leadership and management practices currently used in centres;
- explore participants’ perceptions of the quality of centre leadership and management practices;
- identify what constituted best practice amongst the centres in the study and
- use the above data to develop a theoretical model of quality leadership and management in early childhood education.

So that the aims of the project could be fulfilled, a number of research questions were framed. They were:

- What were the perceptions, ideas and views held by managers, staff and parents about the leadership and management practices in their centre?
- How were early childhood centres managed and led, by whom, and in what ways?
 - a) What did they think was good or excellent and why?
 - b) What did they think needed improvement and why?
 - c) What did they think was needed to lead to improvement?
- Among the centres involved in the study, what appeared to be examples of best practice in leadership and management according to participants' perceptions and the research literature?

It was anticipated that the findings of the research would add to the body of knowledge which informs early childhood practice and the on-going debate over the provision of quality education and care for young children.

Definition of terms

In the early childhood sector, a variety of terms are used for the person who operates a centre on a day-to-day basis, with responsibility for the children who attend. The nomenclature "person responsible" is cited in the Education (Early Childhood Centres) Regulations (Ministry of Education, 1998b) as "a person directly involved in, and primarily responsible for, the day-to-day care, comfort, education, health, and safety, of the children" (p. 2) in a centre. In practice, the person responsible is usually referred to as a supervisor, but the terms manager, director, or owner are also sometimes used. In addition, any of these terms may also refer to combined roles, such as licensee/supervisor or owner/supervisor. In all centres, the licensee is legally responsible to the Ministry of Education (MoE) for all that occurs there but may not necessarily be present in the centre on a daily basis. In this discussion, "supervisor" or "licensee/supervisor" will denote the person responsible, "staff members" will include all persons employed in a centre other than the licensee or supervisor, and "centre personnel" will refer collectively to owner, licensee, supervisor and staff members. This study focuses mainly on the role of the person responsible, or supervisor.

In this introductory chapter, a brief account of the theoretical, political, educational and historical backgrounds and influences that have led to the perceived need for the present study will be described. Included in this overview will be consideration of the views (“images”) of the child and childhood held in Aotearoa/New Zealand, particularly of those who work most closely with children. A brief conceptual overview of the qualitative case study approach, an introduction to the grounded theory method employed and an outline of the organisation of the report will also be provided.

Influences on images of the child and childhood

The traditions and theories of education of Western Europe, brought to this country by European settlers in the nineteenth century, have strongly influenced much of the early childhood movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand. An example were the theories of Plato, whose educational ideas closely connected with his views of an ideal society, and who proposed education for children under six. Rousseau, who was concerned with producing an individual for an existing, imperfect society and an ideal society, was also influential (Cannella, 1997). Dewey, whose focus was on preparing for a democratic society (Moore, 1974), and Pestalozzi, credited with developing pedagogical methods which place the child first (Cannella, 1997), also provided the basis for many threads of influence which can still be seen in the current provision of education and care for children.

In addition, many historical, cultural, social and political changes and climates over centuries have added to the complex tapestry of influences that colour the theoretical understandings held about children. For example, history has seen the denial of the existence of childhood in the world of the ancients and in the medieval period, and its re-emergence in postfeudal Europe (Sommerville, 1982) changed to a “class- and sex- based image in the eighteenth century, to a centering of the family around the child in the nineteenth century” (Suransky, 1982, p. 8). Giddens (1982) suggests too, that sociological contributions from influential writers can be used to illuminate aspects of practice. He included people such as Durkheim, who wrote about a theory of industrial society, and

Marx, who critiqued notions of the capitalist society in his considerations of such influence. Similarly, the psychological model of child development which dominated theoretical considerations (James & Prout, 1997) during the twentieth century still strongly influences current images of the child and childhood in Aotearoa/New Zealand. MacNaughton (1997) describes these images of the child as having “essential and naturally-emerging qualities, rather than...[being] socially-constituted and gendered” (p. 322). Teachers holding the psychological model image, she says, develop their focus on using developmental information about individual children as a base for planning for children’s learning. Dahlberg (2000b) says that this leads to teachers “assessing whether a child is conforming to a set of standards” (p. 23) rather than, for example, using pedagogical power to structure children’s relationships to challenge social constructions.

Sommerville (1982) suggests that adult attitudes, as much as the actual lives of children, determine the status of childhood at any point of the past or present. The present study will take a closer look at ways in which adults who are most closely involved in the provision of early childhood education and care put into practice their images of children and childhood.

More than a century of early childhood services in Aotearoa/New Zealand

Growth in numbers of child places in childcare centres

Provision for the care of young children in childcare centres in New Zealand was, for many years, largely unsupervised, unregulated and uncoordinated (May, 1990). The first licences for childcare centres were not issued until 1961, and the growth in centre numbers was very gradual during the next twenty-five years.

However, societal changes have seen “the large scale entry of women into the paid workforce” (Education Review Office, 1996, p. 3). For example, in 1916, 17.7% of Aotearoa/New Zealand’s women participated in paid work (Department of Statistics, 1990). By 1981, the percentage had increased to 41.9% (Department of Statistics, 1990), and had increased again to 64.8% by 1999 (Statistics New Zealand, 2000). With these

increases came a corresponding growth in the need for full-day childcare. During the past decade, childcare centres have proliferated nationally and now offer more child places than any other early childhood service; 25,701 child places offered in licensed childcare centres in 1983 had increased by 109% to 53,769 places by 1995 (Statistics New Zealand, 1996) and to 68,132 places by 1999 (Education Review Office, 2000a). By comparison, sessional public sector kindergarten places increased by only 17% from 40,340 in 1983 to 47,208 in 1995 (Statistics New Zealand, 1996) and decreased to 45,993 by 1999 (Education Review Office, 2000a). In terms of numbers of children being catered for, and of the resultant rapid growth in numbers of childcare centres, it was considered timely that the present study should focus on leadership and management practices in those centres.

Legislative changes and the search for quality

In addition to the growth in centre numbers, many legislative changes have occurred. Prior to 1986, early childhood issues were the responsibility of the Department of Social Welfare. Childcare was the term used to describe services for young children, and the term still remains embedded in the legislation of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The philosophy of childcare was to keep children safe from harm; usually physical harm, thought to be mostly to do with physical health and nutrition (Smith & Swain, 1988). Another influence on the way childcare was viewed was to do with the cult of domesticity (Cook, 1985), also known as the construction of motherhood (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999). This supported the view that women should provide all the care their young children needed at home in the private sphere as opposed to the public sphere of a capitalist economy (Cox, 1987). In the early part of the twentieth century, provision for childcare was described by Cook (1985) as being

... for those women who, by some misfortune, were unable to rear their children within acceptable norms. This was a model that became a blueprint for success, but the connotations of charity and family dysfunction have been a stumbling block for childcare in trying to break into the mainstream of other early childhood services. (p. 18)

In 1986, the administration and funding of the early childhood sector was transferred to the Department of Education. One of the aims of this move was to develop equity between different early childhood services and to increase accountability across the sector (Dalli, 1993; Smith & Swain, 1988). Dalli (1993) suggested that, at this time, the “discourse of ‘quality’ early childhood education and care was becoming frequently heard” (p. 223). However, definitions of quality remain elusive (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999), although Farquhar (1999), writing six years after Dalli, indicates that shifts are now being made from the psychologically-influenced “outcomes for children” approach to understanding quality. She suggests that other considerations include group perspectives, the postmodern approach advocated by Dahlberg et al., and an understanding of organisational culture. Moss and Pence (1994) indicate that the nature of good quality early childhood education is a values issue. Smith (1996) supports this by indicating that each society needs to “carefully, consciously and inclusively consider” (p. 63) the educational environment occupied by its children; David and Powell (1999) indicate that the curriculum “...may have crucial long term consequences for society. We have to decide what kind of people we want our children to be and to become” (p. 208).

Several policy documents and guidelines were released during 1989 and 1990, including *Before Five* (Ministry of Education, 1989a), *The Early Childhood Management Handbook* (Ministry of Education, 1989b), and *The Education (Early Childhood Centres) Regulations 1990* (Ministry of Education, 1990b). These influenced the view that quality meant compliance with licensing and charter standards, although Dalli (1993) notes that “highlights...included better staff:child ratios than the minimum standards in the regulations (1990) and the requirement to train untrained staff” (p. 225). Almost immediately afterwards, *The Statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices* (Ministry of Education, 1990a), colloquially known as the DOPs, was published (Meade & Dalli, 1991). It effectively annulled the power of the quality guidelines to require higher standards for chartering purposes than those in the regulations. Funding cuts were also made at this time (Smith, 1996).

A further change was made in 1996, when extra funding was made available to centres that met standards at a higher level than was required for licensing. Designed to “provide an incentive to centre managers to improve the quality” of their centres, (Education Review Office, 1996, p. 15) the criteria included requirements for higher levels of staff qualifications. Still, though, licensed and chartered

...private “for profit” centres receive government funding at the same rates as community-based and other centres with no restrictions on how much they charge in fees, how much they pay in salaries, or indeed, what they spend their money on.
(Mitchell, 1999, p. 4)

Besides funding and legislative issues, the quest for quality has led to consideration of many aspects concerned with the provision of early childhood services (Smith, Grima, Gaffney, Powell, Masse & Barnett, 2000). These have included the quality of staff (NAEYC, 1991; Phillips, 1993; Robson & Smedley, 1996; Smith, 1999a), children’s social development (Phillips & McCartney, 1987), collective values of stakeholders, and staff stability, wages and working conditions (Smith, 1996), different types of early childhood education provision (Wylie, Thompson & Lythe, 1999), the place of research (Smith & Taylor, 1996), staff development (Pugh, 1996), leadership training (Bloom & Sheerer, 1992), and postmodern considerations (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999; Wright, 1999).

It is clear that, as well as the many and far-reaching legislative and regulatory changes in the early childhood sector, other issues of quality have required considerable financial, organisational, administrative and attitudinal shifts for centre managers. The present study was designed to include attention to the effect of these changes on current leadership and management practices.

Training and teacher education

A major contributor to the changes experienced by centre managers has been the continuing need for qualified staff. Since the late 1920s, kindergarten teacher education has been provided, firstly by individual kindergarten associations, and, between 1961 and

1988, by the New Zealand Free Kindergarten Association (NZFKA) (Meade, 1981). Kindergarten policy required that only those who held a diploma issued by the NZFKA could staff kindergartens. However, early childhood workers in childcare centres were not required legally to undertake training to gain employment in, or to manage centres for quarter of a century after the first childcare licences were issued in 1961.

While childcare remained the responsibility of the Department of Social Welfare, the term “workers” did not seem problematic. However, since 1987, Colleges of Education in Aotearoa/New Zealand have offered integrated, Teacher Registration Board (TRB) (now known as the New Zealand Teachers Council) approved, three-year diploma programmes of teacher education. These have sometimes been combined with an undergraduate degree that requires a further year of study. The Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood Education) is the “benchmark” qualification for those who teach in the early childhood sector in kindergartens, childcare and home-based care and education (Cooper & Tangaere, 1994). Many private providers offered introductory and other training programmes during the 1990s and some have, since 1997, also developed teacher education programmes approved by the TRB for the registration of teachers. Since 1997, three-year teaching degree programmes have also been offered to those wishing to teach in the early childhood sector. Now, only those (except for a few overseas educated teachers) who completed the NZFKA Diploma prior to 1987 or have been awarded the three-year Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood Education) or its equivalent, or an appropriate degree such as the Bachelor of Education (Teaching) are eligible for teacher registration and “qualified” teacher status.

In addition to the increased levels of education required for teachers, different centre funding initiatives by various governments have increased the pressure placed on those who work with children to acquire early childhood teacher qualifications or to continue to undertake professional development programmes. A plethora of ad hoc training programmes has been available, and attempts have been made by the MoE and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) to rationalise and contain them. This has been done, for example, by processes such as transferring credit for completed lower-level

courses, and offering competency-based schemes which “can create the danger of focusing on competencies at the expense of broader social and educational issues affecting early childhood” (Cullen, 1993, p. 79).

These processes have included “equivalence”, which was an attempt to compare completed qualifications against the benchmark Diploma of Teaching (ECE) (hereafter called the Diploma) and then “top up” with extra study. “Grandparenting”, or recognising specific qualifications completed in a given time frame as valid, was another process that was used. A further system involved “licensing points”, designed to aid centre licensing but which confused the training issue even further when some people considered licensing points to be de facto teaching qualifications for staff. The attempt to place competency-based unit standards for early childhood teacher education on the NZQA framework was another, more recent occurrence. It caused dissension among childcare, training and teacher education providers and has never been implemented as a national qualification. A unit standard-based National Diploma for Pacific people is now being prepared, in spite of the failure of the previous attempt by NZQA to instigate competency-based teacher education.

Regulations gazetted in July 1999 (Ministry of Education, 1999a) saw the licensing point system discontinued. Further, the regulations ensured that, from 2005, only those who hold a three-year Diploma or an appropriate degree will be able to fill the “person responsible” position in a centre. These regulatory changes negate the patchwork of lower level certificates which could once be cobbled together to make a pseudo “licensing point training qualification”. However, the discourse of care inherited from the historical beginnings of the childcare movement still exists in a somewhat uneasy relationship with its sister discourse, education. As an example, the word “childcare” is still highly visible in the regulations, and the terms “workers” and “teachers” sit in uneasy juxtaposition. The latter two terms are often replaced by the word “educator” in MoE documents such as *Quality in Action: Te mahi whai hua* (Ministry of Education, 1998a), and in centre terminology, to relieve the tension between the different discourses.

Government incentives, such as quality funding already discussed above, are available for centres that, amongst other criteria, employ higher ratios of qualified teachers on their staff. However, current regulations require that only one staff member with 100 licensing points must be on centre premises at any one time. As has been noted already, this will change in 2005, when the person responsible will need to be qualified. There is no requirement that supervisors should undertake further study in management or leadership to prepare them for supervisory roles.

For the purposes of the present study, the term “qualified” will be used to describe centre personnel who have been awarded a Diploma, or a Bachelor of Education (Teaching) or similar degree. “Training” will be used to refer to all other early childhood programmes that are not TRB approved and that therefore do not lead to the status of a teaching qualification. Centre personnel who have completed only these programmes will be termed “unqualified” where it is necessary to differentiate between them and qualified staff.

The effects that training and teacher education issues have had on participant perceptions of leadership and management practices in centres will be considered in this study.

Changes to early childhood curricula, and the influence of research

The implementation of *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996), the national curriculum for early childhood in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and consideration of the Early Childhood Education Code of Ethics (New Zealand Educational Institute, 1995) are amongst other changes which childcare centre staff groups have faced in the last few years. The curriculum, which was introduced in 1996 after several years of trials and pilot studies, is defined as

the sum total of the experiences, activities and events, whether direct or indirect, which occur within an environment designed to foster learning and development.

(p.10)

Te Whāriki was implemented as “a ‘bottom-up’ open-ended set of consensually accepted principles” (Smith et al. 2000, p. 65), and consists of four fundamental principles from which five strands and their associated goals and learning outcomes are drawn. The principles, strands, goals and learning outcomes set the framework for the curriculum whāriki or woven mat; the learning outcomes are indicative rather than definitive. The use of *Te Whāriki* is not compulsory in centres, but the discourse of *Te Whāriki* is incorporated in the revised DOPs, which must be complied with in centres that receive government funding. Professional development has been available for centre personnel through agencies contracted by the MoE, and centre managers have been required to make organisational changes to accommodate the revised DOPs in centre policies and plans. In addition, on-going research such as work on the quality of childcare centres for infants in New Zealand (Smith, 1997; Smith & Taylor, 1996), that of Meade and Cubey, (1995) and Wylie, Thompson and Hendricks (1996) on children’s competencies in childcare settings, and of Carr (1999) on assessment of children’s learning, continues to provide data and perspectives which may also change the way quality provision is viewed and experienced in the future.

Summary

This study was designed to explore the ways in which a variety of childcare centres in Aotearoa/ New Zealand are managed and led. The purpose of the study was to identify leadership and management practices used in centres, to explore participants perceptions of the quality of those practices, and to use the data to develop a theoretical model of quality leadership and management in early childhood education.

The historical, philosophical, ideological and theoretical development of early childhood services over the centuries has provided many different images of the child and childhood. While new theories and contexts evolve during each century, traces of the past are visible in many behaviours, practices and beliefs of members of society, and, more particularly, of those who work with children. Previous influences thus contribute to current perceptions and practices, although centre personnel are frequently unaware of

the existence or origins of their deeply-held beliefs and assumptions and that these need to be identified in order to improve practice (Smyth, 1989).

Some of the wide-ranging and more recent changes in early childhood have been outlined to provide a background against which to place the present study. Threaded through these changes has been a concern to develop quality of provision for young children. While definitions of quality remain elusive, there is some agreement that a movement has been made away from a search for quality indicators (Pugh, 1996) or predetermined outputs (Moss, 1999) towards a goal or vision contributed to by stakeholders in their contexts (Grey, 1999).

Aotearoa/New Zealand early childhood research has not yet extended to a wide exploration of quality leadership and management practices in centres. Rather, it has been focused on the needs of children and their families (Smith, 1996), and on those who work in early childhood settings, their conditions of work and their levels of teacher education or training. The present study was designed to examine closely the ways in which a variety of centres are led and managed in an attempt to understand the current practices and perceptions of stakeholders most closely associated with centres.

Research processes

Organisational theory and culture provide an appropriate theoretical framework against which to identify and examine, from the perceptions of centre personnel and parents, the ways in which early childhood centres in Aotearoa/New Zealand are currently led and managed. The focus of organisational theory and culture was chosen because it allows analysis of cultural phenomena at different levels of organisational existence (Schein, 1992). It was also considered appropriate to identify and examine the leadership and management practices used in centres from within the centre via the perception of stakeholders rather than by observing only from an “outsider’s” perspective. Therefore, a qualitative case study approach using principles of grounded theory to obtain “thick

description” (Geertz, 1973, p. 6) was decided upon; this approach will be explained in detail in Chapter Three.

The methodology of grounded theory requires that researchers come to the study with as few preconceptions as possible. Unlike quantitative research, which relies on prior theoretical frameworks and hypotheses which are tested as a result of the research, grounded theory researchers, in shaping their ideas, rely on data grounded in the beliefs and perceptions of the participants. In the present study, the researcher acknowledged her interests in organisational culture and in issues to do with socio-political aspects of the early childhood community. She was aware that her theoretical framework would shape what was seen and not seen, asked and not asked, attended to and not attended to during the study (Merriam, 1998). However, in order to minimise external influences beyond what was brought to the study, a specific literature review was not undertaken until after the data had been collected, analysed and thematically arranged. Once the initial literature review had informed the study, further data were collected and analysed, further literature was examined, and the recursive and evolving process continued until a conceptual framework was developed and a dominant concept, also known as a core category, emerged (Strauss, 1990).

This order of research processes ensured that the conceptual framework, defined by Munton, Mooney and Rowland (1995) as a tool to identify and describe different views and issues on common and therefore comparable dimensions, was also firmly grounded in the data. The core category, focused on the image of the child and childhood, and eight other categories, formed the basis of the conceptual framework. Points of similarity and difference in data were then examined within these categories.

Organisation of the report

The report is presented in eight chapters. In this chapter an historical background provided some insight into the complex historical, ideological, social, political and educational influences which impact on the quality of leadership and management of

early childhood centres in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The aims of the research and the research processes were briefly outlined.

In Chapter Two, literature is reviewed from the fields of organisational theory and culture, involving the corporate world as well as the primary, secondary and tertiary subcultures of the education sector. Theoretical perspectives from the early childhood field are also included. Chapter Three explains the methodology and methods employed in the present study, and provides an outline of the research design. In Chapter Four, the research procedures are described and an analysis of the data from diaries, Education Review Office (ERO) reports, and questionnaires is provided. Interview data are detailed in Chapters Five and Six. The data analyses are discussed and the research questions are addressed in Chapter Seven. Chapter Eight concludes the report with a theoretical model of centre leadership and management that could be used to inform the development and maintenance of the organisational culture of centres. The model is based on understandings of how our image of the child informs the ways in which we devise or influence centre structure, culture and activities.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

(T)he problem of the education of children cannot be set aside from history; it depends on many variables that are never independent of the universe of reasoning on which it is based.

Loris Malaguzzi (1993)

The researcher brought to the present research some familiarity with the theory upon which notions of organisational culture are based, but wished to ground the literature review in the analysis of the data. Therefore, the literature that informed the present study was reviewed, in the main, after much of the data analysis had been undertaken. The literature was thus drawn from a wide field across sociology, psychology, education, organisational theory and history in order to provide a base for, and a method of triangulating (or, as Denzin [1989] defines it, seeking in-depth understandings about) what had been revealed in the data.

More specifically, literature was examined pertaining to the core category and eight other categories that emerged from the data in the present study. The categories, which will be described in more detail in later chapters, were:

- the image of the child (the core category);
- centre culture;
- centre structure;
- communication;
- leadership and management;
- teamwork;
- management of change;
- pedagogical issues, and
- professional issues.

In order to review and analyse the literature that could provide theoretical insight into these categories, a range of other fields was also explored. They included notions of organisational theory and culture (especially the fields of leadership, management and administration theory) and educational leadership.

There is not yet a well-researched literature that combines early childhood and organisational theory, so organisational theory as it has been applied to other areas of societal endeavour, such as the corporate world and the compulsory education sectors, was explored. Although it may be claimed that early childhood centres have a different economic base from schools, their core business is nonetheless similar, and some similarities can also be drawn between the world of business and some early childhood services.

In Part 1 of this chapter, aspects of the literature regarding historical and theoretical influences on current adult images of the child and childhood will be discussed and the concept of organisational culture will be explained. Organisational structure and philosophy will be defined and described in Part 2. In this section also, reference will be made to aspects of early childhood centre organisational activity such as communication, teamwork and change management. In Part 3, pedagogical and professional issues from the literature will be discussed in relation to early childhood education.

Part 1: Images of the child and childhood

Temporal and spatial historical differences in context, beliefs and discourse

An ideal held by philosophers and theorists throughout the ages has been to articulate and provide for the development of the ultimate human being. A number of writers of educational theory, including Rousseau, Plato, Locke, Mill and Dewey, have contributed to the Western body of knowledge that has subsequently influenced the images of the child and childhood held in Aotearoa/New Zealand. These theorists and others have built their views about children and childhood on their own values and beliefs sited in their

own context, place and time in a moment of history, usually associated with a distinctive social and political position (Moore, 1974). Images of the child and childhood also vary between families, community groups, and nations (Hendrick, 1997; Sommerville, 1982; Suransky, 1982; Warde, 2001), as well as in spatial and temporal contexts (James & Prout, 1997).

James and Prout (1997) claim that fragments of the past are incorporated in succeeding ideas of childhood. They are not timeless or universal but “rooted in the past and reshaped in the present” (p. 218). Thus childhood is “a continually experienced and created social phenomenon which has significance for its present, as well as the past and future” (James & Prout, 1997, p. 231). Changes from one “era” to the next are not smooth or cumulative (McDonald, 1978). Instead, they frequently involve ideological shifts and significant incidents bound in social and political contexts.

Foucault viewed the mental conventions through which we construct our worlds as “dominant discursive regimes or regimes of truth” (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999, p. 31). Dahlberg et al. note that

...discourses transmit and produce power and as such are an important instrument of power. The importance of discourse comes from the decisive role of language in the process of constructing the world, rather than being simply a means of representing or copying reality. The language we use shapes and directs our way of looking at and understanding the world, and the way we name different phenomena and objects becomes a form of convention. (p. 31)

Such discursive regimes organise our everyday experience of the world. They govern or influence our ideas, thoughts and actions, constitute boundaries through processes of inclusion and exclusion, and guide our “truth”. They also exclude alternative ways of seeing the world; McNay (1994) says that “(d)iscourse is determined by and is also constitutive of the power relations that permeate the social realm” (p. 87). However, it is important to remember that different groups and individuals have other perspectives and worldviews (Ball & Pence, 2000) that may be different from the discursive regimes in

which we live. It is sometimes possible, especially with the benefit of historical hindsight, to glimpse multiple perspectives (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999; Gronn & Ribbins, 1996) that provide insight into ways of understanding that differ from our own.

Influences on the shaping of images of the child and childhood (pre late 18th century)

It is clear, then, that not only have cultural norms (i.e. of families, nations) varied, but an amalgam of specific social, political, philosophical, philanthropic, religious, technological and scientific issues have influenced legal, legislative and professional arenas, which, in turn, have formed specific discourses and images of children and childhood over time and space (Hendrick, 1997; Howe, 1999; Postman, 1982).

Sommerville (1982) offers some specific examples that help explain such discourses, images and influences. He notes that during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the social construction of the child was torn between the Rousseau-inspired notion of the innate innocence and goodness of the child, and the perceptions of those who believed that children were depraved and evil. The concerns of the Puritans illustrate one of these images. The Puritans were a reform group that splintered from the Church of England in the seventeenth century. They considered themselves outsiders of English society as they attempted to change traditional ways. They were, Sommerville claims, the first modern parents; their goal was not just to ensure the child's duty to the family, but to help the child make personal, individual commitments. They showed, in opposition to the beliefs of the Church of England, an "uncommon sense of the child's moral autonomy" (Sommerville, 1982, p.113) in stating that a child must obey God rather than his or her parents.

During the same period in history, Methodist John Wesley illustrated a second view of moral development in children with his exhortations to parents to break the will of their child (Hendrick, 1997). Other Protestant parents "worried over signs of (a child's) waywardness and (that he) would have to fight against himself and his [sic] fallen nature" (Sommerville, 1982, p. 90). They did not trust even the sacraments of the church to ensure that infant depravity could be kept at bay. They "waited anxiously for signs that

their child had been converted” (Sommerville, 1982, p. 90), becoming more concerned and intrusive parents than those of previous centuries. Similarly, in Catholic areas of Europe, a pessimistic view was held of children’s moral development; the “child’s instincts were... inclined to selfishness and lust and could be arrested and diverted before they became established” (Sommerville, 1982, p. 94).

These examples show that the prevailing beliefs and attitudes held by adults, influenced by many factors of the times and situations in which they lived, have shaped the ways in which children and childhood have been viewed. The beliefs have then been dealt with in legal, professional and public arenas. These, in turn, have produced systems and processes to attempt, for example, to ensure conformity of belief and behaviour in order that control of the masses could be maintained.

More recent influences on images of children and childhood

Hendrick (1997) provides a chronological account of some of the more recent (since the end of the eighteenth century) social constructions of British childhood that can be seen to have had some influence on images of the child and childhood held in Aotearoa/New Zealand. He discusses the ways in which adults (usually the professional middle class) constructed childhood in response to “the social, economic, religious and political challenges of their respective eras” (Hendrick, 1997, p. 36). A number of overlapping concepts are described to outline the effects of those challenges; Hendrick nominates them as the eras of the romantic child, the evangelical child, the factory child, the delinquent child, the schooled child, the psycho-medical child, the welfare child, the psychological child, and the family and public child.

Four significant constructs, some of which are similar to Hendrick’s eras, are described by McDonald (1978) in relation to European childhood. The first, pre-1890s, paints the “child as chattel”, in whom the State had no interest. Post 1900, he outlines the “child as social capital”, which parallels Hendrick’s eras of the factory, schooled and delinquent child. At this time, he suggests, education and health initiatives were intended to protect against social disorder. McDonald’s third construct was post-1945, when the child was

seen as a psychological being. This period was also identified by Hendrick (1997) as a time in which the focus was on the child whose mental health was a concern of the state as work was undertaken towards the ideal of a more sane society. Post 1970s, claims McDonald, saw the construct of the “child as citizen”, with rights derived from notions of a fairer society and social justice.

Early British settlers brought with them to Aotearoa/New Zealand the influences encapsulated in Hendrick’s eight eras and in the outlines provided by McDonald. May (1999a) provides an account of how, by 1900, “with political colonisation complete, the lives of the indigenous Māori child and the colonial Pakeha child were far apart” (p.121) as a result of such colonisation. Conflict over the colonisation of Māori has continued throughout the century as Māori have fought to maintain tino rangatiratanga (self determination) over their rights (Kawharu, 1989).

The founding of the Plunket movement (named after the patron, Lady Plunket) in the early 1890s by Truby King also corresponds with McDonald’s construct of social capital and Hendrick’s concept of eras. The Plunket movement, influenced by the behaviourist school of thought (May, 2001) was an example of social control; according to Cooper and Tangaere (1994), it was an initiative designed to maintain the British colonial view of eugenics (keeping the white race pure). Cooper and Tangaere indicate that King believed that medical science would be the key to such social control, and that self-control and discipline, particularly with regard to the organisation of time, were central to the sound health and character needed in the colony. His philosophy, they note, influenced Government policy, school curricula, and privileged the “care” function of the medical model he advocated.

Foucault used the term “the gaze” to describe “a kind of active vision” (Fillingham, 1993, p. 67). Shumway (1989) adds to this definition by explaining that the gaze is the application of a language to a thing seen so that it is constituted by the observer in his [sic] own terms. May (1999a) uses the term when she expands on Rose’s (1990) use of the “psychological gaze” to include the childhood, education and welfare shifts in state

interest in early childhood care and education throughout the twentieth century in this country. May adds the “liberation gaze”, which encompassed some consideration of the rights of minority groups, women and children. The “economic gaze” which incorporated new codes of individual, social and family responsibility, linked to global economic agendas, and a “culture of audit and assurance imported from the world of business management” (May, 1999a, p. 126) was also an addition in her explanation of the images and discourses of childhood and children.

Twentieth-century influences from other parts of the world have contributed to and coloured current images of the child and childhood in this country. Woodrow (1999) suggests that dominant influences – such as the “innocent child” or the child as threat/monster, or the child as embryo adult – derive from those earlier images, and that a critical examination of taken-for-granted assumptions is needed to enable a reconstruction of the field. Gammage (1999) suggests that many definitions and values are seen as less fixed in the postmodern world. He cites as an example the structure and function of families which, he says, are changing rapidly and are “very situationally and contextually specific and not as enduring as some might think” (Gammage, 1999, p.156). Other influences have included the feminist movement, with views, for example, on families and marriage (Rossi, 1977), woman-as-mother (Choderow, 1978), the dialectic between biology and culture (Eisenstein, 1984), mothering in public (O’Connor, 1995), and women and leadership (Blackmore, 1999). Challenges to traditional notions of the child development movement, psychological and scientific theorising about children, and attempts to universalise childhood have also been mounted (Ball & Pence, 2000; Woodhead, 1990).

Over time, theoretical perspectives have also impacted strongly on societies’ discourses and constructs of the child and childhood. For example, in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the NZFK and Playcentre movements have both been strongly influenced by Piagetian developmental theories since the 1960s. Terms such as “child centred”, “play-based”, and “integrated” (Cullen, 1996, p.114) and “child initiated play” (Education Review Office, 1996, p. 8) feature in the discourse of both organisations.

Dahlberg (2000a) uses the term “Piaget’s child” to describe how subscribing to the developmental approach, as the kindergarten and Playcentre movements did, means “losing sight of children and their lives: their concrete experiences, their actual capabilities, their theories, feelings and hopes” (p. 6). Malaguzzi (1993), too, is critical of this image, referring to it as one in which the child constructs “knowledge from within, almost in isolation” (p. 10). On the other hand, the philosophy of the Italian Reggio Emilia approach, has, says Dahlberg (2000a), encouraged a vision of a child as a co-creator of knowledge, involving adults as listeners who treat children with respect.

One of the few programmes in Aotearoa/New Zealand not based on Western theoretical considerations is ngā Kōhanga Reo which provides Te Reo and ngā Tikanga Māori immersion programmes that also feature whānau development (Irwin, 1990). The theoretical perspectives of ngā Kōhanga Reo are based on the kaupapa of tino rangatiratanga, underpinned by particular features such as principles of the tuakana/teina (older relative/younger relative) relationship which are similar to the co-constructive features of Vygotsky’s work (Tangaere, 1997).

Recently, writers have challenged the traditional voicelessness of children and children’s need to co-construct their knowledge, identity and culture (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999; Hedges, 2000a). Taking a critical perspective on images of the child and childhood has been advocated by other authors (Cannella, 1997; Woodrow, 1999) so that alternative positions may be developed which include the child as an active social agent and a focus on re-orienting the curriculum. Moss (1999) supports this focus as he suggests that the view of children as “co-constructors (rather than re-producers) of knowledge is fundamentally important” (p. 148).

Provision of care and education for children cuts across the images of children and childhood held by individual societies. While there is frequently an “official” image or discourse, supported by legislation which affects systems such as state funding, teacher education and provision, and compliance with regulations, there is also an education

subculture-specific image influenced by those who hold power in the sector at a particular time. In addition, individuals who offer care and education on a daily basis (centre personnel in the case of the present study) also hold their personal images of the child and childhood, based on their own experiences and knowledge. It is at the intersection of images of the child and childhood and the ways in which they are transmitted into action by those who offer and govern early childhood services in the form of childcare that the present study is sited.

The concept of organisational culture, including attendant issues of leadership and management, is used to illuminate this intersection, and is outlined next.

Organisational culture

Before 1975, American studies of school effectiveness, which led to a focus on organisational culture, were based on performance indicators such as national standardised achievement tests, absenteeism, officially recorded delinquency and public examination results (Beare, Caldwell & Millikan, 1989). By 1975, contextual issues, including a downturn in the economy and ideas about market forces, led educators to re-examine the ways in which effective schools functioned. They began to use naturalistic research, in the form of case studies and ethnographies, as opposed to previously used statistical analyses based on scientific positivism. New ways of viewing organisations evolved, influenced by developments such as the work of Habermas and the Frankfurt School in promoting critical theory, by neo-Marxian approaches to the economy, and through the work of scholars such as Thomas Greenfield, who advocated for the use of the concept of phenomenology in research on organisations. Phenomenology "... concentrates on what is – the uniqueness of time and place – rather than on making the organisational world conform to sets of rules" (Beare et al., 1989, p. 28).

During the decade after 1975, a number of popular books, including *Theory Z* by William Ouchi in 1981 and *In Search of Excellence* by Peters and Waterman in 1982, reported on case studies that examined the organisation of corporate firms. Corporate management

structures and organisational theory were applied to the study of educational organisations during the 1980s and 1990s. In the 1980s, the research focus was on the leadership, management, and administration of educational organisations, including leadership behaviours, excellence, and organisational cultures (Beare, Caldwell & Millikan, 1989), and change and school improvement (Bush & West-Burnham, 1994). Bush and West-Burnham also note that during this decade, the research was undertaken through the integration of multi-disciplinary studies, contingency theories and economics of education; while arguments for quality, leadership and entrepreneurship were examined through the concept of grounded theory in the 1990s.

Aspects of organisational theory are used to inform the present study, which employs the case study method and that of grounded theory to "...establish a critical dialogue between theory and practice...tested against methodological considerations...(to explore) the inherent values" (West-Burnham, 1994, p.16).

Organisational culture; the concept explained

Organisational theory is predicated on a history of the metaphor of orderliness, dominated by the concern for the problem of social order, according to Smircich (1983). The concept of culture is based in anthropology, where it also addressed the phenomenon of social order by examining the patterning and orderliness of life experience. Spradley (1980), discussing cultural knowledge in the ethnographic sense of describing culture, says that it is "the acquired knowledge people use to acquire experience and generate behaviour" (p. 6).

The linking of culture and organisation offers the intersection of two sets of images of order; those associated with culture and those associated with organisation (Smircich, 1983). Organisational culture is "the socially shared and transmitted knowledge of what is, and what ought to be, symbolised in act and artefact" (Wilson, 1971, p. 70), or, as Corbett, Firestone and Rossman (1987) explain,

...culture describes the way things are. It provides the contextual clues necessary to interpret events, behaviours, words and acts, and gives them meaning. Culture

also prescribes the ways in which people should act, regulating appropriate and acceptable behaviours in given situations. (p. 37)

Geertz (1973) talks of culture as “the shared fabric of meanings” (p.145) which emerges as group members interact with one another. Culture, then, only exists where a group exists, serving as a social “glue” which binds people together. It is shaped by a variety of intangibles – meanings, norms, values, and attitudes which are constructed, maintained and reproduced by people, who are in turn influenced by the wider sociocultural contexts within which they live (Hatherly, 1997). In an earlier section of this chapter, Dahlberg, Moss and Pence's (1999) use of Foucault's definition of discourse was discussed. Dahlberg et al. (1999) define organisational discourse as “dominant discursive regimes or regimes of truth” (p. 31) that use language to construct the world of the organisation. It could well be claimed, using Dahlberg et al's arguments, that organisational culture is constructed by organisational discourse.

Each organisation is different and unique due to the mix of many variables that contribute to its existence. Rather than being something that has substance and power of its own and being distinct and apart from the human beings who inhabit it, an organisation can be seen as “a conceptual entity which people collectively create and maintain largely in their minds” (Beare, Caldwell & Millikan, 1989, p. 72). They note that the culture of an organisation is developed around a paradigm, or view of reality, which is a “framework one uses to systematise the perceptions one has of what appears to be happening around one” (Beare et al. 1989, p. 17). Schein (1992) describes organisational culture as

...a pattern of basic assumptions - invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its own problems of external adaptation and internal integration - that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (p.12)

Organisational culture comprises a number of identifiable elements (Nias et al. 1989). These are beliefs and values, understandings, attitudes, meanings and norms (arrived at by interaction), symbols, rituals and ceremonies. Nias et al. (1989), in discussing organisational culture in primary schools, also indicate that schools have “culture bearers” (p.11) who, in their speech and behaviour, represent what is deemed worthwhile in the culture. “Culture-founders”, those who first establish the school culture, or who enter the organisation later and change the culture of the staff group and install a new set of beliefs and values, are of vital importance in influencing the development and maintenance of a culture.

Hatherly (1997), reporting her early childhood study, notes that the term “culture” has been used both as a metaphor for describing how organisations work (citing the “machine” metaphor) and as an “objective entity” (p. 5), something that all organisations have and which can be studied and analysed. However, she warns that there are dangers in perceiving organisational culture as an objective entity. Firstly, it should not become reified as something that exists independently of people; culture is a dynamic phenomenon that both defines and is defined by a group. It is an evolving state, changing as internal and external factors change. Secondly, like Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989) she claims that culture cannot be authoritatively defined because it is a concept within people’s minds, able to be interpreted and understood in a variety of ways.

In the present study, Schein’s (1992) notion of organisational culture is employed to accommodate the subjective views held by those who lead, manage, teach in or are involved as parents with ten early childhood centres. Debate on organisational culture suggests that the subtle influences of the participants in the study on their various organisations, and of the organisations on them, are integral to determining what leadership and management practices are used, which of these are valued, and for what reasons. Interviews in the present study were selected as the main method of data collection in order to capture the underpinning organisational discourse and culture of each centre, and they were supported and/or triangulated with data from other sources such as supervisors’ diaries and demographic questionnaires. External influences, such as

the effects of historical and political decisions and social climate, also shape the way individuals believe and behave. These influences and the nature of centre organisational culture are discussed next.

Organisational culture in early childhood centres: a societal sub-culture

The education sector is influenced and shaped by the macro-culture of the society in which it resides. In Aotearoa/New Zealand the education sector consists of compulsory primary and secondary subcultures as well as non-compulsory early childhood and tertiary subcultures. Alvesson (1993) outlines how each level of external influence (in the present study, the beliefs and values of the nation and the educational sector) shapes a particular subculture (in this research, the early childhood subculture). Influence is expressed in many ways, such as in legislated requirements for compliance, licensing, and required qualifications for staff. Within the early childhood education subculture, the organisational culture, structure, activities (O'Neill, 1994) and leadership of each early childhood centre are thus shaped by the beliefs and values of external sectorial and societal influences.

Hallinger and Leithwood (1996) use the terms “community” and “institutional context” (p. 7) to describe the exogenous variables influencing educational organisational leadership. The community includes the socio-economic status of the parent population, geographic features, such as urban, rural or suburban, and parental expectations. The institutional context refers to features as diverse as degree of system centralisation, mandated curricular or management regulations and the structural policy system within which an organisation is embedded. Both of these terms fit within Alvesson’s (1993) view of a subculture.

The early childhood subculture, while sharing some aspects of discourse with some other parts of the education sector (i.e. primary and secondary education) in Aotearoa/New Zealand society, also has its own historical influences, emphases and points of difference. In addition, images of the child and childhood are likely to be focused on the youngest

children (aged birth to five years) in our society rather than the older children who access schools in the compulsory sector.

The early childhood education subculture can now be considered to combine aspects of the two different major disciplines of education and care, although the latter has historically been the dominant influence. The concept of care includes the “medical” perspective of care as an illness-related activity to do with physical health, combined with the notion that women have traditionally assumed responsibility for caring for young children in what May (1993) terms the “cult of domesticity” (p. 4). Hayden (1994) describes this as the “ideology of motherhood” (p. 22); both terms refer to the middle-class ideals that support the view that the place of a mother is in the home with her young children, rather than working outside of the home. Also involved in the concept of care is the view that the caring of young children should be done in the private world, rather than in the public sphere of a capitalist economy (Cox, 1987).

These ideals, which have strongly influenced the images of children and childhood held by members of the public, were widely promulgated in New Zealand from the late 1870s through to the challenges posed by the feminist movement of the 1970s (May, 1993). Influential people such as Sir Truby King, the founder of the Plunket Society and Karitane movement, supported these notions. King opposed higher education for women, claiming that intellectual work sapped the strength they should be storing for motherhood, for which he considered they were best fitted (Coxon, Jenkins, Marshall & Massey, 1994; May, 1997; Olssen, 1981). John Bowlby’s (1951) theory of the negative effects on children of maternal deprivation and separation is another example of ways in which the cult of domesticity and the tradition of care were supported (Smith & Swain, 1988). The post-World War II government sought to return women to the home to make way for returning soldiers to find employment. Bowlby’s ideas were used as an excuse to refuse funding for childcare facilities because of his view that children would be deprived socially and emotionally if their own mothers did not care for them in their own homes (Smith & Swain, 1988).

The Playcentre movement, with its focus on educating parents, particularly mothers, as they attended Playcentre with their own children (May, 1993) remained within the parameters of Bowlby's theories. Plunket and Karitane organisations also conformed to Bowlby's views, with their emphasis on the medical model of care for babies combined with the views of motherhood (already discussed). Even Kindergarten Associations aimed to "change the values and behaviour of working-class mothers to fit the middle-class ideal, particularly in terms of domestic motherhood" (Cooper & Tangaere, 1994, p. 89).

Education, on the other hand, has traditionally been seen as a "public good" to be provided by the state out of taxation (Clark, 1998). A clear picture of the role of the State in the provision of education was provided in Fraser's (1938) statement regarding equality of educational opportunity for all (Bates & Codd, 1980; Lauder & Hughes, 1990). More recently, differences have emerged over the Treasury re-definition of the term "public good" as a market commodity (Clark, 1998; Grace, 1998). Serious debate regarding the importance of early childhood education with regard to education per se is rarely undertaken outside of the early childhood subculture.

The "Cinderella" status (Dalli, 1993) of the early childhood subculture is due to many influences, including the concept of care, outlined above. In addition, early childhood provision and teacher education have become increasingly affected by the privatisation of the sector as a result of Treasury-driven ideologies of economic rationalism. The influence of Treasury, which is part of the societal macro-culture in which the early childhood sector resides as a societal subculture, impacts on society's perception of the purpose of education. Since the fourth Labour government in 1984 until at least the election in 1999, legislation and political influence have focused on making early childhood education a private good (Lauder, 1987) and a commodity in the market place (Grace, 1998) under a philosophy of individual responsibility and a belief system that supports economic growth (Moss & Pence, 1994) without attention to social costs.

Many centres are privately owned and operated for profit, and a sizeable group of entrepreneurs, including real estate agents, architects and equipment distributors, has grown around them. The terms “industry” and “business” are frequently used instead of “education” or “service” (Hayden, 2000) and an industrial management model (Codd, 1989) is sometimes used in centres. Designed to ensure that an organisation conforms to the norms that increase efficiency, an industrial model often diminishes the focus that teachers may otherwise have on sound educational practices, values and principles. Codd suggests that this model views teachers as workers rather than professionals and thereby diminishes their commitment to the values and principles that define the field of educational practice. As an extension of that argument, it could be claimed that education for children under five years of age is not considered efficient or necessary, and that less costly care returns more profit. The image of the child as a commodity to be cared for efficiently at the lowest cost per child unit is the logical result of such a model.

As outlined in Chapter One, the dichotomy and resulting tensions between care and education, including the governmental shifts in considering the purpose of education, have resulted in a complex environment for those who work in centres within the early childhood subculture.

The development of an organisational culture

The culture of an organisation usually forms very quickly as members use energy, drive and imagination to make it work (Kilmann, 1987, 1989). Influences on the shape of the culture come from three sources, according to Schein (1992). The sources are the beliefs, values and assumptions of founders of organisations, the learning experiences of group members as their organisation evolves, and new beliefs, values and assumptions brought in by new members and leaders. Of these, Schein asserts that the impact of founders is the most significant.

The values and assumptions of the founder are taught to the group during the early growth and development of an organisation (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kotter & Heskett, 1992; Nias et al. 1989; Schein, 1992). According to Schein, (1992) founders and

subsequent leaders embed their own assumptions in the ongoing daily life of their organisations by what they

...pay attention to and reward, through the ways they allocate resources, through the role modelling they do, through the manner in which they deal with critical incidents, and through the criteria they use for recruitment, selection, promotion and excommunication. (p. 211)

These assumptions form the basis of solutions to external and internal problems that have worked consistently for group members and that are therefore taught to new members as the correct ways to perceive, think about, and feel in relation to those problems. Organisational discourse (defined earlier) evolves to communicate cultural beliefs and values, providing solutions and particular ways of operating that become the norms of the organisation. These norms often remain in place throughout the lifetime of the organisation (Bertacchi, 1996). Such solutions eventually remain as assumptions about the nature of reality, truth, time, space, human nature, human activity, and human relationships. They come to be taken for granted and finally drop out of awareness. The power of culture is derived from the fact that it operates as a set of assumptions that are unconscious and taken for granted (Schein, 1984).

While the overt behaviours and attitudes displayed by leaders are observable, Schein (1992) notes that messages which are less powerful, more difficult to control, and more ambiguous, are embedded in the organisation's structure, its procedures and routines, its rituals, its physical layout, its stories and legends, and its formal statements about itself. Such messages are built up and expressed through analogies such as metaphors, recurrent imagery, and patterned language (Beare, Caldwell & Millikan, 1989). The present study was designed to analyse carefully these aspects of organisational discourse in early childhood centres.

A model for examining organisational culture

Schein's (1992) model of organisational culture offers opportunities for analysis at several different levels, where the term "level" refers to the degree to which the cultural

phenomenon is visible to the observer. The three levels in order of increasing degree of abstractness are:

- artifacts; visible organisational structures and processes which may include language, technology, the layout of the physical environment, clothing of staff members, myths and stories told about the organisation, and published lists of values;
- espoused values; strategies, goals, and philosophies and
- basic underlying assumptions; unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs, perceptions, thoughts and feelings.

Each of these levels is influenced by the others (Kotter & Heskett, 1992). Schein (1992) says:

(T)he essence of a culture lies in the pattern of basic assumptions, and once one understands those, one can easily understand the other more surface levels and deal appropriately with them. (p. 26)

Kieviet and Vandenberghe (1993), reporting on a study by Imants and other colleagues which examined basic assumptions held by staff members of nine Flemish schools, claim that the culture of an organisation is a socially constructed reality, and it has considerable impact on those working in the organisation. Imants' study investigated the professional culture of the schools and concluded that understandings of the basic underlying assumptions and beliefs of an organisation are created as a result of daily interactions between staff members; the culture of an organisation "is created in the course of their daily encounters" (Kieviet & Vandenberghe, 1993, p. 40). Evidence was found of an interaction between the professional culture (defined in terms of professional relationships) and the implementation of an innovation. In the more effective schools, the fostering of an environment which encouraged shared understandings, decisions and evaluations resulted in the development of collegial and collaborative practices between teachers, and more positive attitudes to change.

The usefulness of including organisational culture as a component of the quality debate in early childhood education is articulated strongly by Hatherly (1997). In a case study of

the organisational culture of one early childhood centre, Hatherly (1997) incorporated Schein's (1992) model in an attempt to "get below the surface of the day-to-day operating norms and decipher some of the values and assumptions which guided 'the way things were done' " (p. ii) within the centre. She found that the underlying motivation of the centre had a substantial effect on the organisational infrastructure and the pedagogic principles of the centre. It was also noted that a focus on organisational culture highlighted leadership influences.

Conceptualising leadership, management, and/or administration

The positions of leader, manager and administrator are integrally linked to the culture of an organisation by Schein (1992) who suggests that neither

...culture nor leadership...can really be understood by itself...if one wishes to distinguish leadership from management or administration, one can argue that leaders create and change cultures, while managers and administrators live within them. (p. 5)

Hollander and Offermann (1993) consider that organisational culture is not only linked to, but influences the roles within it; that situational demands and the expectations of followers, for example, affect leader style. They note that, to some degree, style is a function of the culture of the organisation. On the other hand, Schein (1992) contends that the only important thing leaders do may well be constructing culture. Edwards (1997), too, indicates that leaders are "developers of culture – building, modifying, fostering and maintaining" (p.11) norms and values.

Views on what constitutes the three roles (leadership, management and administration) vary, with some authors considering only two of them. Kotter (1993), for example, refers only to management and leadership (in the business world) when he says "(m)anagement is about coping with complexity....Leadership, by contrast, is about coping with change" (p. 27). He contends that leadership involves setting directions while management includes planning and budgeting, leadership is about aligning people where management

is to do with organising and staffing, and leadership is to do with motivating and inspiring when management is controlling and problem-solving.

All three roles are discussed by Handy (1985) as he, too, explores the corporate world, albeit from an almost entirely male perspective. He claims that the term “manager” is used by businesses to combine the three roles of leader, manager and administrator. He says that managing includes leading (interpersonal responsibilities such as liaising and acting as a figurehead), administration (informational roles such as disseminating information, being a spokesperson), and fixing (negotiating, allocating resources, handling disturbances). Handy suggests that professional organisations have never used the word “manager”, but have found expressions such as registrar, principal or headmaster [sic] to separate the professional leadership role from the administrative roles. Handy does not mention gender differences in the roles he describes – in fact, women are mentioned rarely in his writing – so the male views he articulates may not be transferable to issues of leadership in early childhood centres, where most supervisors are women.

The mix of roles varies according to the structure and size of the organisation (Handy, 1985). Generally, however, managers’ jobs are described as brief, varied and fragmented and comprise tasks that are differentiated by constraints, choices and demands. Kagan and Bowman (1997) acknowledge the variety of tasks undertaken by the managers (supervisors) of American early childhood centres. They consider that, in these relatively small organisations, management is “a central leadership task” (p. 24). They believe that the leadership component is increased as management competence is developed, and suggest that supported preparation for the role of manager would also enhance the development of leadership skills.

Early work on differentiating between the roles of leader and manager resulted in a focus on “economic and non-economic sources of authority” (Sashkin & Rosenbach, 1993). The terms “transactional” and “transformational” were coined to describe the styles adopted by leaders. The transactional or management approach involved a leader appealing to the economic or quasi-economic interests of followers, while the

transformational leader engaged others in developing intrinsically-motivated pathways to higher levels of motivation and ethical behaviour, perhaps envisioning a new social condition (Leithwood, 1992). Transformational leaders are seen as agents of change, able to deal with uncertainty, ambiguity and complexity and with the ability to inspire others. Transactional leaders, on the other hand, involve others in a mutually supportive community by a process of negotiation, concession, accommodation “through the manipulation and interplay of various social forces” (Foster, 1989, p. 41).

In more recent times, the need for a leader to be able to use combinations of transformational and transactional leadership styles (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Kanter, 1983; Peters & Waterman, 1982) has been articulated. Leithwood (1992) claims that the two styles are complementary, with transformational leadership being considered as “value added” (p. 9) because it provides the incentive for people to attempt improvements in their practices.

Leaders and leadership

The search to identify leadership qualities has a long history and has been mostly located in the corporate world (Handy, 1985; Hollander & Offermann, 1993) where male models of leadership have predominated. Approaches have usually fallen under one of three headings: trait theories, style theories and contingency theories. Handy (1985) indicates that trait theories rest on the assumption that the individual is more important than the situation, and that leaders could be selected according to a recipe. However, vision was the only universal characteristic of effective leadership in the research on entrepreneurship by Mitchell and Scott (1987). Vision was also the only common characteristic in nine major qualitative studies of leadership in the private sector in the 1980s (Bolman & Deal, 1991).

Another frequently mentioned characteristic (Bolman & Deal, 1991) was the ability to communicate a vision effectively to others, often through the use of symbols. Commitment or passion, and the ability to inspire trust and build relationships were also frequently discussed. However, because of the lack of commonality found in the

leadership traits of those considered to be leaders in studies such as those described by Handy (1985) in the 1950s through to those described by Bolman and Deal (1991) in the 1980s, trait theory has largely been discredited as a stand-alone method of determining leadership qualities.

Style theories are based on the notion that specific leadership styles are more effective than others. Handy and Aitken (1986) suggest that authoritarian and democratic styles are the dimensions usually compared, with the major difference along the continuum between the two residing in the focus of power. Hollander and Offermann (1993) describe four different forms of power. Resource power and position power, they say, are given “from above” (p. 74) as a result of the role of the individual in an organisation. Expert power and personal power are accorded “from below” as a result of personal attributes and personality. Handy (1985) indicates that, while supportive styles of leadership are usually associated with higher-producing work groups, the evidence does not overwhelmingly defeat the idea that more authoritarian leadership styles do not work. It is likely that the continuum mentioned earlier thus indicates different rather than polarised positions.

Contingency theory considers the many variables involved in any leadership situation. While aspects of trait and style are considered, contingency theory also suggests that other issues such as the complexity of the decision to be made or whether subordinates are likely to be in conflict over a desired outcome should also be part of any plan or change in the organisation. Perhaps it is the daunting number of possible variables and the wide range of organisational cultures and structures that cause some (Macintyre, 1981; Ramos, 1981) to claim that, where success is identified, it is usually due to the leader being in the right place at the right time. They suggest that success is thus likely to be coincidental rather than by design.

Leadership has, thus far in this review, been considered by most authors as the role of one person (typically male) in an organisation. The concept of leadership being a “collective enterprise, involving many people playing different roles at different times” is raised by

Bryson (1995, p. 212). (A number of authors who describe women's leadership also include the concept of collective leadership, which will be discussed separately). While Bryson notes that leadership and leaders are not the same thing (although he fails to define "leader"), he implies that a leader has the ability to judge both external and internal environments wisely. Using this "bigger picture" overview, a leader is then also able to provide sponsorship and direction for others within the organisation to take leadership roles wherever their particular strengths or interests can best be used.

The trend towards regarding the concept of educational leadership as a shared endeavour, in which everyone has the potential and right to work as a leader is also noted by Walker (1994) and strongly advocated by Blackmore (1999) and Lambert (1998). Lambert (1998) defines leadership as "the reciprocal learning processes that enable participants in a community to construct meaning toward a shared purpose" and terms it "constructivist leadership"(p.18). She asserts that leadership, in this context, means learning among adults in a community that shares goals and visions, where the work is perceived as a natural outgrowth of their roles as professional educators. Teachers working in this model of leadership, she says, convene and facilitate dialogue, pose inquiry questions, mentor new teachers, and invite others to become engaged with a new idea.

Central to constructivist leadership is the notion of reciprocal relationships (Lambert et al., 1995). These are described as processes that evoke potential in a trusting environment, reconstruct old assumptions, focus on the construction of meaning, and frame actions that embody new behaviours and purposeful intentions. Lambert et al. envisage these processes as spiralling, building on each other, circling back on themselves and enabling new meanings to be constructed. Rather than the leader/follower roles described in hierarchical models of leadership, Lambert et al. indicate that anyone can choose to lead in a leader/participant relationship with members of the community.

From this brief overview of the development of leadership theory, it can be seen that the private business sector notions of leadership that preceded the educational focus on the leadership role were predicated on male world views and mostly in hierarchically

arranged organisations. Concepts such as leadership as a collective enterprise (Bryson, 1995), a shared endeavour (Walker, 1994) or as constructivist in development and implementation (Lambert, 1998) are usually based on descriptions of educational environments where a more democratic and liberal culture might be expected to exist. Walker (1994) underscores the importance of recognising the influence that organisational culture has on the leadership role when he says:

...for teamwork to be successful the culture of the school must be based on the fundamental values of openness, trust and participation. It would be a futile exercise to implement a team structure in a school that fostered secrecy and suspicion. (p. 40)

Women as leaders

The feminist movement has provided a critical approach to viewing education and other issues. Resistance to hierarchy and authoritarianism, multi-dimensional ways of working (Blackmore, 1989), and a focus on promoting decision-making have been among the principles of the movement that have influenced education (Grace, 1998).

Blackmore (1989), in offering a feminist critique and reconstruction of educational leadership in the compulsory sector, indicates that

...organisational theory, the source of many central concepts of educational administration, has only begun to be criticised for its gender-blindness.... Emphasis in this criticism has been on the masculinist model which has assumed to portray all experience. (p. 94/5)

She claims that the universality of the male experience is portrayed in the positivist research paradigm that is based on theories of abstract individualism and bureaucratic rationality. This paradigm, Blackmore asserts, has become dominant in the educational administration of schools and is “fundamentally anti-collegial” (Blackmore, 1999, p. 2). It is hierarchical in structure, emphasises control and individualism, and encourages leaders to display moral virtues and principles usually associated with the “masculine” features of aggressiveness, forcefulness, competitiveness, and independence.

Blackmore (1999) argues that a feminist reconstruction of the concept of leadership would include a multi-dimensional and multi-directional view of power. Leadership would empower and be practised in different contexts by different people. It would involve acting with others to do things that could not be done by an individual alone. This view of shared leadership sees power as “power through and with others... being at the centre of the spokes of the wheel rather than out in front pulling the wagon” (Blackmore, 1999, p.161).

From a feminist perspective and in its most inclusive sense, leadership is practised by many teachers, parents and principals in a variety of informal and formal administrative positions and across a range of sites (Blackmore, 1999). Blackmore suggests that failure by the male-dominated education sector to realise that day-to-day teaching involves leadership, and to recognise the multiple dimensions of leadership, has deterred many women from seeking formal leadership roles or to even consider that they are leaders.

Rodd (1996) also notes that much of the research that underpins theory and practice in the leadership literature is derived “in the main from studies that have used male samples” (p.120). Like Blackmore, she notes that women may have different perceptions about definitions of leadership from those of men. One of the differences, she suggests, is that in the early childhood field, where there is a very high percentage of women practitioners, very few currently seem to identify personally with the concept of “leader”. Hatherly (2000, p.31) supports this view, suggesting that many women in the early childhood profession express distaste for models of workplace leadership that go beyond administrative roles. She indicates that “we do not want to be seen as heavy-handed or autocratic with our values or our vision”, but warns that, in not being clear about either, leaders may disempower and disable the group in which they work.

Another concept of leadership that may overlap with the model outlined by Blackmore is that of the “collective”. According to Simons (1986), the women’s movement has, since the 1960s, produced versions of the collective. She describes this as a leaderless group in

which leadership acts can be initiated by any group member. Simons, in considering early childhood organisations, suggests that

...it is difficult for a leaderless collective style of organisation to exist, in its purest form, when an organisation is established by another group, such as a management committee which specifically appoints a director to be personally accountable to that committee.... However the director can choose to adopt some features of the leaderless collective.... Advocates of a collective system of management for early childhood services are likely to be focusing on shared decision-making rather than shared responsibility. (p.103)

However, Blackmore and Simons may be overly positive about the likelihood of a collective system functioning smoothly. McNairy (1988) suggests that other factors often influence the ways in which groups operate. Her research revealed that status characteristics can negatively influence team interactions, with one person being deferred to because of perceptions that she may have higher educational status or a longer teaching career than others. Lack of time or inclination to plan together may also hinder the development of reciprocal trust. Territorial ownership of tasks, equipment, decisions, and other professional responsibilities are other issues that may prevent staff from working together as a team or leaders emerging from within a group.

Yet another view of women's ways of working is provided by Helgesen (1990). She describes the structure of women's organisations as being more like a "web of inclusion" (p. 41) with flat management style that permits communication channels to travel in, out, and around the "spider web" instead of through the chain of command usually present in an hierarchical system. This web-like structure thus allows for more collegial and collaborative work between participants than does the more traditional hierarchical model.

Court (1994) explains a similar phenomenon to that of Helgesen's collaborative web in her study of Aotearoa/New Zealand women primary and secondary school teachers and managers. She found that the concept of teamwork, which will be explored more

thoroughly in a later section, was very important to the women in her study. It included a holistic approach through “affiliation with others and power sharing” (p. 33). Court’s views are supported by Adler, Laney and Packer (1993), who indicate that, generally, women try to have democratic and participatory styles of decision-making. They agree with Blackmore that, when compared with male views of leadership, women are less committed to formal hierarchy and that they are more willing to submerge displays of formal power. They note, too, that there is a non-negotiable bottom-line to the decisions women describe making, and that they mostly feel able to maintain their stance on issues about which they have considered a variety of influencing variables.

Educational leadership

The functions of leader, manager and administrator have been frequently debated (Bush & West-Burnham, 1994) especially in relation to whether or not “management concepts, techniques, skills and processes can be applied to education without detriment to educational values” (p. 9). Bush and West-Burnham trace the development of the definition of educational leadership from being described “as a subset of management” by Fayol in 1916 to “a distinctive component of organisational effectiveness which needed to be differentiated from management and administration” (p.12). Similar views are outlined by Peters and Waterman (1982), Bennis and Nanus (1985), Sergiovanni (1984), and Caldwell and Spinks (1988).

While the primacy of personal authority in western constructs of educational leadership remains popular (Sergiovanni, 2001), Southworth (2002) suggests that recent emphases have begun to change towards the use of a more holistic and integrated approach. For example, Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) discuss the importance of situating leadership in the context of a particular setting; indicating that “(o)utstanding leadership is exquisitely sensitive to the context in which it is exercised” (p. 4). Day, Harris and Hadfield (2001) concur with Leithwood et al., indicating that effective leadership is both a contextualised and a relational construct. Their work explores multiple perspectives of effective leadership within school organisations that are in different contexts (for example, rural and urban, large and small schools), in similar fashion to the present study

which focuses on perspectives of those who are involved in early childhood centres from a range of contexts.

Few models of educational leadership include a strong emphasis on teaching and learning. Southworth (2002) argues that an integrated approach to school leadership would include consideration of moral and instrumental domains as well as a focused approach to student learning. Leadership, he says, should be learning-centred, requiring principals to possess very specific knowledge related to learning and teaching.

The four-point model proposed by Edwards (1997) is another of the few that include the role of teacher in conceptualising the principalship of a school. He lists four areas of activity as:

- the business manager who ensures that records are kept, routines are followed, plans, returns and reports are made;
- the people person who motivates and supports people to work as a team;
- the teacher who is experienced and understanding of curriculum and classroom activities;
- the thinker who is the visionary and plans ahead for the organisation; who reflects upon the kind of organisation and its culture in order to seek new ways of doing things and helping others to travel to new horizons.

Other models of educational leadership mostly seem to omit provision for a clear understanding about the core business of an educational organisation – that is, the teaching and learning processes that the organisation exists to provide. For example; West-Burnham's (1992) model defines educational leadership as being concerned with values, vision and mission; management as being to do with execution, planning, organising and deploying; administration as being concerned with operational details. Appearing to be more appropriate for a military organisation, West-Burnham's definition fails to address educational issues such as pedagogy and curriculum.

An understanding of teaching and learning is also omitted from Simons' definition of leadership and management in Australian early childhood education (Simons, 1986). She

indicates that the leadership role looks ahead and encourages others to do the same so that the service works to meet its objectives, which should include influencing external policy-makers. Management skills, however, are directed to achieving stability in the organisation. Management skills include “planning and organising, communicating, running meetings, developing policy, keeping records, writing submissions, evaluating, managing conflict, dealing with stress, and using new technology” (p.107). In addition to needing a focus on learning and teaching, it is also suggested that the vision or process of looking ahead outlined by Simons needs to be based on an “ethical agenda” (Newman, 2000, p. 40). This concept encompasses thinking, acting and leading ethically as well as explaining thought and action in terms of ethical principles and theories.

In another Australian study, Rodd (1996) mentions planning for children but, like West-Burnham and Simons, fails to provide for knowledge of pedagogical understanding and curriculum implementation in her definition of centre leadership. She uses the terms managers and leadership in synonymous fashion as she describes the understandings held by early childhood centre managers about effective leadership. Rodd’s research indicates that early childhood managers considered that the following attributes were important in their leadership roles:

- self-knowledge
- communication skills
- having a vision to lead and motivate staff and parents
- the ability to plan for children and the centre
- an understanding of the importance of informed decision-making
- the need for monitoring and evaluating
- encouraging on-going professional development for all in the centre.

Rodd suggests that, in addition to this list, managers should develop the ability to conduct research, lobby for legislation, speak at professional meetings, and market programmes.

The omission of aspects of issues concerning teaching, learning and curriculum from West-Burnham’s, Rodd’s and Simons’ outlines of suggested attributes of school or centre

managers may be to do with current market emphases on “outcomes and image, not process or substance” according to Blackmore (1999, p.154). Blackmore suggests that entrepreneurial skills, competitiveness, and marketing underpin the postmodern rhetoric of self-managed quality in education. She asserts that the focus once applied by education leaders to teaching and learning is now reconstructed into activities such as managing appraisal schemes and budgets as a result of the prevailing deregulated systems premised on market liberalism.

On the other hand, Hayden, in her (1996) discussion of the administration of childcare centres in the Australian context, suggests that, while managers’ roles are different from those of teachers, managers should also have an understanding of teaching and learning. Like Rodd and Simons (above), Hayden indicates that

(d)irectors of child care centres are “managers” - in the same way that school principals and chief executive officers of large corporations are managers....There is no evidence that distinction in teaching, which involves programme planning and delivery for groups of children, is related to the skill and knowledge base required to perform a very different set of multifarious administrative and management activities. (p. 2)

She outlines areas in which the roles differ, including organisational development, team building and financial accounting, opining that the “head teacher notion” can be destructive and lead to an “overload syndrome” (p. 9) because of the different skills needed by a manager. Hayden goes on, however, to claim that “(e)xcellent managers in early childhood settings provide *content* leadership” (p. 87, emphasis in original) and that they function at an “educational (client oriented)” level. She suggests that a two-tiered system of qualifications could assist teachers to become capable managers who would be advantaged by having a focus on education. The initial teacher qualification, Hayden says, could introduce overviews of issues of administration, teamwork, policies and regulations, while specialised post-graduate programmes in management would provide deeper understandings of management roles.

Angus (1989) views are supportive of the stance taken by Blackmore, and provide further backing for Hayden's suggestions about teachers needing further educational qualifications to become managers. In addition, Angus outlines a number of components that are often not addressed in conceptions of educational leadership. He discusses the effects that traditional bureaucracy has on leadership, suggesting that rigid hierarchical positions within schools give great symbolic emphasis and power to the role of leader. He also suggests that most approaches to school leadership neglect the complexity of teacher and administrator roles, and the unstable and conflicting political, industrial and educational contexts within which they are enacted. The many variables, such as gender, cultural capital, socio-economic status, ethnic background and access to education that influence the multiple levels of inequality and power that exist in society are not addressed in what Angus sees as the functionalist practices influencing current views of school leadership.

Angus (1989) offers the notion of human agency as having potential if leaders are to contribute to educational reform which addresses some of the neglected aspects of school structure and endeavour outlined above. Leadership, he suggests, can be displayed by different people at different times according to interests, skills and abilities, rather than be limited by hierarchical structures. Angus asserts that these improvements would lead to facilitative educational leadership in which many school participants would have access to forms of self-determining power within a context of participative democracy. Codd (1989), too, notes that democratic administrative practices are premised on a critical-reflective dimension. Such practices support the aim of education to encourage active and properly informed social critique.

Issues of teamwork and collegiality need to be acknowledged as important concerns when shared leadership is considered. Sergiovanni (1992) comments that the concept of collegiality as a professional virtue provides teachers with the right to expect help and support from other teachers when it is needed, and that they are also obliged to give the same. He believes that collegiality is considered a proper professional attitude or

orientation which can function as a substitute for leadership. Teamwork and collegiality will be discussed further as notions of communication are explored.

Preparing supervisors for leadership, management and administration roles

In Aotearoa/New Zealand childcare sector before 1986 there was no consideration of the need for the licensee, the supervisor, or the person responsible to hold a teaching qualification, let alone any supervisory or management qualifications or experience. It will not be until 2005 that at least one person (not necessarily the supervisor) in each chartered and licensed centre must be a qualified teacher (Mallard, 2000), and even then it will not be compulsory for any other person in a centre to be qualified. While recent ministerial moves to upgrade the quality of early childhood education provision are to be encouraged, it should be noted that it is very isolating to manage and lead a centre while being the only qualified person working in it (Bertacchi, 1996).

A recent Aotearoa/New Zealand study was designed to explore the perceptions of a sample of childcare supervisors about the preparation and skills they need to be effective in their roles (Livingstone, 2001). The study identified a need for on-the-job professional development and for postgraduate opportunities to enable supervisors to develop leadership and management skills relevant to their work in the early childhood sector. Specific content recommended for programmes for supervisors included conceptual leadership skills, advocacy, public relations, administration and finance.

A number of overseas authors have also advocated for better preparation of supervisors or directors for their roles (Bloom & Sheerer, 1992; Culkin, 1997; Hayden, 1996). Writing about British early childhood centres (nurseries), Hay (1997) suggests that most nursery managers there receive little training for the management role; that they obtain such a role by being good at being a senior member of the teaching team. They thus often remain hooked on their old operational role, which manifests itself in “firefighting the immediate rather than thinking about the important” (Hay, 1997, p. 11). Hay notes that the important issues involve working on systems, provision and technique of supervision, appraisal, staff meetings and in-service training. It is noticeable that curriculum planning

is not included within what Hay considers to be the supervisor's leadership and management parameters, nor, (like Rodd, as discussed earlier) are curriculum implementation or pedagogical issues part of the role.

Relevance of the concept of organisational culture to the present study

The notion of organisational culture was founded, as already outlined, on American case studies of school effectiveness, including aspects of leadership, school quality and improvement, change and entrepreneurship. According to Schein (1992), an organisation's culture is usually based on the beliefs, values and assumptions initially brought to it by the founder, and is further shaped by new leaders and members as they forge relationships which foster and maintain the norms and values of the organisation. The present study was designed to identify and explore the leadership and management practices in a range of early childhood centres from the perceptions of adults closely involved with them. It was anticipated that some aspects of the theory of organisational culture might be helpfully employed to obtain an understanding of how the basic assumptions, values and beliefs held by those people informed the culture of each centre. Thus, interviews with participants, combined with the collection and analysis of supporting data, such as demographic questionnaires and artifacts, were used to attempt to determine how centres were led and managed.

Summary

In Part 1 of this chapter, historical and contemporary influences on societal images held of the child and childhood have been discussed. The concept of organisational culture was also outlined. Influences on, and aspects of organisational culture (such as development and leadership) were briefly addressed. In the next section, organisational structure, philosophy, communication, teamwork and change will be examined.

Part 2: Organisational structure and philosophy, communication, teamwork and change

The structure of an organisation includes the allocation of formal responsibilities within an organisation, the linking mechanisms between the roles, and any co-ordinating structures that are needed (Handy, 1985). As well as the allocation of human resources, financial, technical, material and informational resources must also be organised (Kilmann, 1987). According to Hallinger and Leithwood (1996), all of these facets, and more, shape the context in which the organisational leader functions.

(O'Neill, 1994) presents organisational culture (described earlier), organisational structure and organisational activity as interdependent relationships which determine the character of individual organisations. Organisational activity is defined by O'Neill (1994) as "the official curricula ...and other broader areas of activity which collectively make up the organisation's whole curriculum" (p. 102). Similarly to Handy (1985) and Hallinger and Leithwood (1996), O'Neill indicates that organisational structure focuses on the pattern of roles, relationships and lines of authority. Structures and policies constitute the formal relationships and official goals in an organisation, while the culture represents the informal networks, norms, beliefs and values of the people who work within the structure. Those who share the culture and thus constitute the structure of the organisation develop the activities of that organisation.

Different organisational cultures that are each reflected in a structure and a set of systems have been described to support different purposes, with various levels of centralisation or devolution of control in evidence across the spectrum of structures; for example, Handy and Aitken (1996), discuss power, role, person and task cultures. They note that the appropriate structure for an organisation may change as internal and external forces dictate different pressures. Bolman and Deal (1991) agree that different pressures are applied in different organisations, noting issues such as personal and professional relationships between individuals in different parts of an organisation, and employee needs and motivations as examples. Bolman and Deal also move beyond the relatively

restricted range of structures described by Handy to explain that other factors are now changing the face of traditional (especially hierarchical) organisational structures. Amongst the factors they outline are issues such as continuing technological advances, and the changing nature of the workforce, which is now likely to be more highly qualified and better educated. Both of these issues impact on other internal variables and have begun to influence “dramatically different structural forms” (Bolman & Deal, 1991, p. 77).

Bottery (1992), following Handy’s 1985 and 1986 writing, notes that, in the school sector, particular philosophical views of education underpin the transmission of values in each school and influence the structure of each organisation. He describes four different philosophical codes to illustrate his view. The first is the cultural-transmission code, which values knowledge that is perceived to be part of a country’s cultural heritage. The child is seen to be a “passive imbiber” of such knowledge. Bottery’s second description appears to include what early childhood educators would consider as two different theories of learning. One is the child centred Piagetian theory that the child is an active agent in his or her own learning, and that the child constructs his or her knowledge in interaction with the environment (Hedges, 2000b). The second involves social constructivist concepts, such co-constructivist notions derived from Vygotsky about the child’s learning being co-constructed with the teacher, an adult or a peer. Thirdly, the social-reconstruction code involves a mixture of teacher guidance and facilitation of topic- or problem-based learning for the child, who is expected to analyse and criticise issues. Finally, the gross national product (GNP) code referred to by Bottery is akin to the New Right market model discussed earlier (Clark, 1998; Grace, 1998). It values knowledge that is conducive to the furtherance of national economic well-being. Children are trained to fit this model, and teachers are expected to provide the training and to construct and transmit knowledge that pertains to economic growth.

A different set of roles is claimed by Bottery to also exist for school principals in each of the four codes he describes. In the cultural transmission model, hierarchical roles are set in place for all, with the principal as the supervisor. The child-centred model

democratically involves the principal as guide and facilitator, while the social reconstruction model offers a co-ordinating, facilitating role that has mixed aspects of hierarchical control and democratic processes. The GNP model has clear and precise aims and is hierarchically organised, with the principal focusing on economic initiatives.

It is clear that different organisational structures result from each of these models, and Bottery (1992) discusses the ways in which issues such as communication, professional development, change, and curriculum planning and implementation are influenced by the philosophies that underpin the structures. It is likely that the philosophical beliefs which underpin the organisational structures of early childhood centres may also differ as widely as those outlined by Bottery in the school sector. It could also be argued that different images of the child reside within each of the philosophical beliefs, and that the assumptions, beliefs and values about each image lead to the formation of organisational structures that support the development of the image held.

The childcare movement in Aotearoa/New Zealand has been dominated by a traditional focus on 'care' rather than on education; for example, childcare workers were not exposed to teacher education programmes until the end of the 1980s. It could thus be said that the ethos of childcare has not been subjected to the same professional, ethical and moral values held by the state education system. Instead, it is possible that the traditional and historical factors within the early childhood subculture, combined with the reforms of the early 1990s and some of the types of philosophical issues discussed by Bottery, may have resulted in market-oriented managerial structures, cultures, philosophies and practices in many childcare organisations.

Ball (1990) warns that any free "market is unprincipled, it allows no moral priorities in its patterns of distribution" (p. 37). In Aotearoa/New Zealand, centre owners and licensees need to be entrepreneurs under the current competitive, private, New Right-influenced marketplace model. As Grace (1995) indicates, the commodification and "final secularisation" of the education sector in Britain has ensured that school leaders have been required to focus less on moral, scholarly and professional qualities, and more on

their capacity to survive in and exploit market opportunities for education. If this concept is considered with regard to the childcare community (sometimes referred to in managerial terms as the industry [Penman, 1999] or business) in Aotearoa/New Zealand, where little participation has traditionally been sited in education, the emerging picture of the childcare sector is one of managerialism. The focus of managerialism is on efficiency (Codd, 1989), cost-effectiveness (Bennett, 1994; Harker, 1998), budget control and forecasting, public relations, performance indicators and quality control (Grace, 1998), rather than on teaching and learning. Managerialism shapes organisational structures that are inclined to be governed by top-down management processes rather than by inclusive, bottom-up structures that encourage staff to formulate policies that address their issues and concerns (Dimmock, 1995).

The pressures of the New Right doctrines extend to areas of educational operation beyond teaching and learning (Grace, 1995). Market forces, which influence centres to compete to retain or obtain full child places, are everyday concerns. Competition for children includes using, for example, the provision of computer hardware, brightly coloured plastic outdoor equipment which is a visible advertisement, reduced fees, Yellow Pages advertising, or persuasive centre nomenclature such as “Prodigy Learning Centre” and “Brilliant Stars” as lures to attract parental interest. Such incentives may have little to do with improving the quality of learning and teaching. The employment of centre personnel is another concern. In order to maintain high teacher:child ratios, unqualified staff members are frequently employed. This is antithetical to the enhancement of children’s learning (Phillips, 1994; Smith, 1996; Willer, 1990), although some centres advertise on the “strength” of their high (albeit unqualified) adult:child ratio.

It is thus clear that historical and traditional influences in areas such as care and education, as well as current socio-political and economic issues, have a major impact on the philosophies of childcare organisations and the ways in which they are structured.

Philosophies, values and ideology

From a postmodern view, a society's image of children is socially constructed, according to Cannella (1997) and Woodrow (1999). They posit that a critical perspective on the way children are represented, spoken to, treated, and legislated for, will reveal hidden assumptions that construct children's place and position in a society. Woodrow (1999) indicates that the "constructions of childhood" (p. 7/8) that society holds about children (such as the "innocence" of childhood, or of the child as a "threat") form resources upon which individuals and professionals draw. These beliefs then affect the understanding that professionals and policy-makers hold about their roles and strongly influence issues such as curriculum development, assessment regimes and pedagogy. Educational institutions in developed countries are also socially constructed; "what we think these institutions are determines what they do, what goes on within them" (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999, p. 62). Dahlberg et al. claim that the dominant construction of early childhood institutions in developed countries is as producers of child outcomes, substitute homes, or as businesses. Child outcomes include, for example, the promise of preparing children for school and reproduction of cultural values such as gender. The concept of substitute homes encompasses the offering of maternal care and attachment pedagogy and individualised attention, while businesses in a market sell their products, such as developmental outcomes and readiness for school.

Dimmock's (1995) model focuses on producing outcomes for school children by attempting to examine the quality of teaching and learning. As he traces backwards from the endpoint of student outcomes, he identifies four other interactive layers that undergird his conception of the quality school which focuses on effective learning. Altogether, the layers are:

- student outcomes which provide goal direction for learning;
- learning styles and processes;
- teaching strategies;
- school organisation and structure and
- leadership, management, resources, culture.

Dimmock suggests that the five layers could be analysed and adapted within any school and applied to improve the quality of teaching and learning in that organisation. It is conceivable that an examination of each of Dimmock's layers may uncover issues presented in the wider conceptual framework provided by Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989) for considering the culture of a school. Their framework includes values (guidelines for behaviour), philosophy (a coherent statement about values) and ideology (the study of an idea, more limited than a philosophy) as closely related terms in the conceptual intangible foundations of organisational culture which are present in all schools.

Beare, Caldwell and Millikan (1989) suggest that values are the criteria against which we evaluate and reflect upon our actions, and on the attitudes and behaviours of others. A philosophy, they say, consists of higher order values which are metaphysical and conative, based on will, aesthetic sense, ethical code, and moral insight, and which are entirely personal and individual to the value holder. Other, lower order cognitive (rational) and affective (subrational) values, it is asserted, do not merit the status of a "philosophy". Ideology "tends to adopt a predetermined position or belief structure" (Beare et al. 1989, p. 185) and usually focuses on an idea or ideas contained within a philosophy. Using Hodgkinson's 1978 and 1983 models to outline issues which arise at (or as a result of) the intersection of individual and school values, philosophies and ideologies, Beare et al. indicate the complex nature of the issues and tensions which may arise within an organisation as its culture is developed, maintained or changed.

Manifestations of school culture are generally visual, behavioural and verbal. These are expressed or symbolised in many aspects of the school, including in its aims, the curriculum, language, metaphors, organisational stories, artifacts, rituals, ceremonies, teaching and learning, operational procedures, rules, regulations, and parental and community interaction patterns (Beare, Caldwell & Millikan, 1989).

Communication

Organisational culture develops through interactions between members of the organisation. Beardsmore (1995) likens such communication within an organisational culture to a “nervous system” which transmits messages at all levels about what fits.

Most writers discuss aspects of communication that contribute to organisational functioning. For example, Garmston and Wellman (1998) and Bloom (1995) emphasise the importance of collaborative dialogue between staff, Garner (1995) suggests that trust is developed through systems of open communication, and Keesing-Styles (2000) advocates open and reciprocal communication. Riches (1994) describes communication a little more fully. He defines it as “an activity which takes place when a message is transferred satisfactorily from one party to another so that it can be understood and acted on if necessary” (p. 246) and indicates that there are three different spheres of communication. One includes basic mechanical aspects of communication such as written notes, memos and voice-mail. Another is interpersonal communication, involving verbal, non-verbal and listening behaviour. The third, organisational communication, refers to the signals involved in the network of communication experiences, which exist in all organisations.

Riches (1994) uses the work of Rasberry and Lemoine (1986) to develop a model of organisational communication that includes an emphasis on contextual issues. Contextual variables may include, for example, the meaning that affects the ways messages are encoded and decoded, the ways in which messages compete with other messages, and influences of time, space and relationships. These examples are all aspects of organisational discourse, but Rasberry and Lemoine’s description fails to describe fully the degree to which such discourse embodies and articulates organisational culture and shapes, regulates and governs organisational communication.

Communication between centre personnel and children

Few writers discuss the role of centre supervisors communicating with children as part of leadership or management. Robson and Smedley (1996), for example, touch on the importance of interactive experiences for children, but fail to clarify what part (if any) a supervisor might play in providing and maintaining the environment and implementing a programme. Others (Bloom, 1995; Hay, 1997; Kagan & Cohen, 1996; Rodd, 1998) focus on relationships with staff members, parents and others, but do not include fostering positive relationships with children as part of the repertoire of skills needed by a supervisor.

Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (1999) are amongst the few writers who do advocate for all centre personnel to communicate closely with children in order to foster relationships that then promote learning, critical thinking and problem solving in children. Writing from a postmodern perspective, they consider that nothing and no one exists outside of context and relationships. They claim that when the human encounter (relationships) is seen as the basis for pedagogy, communication is seen as the key to children's learning. Pedagogy must stimulate the children's own activity and their possibilities for communicating their own experience. Through communication, Dahlberg et al. (1999) assert,

...children can establish belongingness and participation, laying the ground for taking different perspectives; view their own experiences in the light of others'; discuss, make choices, argue for one's choices, stand up for them, and handle new situations. (p. 59)

Edwards et al. (1998), Katz (1994), Malaguzzi (1993), and Rinaldi (1994) all write of their teaching or observations of organisational culture, structure and teaching in preprimary schools of Reggio Emilia in Italy. They indicate that communicating with children in meaningful ways is considered part of the role of all adults and children who participate in these organisations. The child is seen as central to what occurs in a centre, and adults are encouraged to "slow down" (Katz, 1994, p. 24) to listen and spend focused time with them. Katz posits that there is a strong sense of shared responsibility for

children at all levels of Italian society and a high value placed on the importance of children and families. Amongst other attributes, she says, these support a collaborative and collegial culture in which children are seen as competent learners who use opportunities “for sharing, experimenting, revolting, building theory and constructing knowledge about the world in which they work” (Katz, 1994, p. 34). Communication between all adults and children is an essential feature of any programme in which this image of the child is upheld.

Relationships with parents and whānau

It is generally accepted that, the younger the child, the wider the range of functioning for which adults must assume responsibility (Katz, 1995). Early childhood services differ from schools in that they cater for the very youngest children in our society, and therefore have a closer working relationship with parents, caregivers and whānau than do primary and secondary schools (Porter, 1999). This suggests that the degree of care that must be taken to promote and maintain communication systems which enhance relationships between parents, children and the professionals with whom they work should also be greater in the early childhood sector than in the other education sectors.

Powell’s (1989) comprehensive examination of the literature on relationships between staff of early childhood education programmes and families in America over the last four decades traces changes in ideological and theoretical approaches. These range from the post-World War II concept of the “expert” in child development informing mothers about their children, to a more recent emphasis on matching programme focus with parental populations. The latter shows a “trend toward collaborative, equal relations between parents and program staff wherein the flow of influence is reciprocal” (Powell, 1989, p. 91) and the increasing attention being paid to the social context of parent functioning. Mara (1999), reporting on recent research undertaken in Aotearoa/New Zealand in Pacific Island centres, also notes the need to move from parents considering centre personnel to be “experts” to a more co-operative dialogue involving shared understandings about children’s learning and development.

The latter issue has been informed by ecological (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Smith et al. 2000) and bioecological influences (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) on human development. As a result of such influences, substantive shifts in programme assumptions about the determinants of parent functioning have occurred, leading, for example, to terms such as “parent support” being increasingly used instead of “parent education” and to a move away from a deficit model of programme delivery.

The provision of parent support and positive parent:staff interactions are considered to be dynamic variables of quality. For example, Woods, Boyle and Hubbard (1999) assert that

...it has long been recognised in educational research that continuity of learning experiences between home and school is important for the child's successful learning development. (p. 90)

They also note that firm cultural and personal links, as well as links in terms of knowledge content and structure, are required between home and an early childhood setting. Pugh (1996) rates good relationships between parents and teachers as one of three key factors of quality, and Phillips and McCartney (1987) and Powell (1989) all note that when parents and teachers have good relationships, children are more settled and happy and converse more with teachers. Huttunen (1992) indicates that teachers and parents should be viewed as co-workers if quality curriculum is to be achieved for children. This notion is reflected in *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996), the context of which is based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological model (Huttenen, 1992, p19). The curriculum emphasises “the inclusion and support of parents” (Huttenen, 1992, p. 27) and that “participation in the programme by whānau, parents, extended family and elders in the community should be encouraged...” (Huttenen, 1992, p. 42). In *Quality in Action. Te mahi whai hua* (Ministry of Education, 1998a, p.14) the term “partnership” is used to define the relationship between centre personnel and parents, guardians and whānau. However, the type of partnership expected is not made clear. Other authors suggest that there are a variety of qualifiers for the term “partnership”; for example, equal partnership (Powell, 1998), reciprocal partnership (Keesing-Styles, 2000), consultative partnership (Schaefer, 1991) or, as emphasised by the National Association for the Education of

Young Children (1996), partnership based on mutual trust and respectful of family child-rearing values and decision-making rights.

In spite of the ideals and recommendations, dynamics in parent:teacher relationships may be much more complex than the literature noted above suggests. Tensions have been reported as “commonplace” (Galinsky, 1990) and can be traced to a number of issues, including traces and combinations of historical practices as well as more contemporary influences. Galinsky reports that these include discrepancies between the education and socio-economic levels of parents and teachers, and teachers’ opinions of parents’ employment situation, ethnic background and marital status. As well, parental stressors and the divisive dichotomies of separating child “care” from “education” and other family functions (Powell, 1989) cause difficulties in parent:staff relationships.

Ebbeck and Glover (2000) provide further considerations about parental involvement as they describe an Australian study of immigrant families and their relationships with staff in early childhood settings. Depending on the cultural backgrounds of families, different levels of parent involvement in decision making, availability of emergency help for families, time for parents to have for themselves, and opportunities for parents to work with their child in the early childhood setting were required by the parents. This study suggests that issues of parent:staff relationships are very complex and individual, requiring skill and knowledge on the part of centre personnel.

A further report (Powell, 1998) indicates that although a movement towards a more inclusive role for parents in early childhood programmes depends on the levels of confidence, collaboration and affiliation between them and centre personnel, the two groups differ in their views of these terms. For example, parents valued high levels of knowledge and skill (especially in caring for their child) in centre personnel; teachers, on the other hand, valued open communication and agreement about caregiving issues and parents’ child-rearing knowledge and skills. Powell suggests that a lack of congruence exists between parents’ views and those of centre personnel about their relationship with each other.

Communication between centre personnel

Staessens (1993) describes the professional relationships among teachers as a core component of school culture:

We assume that communication and co-operation between teachers are two basic processes in the construction and maintenance of a school culture. Patterns of communication and co-operation not only create a certain culture, but also strengthen this culture....Communication is the basis for the interactions that foster efficient functioning of the school. (p. 41)

The term “relationship-based” is used by Bertacchi (1996) to describe communication in early childhood centres. Relationship-based centres are characterised by ideals of respect for the person, sensitivity to context, commitment to evolving growth and change, mutuality of shared goals, setting standards for the staff concerning values and ethics and open commitment to reflecting on work (Grey, 1999). The levels of communication needed to develop and maintain good relationships provide the essence of teamwork, which will be discussed next.

Teamwork

For a long time, it has been considered vital that teachers should co-operate, communicate effectively, and be “team players” (Garner, 1995). Most definitions of teamwork seem to be reflective of a democratically-oriented organisational structure and culture that encourages and rewards participation and collaboration. For example, aspects of teamwork include collegiality, defined by Sergiovanni (1992) as intrinsic motivation to maintain a professional orientation to give and to expect support from others, the careful development of trust (Thornton, 1990) and an emphasis on participatory decision-making (Bloom, 2000). Committed and competent team membership (Larson & LaFasto, 1989) and collaboration (Cardno, 1990; Larson & LaFasto, 1989; Whalley, 1999) are also emphasised. Cardno (1990) describes collaboration as partnership, cooperation, agreement, consent and working in combination to accomplish institutional objectives. She says collaboration is bound to notions of consultation, involvement and participation,

shared goals and shared vision, openness, trust and democratic ideals. Bertacchi (1996) binds ideas of teamwork succinctly in indicating that the key to effectiveness in early childhood centres hinges on the quality of relationships developed amongst all involved.

Larson and LaFasto (1989) studied successful teams in occupations as diverse as mountain climbing and surgery. They found that teams designed to problem solve considered that trust was the most important feature of their teamwork. Teams designed to be creative valued autonomy, and teams developed to work tactically emphasised the importance of clarity of communication. The features of Larson and LaFasto's work were applied by Garner (1995) to teamwork in early childhood education. He maintains that trust is also central to the work of an early childhood team. He also suggests that problem resolution, creativity and tactical planning are results that are often pursued, but that team structure and levels of autonomy often preclude satisfactory results because they are frequently not paid sufficient attention in the initial stages of preparing to work as a team.

Developing effective teams

Given that there seems to be some consensus over what successful teams do or do not do, how are they developed and maintained? Larson and LaFasto (1989) found that four design features seem to characterise effectively functioning teams. The design features are:

- clear roles and accountabilities;
- effective communication systems;
- methods for monitoring individual performance and providing feedback; and
- emphasis on fact-based judgements.

Mitchell and Ameen (1995) note that teams need to be carefully structured to ensure success. They indicate that teamwork must have the highest administrative priority, that power and authority must be invested in all team members, and that each team should report to only one higher authority within the organisation. Teams, they suggest, need to meet frequently (weekly for at least two hours) and the responsibility for chairing and

recording the meetings should be shared among all members. Planning for professional development for all staff members was also considered an important aspect of teamwork.

Working in and writing about British nursery schools, Hay (1997) indicates that team support for other team members is valuable;

...teamwork recognises a current belief in the value of "management by participation" - working together as equal members of a team provides social support that relieves the strain and stress of nursery life. (p. 54)

She suggests that teamwork requires the subordination of individual interests and needs in order to provide coordinated activities to achieve common purposes. The basic requirements for working well together are, she says, shared aims and objectives, a common working language and the ability to manage relationships as well as tasks.

Mitchell and Ameen (1995) also support the notion that the clinical skill of individual team members is important in team development. They suggest that careful attention to selection, appraisal and professional development are vital features of that clinical skill. They emphasise the importance of process, which makes possible the teamwork skills that allow staff to function as a unit. Process consists of two major ingredients; interpersonal communication processes (listening, supporting and differing) which were discussed in the previous section, and consensus decision-making, which will be discussed shortly.

The emphasis of most authors, such as those above, appears to be on the specific components of teamwork rather than also including the influences of organisational culture, structure and discourse on a team. In early childhood education, is it possible to develop effective teamwork, for example, within a hierarchically organised structure? Can small internal groups function independently as teams even if the larger organisation does not? If so, how does this impact on the rest of the organisation? Can enough decisions be made by a small team within a larger organisation to ensure that it has ownership of the result? What effects are imposed on a small team if members range in

skill levels from unqualified to highly skilled, as is the current situation in early childhood education? What happens if no one in the team has teaching qualifications but the team is expected to deliver an educational service? Contextual variations, it would seem, must impact on the development of teamwork, on the ways teams function, and on their structure and type. Thus, while the ideals of teamwork can be articulated, variables in any organisation must colour the type of teamwork that eventuates within it.

Decision-making

Torrington and Weightman (1989) suggest that

(t)he ideal of participation in decision-making is fundamental to Western political structures, partly because it is seen as a means towards fairness between all members of society and partly because it is seen as a way of delivering effective government. Management, like government, depends on both efficiency and justice. (p. 72)

While the democratic ideal may be to maintain full involvement of members of society in decision-making processes, Torrington's statement is probably often not supported in reality, and certainly not in all organisational decision-making. The concept, discussed in the previous section, of variables within organisational culture, structure and discourse that influence teamwork is noted by Mintzberg and Waters (1990), who argue that decision-making processes that initiate change are often difficult or impossible to trace to their source. For example, informal talking within an organisation can be the cultural basis for the way an issue is understood within that organisation and becomes the catalyst for action. Speculative ideas are sometimes gathered from various sources and "snowballed" together to form strategies which emerge inadvertently. The environment, perhaps influenced by market perceptions, political decisions, or economic forces, is a further possible influence on the way decisions occur. Therefore, while the "ideal of participation" may be intended, it is often not realised in decision-making processes within society or organisations.

Bloom (1995) also describes the complex nature of participatory decision-making. Her research in 315 centres in Illinois showed that personnel who hold different positions in a centre often hold conflicting views about how decisions are made. 78% of the teachers involved in the study indicated that they perceived that they had less influence in centre-wide decisions than they would like to have had. Bloom points out that, while teachers' perceptions may not be fully informed, perceptions are powerful regulators of behaviour and influence levels of commitment. Bloom's research findings suggest that four levels of participation exist in centre decision-making. The levels of participation are:

- unilateral decision-making, in which the supervisor makes the decision;
- consultative decision-making, in which the supervisor seeks ideas from staff prior to making a decision;
- collaborative decision-making, in which staff are involved in making decisions by a variety of means, including unanimous agreement, majority vote and consensual decisions;
- delegated decision-making, where relevant information is provided or explored for staff to make the decision.

Bloom indicates that the level of participation in decision-making will vary from situation to situation, depending on the needs of the individuals involved, the timeframe available and the levels of expertise of staff members. While Bloom's study did not extend to parents' roles in decision-making, it could, perhaps, be assumed that parents and other stakeholders (such as management committees, licensees) also hold different perceptions about where and how decisions are made.

Change

Change is an inevitable process by which the future invades our lives (Rabey, 1997). Change takes time and effort to enact, is an incremental process, and usually causes a ripple effect; change in one aspect of a system or culture results in effects being felt elsewhere (Bloom et al. 1991). Change has "multiple causes...(that) are to be explained more by loops than lines" (Mintzberg & Waters, 1990, p. 10). These causes include

interconnected contextual influences from the past, present and future, as well as the perceptions, learning and remembering of those involved in the process.

Change and organisational culture

Many changes in the early childhood sector have occurred in a relatively short time, such as the recent rapid growth in numbers of childcare centres, legislative changes, staff training, curricular developments and influences of research (see Chapter One). Historical features of the early childhood subculture (such as the influence of the “cult of domesticity” (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999, p. 46; May, 1993, p. 9) and the tradition of care rather than a focus on education (Cooper & Tangaere, 1994) still have a strong hold on early childhood philosophy. The organisational culture of each early childhood centre has had to cope with the traditional views of the education sector and society, as well as adapting to the contextual changes in both and to change within the centre itself.

While the culture of an organisation prescribes what happens within it, it also drives strategy (Beardsmore, 1995) because of its ability to filter the evidence from the outside world and therefore to govern the formation of strategy alternatives. Therefore, understanding the culture within an organisation and ways in which it may need to be adapted to meet the needs of the outside environment are important skills for staff. The levels of economic and environmental stability and turbulence in the world outside of the organisation will influence the degree of strategic change needed internally; creating the right balance is a sensitive task. Schein (1992) views this situation as “problems of external adaptation and problems of internal integration” (p.12) which need to be worked through over time and eventually “owned” by the group.

Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994) indicate that external reasons for change are often more difficult for an organisation to assimilate because it seems that change is being “done to” the organisation whether it desires it or not. Internal change, they say, is often seen as a more collegially-designed process of growth and is easier for members to understand and accommodate. Change, according to Hopkins et al., tends to manifest itself within organisations in one of two forms. The first is incremental change, which is a

gradual, subtle transition from one state to another. The second form, planned change, is designed to break the usual sequence of events and replace it with a new order of practice.

While change can be very positive, it is also often threatening to those who work in organisations, and the behavioural and attitudinal “norms” particular to the culture of a specific organisation may present a resistance in themselves (Marsden, 1998; Schein, 1992). It is easier to make successful changes in a climate that makes explicit the values, norms and practices of effective roles that develop the aims and enhance the nature of an organisation than it is in an organisation where a more dysfunctional culture exists. The leader (or change agent) who can act as a catalyst in developing and maintaining a culture that allows staff to reflect on how improvements might be made will have set the scene for managing change positively (Bloom et al. 1991).

Humphries and Senden (2000) suggest that there are four stages of response commonly experienced when change occurs: denial, resistance, exploration (energy, excitement, sometimes frustration and lack of focus with too much to do and think about) and, finally, commitment. Denial and resistance can be triggered by many fears, including loss of security, loss of status, or apathy (Rabey, 1997), and can take many forms, from subtle sabotage to outright opposition.

Ownership of and participation by all involved in change processes are important if change is to be successfully undertaken and resistance is to be reduced. The establishment of a “bottom-up” co-operative approach to change assists people to become involved in the ownership of change (Dimmock, 1995). Other essential features include careful planning, sufficient time and consultation (Rabey, 1997). Dunphy (1991) contends that adequate rewards and continuing monitoring and modification of change are important features that need to be built in to change processes. Continuous professional development for staff is also essential according to Neville (cited in Walker, 1992).

In the present study, written questionnaires and interview questions were designed to examine issues to do with changes that have taken place in centres, and participants' perceptions of how changes have been led and managed. Triangulation of data was also planned to enable a more in-depth understanding of the processes of change and their effects on the cultures of the centres in the study.

Summary

The literature, as it pertains to organisational structure and philosophy, values and ideology, was discussed first in Part 2 of this chapter. Theoretical issues relating to communication, teamwork and change in organisations were outlined next. Where possible, attention was drawn to the implications of theory to organisational culture and structure in early childhood education in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In Part 3, the focus is on theoretical aspects of pedagogy and curriculum as they relate to the leadership and management of early childhood centres.

Part 3: Pedagogical and curriculum issues

The change of focus in the childcare sector from care to the inclusion of education was highlighted by the transition of administration of childcare from the Department of Social Welfare to the Department of Education in 1986 (Smith & Swain, 1988) (see Chapter One). Arguably, the notion of "care" still predominates, although aspects of the different theoretical and ideological educational approaches that influenced the Playcentre movement and the philosophy of free state kindergartens have been employed in some childcare centres. It is also clear that many centres operating under private, for-profit, business models have been successful financially, especially after MoE funding for childcare increased in 1990.

The reforms of the education sector in the 1990s added impetus to the privatisation of childcare centres, and have also increased the focus on pedagogical (Dockett & Fleer 1999; Hedges, 2000b) and curriculum (Carr, 1998; Gaffney & Smith, 1997; Mara, 1999) issues in the early childhood subculture. However, there is very little literature that

discusses the need for a focus on pedagogical or curriculum leadership in early childhood education to ensure that the benefits of the attention to teaching and learning afforded by new research are effectively put into practice in centres. In the next section, some of the theoretical influences and contextual conditions to do with teaching and learning will be explored briefly.

Theoretical influences on pedagogy and curricula

In Aotearoa/New Zealand, there have been many diverse approaches to curriculum design and implementation. In the main, they have been influenced by Western theories and practices (May, 1997). Each approach is based on the implicit image of the child and childhood held by the instigator of that approach. Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (1999) describe a number of examples of theorists who have had an important influence on the construction of early childhood in current pedagogical practice. They discuss the theories of Locke, who proposed the empty vessel or tabula rasa approach that posits challenges to have a child “ready for school” or “ready to learn”. Rousseau placed an emphasis on free play and free creativity within a sheltered and protected childhood, while Piaget focused on ages and stages of development described in terms of developmental psychology. Developmentally appropriate practice (Bredekamp, 1987) was conceptualised within Piaget’s paradigm and still strongly influences teaching practices today. In addition, the influence of Froebel’s theories and “developmentally arranged play and activities” (May, 1993, p. 3) in Germany in the mid nineteenth century was brought to this country by followers who founded the kindergarten movement here, and has had a major influence on curricula, pedagogical practices, and values.

Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (1999) also include the “construction of motherhood” (p. 46) as a twentieth-century influence on teaching practice. Following Bowlby (1979), the emphasis of this view is that a mother is biologically determined to care for a child, and that harm is caused to the child by disturbing this relationship. Dahlberg et al. (1999) note that the labour supply market factor which emerged during the latter part of the century, requiring women and men in the workforce, has coloured and re-focused this perception of childhood. In order to provide for women to join the workforce in a time when their

labour is needed, centres with a “maternal” focus of care, resembling the perceived benefits of a family home, are provided.

In the 1980s, the work of Vygotsky and Bruner also began to influence Western pedagogical practices and curriculum development (Lauritzen, 1992). Their theories promoted the value of peers and “knowledgeable others” in children’s socially-constructed learning, providing a process, or social-constructivist model of teaching and learning, which impacted on curriculum planning and implementation. In addition, Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (1999) suggest that the co-constructivist model (of “shared meaning-making which acknowledges cultural and social forces” [Hedges, 2000b, p. 18]), together with influences of Reggio Emilia and recent Scandinavian initiatives, have forged a postmodern social constructionist perspective. This perspective sees children existing within a changing environment in which they must take responsibility for forming and shaping their own understanding of the world, knowledge, identity and lifestyle. Pedagogically, this requires provision of opportunity for children to develop high capacities for learning, self-reflection and communication, as well as open and questioning relationships.

Other recent publications provide support for deconstructing the field of early childhood education in order to move towards an understanding of “who the child is and might be” (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999, p. 44). For example, Lambert (1995), in reviewing theoretical influences on early childhood education, also suggests that the era of the “Great Theorists” (p. 72) has now passed. She contends that the patriarchal “cultural assumptions about normative development” within the “dogmatic theoretical models” of the past should no longer form the basis of early childhood practice. She suggests that multidimensional perspectives and contextualising research approaches are two ways of reconceptualising notions about the cognitive development of young children.

Other perspectives on curriculum development and cognition are also offered. For example, MacNaughton (1995) suggests that feminist post-structuralist theory provides a political and theoretical way of assessing children’s learning, and Dockett (1995)

describes advances on thinking about children's metacognitive awareness and theories of mind which go well beyond Piagetian beliefs and influences.

Historical and contextual influences on pedagogy and curricula

Historically-based tensions between care and education in the childcare sector can be illustrated in Middleton and May's (1999) insight into the thoughts of Holmes, who was considering the integration of childcare into the field of teacher education in the late 1980s when he said

I've always been an advocate for the term teacher. I was always looking for components of a programme which were educational yet I found people that didn't have any awareness of what they were doing as educational. They saw themselves as carers and saw themselves as just providing those components of care, security, risk free safe environment. (p. 102)

Holmes' observation of teachers' views of their work reflects the care/education dichotomy (Smith et al. 2000) which, arguably, still exists today. This dichotomy, combined with an equally strong history of belief in the importance of play in the lives of young children (Cullen, 1996; David, 1994) and the Piagetian influences on cognition and curriculum that have already been outlined, form the prevailing influences upon early childhood education in Aotearoa/New Zealand. An attempt to reconcile the dichotomy was reflected in the concept of "educare" (Smith, 1996), "coined in recognition that there can be no meaningful distinction between care and education" (p. 52), but the differentiation still appears in early childhood discourse and practice.

In addition, different images held of children provide conflicting beliefs and on-going debate about how early childhood services should provide education for them. Berk and Winsler (1995) outline two polarised positions that are frequently taken. They indicate that child-centred programmes aim to foster independent growth, while "academic" (p. 149) or formal programmes are adult-centred, aimed at socialising and preparing children for school. Different curricula and learning environments are provided to support each position; nonintrusive environments for the child-centred programmes, and formal,

school-like programmes for the academic programmes. Berk and Winsler (1995) claim that neither of the positions are well-suited to “promote the development of conscious thought and self-regulation in young children” (p. 150) and suggest, instead, that the socio-cultural Vygotskian approach, which values the enhancement of higher mental functions, offers a resolution to the debate. Cullen (2001), focusing on knowledgeable teachers providing “active, meaningful learning experiences...in everyday environments” (p. 8) to enhance literacy learning, provides support for Berk and Winsler’s claim, arguing that the socio-cultural approach *does* prepare children for subsequent school learning.

Reflections of the debate are seen frequently in public comment (see, for example, an account of how to “hothouse” infants and young children [Johnson, 1998] and an article by an Aotearoa/New Zealand journalist [Coddington 2001] on teacher education and the teaching of reading). A further example is seen in a recent publication by the Education Review Office (2000b), where critical comment is made of the ways in which early childhood providers assess children’s development and achievement (especially in the areas of numeracy and literacy) while acknowledgement is noted of the possible counterproductiveness of structured and formal early academic learning.

There is also a conscious desire by many teachers in the early childhood field to resist the “push-down” effects of the primary school curriculum which favours more formal programmes of instruction (Cannella, 1997; Corrie, 1999). However, this resistance is difficult to maintain in the face of the barrage of societal challenges for parents and teachers to provide formal instruction at earlier ages. Two decades ago, Elkind described the American “hurried child” (Elkind, 1981) as a product of an era in which rapid change had impacted on the contexts in which children grew up. The concept of parents demanding earlier formal education featured in his description as one aspect of childhood at that time, and is, perhaps, now being experienced in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Parents' views of curriculum and pedagogical issues in early childhood education

The literature offers a number of reports on parents' perceptions of curriculum and pedagogy. For example, Russell (1991) interviewed parents about how they perceived their role in the education of their child. Of 41 parents, only 11 believed that parents play a major role, seen at least as equal in importance to that of teachers. This group believed that academic and non-academic teaching, with an emphasis on moral and social development, was a parent's responsibility. Teachers were considered to carry out the same functions, but could also act as resources to advise and support parents. Eighteen other parents held similar values, but emphasised that, while they held particular responsibility for behaviour and discipline, they considered themselves subordinate to teachers in providing suitable educational experiences for children. They considered themselves in a supporting role, mainly because of their own lack of resources at home and more importantly, their lack of training.

The remaining 11 parents in Russell's (1991) study considered that education was "what happened in schools and pre-schools" (p. 281). Four perceived their roles as minor and subordinate to those of teachers with regard to curriculum content and implementation, although they considered that their presence in the centre and support for teachers was necessary to the emotional well-being of their children. Seven parents felt that their role involved selecting a good educational institution and that once that was achieved, they should play no further part in their children's education.

Parents' perceptions of the quality of curriculum and pedagogical provision and the differences between their views and those of childcare workers and supervisors is offered in a study undertaken by Williams and Ainley (1994). Williams and Ainley surveyed 20 participants from each of these three groups to determine their views on the relative importance of 11 researcher-selected criteria of quality previously determined by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Of these, interactions among staff and children, planning, evaluation and the physical environment were four criteria most directly related to pedagogical and curriculum issues. Parents consistently rated these four criteria as lower in importance than did the childcare

workers and supervisors in the study. The issue of staff being well-qualified, which is considered to have a major positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning in early childhood settings (Meade, Podmore, May, Te One & Brown, 1998; Mitchell 1999; Wells 2000) was also considered by Russell's (1991) parent participants to be less important than it was by the other two groups.

In a recent qualitative study that used aspects of the grounded theory method to seek parents' perceptions about their transition to parenthood (McLeod & Butler, 1999), parents discussed their confusion about the barrage of often-conflicting advice they received on pedagogical and curriculum issues. This advice came from a variety of sources – for example, from other parents, privately-owned centre owners, community early childhood education providers, and commercial sources (i.e. computer companies and commercially-produced “early reading” systems advertised to promote advanced child-reading capabilities by using flash cards and workbooks). Parents also expressed the difficulties they experienced in judging the worth of pedagogical approaches used in centres as they sought the type of childcare that might best suit their child. As children grew from infancy towards school age, the tendency amongst most parents was to seek more didactic and structured programmes where, one parent explained, teachers “start teaching them (children) to do words and write and things” (McLeod & Butler, 1999, p. 250), perhaps not realising that children could learn to read and write without employing these measures.

Stover (1999) found similar issues raised in her case study evaluation of how parents were consulted on centre policies. She suggests that parents, by advocating for more tightly regimented skills-oriented programmes, and by focusing on the products rather than the processes of their child's education, could undermine the quality of centre programmes.

In general, parental opinion of early childhood curriculum content and implementation often varies from the opinions of those who work in the early childhood education subculture. This is noted in the studies discussed above and supported by others in

Aotearoa/New Zealand (Keesing-Styles, 2000; Smith & Barraclough, 1997) and in other countries (Athey, 1990; Blenkin & Kelly, 1997; Folque & Siraj-Blatchford, 1996; Holloway et al. 1995; Rodd & Millikan, 1994).

The early childhood curriculum: Te Whāriki

During the early 1990s, an early childhood curriculum was developed for Aotearoa/New Zealand. Carr (1999) claims that the implementation of *Te Whāriki* has brought about a shift from a framework of outcomes based on the psychological model of physical, intellectual, language, emotional and social skills to a framework based on a socio-cultural perspective. She argues that the socio-cultural model provides a framework of belonging, well-being, exploration, communication, and contribution, and emphasises participation.

Cullen (1996), however, suggests that the structure of *Te Whāriki*, based as it is on providing for infants, toddlers and young children, “is essentially developmental” (p.114). She warns that a programme based on the five strands of *Te Whāriki* would be unlikely to be different from a developmental (psychologically-focused) programme of the type the early childhood subculture has advocated since early in the twentieth century. The curriculum was, says Cullen (1996), greeted with “enormous enthusiasm” (p.123), but she raises concerns about a number of issues that might constrain its successful implementation. Amongst these she notes the fragmented or incomplete training of many practitioners, who would have difficulty in making the conceptual leap required in translating the theoretical perspectives into practice. She also predicts that the framework could be “interpreted on the basis of existing philosophies and practices with an ‘overlay’ of the new terminology” (p.118).

According to the Ministry of Education (1996), *Te Whāriki* provides a curriculum framework that forms “the basis for consistent curriculum and programmes” (p. 10). It is not compulsory to use the document, but the DOPs (which are mandatory for chartered early childhood services) contain the discourse of *Te Whāriki*. As a result, all centres must comply with the DOPs, and policies must therefore contain references to the

language of *Te Whāriki*. The curriculum is founded on the following aspirations for children (Ministry of Education, 1996):

Develop and implement a curriculum that assists all children to be: competent and confident learners and communicators; healthy in mind, body and spirit; secure in their sense of belonging; secure in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society. (p. 9)

The focus on the implementation of *Te Whāriki* is evidenced in documents such as *What counts as quality in childcare* (Education Review Office, 1996) where it is noted that the use of *Te Whāriki*, “even in its draft form”, shows promise because:

The present regulatory framework does not provide sufficient clarity and direction to ensure the implementation of consistently high quality early childhood programmes. (p. 20)

Four years later, a publication by the same office (Education Review Office, 2000b) includes the use of *Te Whāriki* as a quality assurance mechanism which provides “guidelines for consistent and high quality early childhood programmes” (p. 13). The same document, however, notes that:

Many centres...need to develop the links between the assessment of children's achievements, abilities and needs, planning for those needs and evaluation of programme effectiveness (Education Review Office, 2000b, p. 20).

Planning and implementing the curriculum: processes and concerns

Curriculum planning and implementation in the early childhood sector differs from other education sectors. Generally, both are less subject-focused and more holistic in nature than in other sectors (Corrie, 1999); early childhood educators have problematised formal programmes of instruction (Cannella, 1997), notwithstanding the ongoing public debate about how children learn, noted above. Arguably, in the early childhood subculture, a stronger teacher focus is expected on child-initiated experiences for the individual child than occurs in primary and secondary schools.

Spontaneous learning is widely encouraged and flexible planning is expected, following a Piagetian-influenced constructivist model (Athey, 1990) or, more recently, a socio-cultural (Vygotsky, 1978) or co-construction model (Rogoff, 1990), as in the national (but not compulsory) curriculum document, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996). The process of curriculum planning (often called programme planning) within the framework of *Te Whāriki* is expected to provide sufficient learning opportunities to ensure that curriculum goals are realised, and should draw on observations of children's strengths, needs and interests (Education Review Office, 1998). The focus of curriculum planning may be on one of a variety of factors or combination of factors such as individual children, groups of children, or a particular aspect of *Te Whāriki*. Curriculum planning is usually undertaken by a group of teachers, rather than by individuals, in early childhood centres.

Suggested processes for planning, evaluating and improving curriculum programmes based on teachers' knowledge and understanding of the learning and development of each child are offered in *Quality in Action. Te Mahi Whai Hua* (Ministry of Education, 1998a). This document conveys the Government's expectation of the standard of education and care to be provided for infants, toddlers and young children. However, the match between desirable objectives and practices (DOPs) as outlined in the Government's publication and what happens in centres in New Zealand may not yet be close.

This point is picked up by the ERO, which notes that, due to the lack of clear expectations outlined in *Te Whāriki*, and because of the wide range of experience and training of staff in early childhood centres,

...many early childhood providers do not consistently articulate or pursue high quality expectations, especially in respect of children's cognitive capabilities.
(Education Review Office, 1998, p. 5).

Cullen (1996), too, suggests that practitioners' "theoretical knowledge is often constrained by piecemeal or incomplete training" (p. 116). She also indicates that New Zealand practitioners come from "a longstanding tradition of free play" and may continue

to emphasise the Piagetian developmental approach to education over more recently addressed sociocultural theories which value the roles of peers and adults in children's learning.

Cullen (1996) also suggests that aspects of theories which have not yet been carefully observed or adapted for cultural groups other than those in which they were developed may be used by practitioners in New Zealand who do not have the knowledgeable sensitivity to implement them appropriately. She makes specific reference to the terms "scaffolding" (introduced by Bruner), and of "guided participation" (outlined by Rogoff) as examples of theoretical perspectives which have not yet been examined critically for the appropriateness of their application to Māori, Asian, Pacific Island or Pakeha communities in New Zealand. These terms are briefly defined in *Quality in Action. Te Mahi Whai Hua* (Ministry of Education, 1998a), but neither Bruner nor Rogoff are referenced for further practitioner reading.

Suggestions for bicultural and multicultural approaches to curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation and to assessment of children's learning are minimal in *Quality in Action. Te Mahi Whai Hua*. As an example, educators are exhorted to

...extend children's thinking and introduce other world views by integrating tikanga Māori into the curriculum. They can also use te reo Māori, where appropriate, and gain an understanding of Māori pedagogy in order to facilitate young children's learning. (Ministry of Education, 1998a, p. 19)

Such comment reinforces the position of Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand society as "other" instead of maintaining a bicultural focus, and no reference is provided to support an educator to learn more about the issues.

Cooper and Tangaere (1994) assert that, while the te Kōhanga Reo movement, with its base in total immersion in the Māori language, has provided positive developments in early childhood care and education for Māori children, those children fare badly in mainstream services. DOP 10 (Ministry of Education, 1998b) specifies that service

management and educators should implement policies, objectives and practices which reflect the unique place of Māori as tangata whenua and the principle of partnership inherent in te Tiriti o Waitangi, and which are inclusive, equitable and culturally appropriate. However, as Cooper and Tangaere (1994) indicate, the Government has shown no genuine commitment to acknowledging te reo Māori or te Tiriti o Waitangi in mainstream education, and the future for Māori is confusing and ambiguous.

Cullen (1996) raises other concerns with regard to practitioners' levels of understanding of pedagogical practices and curriculum subject knowledge. Because of the emphasis in *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996) on affective domains, she questions whether those enrolled in teacher education programmes are being provided with an appropriate depth of subject knowledge and a strong understanding of current theories of cognition and learning. Haynes (2000), writing specifically about the depth of mathematical knowledge needed by early childhood teachers, indicates that both personal knowledge and a positive disposition towards mathematics are essential components of effective teaching. The need for teachers to have a depth of scientific knowledge is reinforced by Backshall (2000) in her discussion of the science learning of infants and toddlers. All three Aotearoa/New Zealand writers thus articulate the importance of practitioners having a strong theoretical knowledge base in curriculum content and pedagogy.

In the United Kingdom context, Drummond (1989) wrote that she feared that there was a conceptual vacuum at the centre of the work of early childhood teachers which prevented them from justifying their philosophies and practices, and that a "language for learning" (p. 13) must be promoted to facilitate debate and to express feelings and reasoned arguments. Athey (1990) follows Drummond's concern when she says

...teachers of young children need to be more articulate about the nature of successful learning in the early years, how this learning comes about, and how professionals working with parents can facilitate such learning. (p. xii)

It is possible that Drummond's and Athey's comments may also apply to the staff in the context of the present study.

Programme evaluation

Prior to the late 1990s, little was written in Aotearoa/New Zealand about programme evaluation in early childhood centres. Towards the end of that decade, the pedagogical and political context included a strong focus on accountability in education, legal requirements for early childhood programmes to be accountable, and initiatives to develop criteria for programme evaluation (Podmore, May & Mara, 1998). Examples of specific initiatives include the final draft of *Te Whāriki*, with more explicitly-stated expectations for programmes, assessment and programme evaluation than had been articulated previously, and the higher standards of provision, related to new funding criteria, that were promulgated in the 1997 revised statement of the DOPs. Many of the MoE's professional development strategies were also designed to promote the active involvement of centres in developing evaluation practices which were based on sound Aotearoa/New Zealand-based research into quality, curriculum and programmes (Podmore, May & Mara, 1997).

May and Carr (2000) note that assessment processes (upon which planning should be based) and evaluation procedures for the early childhood curriculum have not yet been fully researched and discussed. These issues, they say, are the focus of two MoE-funded research projects still being developed. However, there have been a number of research initiatives that have begun to inform understanding of the links between evaluation, assessment and curriculum. These include a literature review on the principles of evaluation and the links with assessment and curriculum (Cubey & Dalli, 1996), and an innovative approach for enabling participation of stakeholders in implementing and evaluating programmes based on *Te Whāriki* (Haggerty, 1996). Other research includes Carr's (1997) work on connecting assessment to evaluation, an outline of possibilities and problems associated with programme planning and evaluation using *Te Whāriki* (Lee, 1996), and a thesis that outlines ways in which professional development can enhance processes of reflection, curriculum planning and programme evaluation through action research (Haggerty, 1998).

In addition to these and other research developments, *The Quality Journey; He Haerenga Whai Hua* (Ministry of Education, 1999b) (mentioned above in relation to curriculum planning and implementation) was published and circulated to all early childhood services in Aotearoa/New Zealand in November, 1999. This resource was designed to assist centres to develop quality review systems in their own environment. It includes, in the range of review parameters, a focus on teaching, learning and development which assists centre personnel and parents to evaluate how well the service is performing and to improve effectiveness “through consolidating, changing, or abandoning aspects of a service” (Ministry of Education, 1999b, p. 10).

It is clear that the evaluation of early childhood programmes is a MoE research and professional development focus and that individuals and groups are also contributing to the body of knowledge held in Aotearoa/New Zealand on the topic. However, most of the literature involves academic reports on trials and pilot schemes rather than on practitioner-based discussion of programme evaluation. Because of the relatively recent interest in the topic, it is questionable whether programme evaluation is undertaken in an informed way in centres apart from in those that are involved with the MoE-contracted professional development programmes offered by various agencies working with specific centres.

Role of the person responsible in pedagogical issues

Grace (1995), writing about British schools, suggests that prevailing political influences in the 1980s and 1990s have changed the role of the British head teacher from one of professional leadership with direct and personal involvement in classroom teaching, to one of distanced cultural manager. Cultural management, he says, is concerned with a more utilitarian and directive relationship with teachers, parents and children. Under this model, head teachers are likely to be concerned with the technical mechanics for efficient delivery of the required cultural output, not with professional debate about pedagogical issues.

While Grace referred to British schools, the political and economic climate in Aotearoa/New Zealand in the 1990s encouraged the privatisation of early childhood education, thus also influencing provision of services in a context of economic rationalism (Hayden, 1996). With few, or perhaps no qualified staff in some centres, it is likely that technical (as opposed to pedagogical) ends are also pursued in those centres with an effect similar to that described by Grace. If so, the concerns about low levels of qualified practitioner pedagogical knowledge articulated by Cullen (1996) (and discussed above) become compounded. After all, if she *is* qualified, the person responsible may be the only person on the staff of a centre with anything other than “commonsense” knowledge of teaching and learning theories (Rodd, 1994) and their application to practice. She may also spend much of her time on administration and other duties involved in operating the centre, rather than on pedagogical concerns.

The “effective schools” movement of the 1980s created many debates about the nature of leadership in schools. Some researchers used the term “instructional leader” (Andrews, Basom & Basom, 1991; Cardno, 1990; Hough, 1984; Jordan, 1986) to describe the importance of having as principal (also referred to as the “culture manager” by Hough, 1984, p. 60) someone who understands about curriculum. Another term for this role was “curriculum leadership” (Cardno, 1992). It is interesting to note that most of those writing about early childhood leadership and management, including Hay (1997) and Rodd (1996), do not include curriculum and pedagogical issues in their concepts of early childhood leadership. Simons (1986) does list programme evaluation as a skill needed by directors, but neglects to link this to curriculum planning and implementation. Hayden (1996) is one of the few writers to suggest that managers need an understanding of teaching and learning processes before undertaking further training for the leadership and management component of their role.

Waniganayake, Morda and Kapsalakis' (2000) study of staff perceptions of leadership and management, however, offers some refreshingly different suggestions about the need to explore “multiple leadership roles along divergent dimensions of centre functions” (p.18). They suggest providing opportunities for staff members with particular strengths

or interests to take specific responsibility for organisational activities such as curriculum implementation or for administration. They also argue that the hierarchical models of functioning frequently found in centres require issues of status and order to be addressed, and a reliance on positional authority. Both, they say, detract from staff members being encouraged to develop leadership strengths in areas such as the curriculum.

Professional issues

The issue of professionalism and whether or not it applies to early childhood education has been debated frequently (Spodek & Saracho, 1988). Professional issues include many aspects of teachers' lives and work, including the employment of qualified or unqualified staff, the length and quality of teacher education, teacher registration processes and values, the values and beliefs implicit in the culture and structures of centres in which centre personnel work, staff appraisal, professional development and career pathways.

Women and professionalism

The question of whether teaching (especially early childhood teaching) is considered to be a profession has been debated as the quest for quality has increased in intensity (Bredekamp & Willer 1993; Spodek & Saracho, 1988). One problem with addressing issues of professionalism for the female-dominated early childhood sector lies in re-interpreting the traditional definitions of professionalism which reflect the historical dominance of males in professions. Silin (1988) notes that

...standards of professionalism modelled on the male experience, as well as assumptions about the nature of professional commitment will need to be re-evaluated to reflect alternative career structures and interpretations of the meaning of work. (p. 130)

Bresden and Myers (1989) outline the problems women in early childhood education experience as a result of inheriting male conceptualisations of professions and professionalism. They suggest that issues of power and of linear career progression are predicated on the hierarchical model of power and governance supported by traditional

male world views. They also challenge the beliefs (implicit in the traditional concepts of professionalism) that professionals cannot sustain family and lifestyle commitments. Ways in which centres consider these issues are usually implicitly addressed in the espoused values (strategies, goals and philosophies) and the basic underlying assumptions (unconscious, taken-for-granted beliefs, perceptions, thoughts and feelings) (Schein, 1992) which underpin the culture of centres.

Teacher education and professionalism

The content of teacher education programmes and their place in the debate about professionalism have also been sources of concern for many involved in the care and education of children and are evident in the espoused values and the underlying assumptions of centre cultures. Some in the early childhood community advocate for teachers who are reflective practitioners and who think critically as they work with children (May, 1996), and who have a deep understanding of theoretical perspectives to apply to practice (Grace, 1995). Others, with a more technical view, consider that teachers are better to be “successful” workers “who have a range of competencies measured by unit standards that are discrete, sequential (and) portable” (NZQA Skill New Zealand, 1993, p. 63). The Early Childhood Council, a group of (mostly private) centre operators, uses the discourse of industrial management to support vociferously unit standards and claim that “competent practitioners” (Penman, 1999, p. 4) should be trained by Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) in the same way as plumbers and hairdressers are taught.

Another aspect of professionalism is considered to be “prolonged training” (Katz, 1988, p.78). In Aotearoa/New Zealand, credentialling of early childhood teachers is now benchmarked at the level of the three-year Diploma. Registration of teachers is attracting more interest each year from those who hold the Diploma, and because successful registration processes are dependent upon continuing supervised professional development (The Teacher Registration Board, 1997), teachers have been encouraged to continue to develop professionally beyond graduation.

Staff appraisal and professional development

In addition to teacher education and registration requirements, DOP 11 (Ministry of Education, 1998b) indicates that “(m)anagement should implement personnel policies which promote quality practices including appointment of quality staff, staff appraisal and professional development for both management and educators”.

In order to meet minimum requirements for centre chartering purposes, leaders and managers in centres must ensure compliance with DOP 11. The systemic requirements introduced by the Government-imposed teacher education processes, the teacher registration regulations, and the chartering specifications of the DOPs have all impacted on the need for qualified, registered teachers to continue to undertake professional development as part of their work. However, many early childhood centres operate with few (or no) qualified and registered teachers, so DOP 11 is the only requirement that provides for unqualified staff to access training that will improve the quality of their practice.

Cautions about the value of staff appraisal are articulated by Edwards (1992a), who states that there is “no clear evidence from research that appraisal produces better teaching and learning” (p. 2). Copley and Thomas (1995), too, found few positive aspects in a survey of school staff on their opinions about their appraisal processes and the outcomes for them and for children. Other research suggests that the practice of “appraisal is about power: the power of knowledge, access, secrecy, bias, prejudices and idiosyncratic ways of thinking” (Townsend, 1998, p.53) and that power is delegated to those appraising (Sergiovanni, 1991).

It is clear that, if appraisal systems and processes are to be viewed positively by staff and have useful outcomes for children, a climate of trust must be developed (Townsend, 1998) and formative and summative functions of appraisal must be considered separately (Edwards, 1992b). Links between staff performance appraisal and professional development need to be clearly indicated (Bloom et al. 1991) and a collaborative working environment needs to be established so that personal/professional and centre goals can be met through the interlinked processes.

Gould's (1997) literature review of professional development programmes for teachers (based mostly on school models) revealed a number of professional development issues which may be relevant to early childhood education. The literature supported the notion that adult learners hold influential personal and implicit theories that may be different from espoused theories, and that professional development must include processes that encourage personal reflection on deeply-held values and beliefs. It was also noted that innovations that are adapted by teachers to meet their own needs and situations are likely to be more effective than an approach that instructs from a top-down perspective (see also Gaffney, Smith and Nuttall, 1996). The collaborative and collegial sharing of knowledge and work practices among staff (who are usually at different points of development) within a centre culture that encourages innovative practices was seen as conducive to positive professional development. One model of teacher change referred to by Gould suggested that teachers move through three stages of professional development – from procedural (involving techniques and materials) to interpersonal (involving classroom atmosphere) to conceptual development (involving the integration of theory and practice).

Katz (1995), too, outlines developmental stages through which early childhood teachers progress. She describes four stages of development and training needs as survival, consolidation, renewal and maturity. Survival is the initial stage, usually lasting for the first year of teaching. Onsite support and technical assistance which helps the neophyte survive the initial experiences of inadequacy and unpreparedness is required during this time. Assistance and encouragement from centre colleagues is also essential in the second stage (consolidation) but the teacher is also beginning to define specific areas in which she needs to focus, and is able to access specialists and other agencies. The third stage, renewal, is usually experienced during the third or fourth year of teaching, where a wider range of techniques, skills, materials and approaches is used as local and national interests are developed. The fourth stage (maturity) may be reached within three years, but may not be realised until more than five years. This stage involves working competently and confidently with children, and taking a more insightful and meaningful approach to educational and professional issues and to philosophical beliefs. Further study and national and international interaction with other educators is characteristic of this stage of development. Katz notes that each of the four stages has implications for

different needs of teachers, as well as for the location and timing of professional development.

Bloom et al. (1991) assert that appraisal and professional development are just two components of the structure and culture of a centre. They indicate that changes and developments to them will result in changes elsewhere.

The effects on centre culture of qualified and unqualified staff

Although it has been discussed previously in this chapter and in Chapter One, the requirement to have only one qualified person in a licensed and chartered centre needs to be addressed also with regard to professional issues. The culture of a centre reflects the shared values, beliefs and assumptions of those who work in it and regulates the ways in which people act and behave (Corbett, Firestone & Rossman, 1987). The influence of the centre founder has also been discussed in this chapter (Schein, 1992). If a prevailing centre culture has been developed by a founder who has little knowledge of early childhood education theories and practices and perhaps only one other staff member is qualified, what effect does this have on the development and maintenance of a centre culture which should provide quality care and education for children? Different variables exist in every centre, but varying dynamics of the professional issues outlined here are likely to influence the centre cultures in which children are placed by parents.

Summary

The literature was explored for theoretical, historical and contextual issues of pedagogy and curriculum in early childhood education and reported in Part 3 of this chapter. Professional matters (such as women and professionalism, teacher education and professionalism, staff appraisal and professional development) that impact on the Aotearoa/New Zealand early childhood subculture were also extrapolated from the literature.

Chapter summary

In this chapter, literature has been examined across a wide field of theoretical bases in order to address the issues discussed by participants. These issues, grounded in the analysis of data, initiated a review of the historical, political, economic, social and contextual backdrop of the early childhood subculture, with particular reference to images held of the child and childhood. Across centuries, in a variety of political contexts, in many different social and economic situations, societies have constructed differing images of the child and childhood which have informed and been informed by “dominant discursive regimes” (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999). Discourses that transmit and produce power permeate every level of society through language, shaping the views its members hold of the world in which they live.

The literature from other education subcultures and the corporate world regarding organisational culture and structure was also reviewed because of the issues raised by participants. Schein (1992) notes that organisational structure and culture is defined usually by the founder whose values, beliefs and assumptions provide the basis of the discourse of the organisation. Schein’s three-level model for examining and analysing organisational culture was examined and linked to issues of leadership, management and administration. Few definitions of educational leadership in the compulsory education subculture or in the early childhood literature included the role of the teacher; instead, the leadership focus was more on advocating, managing and planning, and on communicating direction and vision. In the early childhood literature in particular, the absence of comment in the areas of curriculum and pedagogical leadership (especially in areas such as assessment of children [May & Carr, 2000], and the implementation of programmes) was noted. Concern about the low levels of early childhood practitioner understanding of pedagogical practices was expressed by those within Aotearoa/New Zealand (Cullen, 1996) as well as in Britain (Athey 1990; Drummond 1989) and Australia (Rodd, 1994).

O’Neill’s (1994) outline of the interconnectedness and interdependence of organisational culture, structure and activities was examined. The use of this model, linked to the power

of societal and organisational discourse in strengthening many organisational beliefs, values and assumptions, provides useful insights into the functioning of organisations. It will be used to help explore the issues raised in the research questions and as a theoretical basis to assist in positioning the eight categories that formed the conceptual framework which emerged during the present research.

The literature on organisational activities (O'Neill, 1994) that emerged from the data in the present study (communication, teamwork, change, as well as pedagogical and professional issues) was also explored. Effective communication between centre personnel and children did not feature in most of the reviewed accounts of early childhood leadership and management, except in those written about the philosophy of Reggio Emilia (Edwards et al. 1998; Katz, 1994; Malaguzzi 1993) and from postmodern perspectives such as those of Dahlberg, Moss and Pence (1999). Relationships between parents and centre personnel are variously described in the literature, but indications are that many tensions exist. Most literature described relationships between staff in centres being based on communication and co-operation, usually described as teamwork (Hay, 1997). Processes of decision-making vary according to organisational structure and culture and the communication of those decisions results in change, which, in turn, affects processes of teamwork (Bloom, 1995). Other variables causing change are contextual influences from the past, present and projected future.

It was noted that leadership and management practices (and the lack of comment in the literature about pedagogical and curriculum issues, noted earlier) are strongly influenced by a number of variables such as Western theories (May, 1997), the care/education dichotomy (Middleton & May, 1999) and different images held of the child (Berk & Winsler, 1995). Again, current contextual issues, such as the development of *Te Whāriki* and the influence of theories that have a socio-cultural focus on teaching and learning (Berk & Winsler, 1995; Cullen, 2001), also affect the early childhood subculture.

Much of the literature addressing the culture and structure of educational organisations is based on the assumption that the founders and staff members of those organisations are

qualified. Much is also premised on a male view of the education sector (Blackmore, 1999). Thus, little literature is available on professional issues (such as appraisal, professional development and professionalism) as they pertain to the female-dominated early childhood subculture and where many more staff members are unqualified than is the case in compulsory or tertiary education organisations.

It is clear that an examination of leadership and management practices in any early childhood centre may present a complex set of organisational arrangements and activities. Organisational culture, usually initiated by beliefs, values and assumptions held by the centre founder, together with a vast range of other variables informed by past and current influences, is likely to be visible in the practices currently employed in a centre. The purpose of the present study and the methods and methodology used to examine the issues discussed in the literature review will be the focus of Chapter Three.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology, methods and research design

Purpose of the research project

The present research seeks to identify and explore participant perceptions about the quality of leadership and management practices in a range of early childhood centres in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The aims and research questions, which will be provided in more detail in Chapter Four, were designed to identify and explore leadership and management practices currently used in centres from the perceptions of licensees, managers, staff members and parents. Participants' views of good practice were to be explored also. The qualitative case study approach that was chosen used some grounded theory methods and was designed to "describe and analyse contextualised social phenomena" (Hatch, 1995, p.122) to "find out what was going on" (Stern, 1994, p.117) in centres. The purpose of this study was to use the data to develop a theoretical model of quality leadership and management in early childhood education.

In this chapter, a brief overview of the origins of the two main research paradigms that comprise educational research will be provided first. One of these, quantitative research, was used in a support role in the present study to enumerate and quantify aspects which were then used to inform data gathered and analysed using the other, qualitative, approach.

The qualitative or naturalistic approach was selected for use in the major part of this study because it is multimethod in focus, allowing interviews, observations, descriptions of artifacts and other data to be collected and analysed. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) indicate that this approach also permits the researcher to attempt to "make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p. 3) and

encourages the use of many perspectives and methods to triangulate data to add depth, breadth and rigour to an investigation. Many studies of educational management and leadership using qualitative research methods have been undertaken in the last three decades in the compulsory school sectors. Some examples of studies that have incorporated qualitative research methods are Weber's (1971) study of effective teaching of reading in four city schools in three American states, and Nias et al.'s (1989) work on relationships amongst staff in five different British schools, including a nursery school.

An outline of some of the assumptions that underpin qualitative research methodology will also be included in this chapter. In addition, issues concerning the rigour or soundness of qualitative research (credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability) (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) will be addressed. The qualitative approach used in most of the present study was teamed with a case study method which incorporated aspects of grounded theory. The methods used will be described in the last part of this chapter.

Educational research: an overview

Educational research as "disciplined inquiry with an empirical base" (De Landsheere, 1988, p. 9) had its origins in experimental pedagogy and the child study movement in Western Europe in the 1880s. De Landsheere offers an overview of the three identifiable periods that have influenced current educational research. The first, he claims, was the child study movement (1900-1930), where educational research was associated with applied child psychology and a "scientific" approach to education.

The progressive movement of 1930 to the late 1950s was the second period. It was noted for a more philosophically oriented approach influenced by the limiting "atomistic" character of previous educational research, a questioning of the scientific approach to the management of education and the emergence of a social and political philosophy combined with empirical research. The third period (the 1960s and 1970s) included developing technological influences and serious debate over the merits (or otherwise) of

recognising research which did not cohere to the tenets of scientific research with its reliance on positivism.

A paradigm is defined as determining the criteria according to which one selects and defines problems for enquiry (Husén, 1998). During the 1960s and 1970s it became clear that two paradigms had developed within educational research. Husén (1998) explains that one paradigm

...is modeled on the natural sciences with an emphasis on empirical quantifiable observations which lend themselves to analyses by means of mathematical tools. The task of research is to establish causal relationships, to explain (Erklären). The other paradigm is derived from the humanities with an emphasis on holistic and qualitative information and to interpretive approaches (Verstehen). (p. 17)

De Landsheere (1988) describes the battle for supremacy between these two paradigms in the 1960s and 1970s as “confrontation” (p. 10). The discourse underpinning the debate can be seen in the vocabularies used by the opposing parties; “positivist”, “objective”, “realistic”, “reductionist”, “scientific” by those who worked within the paradigm based in the natural sciences and “nonpositivist”, “subjective”, “idealistic”, “anti-reductionist” and “naturalistic” by those focusing on the humanities-based approach (Walker & Evers 1988).

Hatch (1995) reflects these dichotomous views when he suggests that researchers who hold positivist assumptions about how the world is ordered (views that include that childhood exists and can be revealed if enough control and rigour can be applied) are logically confined to the use of quantitative methodologies in their studies of children and childhood. Constructivist researchers, on the other hand,

...argue that knowledge is symbolically constructed and not objective, that understandings of the world are based on conventions, on perceptions held in community with others; that truth is, in fact, what we agree it is. (Hatch, 1995, p. 122)

However, it is now more widely accepted that the scientific, quantitative (or “hard” data) approach and the humanities-based anthropological, phenomenological, qualitative (‘soft” data) approaches (Eisner & Peshkin, 1990, p. 9) can be seen to be complementary rather than oppositional (Carr, 1998; Hammersley, 1992).

Because the present study seeks to examine cultural, social, historical, personal and political influences on the leadership and management of early childhood centres in Aotearoa/New Zealand, the methodological approach draws mostly on elements of the humanistic, interpretive, qualitative paradigm. Qualitative research methodology, using a case study method and aspects of grounded theory, was chosen for the present study and will be discussed in the next sections.

Qualitative research

Qualitative research (also known as naturalistic research) seeks to “describe what is rather than prescribe what ought to be” (Hatch, 1995, p.128). It operates in a complex historical field that contains perspectives from a variety of genres, including hermeneutics, phenomenology, semiotics, Marxism and feminism (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) indicate that qualitative research is

...multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers can study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 2)

Denzin and Lincoln (2000) provide a history of qualitative research that they define in seven “moments” (the first five moments are described also by Denzin and Lincoln in their 1994 publication). The moments trace a similar history over the first three moments to that described by De Landsheere (above) for educational research. They are, however, more specific and provide not only a history, but also an appreciation of the fact that “some of the moments are also simultaneously present in this era” (Annells, 1997, p.120).

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) describe the first moment as the traditional period (1900-1940). In this period, qualitative researchers wrote “ ‘objective’, colonising accounts of field experiences that were reflective of the positivist scientist paradigm” which examined the strange, alien “other” (p. 7). The second moment was the modernist phase (1940-1970s), portrayed as a time of creative ferment. Attempts were made to formalise qualitative methodology, and new interpretive theories (such as phenomenology, feminism and critical theory) were explored. The third moment (1970-1986) is recorded as a time of blurred genres; previous gains were built on, and a full range of paradigms, methods and strategies were employed in research. Ethical and political issues were a focus, and a growing range of diverse ways of collecting and presenting data provided excitement and interest in the research community.

The third moment also posed the problem of how researchers placed themselves in research, and how to cope with the changing rules and standards introduced along with the new genres. These uncertainties defined the fourth moment (the crisis of representation), in which research and writing became more reflexive. Issues of objectivity, validity and reliability again became problematic and were thus challenged. Fieldwork and writing, instead of being two separate tasks, began to flow one from the other. The fifth (postmodern) moment saw the development of experimental and new ethnographies, the sixth (1995-2000) involved post-experimental inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) and the seventh moment, the future, (2000-) will be concerned with moral discourse and critical conversation about concerns such as democracy, race, gender, and community.

As Denzin and Lincoln (1994) explain, no single set of methods is privileged over any other in qualitative research. Semiotics (the study of signs and symbols), historical analysis, narrative and phonemic analysis are just some examples of many methods used. Methods, approaches and techniques include interviews, participant observation, episodes, accounts, hermeneutics and deconstructionism. These and many other research practices provide a wide-ranging set of interpretive methods that are very difficult to

define, “for it is never just one thing” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 3). Indeed, each study needs to be defined by its own method and discipline history.

Using a qualitative approach in early childhood settings

The qualitative, interpretive approach was chosen for the present study because it was considered important that the complexities of centre leadership and management should be examined through the process of gathering “thick description, acknowledging contradiction, ambiguity, inconsistency, and situation-specific factors” (Carr, 2001, p. 13) as a result of obtaining the “informed and patient cooperation of people who know the setting” (Walsh, Tobin & Graue, 1993, p. 472). Using a qualitative approach is particularly appropriate in early childhood settings because, as Walsh et al. also note:

...(i)nterpretive research has an important place in research on the education of young children. It has the potential, in the negotiated, collaborative relationship between the researcher and the researched, to give voice and visibility to those groups, children and practitioners, who historically have been silenced and isolated. (p. 473)

Criteria of soundness

Researchers involved in any inquiry need to establish trust in its outcomes, although the complexities of the modern world raise increasingly vexatious questions about traditional claims to the rigour of many research projects (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). The credibility of the findings of a particular study, the transferability of those findings, and their ability to be replicated within the same context and with the same participants, were once important criteria of soundness or rigour in a qualitative study (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). While validity, reliability and ethics are still major concerns in any research (Merriam, 1998), in recent times it has become clear that multiple perspectives, assumptions and differing world views amongst researchers and participants have resulted in arguments for employing different methods and criteria in assessing qualitative research.

These methods include such activities as maintaining an audit trail, triangulating evidence and involving participants in many phases of the research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) use

the constructs *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability*, and *confirmability* to describe the assumptions that underpin judgements of soundness in qualitative research. These constructs will be described next.

Credibility

The qualitative, naturalistic researcher does not begin with a hypothesis that can be carefully measured. Indeed, she or he often needs to deal with constructed and multiple realities and truths that emerge from the minds of people during an investigation (Kinchenloe & McLaren, 1998). Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe the complexity of reflecting the multiple realities embedded in the data gathered during a qualitative study thus:

Naturalistic inquirers... focus upon the multiple realities that, like the layers of an onion, nest within or complement one another. Each layer provides a different perspective of reality, and none can be considered more "true" than any other. Phenomena do not converge into a single form, a single "truth", but diverge into many forms, multiple truths. Moreover, the layers cannot be described or understood in terms of separate independent and dependant variables; rather, they are intricately interrelated to form a pattern of "truth". It is these patterns that must be searched out, less for the sake of prediction than for the sake of verstehen or understanding. (p. 57)

Transferability

Traditionally, establishing external validity (transferability or generalisability) was considered appropriate and possible by scientific researchers at a time when the social and physical worlds were places where "lawful regularities existed between causes and effects" (Donmoyer, 1990, p.177). Donmoyer suggests that because human action is now considered to be constructed, not caused, social phenomena and social purposes are much more complex than the phenomena in the physical world. External validity, for qualitative research, then, is restricted to the situation, time frame, and to the specifics of the encounter or to the population of which the persons involved in the encounter are a sample. In short, qualitative researchers do not ask whether their findings are

generalisable, but to which (if any, say Kinchenloe and McLaren [1998]) other settings and subjects they are generalisable (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

Kinchenloe and McLaren's concerns (above) about generalisability indicate their views that qualitative research could rarely be replicated exactly, as the exact sample would be unlikely to exist in the same form for a second study. Instead, it is more usual that a particular situation, setting or pattern of interaction (Marshall & Rossman, 1995) is examined and theorised, leaving others to engage in transferring the theoretical construct to other situations, and to help build a body of theory.

Eisner (1991) supports the notions of generalisability articulated by Marshall and Rossman, noting that, unlike statistical studies where the investigator makes the generalisations, "(i)n qualitative case studies the researcher can...generalize, but it is more likely that readers will determine whether the research findings fit the situation in which they work" (p.204). He considers that generalisation or transference of findings should not be a top-down process where researchers provide rules of procedure to practitioners, but should offer considerations to be shared and discussed, reflected upon and debated and that "...generalizing qualities are not so much located in Truth as in their ability to refine perception and to deepen conversation". (p 205)

In the present study, Eisner's conception of transferability or generalisation as "tools with which we work and (which are) shaped in context" (p. 205) will be utilised as the findings are discussed and recommendations are made.

Triangulation (a system of cross-checking multiple sources of evidence of the same phenomenon) assists with transferability and offers a further method of gaining an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Rather than assuming that verification must be undertaken as follow-up research, as happens in scientific research, the verification of hypotheses is done throughout the course of a qualitative research project (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Strauss and Corbin suggest that verification is not one of finding proof but rather a seeking of support for "statements of

relationship” between concepts (p109). Triangulation can be undertaken within qualitative methods by, for example, comparing observational data with interview data, comparing what people say in public with what they say in private and comparing the perspective of people from different points of view (Patton, 1990).

Triangulation can also be an opportunity to make use of both quantitative and qualitative data to explain more fully “the richness and complexity of human behaviour” (Cohen & Manion, 1989, p. 269). Flick (1992), too, notes that, in qualitative research, triangulation should be seen as an aid to credibility because a combination of multiple methods, empirical materials, observers and perspectives adds breadth, depth and rigour to an investigation (see also Delamont [1992]; Denzin & Lincoln [2000]). Fielding and Fielding (1986) agree that breadth and depth can be added to qualitative research through the careful and purposeful combination of theories and methods, but that an “objective truth” (p. 33) should not be sought.

Flick (1992) notes that “(t)riangulation takes into account that subjective knowledge and social interactions should be understood as parts of (social, local, institutional) contexts and on the historical backgrounds of those contexts” (p. 194). He also cites Kokeis-Stangl (1982) who indicates that, instead of expecting a process of triangulation to provide reliability and validity as once researchers expected to do in testing hypotheses in quantitative research, it would be more appropriate in qualitative research to see “control processes as more-perspective triangulation...and in advance to be prepared for receiving a result no uniform picture but rather one of a kaleidoscopic kind” (p. 194).

The purpose of triangulation in the present study, then, was designed to follow Denzin’s (1989) approach:

The goal of multiple triangulation is a fully grounded interpretive research approach. Objective reality will never be captured. In-depth understanding, not reality, is sought in any interpretive study. (p. 246)

Dependability

Dependability (or internal validity) refers to the effect on the research findings of the influence of external variables (Borg & Gall, 1983). Borg and Gall refer to several extraneous variables that need to be considered as a study is planned. They include history (variables external to the subjects that are present during the course of the study and which may distort the results) and maturation (changes to the subjects that occur during a study). A third threat to dependability is experimental mortality, which refers to the loss of subjects during a study, and a fourth is instrumentation, which refers to errors or biases which occur as tools or instruments (such as an observer) change.

Guba and Lincoln (1981) suggest several strategies that could be included in preparing plans for the research to ensure that dependability is maintained. These include:

- prolonged engagement of the researcher at the site to ensure de-programming from preconceived ideas;
- a conscious effort by the researcher to resist becoming involved with participants;
- an awareness by the researcher of possible power, role or status differences between him or her and the participant which may distort responses;
- continual comparison, examination and assessment of data to ensure that data-gathering distortions are minimised.

Several other tactics are helpful in demonstrating dependability. These include observations or utterances being tape recorded and transcribed verbatim (as was undertaken in the present study), or audiovisual methods being used to record events (Basse, 1999; Merriam, 1998), providing that practical and ethical issues are sensitively considered. The recordings and transcriptions can be checked with participants to ensure dependability (Zeller, 1995) and to enhance "auditability" (Guba & Lincoln, 1981, p.104).

Confirmability

It is claimed that no researcher is totally objective (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, chap. 1), even in quantitative research which is where the criteria of objectivity originated.

Qualitative research often involves researchers in examining and analysing perceptions, multiple truths and situations in environments with which they are very familiar. This negates any claim that research can be conclusively confirmed by another researcher or that a researcher can be objective, as “any gaze is always filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race and ethnicity” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p.12). However, if the data confirm the general findings and lead to the implications, confirmability can be reached.

While it is essential that researchers declare their biases, limitations and interests, these are usually also some of the reasons influencing why the research has been undertaken. As a “biographically situated researcher” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 11), the individual undertaking qualitative research brings advantages with them that include, for example, understanding the discourse of the situation, perhaps being a participant-researcher, or asking questions which slant towards a particular interest. The biases and interests of the researcher may focus the research in a particular direction, but should be explicit in the research design and intentions.

The case study approach

The present research was designed using a case study approach. A case study involves an investigator who makes a detailed examination of a single subject, group, (Borg & Gall, 1983), bounded phenomenon (Merriam, 1988), event (Davey, 1991) or instance (Bell, 1987). Denzin and Lincoln (2000) claims that a “case study is a specific, unique, bounded system” and “ is both a process of inquiry about the case and the product of that inquiry” (p. 436). A case study draws together important ideas in the investigation of complex problems in a systematic way. It is especially well suited for generating, rather than testing hypotheses (Davey, 1991), and, as Bryman (2001) indicates, it usually takes an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research.

Bassey (1999) succinctly states that case study “is study of a singularity (research into particular events) conducted in depth in natural surroundings” (p. 46). He also indicates

that the many variables implicit in qualitative research result in “fuzzy generalisation”, or qualified generalisation which is “the kind of statement which makes absolutely no claim to knowledge, but hedges its claim with uncertainties” (Bassegy, 1999, p.12). In the present study, the case studied is that of perceptions of leadership and management in ten early childhood centres in a city in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

The educational case study

Stenhouse (1988) indicates that there are four broad styles of work subsumed under the umbrella of case study. They are ethnography (located within the social sciences), evaluation, action research and educational case study.

The style of case study that forms the basis for the present study is educational, designed to understand educational action. Because education is a process, educational research often needs to employ research methods that are “process-oriented, flexible and adaptable to changes in circumstances and an evolving context” (Anderson, 1990, p. 157). The concern for researchers using this style is

...to enrich the thinking and discourse of educators either by the development of educational theory or by the refinement of prudence through the systematic and reflective documentation of experience (Stenhouse, 1988, p. 50).

Stenhouse (1988) suggests that most single case studies are opportunistic, but that multisite case studies, as in the present study, offer the opportunity to cover the range of variables considered to be important to the study.

Strengths, limitations and ethical concerns regarding qualitative case study research

All research designs have strengths and limitations and often strengths are also indicative of limitations (Merriam, 1988). How do the special features of a case study approach present limitations?

A case study design is selected because of the nature of the research problem and the questions being asked. As a means for examining complex social situations with many

variables based in naturalistic situations, qualitative case study research offers special opportunities to gather rich data (Geertz, 1973) that offers insights into those situations. However, naturalistic situations cannot (and should not) be controlled by the researcher, and they cannot (and should not) be replicated, because the real world changes (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). The advantage is that intensive analysis is possible because the researcher is not committed to a highly limited set of variables, so the probability of finding critical variables and relations is increased (Eckstein, cited in Merriam [1988]).

In addition, what may appear to be a limitation can be viewed differently if it is realised that a researcher's in-depth understanding of a complex case study issue is shaped by a theoretical framework. This is guided by concepts and models so that the theoretical parameters of the research are clear. Others (for example policy designers or users or readers of specific research) can then determine what can be transferred to other situations or tied into a body of theory (Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

Merriam (1988) notes that case studies are expensive in time and money because of the methods of data collection, as well as being complex and difficult to report succinctly (see also Yin, 1994). Merriam (1988) warns, too, that there are a number of ethical issues peculiar to qualitative case study research about which researchers must be aware. The integrity of the researcher is one of these, especially in relation to sensitive data collection and analysis. Bassey (1999) suggests that awareness of privacy and respect for democracy, truth and persons are crucial characteristics for a researcher. He suggests that listening intently, recording accurately, observing carefully (perhaps supported by a variety of technological aids) must be prepared for in the research design. In the present study, interviews were transcribed verbatim and checked by the participants to ensure the integrity of the written record of their conversation, as suggested by Taft (1988).

An awareness of one's own bias is another important attribute for a researcher; Carr (1998) notes that observers "use a personal and sociocultural lens through which they select and interpret what they observe" (p.11). Yin (1994) suggests that biased views have also influenced research using other research strategies and that *all* researchers must

defend against this possibility. In any research, researcher bias can be minimised by stating biases (through a self-analysis) and, as happened in the present study, having a research partner or supervisor play “devil’s advocate” (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). It is also wise to guard against value judgements in data collection and analysis.

Important, too, is an understanding of power relations between researcher and researched, and between those researched. Merriam (1988) points out that discrepancies between the perceptions people have about what they are doing, what they say they are doing, what others think they are doing and what they are actually doing are often very different and the revealing of these differences can create dissonance. All of these issues require careful consideration and sensitive management by the researcher.

Other issues of concern for qualitative researchers are to do with the over-exaggeration or oversimplification of situations, leading to erroneous conclusions about the actual state of affairs (Carr, 1998; Zeller, 1995). Checking and re-checking the data, asking questions of the data, having a participant, a research partner or supervisor critically question the researcher’s analyses are all ways of counteracting faulty analysis (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). Guba and Lincoln (1981) also warn against case study research of this type being considered as an account of the whole when it is merely a part.

Earlier, it was noted that Yin (1994) considered that researcher bias needed to be controlled in any type of research. His comment holds good for almost any other ethical issue as well. For example, confidentiality, risk assessment, informed consent, data access and ownership (Patton, 1990), participants’ rights, voluntary participation, and avoiding deceit, (Hedges, 2000a) preservation of data, and recognition of the historical context and the holistic picture (Marshall & Rossman, 1995) are all valid ethical concerns that were addressed as the present research was planned and implemented (see Appendix B).

Data collection and storage

Collecting and recording data about a case or cases and the preparation of a report form the basis of case study method. Collection of data usually involves participant or non-participant observation or interviewing on site, probably together with the collection of demographic data, physical artifacts, surveys and documentary evidence, and possibly using various audio-visual recording equipment (Anderson, 1990). The organisation of case records is a major consideration for researchers, due to the sheer volume of documents collected (Sarankatos, 1993). Indexing, also called coding (Stern 1994; Strauss, 1987) and progressive reduction of the data are the two organisational strategies usually employed to manage the data (Stenhouse, 1988). More recently, computer software has become available to researchers. Software packages will continue to be developed for increasingly specific purposes (Richards & Richards, 1994), but already store, index (code), retrieve and reduce data.

In the present study the NUD.IST (non-numerical, unstructured data in qualitative research by supporting processes of indexing, searching and theorising) software was used. It has a document system that holds textual data and retrieves using a variety of processes. It also has an index system that allows concepts to be created and manipulated and emerging ideas to be stored and explored. All coding functions are documented to enable the research process to be audited. (For more details of this software programme, see Appendix A).

Grounded theory

Grounded theory was the method chosen for most of the research in the present study. A grounded theory is one that “is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 23) and has been selected for use in the proposed study because it enables a practice-to-theory, inductive, “from-the-ground-up approach using everyday behaviors or organisational patterns to generate theory” (Hutchinson, 1993, p. 183). Theory is not considered as perfected “product”, but rather as an “ever-developing entity” or process (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 32).

The constant comparative method is the fundamental method of data analysis in the generation of grounded theory. Data are collected, analysed, and constantly compared through selective sampling and memo writing as they are coded and categorised. Similarities and differences are distinguished among incidents until the basic properties of a category are defined. Relationships between categories are also gradually clarified through theoretical sampling and further continuous comparison, until a core category emerges. A more detailed account of the research processes used in the present study will be provided shortly.

The grounded theory method was selected for the present study because of its compatibility with the qualitative case study framework already described and because it seemed to provide the most appropriate means of examining the perceptions of participants about leadership and management in early childhood centres. Grounded theory has been used extensively in other educational management studies (West-Burnham, 1994) such as Imant's study (in Kieviet & Vandenberghe, 1993) of organisational culture in nine Flemish schools. Examples of grounded theory studies undertaken in Aotearoa/New Zealand include Marks' (1996) work on preservice teacher education and change, Stephenson's (1999) study of young children's outdoor experiences and Hatherly's (1997) examination of organisational culture in one early childhood centre. Examples of other studies that have also used the grounded theory method are Butler and McLeod's (2000) study of life changes of 15 Aotearoa/New Zealanders in their transition to parenthood, and Holloway et al. (1995), who examined low-income mothers' views on preparing their children for school.

Theoretical foundations of grounded theory

The philosophical foundation of grounded theory, so called because the theory is firmly grounded or "developed in intimate relationship" with data (Strauss, 1987, p. 6), lies in the work of George Herbert Meade and American pragmatism. Its sociological base is in the work of Hubert Blumer and symbolic interactionism (Hutchinson, 1995). Hutchinson notes that symbolic interactionists believe that people interact with each other through

meaningful symbols and that meanings evolve over time from social interactions. Wood (1992) defines this perspective as one in which

...(s)ituations are constituted as processes, and factors unique to individuals lead them to select, order and interpret disparate external circumstances to create patterns that are meaningful to them and that form foundations for their own communication. (p. 35)

Grounded theory was introduced in 1967 by Glaser and Strauss, who indicated that their work was “a beginning venture in the development of improved methods for discovering grounded theory” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p.1). They had worked collaboratively over the previous seven years to attempt to formalise a rigorous, qualitative method of inquiry. Annells (1997) points out that this first publication of the grounded theory method occurred at the end of what Denzin and Lincoln (1994) describe as the “second moment” or modernist phase of qualitative research.

Grounded theory is a method of developing theory from systematically obtained and analysed data (Wildy, 1996). According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), grounded theory provides for a focus on a substantive area, commencing with a general area of interest. The aim is to generate an inductive grounded theory. In the process, a basic problem, questions and a basic social problem which are all grounded in the data emerge and hypotheses are generated. This leads to a verified grounded theory, or to limited application as a provisional theory.

Annells (1997) indicates that a major post-positivist reformulation of the original theory was presented in 1990 by Strauss and Corbin. A number of differences from the original work are expressed in theirs. These differences include a focus on a phenomenon rather than on a substantive area and on the development (rather than the emergence) of grounded questions and hypotheses. Strauss and Corbin consider that continual permutations of action underpin grounded theory. They say that the grounded theory method results in some degree of verified grounded theory leading to the ability to directly manage a problem (Annells, 1997). Strauss and Corbin (1990) indicate that

terminological and procedural differences reflected in publications and research projects over the years since grounded theory was introduced are due to additional reflection and researchers' different experiences and needs. However, they say that the same basic procedures are still used and an identical stance towards qualitative analysis is held by those undertaking qualitative research, even after twenty years. Their (1990) version, provided two decades after the first description of grounded theory published by Glaser and Strauss, considers that the perspectives of the researcher will be reflected in the theory produced and suggests that it reflects a more constructivist style.

Strauss (1990) identifies several important ways in which grounded theory differs from other research methods. He notes, for example, that the conceptual framework is generated from the data rather than from previous studies. As well, the researcher attempts to discover one or more dominant processes (a core category) in the social scene, rather than describing the unit under study. Another point of difference is that every piece of data is compared with every other piece, rather than comparing totals of indices – and data collection is modified in the light of developing theory. Strauss (1990) says:

So, it is not really a specific method or technique. Rather it is a style of doing qualitative analysis that includes a number of distinct features, such as theoretical sampling, and certain methodological guidelines, such as the making of constant comparisons and the use of a coding paradigm, to ensure conceptual development and density. (p. 5)

Other researchers, such as Charmaz (1994a), who provides a social constructivist version of using the method of grounded theory and Stern (1994), who used grounded theory to examine social problems for which no theory existed, also agree that while the general intent of those who use grounded theory is similar, the processes employed may vary in order or emphasis to fit the purpose of the research. They indicate too, that the language used to describe processes varies from researcher to researcher (such as the “emerging” [Glaser & Strauss, 1967] or “developing” [Strauss & Corbin, 1990] of grounded questions and hypotheses already mentioned). The use (or otherwise) of computer

software may also influence the terms used, such as NUD.IST “nodes” instead of “substantive codes” (Stern, 1994, p.120).

In summary, grounded theories are guided by the assumption that people order and make sense of their environment. Reality is a social construct and grounded theories are systematically detailed from the intense analysis of data grounded in the social constructs revealed by participants. While the intent of grounded theory method remains similar across qualitative research, the processes for undertaking it and the language used to describe the processes have varied over time and between researchers. The processes of grounded theory employed in the present research will be discussed next.

Research design: the present study

The preparation for the present qualitative case study, designed to examine leadership and management practices in early childhood centres, was based on the tradition of the use of case study and grounded theory methods used extensively in studies of organisational research in the 1990s. These methods were chosen because of the opportunities they provide to “enhance understanding and effective practice” (West-Burnham, 1994, p.15) through the use of “thick description” (Geertz, 1973, p. 6/7) where a dynamic and integrative process allows theories to compete, be applied, tested, reviewed and modified. West-Burnham (1994) notes that this process results in adoption, integration, assimilation or rejection; all are critical components of the discipline of educational management.

Stern (1994) outlines five stages to describe the processes involved in her interpretation of grounded theory method. The stages are the collection of empirical data (incorporating coding and categorisation), concept formation, concept development, concept modification and integration, and production of the research report. While they are described as stages, they are not discrete in terms of timing; one overlaps into the next and frequent forays are made by the researcher back into a previous stage to check on specific data in order to remain grounded. An indication of the time taken for each phase and the overlapping nature of the research are both illustrated in Figure 1.

Charmaz (1994a) incorporates four phases in developing concepts and theoretical frameworks. She lists the first three as similar to the first three stages outlined by Stern, but combines Stern's final two into one, which consists of "making further discoveries through writing and re-writing" (Stern, 1994, p.67). For the purposes of the present study, four phases were used in the research design, incorporating Stern's first three stages and Charmaz' final phase. The four phases are summarised in Figure 1 and will be detailed next. The actual storing, indexing, and coding of interview data was undertaken using NUD.IST software. Four parallel phases of the NUD.IST operation can be seen in Appendix A (p. 374), complete with specific references to the data collected, coded, categorised and compared during the present study.

Phase 1 (February 1998 – August 1999):

Research proposal prepared

Pilot study, first data collection and analysis, coding and categorising undertaken

Analysis informs on-going data collection through selective sampling and memo writing

Phase 2 (January 1999 – June 2000):

Saturated codes continuously compared, second set of categories developed

Initial draft of conceptual framework produced

Coding, analysis, categorisation and continuous comparison maintained

Phase 3 (March 2000 – Dec 2000)

Reduction of categories

Theoretical sampling of data to aid conceptual development

Review of the literature

Phase 4 (June 2000 – Dec 2001)

Clarification, modification and integration of concepts

Emergence of the core category

Writing of the research report

Figure 1: Grounded theory research design by phase and date.

Grounded theory method: Phase 1. Collection, coding, categorisation of empirical data

Data collection

Data refers to any source of material (e.g. interviews, artifacts, documents, participant observations, literature reviews) collected by the researcher. Data gathering begins as soon as the researcher has identified a researchable problem (Sherman & Webb, 1988; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Observations are frequently used as the main source of data in qualitative case studies (Cohen & Manion, 1994), depending on the type of setting in which the research takes place. In natural settings, such as a school or centre, participant observation is often used. Non-participant observation is usually undertaken in more structured settings. Interviews, according to Eisner (1991), are the second most used type of data in qualitative case studies. In the present research, the intention was to explore participants' perceptions of leadership and management practices, and "the interview is a powerful resource for learning how people perceive the situations in which they work" (Eisner, 1991, p. 81). MacNaughton, Rolfe and Siraj-Blatchford (2001) indicate that interviews are an appropriate tool for researchers interested in safeguarding the view that "the meaning that participants give to things is key to understanding their decisions" (p. 190).

It was considered that participants' views, expressed in their own language and discourse through interviews, could provide greater insight into centre culture, leadership and management issues than could observations. Interviews were, therefore, chosen as the main data for the present study. Sarankatos (1993) indicates that

...social life is formed, maintained and changed by the basic meaning attached to it by interacting people, who interact on the basis of meanings they assign to their world....Social life is expressed through symbols. Language is the most important symbolic system. (p. 48)

In the present study, interviews provided narratives containing "synchronic data" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p.12) which is data about the present situation or belief of a

participant in the language of that person. Language provides insight into the socially constructed realities of people's lives, illustrating it with thick description. Structuring a series of interviews in this study with a variety of participants who viewed issues from different perspectives provided the opportunity to examine their realities and triangulate (add breadth and depth) the analysis across interviews (Delamont, 1992; Fielding & Fielding, 1986; Flick, 1992). Evidence from other sources such as the ERO centre reports, supervisor diaries, survey questionnaires, artifacts and documents allowed further triangulation. The literature review, undertaken in the third phase of the research (see Figure 1) provided another source of triangulation when it was compared with the analyses of other data.

One way of reducing the risk of measurement errors is to seek leads from the participants and to discuss the data with them (Anderson, 1990). Another is to check back with them during the writing process about assumptions and interpretations. In the present study, participants received copies of transcribed interviews to amend or add to prior to analysis. The analysis of earlier interviews informed later interviews, and theoretical sampling during a later stage of the research afforded an opportunity for the researcher to check assumptions and interpretations.

Throughout the data collection phase, Sherman and Webb (1988) suggest that a research journal should be kept so that the researcher can "bracket" (or record) personal feelings, values and preconceptions in order to be able to transcend them in an effort to see a situation with a new perspective. A journal was kept by the researcher in the present study, and records of artifacts collected, observations of behaviour and interactions between participants were also noted in it. In addition, the memo-writing facility in the NUD.IST software was used to record aspects noted by the researcher during analysis of the narratives of participants. Examples of these records can be seen in Appendix D.

Data analysis and coding

When the method of grounded theory is used, data analysis is undertaken in tandem with data collection. The researcher needs to maintain awareness of the subtleties of meaning

within the data and to use “theoretical sensitivity” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 41). Theoretical sensitivity is, according to Strauss and Corbin (1990) “...the attribute of having insight, the ability to give meaning to data, the capacity to understand and the capability to separate the pertinent from that which isn’t” (p. 42). They note that researchers with theoretical sensitivity draw it from a number of sources, such as a thorough grounding in the technical literature, professional and personal experience, continual interactions with the data and by maintaining an attitude of scepticism.

Open coding begins as soon as the first data samples are collected (Charmaz, 2000) and is designed to open up the inquiry. Open coding produces substantive codes (or nodes in NUD.IST terminology), that “codify the substance of the data and often use the very words used by the actors themselves” (Stern, 1994, p. 120). The data are examined by the researcher to initiate a new code, or for relevance to an existing one by examining conditions, interaction among the actors, strategies and tactics or consequences (Strauss, 1987). Charmaz (1994a) suggests that coding for processes, actions, assumptions, and consequences rather than for topics leads to greater analytical precision. Her set of questions (p. 81) that can be asked to aid the researcher to code were useful in the present study. The questions are

- of what larger action is this process a part?
- how did this action evolve?
- what do these data state or assume...about relationships?

Using these strategies, indicators are compared for similarities, differences and degrees of consistency of meaning and are then placed in a code. In the present study, the use of the NUD.IST software facilitated the coding task by allowing electronic sorting of the data. Data collection continues until the codes are saturated (no new information is found). Because data collection proceeds in tandem with data analysis, the researcher is aware of the codes that are emerging, notes trends and directions and soon finds it necessary to begin to check these issues while in the field by adding further questions, or tangents on questions already being asked. In some cases, a wider variety of artifacts can be (and, in the present study, were) sought, or the researcher can employ various other methods of

obtaining information at this stage of the investigation. Techniques that are employed as data collection continues to inform and guide the simultaneous data collection and analysis processes (Charmaz, 1994a). Stern (1994) refers to these processes as “selective sampling”, which is sampling directed by evolving theory.

As the processes of interviewing and analysis of interviews proceed in tandem, memos may also be written. They are recorded in order to attempt to raise the data to a conceptual level, develop the properties of each code or category (see next section) and define them operationally, highlight links between codes or categories, and locate the emerging ideas with others of potential relevance (Glaser, 1978). Again, the NUD.IST software simplified memoing in the present study because of the specific function it contains (see Appendix D).

Categorising

Categorising, also known as axial coding (Strauss, 1987), is an important part of coding. Categories are coded data that seem to cluster together. The process consists of intense analysis around one code (or axis) at a time to determine relationships between that code and others. Codes are grouped as continuous comparisons are made; grouping and re-grouping continues as further data are analysed and stored. Stern (1994) reminds that “continuous comparative analysis is a matrix operation rather than a linear endeavour” (p. 123) and it proceeds in concert with each stage of categorising of data. The ‘family tree’ system and coding process on which the NUD.IST software was built allowed for easy comparison and referencing of new data in the present research as described in Appendix A.

Phase 2: Concept formation

Developing concepts to a dimension in which they can be discussed and related to each other results in a conceptual framework. This explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main dimensions of the research (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Or, as Senge (1994) suggests, a conceptual framework provides a system in which aspects of a body of knowledge and tools, that have been developed over years, are used together to make

complex patterns clearer. Miles and Huberman (1984) note that a conceptual framework can be prepared in advance of a study, effectively “bounding” or limiting what is studied. Alternatively, as in the present project, it can be developed during or towards the end of a study, allowing for a more “loosely structured, emergent, inductively ‘grounded’ approach to data” (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 27).

Stern's (1994) description of the development of a conceptual framework during a research project most closely matches the processes of the present study. She notes that the conceptual framework emerges when the main issues in the social scene have been identified as codes and categories. The codes and categories are then carefully compared, with the researcher making choices regarding the relative salience of the issues presented in the scene under study (in the present study, using NUD.IST software to facilitate the process as shown in Appendix A, p. 374). The processes of coding and categorisation are again used to arrange and re-arrange the original categories, culminating in a second set of categories that form the tentative beginnings of a complete conceptual framework.

Phase 3: Concept development

When developing concepts, three steps are involved. They include the reduction of categories (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973), theoretical sampling of the data (Charmaz, 1994a; Merriam, 1998) and sampling of the literature (Stern, 1994). These steps will be outlined next.

Reduction of categories

Comparisons between categories are made by the researcher to see how they cluster or connect. The process of connections is described by Schatzman and Strauss (1973) as “linkages”, and allows for a “higher order of category, some umbrella under which all of these categories fit” (Stern, 1994 p. 121). As categories are continuously compared, some initial categories are subsumed by others (see Appendix A, p. 374 for a description of this process in the present study). Continuing to test the categories against the tentative conceptual framework allows for the collapse of initial categories into more general categories, referred to as “core variables” by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and “core

processes” by Hadden and Lester (1994)). According to Glaser and Strauss, and Hadden and Lester, these indicate a more advanced conceptual form of analysis than the processes that defined codes and initial categories.

Theoretical sampling of the data

Theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 1994a; Merriam, 1998) is defined as sampling directed by evolving theory for the purpose of making comparisons between and among aspects at the focus of a study. Charmaz (1994a) indicates that she conducts theoretical sampling only after key concepts have been defined, as delayed focused sampling fosters gaining an in-depth understanding of the realities and issues at hand. It is undertaken then, to pursue, explore and deepen understandings about selected aspects of a study in order to develop conceptual ideas. In the present study, theoretical sampling was used to examine several of the codes (for example, pedagogical issues) for which insufficient data had been gained in the first research phases to inform the study.

Sampling of the literature

The use of a selected sample of existing literature as data is recommended by Stern (1994) as a third phase in this research method. She asserts that, although an initial review of the literature is necessary to assist in developing the research field and research questions, this second search is more focused on specific emerging concepts revealed as the conceptual framework develops. Charmaz, in Glaser (1994) also supports the incorporation of a literature review into the research design at this late stage, indicating that the grounded theory method

...stresses discovery and theory development rather than the logical deductive reasoning which relies on prior theoretical frameworks...(researchers who use grounded theory) do not rely directly on the literature to shape their ideas, since they believe that they should develop their own analyses independently .(p. 96)

In the present research, the literature review involved the exploration of literature for each of the eight categories that emerged from the data (organisational culture,

organisational structure, leadership and management, communication, teamwork, management of change, pedagogical and professional issues).

Phase 4: Clarification, modification and integration of concepts and writing of the research report

As category reduction, theoretical sampling and literature sampling proceed during the third phase of grounded theory method and memo-writing continues throughout all phases, the emerging concepts are compared with each other and with other data for validation. The inter-relatedness with each other and over time continues to be noted. It is in this phase that the core category is identified. The core category (in the present study, concerning the image held of the child) forms the underpinning thesis of the written report, which also outlines the substantive theory framed within the literature of the field to show where and how it fits (Charmaz, 1994a).

Chapter summary

In this chapter, the aims and research questions of the present study were outlined. The reasons for selecting a qualitative case study approach to the present research topic were explained and issues of soundness were described. The grounded theory method was selected as the main vehicle with which to explore participants' perceptions because of its inductive practice-to-theory nature and its strong tradition in educational administration (West-Burnham, 1994). The grounded theory method was briefly sketched and the research design of the present study was explained. Having outlined the research methodology, methods and research design and the reasons for which they were selected for the present study, the writer will describe next the research procedures and the initial analysis of data.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research procedures and initial data analysis

This qualitative case study was designed to identify leadership and management skills currently used in centres, to explore the quality of those practices, including what constitutes best practice, and to use the data to develop a theoretical model of quality leadership and management in early childhood education. Research questions were prepared to aid the researcher to focus on the aims of the project.

The research questions were:

- What were the perceptions, ideas and views held by managers, staff and parents about the leadership and management practices in their centre?
- How were early childhood centres managed and led, by whom, and in what ways?
 - a) What did they think was good or excellent and why?
 - b) What did they think needed improvement and why?
 - c) What did they think was needed to lead to improvement?
- Among the centres involved in the study, what appeared to be examples of best practice in leadership and management according to participants' perceptions and the research literature?

At this point, it should be made clear that the literature search and analysis that was undertaken in the third phase of the present research provided evidence that persuaded the researcher to re-examine the notions of "best practice" that were included in the research proposal and noted above. The term "best practice" posed similar issues to the notion of "quality" that was discussed in Chapter One and that was also included in the aims of the present study. Both refer to the ways in which a centre might theoretically be advised to function without taking into consideration the many variables that might impact on what really is best practice or quality provision in a particular setting. Examples of these

variables include different values and judgements held by those in different centres (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999) and different cultural views (Holloway & Fuller, 1992). Concerns about the terms will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter Eight. It is important to note here, however, that while participants were asked what worked well for them in their centres, the literature search revealed a wide range of features promoted by various theorists, rather than explanations of “best practice” or “quality”. These features provided more of a focus on issues than had been originally envisaged

In this chapter, specific research procedures will be discussed and an initial analysis of the data from diaries, the centre ERO reports and questionnaires will be provided. First, a brief description of the research sample, the rationale for it and the selection and participation procedures will be provided. Interviews were the main source of data for the study, so an explanation of how they were constructed, undertaken (with regard to limitations and ethical issues) and recorded will follow. After this, an outline of how the NUD.IST software programme was employed to store, index, code and categorise data will be included.

Eight categories emerged from the analysis of interview data in the second research phase. The categories will be overviewed briefly, then the supporting research methods used in the study (demographic questionnaires, the analysis of supervisor’s diaries and each centre’s ERO report and the examination of literature) will be discussed in detail. A description of how the data were collated and triangulated will also be provided.

In order to test research tools and interview skills prior to beginning the main study, a pilot study was undertaken in Centre A. The pilot study will be discussed briefly in the final section of the chapter.

The research sample

It was decided that licensees, supervisors, staff members and parents from a range of centres would be invited to identify and explore their views on leadership and

management practices in their centres so that the research aims articulated in the present study could be met. The research sample was thus drawn to gain as wide a range of perspectives as possible.

Four MoE “categories of authority” (Education Review Office, 1996) are used to describe the legal basis under which early childhood services operate. These are ngā Kōhanga Reo, private/private trust, community, and corporate/institution.

The term “early childhood centre” is defined in the Education Act 1989 as any

...premises used (exclusively, mainly or regularly) for the education and care of three or more children (not being the children of the persons providing the education or care). (Education Review Office, 1996, p. 7)

and is the legal category for legislation, regulations and government policy in the early childhood sector. The childcare service is one of seven types of centre-based service listed by the ERO (the others are kindergartens, Playcentres, ngā Kōhanga Reo, Pacific Island early childhood centres, community play groups and the Correspondence School), and includes centres

...operated by private individuals, commercial companies, charitable institutions, community groups, Government agencies, local bodies, hospitals, educational institutions, and other organisations. Such centres cater for children ranging in age from birth to six years. Some centres in this category, such as Rudolph Steiner and Montessori, base services they provide on a particular philosophy of learning and teaching. (Education Review Office, 1996, p. 8)

Up to six of the centre personnel and parents of each of ten centres participated in this study. All centres were located in an city in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Four were from the private/private trust MoE category of authority, three were from the community category and three were from the corporate/institution category. As well as the variety of categories of authority, centres were selected to attempt to obtain a range across socio-economic areas, numbers of children for which they were licensed, and special character.

The process of selecting a sample of such diversity is called “maximum variation sampling” (Merriam 1998, p. 62) and is designed to find shared patterns that cut across cases and are significant for their similarities.

Rationale for the sample definition

The sample for the proposed study was chosen for a number of reasons. First, childcare centres provide more child places in New Zealand than any other group of licensed providers (for example, Free Kindergartens, family daycare, National Trust ngā Kōhanga Reo). Very little research has been undertaken into examining what happens in childcare centres in New Zealand, in spite of the rapid growth in this section of the sector.

Second, it was considered that the diverse range of licensed centres from three of the four categories of authority (Education Review Office, 1996, p. 9) and the centre operations outlined by the ERO would provide a large number of variables to consider within the financial and geographic scope of the study. These variables include the number of children for which a centre is licensed, the culture and philosophical basis of the centre, hours of operation, economic viability, purpose, sources of income and resource availability.

Although the original research proposal indicated that centres would be randomly selected, it soon became clear that random selection would not fulfil the purpose of obtaining a wide-ranging sample (i.e. from different socio-economic areas, different numbers of child places, single centre or multiple centre chain). Centres were thus first randomly selected from a MoE list by determining every third centre in a particular category of authority, but at that point maximum variation sampling was used to ensure that centres were only selected if they were different from the centres already in the study. In addition, any centres within which the researcher was currently working as a visiting lecturer, or that employed staff members who were enrolled as students in classes taught by the researcher were removed from the sample if they were selected.

Selection and participation, including ethical considerations

Participants in the study were drawn from the ten childcare centres. In each case, the participants (in each centre the licensee, the supervisor, two staff members and two parents) were approached initially through the supervisor of the centre. As the roles of licensee, supervisor and owner are sometimes combined, four licensee/supervisor/owners, one licensee/supervisor and five supervisors were approached to make initial contact.

A telephone call was the vehicle for initial discussion. The proposed study was discussed and a letter and an information sheet (Appendices B1 and B2) were then sent to the person contacted. A telephone call ensued a week later to ascertain interest in the study and, if acceptable, a time was arranged to visit and explain the project. If the approach was declined, another centre in the same category of authority was contacted.

Through the person with whom the initial contact was made, names of the licensee, staff and parents who were willing to participate were sought. At the first meeting with each participant, details of the study were explained, an information sheet provided and informed consent (Appendix B3) gained. Informed consent included the understanding that participants could withdraw from the study at any time and that the researcher would maintain confidentiality, although no control over what participants said to each other or to other people could be guaranteed. It was also made clear that pseudonyms would be used for centres and participants.

Interview times of one to two hours were arranged in a venue of the participant's choice. A questionnaire requesting personal and professional demographic details was provided for each owner/manager/licensee, staff member and parent (Appendix B4) and three copies of diary forms (Appendix B5) were supplied to each supervisor.

Interviews

Initial interviews were undertaken with each participant in the first research phase and theoretical sampling was undertaken with three participants during Phase Three.

Interview design

Based on the principles of grounded theory outlined in Chapter Three, the interviews were designed to identify and explore participants' perceptions of management and leadership practices in centres. The interviews were semi-structured or "focused" (Yin, 1994, p. 84) and had a "funnel sequence" of questions (Anderson, 1990, p. 236) which moved from the first general, "easy" non-personal question through an increasingly focused sequence to those which required more personal reflection and disclosure. Anderson (1990) described the type of interview used in this study as "elite"; designed to "probe the views" of the participants in order to build understanding and to teach the interviewer about events and personal perspectives. The interviewer needed to listen carefully to attitudes and feelings and to be "interviewee-guided" and to include opportunities for clarification and discussion (Reinharz, 1992, p. 295). The final "ending" questions were designed to de-brief, reassure and close the interview (Charmaz, 1994b).

Interview procedures

While the researcher was required to focus the interview on aspects of leadership and management that were familiar to her, it was necessary to remain open to new or different views as outlined by Reinhartz (1992). Those views needed to be analysed and emerge as codes, then compared with the results of other interviews. To assist in this process, a list of guiding questions (Appendix C) was developed by the researcher, checked by a research supervisor and added to as the interviews proceeded. The questions were used as a reminder to the researcher if the participant did not volunteer the topics. The guiding questions were not asked in any particular order. The order of topics was determined by the participant's responsiveness, attitude, own decisions, and by clarifying questions or prompts posed by the researcher. Each interview could be described therefore, as directed conversation (Charmaz, 1994b) and as a "conversation between fellow professionals" (Blenkin & Kelly, 1997, p. 3).

Alvesson (1993) suggests that a researcher who "is both close to and distant from the subjects of study" (p. 49) allows patterns of meaning to be understood better if they are

approached from a wide spectrum of reference points. Such distancing, he notes, can be achieved by way of broad theoretical knowledge of reflection and at the same time a kind of naïveté. Using ideas from a list of possible guiding questions that applied to issues identified by the participants provided both the distance and the naïveté.

When participants discussed particular processes and practices, their perceptions about the quality of the identified issues were sought. They were asked the questions with which this chapter began; to identify practices that were good or excellent, those which may have needed improvement, and to offer suggestions about what would lead to improvement. Documents and artifacts (such as the ERO reports, appraisal policies and newsletters) were often examined and discussed during the interviews to both triangulate information (Flick, 1992; Gronn & Ribbins, 1996; Zeller, 1995) and to maintain a focus on the holistic or “big picture” (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, p.148).

Interviews; limitations and ethical issues

The use of interviews to gain deeper understandings of and insights into perceptions, values and realities of those who participate in particular situations is a well established research technique (Blenkin & Kelly, 1997), but has its pitfalls and dangers. In the present study, one researcher conducted all the interviews, so differences in interview techniques and topics were minimised compared to larger studies in which teams of interviewers must moderate interviews carefully. However, it must be acknowledged that the biases and values of one researcher may heavily influence the interview questions, directions and the interpretation of interviews if she is the only person asking, recording and analysing (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). In addition, the attitude of the researcher, any imbalance of power relationships, levels (if any) of past interactions between the researcher and participant are all examples of influences which may affect interview results (Anderson, 1990; Merriam, 1988).

Several measures were employed to limit the effect of the weaknesses of interviewing. The guiding questions already outlined provided one framework by which the researcher attempted to minimise the effects of her own biases and values and was kept reminded of

topics to cover. The topics and guiding questions had been reviewed by research supervisors, giving added protection to the research focus (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). The fact that participants (other than the centre supervisors) were approached to contribute to the study by someone other than the researcher also prevented any power or influence being applied by the researcher to encourage individuals to take part. In addition, the researcher eliminated from the research sample any centres with which she currently worked as a visiting lecturer, or staff members who were enrolled as students in classes she taught, to further eliminate issues of perceived power imbalance (Merriam, 1988).

The purpose and ethical base of the research was explained carefully to each participant. Confidentiality was discussed with all participants and the researcher made every attempt to remain neutral about participants' comments and responses (Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

Tape recording and transcribing each interview ensured that the research was grounded in what the participants actually said. The transcripts were returned to the participants for checking, as suggested by Taft (1988). In four cases, participants sent their transcripts back to the researcher for amendment or clarified what they had said by adding further comment, allowing further levels of reliability and what Guba and Lincoln (1981, p.104) terms "auditability". In some situations, the researcher contacted participants by telephone to clarify issues to assist with analysis. Analysis was also accurately enabled by use of the NUD.IST software programme, which allowed chunks of transcript to be copied exactly and transferred to one or more codes (nodes).

Interview transcripts then, were prepared, returned to participants for amendment, entered in the NUD.IST software programme and analysed as other interviews proceeded. This enabled a constant comparison of emerging codes to inform selective sampling (Stem, 1994) in later interviews during the first research phase (see Figure 1 p. 108).

In the third research phase, theoretical sampling (described in Chapter Three) involved a second interview with a supervisor from each of the three MoE categories of authority and some telephone calls to other participants. This aided the saturation (no new information emerged) and comparison of categories. Other data (from the ERO reports, diaries, artifacts) were then used to triangulate details (Flick, 1992).

Memo-writing and journal entries

In the present study, the process of “memoing” (Glaser, 1978) during the collection of data preceded the development of a conceptual framework. As the process of interviewing and analysis of interviews proceeded in tandem, memos were written. They were recorded in order to attempt to raise the data to a conceptual level; to develop the properties of each category and define them operationally; to highlight links between categories, and to locate the emerging ideas with others of potential relevance (Glaser, 1978). Memos consisted of hand-written notes in the researcher’s journal, if considered during fieldwork, or entries into the NUD.IST software programme if considered during the process of analysis. An example of a journal memo and of a NUD.IST memo is included in Appendix D.

The transcription, analysis, coding and categorising of interviews

The NUD.IST software programme was used to store the 54 interviews that were undertaken in the present study. Each interview was transcribed verbatim and then entered into the NUD.IST software under pseudonyms. Each transcript was then coded. As new transcripts were entered (indexed) and coded, they were compared with the codes of all previous transcripts and adjustments and changes were made to codes as a result. Full details of the NUD.IST processes of storing, indexing and coding data are included in Appendix A.

When the initial interviewing and coding set was completed in the first research phase, a printout of codes (referred to in NUD.IST language as nodes) revealed the numbers of entries in each. Those with the highest numbers of entries reflected issues which participants discussed more often and were re-read by the researcher first. Common

patterns and links were noted in codes and sub-codes across all four first-level codes (licensee, supervisor, staff and parents). A second coding phase of this study then began with a new set of files being set up (still separated under the four licensee, supervisor, staff and parent headings) to accommodate the links noted.

Constant comparison of data leading to emerging categories

The files in the new set were compared in a matrix-like pattern that resulted in eight categories and 48 sub-codes that captured the issues most frequently raised in the interviews. In this second phase of the research, the eight categories that resulted from the continuous comparison and subsequently formed the second coding set were as follows:

- Organisational structure
- Organisational culture (based on perceptions of centre and personal philosophy)
- Leadership and management (with administration subsumed within management)
- Communication (including staff / parent and staff / child relationships)
- Teamwork
- Management of change
- Pedagogical issues
- Professional issues

The entries in the eight categories in the second coding set were re-read to determine the content and the important points were noted from each. This enabled a record to be prepared of the main ideas expressed in each category, including when contradictory comments were made. An example of a contradictory comment was noted when a licensee, referring to her centre's organisational structure, said that no staffing hierarchy existed in the centre, as all contributed equally to decisions. Later, she indicated that she vetoed decisions as necessary. She also commented that selected staff (always the same people) took responsibility for the centre in her absence. Those people were staff members who had been employed for the longest period of time in the centre, which indicated that experience in the centre (rather than age or qualifications, or other factors) informed hierarchical structure.

The category “organisational structure” conveyed information about the organisational structure of each centre as well as perceptions about the effects of that structure on those working within it (i.e. staff) and outside it (i.e. Community House committee members). This category, together with some of the data from the demographic questionnaires completed by participants, will be used in the next chapter to provide a detailed outline of each centre’s organisational structure and a description of participants in the sample. The perceptions of centre personnel about the effects of their centre structure on leadership and management issues will also be provided in Chapter Five, together with details of the “organisational culture” category.

The other six categories reflected the organisational activities (O’Neill, 1994) described by participants. These six categories will be outlined in Chapter Six. All eight categories in the second coding set contained data that identified the perceptions of staff and parents about leadership and management practices used in the early childhood centres in the study sample. Perceptions of the quality of and possible improvements to those leadership and management practices were also identified. The eight categories formed a conceptual framework (Munton et al. 1995) and were the focus of theoretical sampling in the third phase of the study.

As the third and fourth research phases of the study developed, the eight interview categories were continuously compared with each other and with data from the other methods of collection. It was at this point that the core category (the image of the child and childhood) emerged. Issues of organisational culture, structure and activities (O’Neill, 1994) in each centre rest on the image of the child and childhood held by those in the centre.

Supporting research methods used

Forms and questionnaires reflecting a number of research methods were collated by the researcher and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee prior to the study. The methods used in the first research phase included demographic data

questionnaires, coding of each manager's self-reported diary forms and of each centre's latest ERO accountability review report, as well as an examination of literature and other artifactual material. The evidence noted as artifacts (such as meeting notes, parent newsletters, noticeboards) that were examined or discussed will be introduced in Chapters Five and Six. A description of each of the other supporting research methods and its preliminary findings will be provided next, followed by a brief outline of the pilot study.

Demographic data questionnaires

Each supervisor was asked, in a questionnaire, to stipulate the category of authority under which her centre was funded. The number of children for which the centre was licensed was also requested, as was the socio-economic area in which the centre was located (or from which it drew children if this was different from the centre location). The number of staff members and each staff member's role in the centre was requested, as was the length of time the centre had been operating.

Licensees, staff and supervisors also supplied personal and professional details. These details included the length of time for which the participant had held their position, their salary or wage and hours per week worked, their age and their early childhood work experience. Professional qualifications were also requested, and reflected the diversity of qualifications held by those working in the sector. These demographics are summarised in Appendix E, p.404.

Parents were asked about the number and ages of the children enrolled in the centre and about their involvement in centre activities. Their responses are included in the description of the centres in the next chapter.

Coding of each supervisor's self-reported diary forms

Each centre manager was asked to keep a diary for three self-identified "typical" centre days so that the tasks could be analysed and coded. When possible, the coding was negotiated at the supervisor's interview. At other times it was discussed by telephone. In

either event, the diary was returned to the supervisor for amendment or comment after the researcher had coded it according to tasks undertaken. The time spent by supervisors on each code was calculated and compared with details included in the transcripts. The codes were also examined with artifacts and documents (discussed previously) to triangulate “converging evidence” (Anderson, 1990, p.163).

Where two tasks were being undertaken at the same time (such as feeding a baby her bottle while talking to her mother), the supervisors chose to have half the recorded time coded for each activity i.e. half as working with child and half as working with the parent. It must be noted that the times are, therefore, indicative only. They indicate trends of time spent, and were used to place alongside supervisor’s transcripts to find support for them or to triangulate for areas of contradiction.

Table 1 shows the eight diary codes that resulted from the analysis. Most time was spent on the code identified as leadership, management and administration, then on working with children. Working with parents, planning curriculum and the educational environment, routine tasks, professional development, working with other agencies and public relations tasks were other nominated codes. Each of these codes will be described in more detail next. In Table 1, the time individual supervisors or supervisor/licensees spent on tasks over three (two for Centre F) self-selected “typical” days is also shown, with the total time spent on all codes shown at the bottom of the table.

Table 1: Estimated time recorded by supervisors or supervisor/licensees as spent on tasks over three days.

| Centre & funding cat'y See key | Management including leadership & administration | | Working with children | | Working with parents | | Planning curriculum & educat. environ. | | Routine tasks | | Professional Dev'tment (own & others) | | Working with other agencies | | Public Relations | | S: supervisor L: licensee |
|-----------------------------------|--|------|-----------------------|------|----------------------|------|--|------|---------------|------|---------------------------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|------------------|----|------------------------------|
| | hrs | mins | hrs | mins | hrs | mins | hrs | mins | hrs | mins | hrs | mins | hrs | mins | mins | | |
| B | 15 | 02 | 7 | 07 | 2 | 40 | 1 | 00 | | 40 | | | | - | 40 | | S |
| C | 5 | 55 | 10 | 15 | 1 | 30 | 10 | 10 | 2 | 25 | 1 | 15 | | - | - | | S |
| D | 3 | 35 | 11 | 55 | 2 | 40 | | 40 | 1 | 20 | 1 | 25 | | - | - | | S |
| E | 25 | 00 | 3 | 00 | 4 | 00 | - | - | - | - | - | - | | - | - | | S/L |
| F* | 12 | 35 | - | - | 3 | 20 | - | - | - | - | - | - | | 1 | 40 | | S/L |
| G | 13 | 30 | 8 | 05 | 4 | 55 | - | - | | 30 | - | - | | - | - | | S/L |
| H | 10 | 40 | 4 | 30 | 2 | 30 | 2 | 35 | 6 | 30 | - | - | | 15 | - | | S/L |
| I | 13 | 18 | 6 | 50 | 2 | 22 | 2 | 20 | 2 | 05 | | 55 | | - | - | | S |
| J | 21 | 20 | 2 | 00 | | 40 | - | - | | 15 | - | - | | - | - | | S/L |
| K | 5 | 23 | 9 | 42 | 1 | 50 | | 35 | 1 | 35 | 1 | 00 | | 20 | - | | S |
| Total over 3* days | 126 | 18 | 63 | 34 | 26 | 27 | 17 | 20 | 15 | 40 | 4 | 35 | | 2 | 05 | 40 | |

Key:

*Centre F supervisor kept a diary for two days only

Corporation/institution funding category

Community funding category

Private funding category

Diary codes

Each of the eight diary codes will be described in decreasing order of the amount of collective time spent on them by supervisors and supervisor/licensees. The largest consumer of time, leadership, management and administration will be detailed first.

Leadership, management and administration

Included in this diary code was time spent on strategic planning (only one supervisor mentioned this specifically) and developing policy. Both of these tasks were considered to be “leadership” roles. Much more time was allocated to management issues, defined by supervisors and supervisor/licensees as talking with staff, working with them on a one-to-one basis and in staff meetings. Also included in this code was administration, referred to as “the paperwork” and involving meeting MoE compliance requirements such as funding, staff salaries or wages, parent accounts and receipts and enrolment and attendance records. The time spent on tasks identified as “administration” was more than for any other tasks when examined collectively and individually.

Table 2 illustrates the trends of estimated self-reported amounts of time spent separately on leadership, management and administration tasks over three days by individual supervisors or supervisor/licensees (two days for one supervisor/licensee). Each of these three sections was originally coded separately on supervisor diary forms, as recorded in Table 2. However, they were amalgamated under one code in Table 1 because supervisors saw them as combined in what they referred to as “management”, with both leadership and administration subsumed within management tasks and skills.

Table 2: Estimated self-reported time spent by individual supervisors and supervisor/licensees working in areas they defined as leadership, management and administration.

| Centre | Leadership | | Management | | Administration | | S=Supervisor S/L=Supervisor/ Licensee |
|--------|------------|------|------------|------|----------------|------|---|
| | hours | mins | hours | mins | hours | mins | |
| B | | | 6 | 25 | 8 | 27 | S |
| C | 2 | 00 | 2 | 00 | 1 | 55 | S |
| D | | | 1 | 40 | 1 | 55 | S |
| E | | | 6 | 00 | 19 | 00 | S/L |
| F* | | | 4 | 50 | 7 | 45 | S/L |
| G | | | 5 | 55 | 7 | 35 | S/L |
| H | | | 3 | 10 | 7 | 30 | S/L |
| I | | | 4 | 55 | 8 | 23 | S |
| J | | 45 | 3 | 40 | 16 | 55 | S/L |
| K | | | | 50 | 4 | 33 | S |

Key:

*diary kept for two days only

Corporate/institution
funding category

Community
funding category

Private funding
category

Figure 2 shows the total amounts of self-estimated and self-recorded time spent by all ten centre supervisors or supervisor/licensees during three days (two days for one supervisor/licensee). The disproportionate amounts of time spent on administration, management and leadership are clear in Figure 2, with time spent on administrative tasks far outweighing management and leadership activities in most cases.

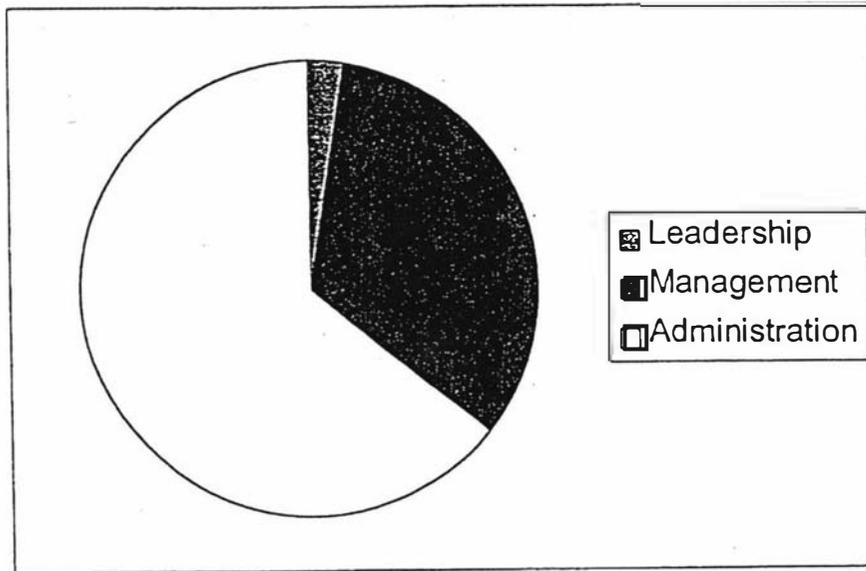


Figure 2: The aggregated amounts of self-estimated, self-reported time spent by ten supervisors and supervisor/licensees working in areas they defined as leadership, management and administration over 3 days (2 days for one supervisor/licensee).

Working with children, preparing the educational environment and curriculum planning

The activity upon which the second largest amount of time was spent collectively by supervisors and supervisor/licensees was working with children. However, this varied considerably between individuals; over three days (two days in one instance), one supervisor/licensee spent two hours and ten minutes working with children, while one supervisor spent almost 20 hours and 25 minutes (see Table 3).

When the centre personnel discussed the detail of what they did when with children, they often referred to “working” with children. However, when speaking more generally about their roles, they often mentioned that they were teachers involved in “teaching” children. This issue will be explored further in Chapters Five and Six.

For the purposes of analysis, however, it was noticeable that participants separated into different codes the time spent “working with children” (which involved implementing the curriculum and was sometimes referred to as “working on the floor”), preparing the educational environment, and planning the curriculum. When time spent on these activities are combined (see Table 3 for time spent separately on these tasks and then added together) and the resulting amount of estimated time referred to as teaching, it is clear that those who held the role of supervisor/licensee spent less time teaching than did those who were supervisors only. Three supervisors (Centres C, D and K) reported spending more time in teaching children than in their combined leadership/management/administration role.

The range of estimated time spent teaching by supervisor/licensees is two hours and ten minutes to eight hours and five minutes over three days (except for one licensee/supervisor who kept a diary for two days only). Supervisors estimated that they spent between eight hours and seven minutes, and 20 hours and 25 minutes over three days in teaching children. For the nine supervisors or supervisor/licensees who teach, all spend more time working with children (i.e. implementing the curriculum) than in planning for it or in preparing the educational environment

Table 3: Estimated self-reported time spent by supervisors and supervisor /licensees in working with children, preparing the educational environment and in planning the curriculum over three days*, combined to give time spent on all components of teaching.

| Centre | Working with children | | Planning curriculum and ed. environ | | Total time spent teaching | | Role S=Supervisor L=Licensee |
|------------|-----------------------|------|-------------------------------------|------|---------------------------|------|------------------------------------|
| | hours | mins | hours | mins | hours | mins | |
| B | 7 | 07 | 1 | 00 | 8 | 07 | S |
| C | 10 | 15 | 10 | 10 | 20 | 25 | S |
| D | 11 | 55 | | 40 | 12 | 35 | S |
| E | 3 | 00 | | – | 3 | 00 | S/L |
| F * | | – | | – | | – | S/L |
| G | 8 | 05 | | – | 8 | 05 | S/L |
| H | 4 | 30 | 2 | 35 | 7 | 05 | S/L |
| I | 6 | 50 | 2 | 20 | 9 | 10 | S |
| J | 2 | 10 | | – | 2 | 10 | S/L |
| K | 9 | 42 | | 35 | 10 | 17 | S |

Key:

* diary kept for two days only

Corporate/institution funding category

Community funding category

Private funding category

Working with parents

The third largest amount of collective time was devoted to working with parents, and all supervisors and supervisor/licensees individually spent some time doing this (see Table 1). 40 minutes was spent by the participant with the least involvement with parents during this time, with four hours and 55 minutes being the greatest amount of time spent over three days (two days for one participant). “Working with parents” involved a wide range of activities to do with supporting, advising and informing parents (e.g. helping with

Work and Income New Zealand (WINZ) payments, supporting parents with custody arrangements, counselling parents on matters to do with child development).

Routine tasks

Table 1 shows that routine tasks were undertaken by all five supervisors and three supervisor/licensees, with a range of between fifteen minutes at the least, and six hours thirty minutes at the most recorded over the nominated days. Routine tasks mostly involved domestic tasks (e.g. wiping high chairs, packing the dishwasher, sweeping floors) and preparing food.

Professional development, working with other agencies, public relations

The three areas in which the least amount of collective time was spent were professional development (between 55 minutes, and one hour and 25 minutes of time spent by only four supervisors), working with other agencies (between 15 minutes, and one hour and 40 minutes, used by two supervisor/licensees and one supervisor) and public relations (40 minutes spent by just one supervisor) (see Table 1). Professional development was recorded as anything to do with arranging for or undertaking their own professional development and that of staff and student teachers. Working with other agencies included speaking by telephone or working with staff from Work and Income New Zealand, Special Education Services and a College of Education. One centre supervisor was required by the corporation that owned her centre to show visitors to the corporation through the centre, and was the only supervisor to nominate this function.

Summary

The greatest amount of supervisors' and supervisor/licensees' working time was spent on what they mostly termed management activities. They perceived that management included mostly administrative tasks, some management, and a very small leadership component. Teaching activities took up the second largest amount of collective time but varied considerably on an individual basis. Those who held the role of supervisor spent more time teaching than did those who were supervisor/licensees.

Working with parents consumed the third largest amount of time, and then routine tasks, such as cleaning, followed by relatively small amounts of time spent on professional development and working with other agencies. One supervisor also spent a small amount of time on public relations work for the corporation in which she worked. The estimated relative time spent collectively by supervisors and supervisor/licensees on specific tasks, as outlined above, is summarised in Figure 3.

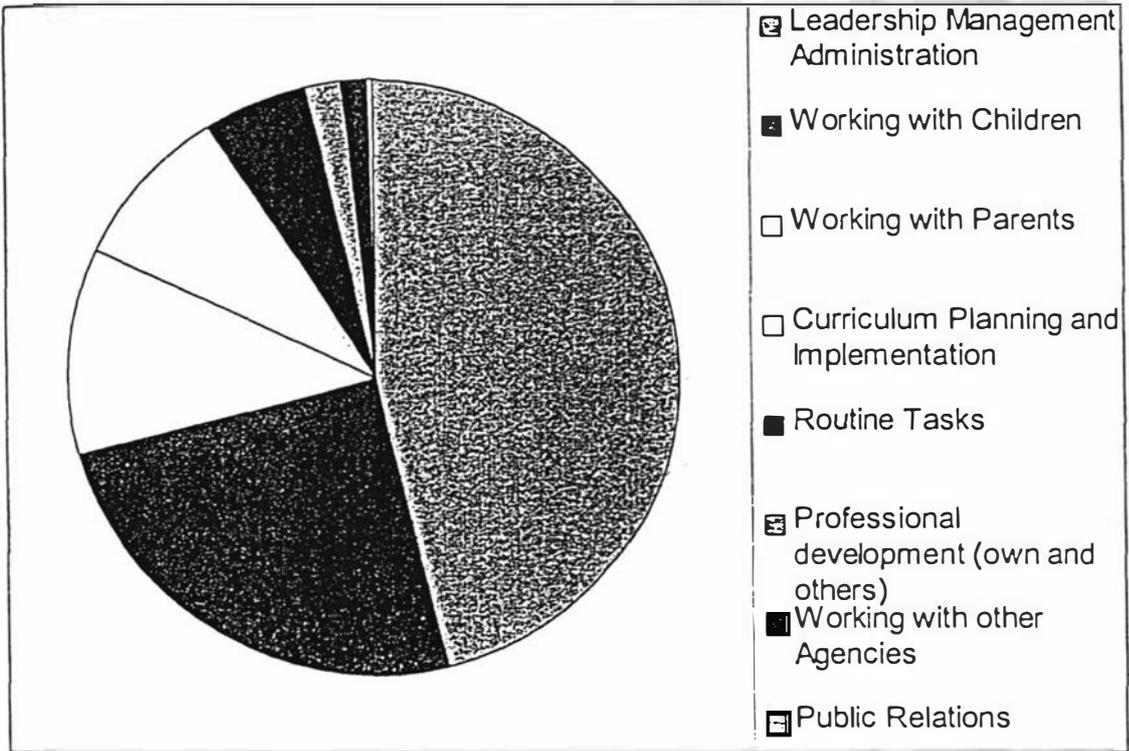


Figure 3: The collective estimated time recorded by supervisors and supervisor/ licensees as time spent on tasks over three days (two days for one supervisor/licensee).

Coding of each centre’s latest ERO accountability review report and examination of other artifactual material

The latest ERO report was obtained for each participating centre. These were not as useful as anticipated, because in two cases (Centres B, G,) the last reports were dated

1996, three years prior to the data collection. In two of those centres, the entire staff had since changed, and in one, the centre had shifted premises. However, they were useful in examining the philosophical base of the centres, and in checking the requirements and recommendations for compliance. These issues informed interviews and were helpful to examine alongside other artifacts (such as newsletters to parents, staff professional development and appraisal records, assessment sheets and minutes of meetings).

Table 4 indicates the number and type of compliance requirements in the most recent ERO report for each centre. Those that are more than three years old, or may not be relevant because of major changes in staff or premises, are marked with an asterisk.

There seemed to be no correlation between categories of authority and compliance requirements. Three centres (E, and J funded under the MoE private category, and K, funded under the community category) had no compliance requirements. Three centres (D, funded under the community category, and F and H, funded under the private category) had more than five (eight, eleven and seven respectively) compliance requirements. Common to all three was the need to attend to professional development, charter development and child safety. No other common compliance elements occurred across centres.

Table 4: The date of the most recent ERO report, and the number and type of compliance requirements for each centre

| Centre | Date of last ERO report & ca'gory of authority | Number of compliance requirements | Compliance requirements to do with: |
|-----------|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| B* | August 1996 Corporate/institution | 4 | charter, policy, hygiene, professional development |
| C | March 1999 Community | 2 | food record, privacy officer needed |
| D* | March 1997 Community | 8 | charter, curriculum planning, medication record, review processes, smoking policy, professional development, child safety, fire/emergency |
| E | February 1998 Private | 0 | — |
| F | March 1997 Private | 11 | charter, curriculum evaluation, smoking policy, management plan, child/adult ratio, professional development, employee safety, bed linen hygiene, child safety, nappy-changing hygiene, earthquake/fire |
| G* | August 1996 Corporate/institution | 1 | display license |
| H | March 1998 Private | 7 | charter, professional development, occupational health and safety, personnel policy (equity), medication record, building safety, attendance record |
| I | April 1999 Corporate/institution | 2 | playground safety, audit financial statement |
| J | April 1998 Private | 0 | — |
| K | October 1999 Community | 0 | — |

* Centres for which the report may not be currently relevant

Summary

The ERO reports provided variable information, as two reports were more than three years old, and another was no longer relevant because of staff and premises changes. For centres with more than five compliance requirements, the need to organise professional development, charter development and child safety issues were concerns in common. Professional development was also a requirement for one other centre. No other patterns were apparent.

The literature reviews

The researcher came to the present project with an interest in and some background knowledge of early childhood education, organisational culture, and educational management and administration. She planned to use the “lens” of organisational culture to explore the leadership, management and administration of early childhood centres.

However, it was important that the views of the participants were heard and that the findings remained grounded in participants’ perceptions. In order not to colour the researcher’s views any more than her interests, previous study and an overview of the literature undertaken for the research proposal preparation had already done, it was decided that a major review of the literature would be undertaken only when the first two phases of interviewing, data analysis and coding had occurred.

A literature review is “a means to an end” (Yin, 1994, p. 9), not an end in itself, and was planned to develop “sharper and more insightful questions about the topic”. The literature could also be used as a further aid to triangulation, in that it provided breadth and depth (Fielding & Fielding, 1986) and rigour (Flick, 1992) to the study. By undertaking the main review towards the end of the third research phase, the researcher was able to use the conceptual framework that had emerged (especially with regard to the eight categories that emerged in the second coding set, and the core category concerned with the image of the child held in centres) to prepare for theoretical sampling that clarified, explained, or enabled further examination of various aspects of participant perception. The core category, portraying the notion of various images of the child, was an

unexpected result of the first two research phases and required an extensive literature search, while the category of “pedagogical issues” was the topic most consistently explored during the theoretical sampling.

Theoretical sampling, clarifying, modifying and integrating of data

The literature review provided a rich source of theoretical perspectives about the categories that had emerged from the interviews. The data collected from the review were considered beside the other three most useful primary sources of data (the interviews, the supervisors’ diaries, and the demographic data) and the less informative (for the purposes of the present study) ERO reports.

An overview of the entire data collection was then plotted on a grid to pinpoint aspects of the study that still needed to be discussed with participants (described as theoretical sampling by Charmaz [2000] and undertaken to shed light on emerging theory). The eight categories were placed on the vertical axis of the grid, and “diaries”, “ERO reports”, and “other data” (including artifacts, literature, observations of the environment, symbols, etc.) were placed on the horizontal axis. The intersection of each was then examined to determine whether participants had provided evidence (or otherwise) of links between each aspect. Where insufficient evidence existed, questions were prepared for specific participants. The biggest “gap” in the initial interview responses was to do with pedagogical issues; participants had provided their perceptions of planning and assessment, but not curriculum implementation and programme evaluation. This gap was reflected in the fact that the supervisors’ diaries did not specify implementing the curriculum with children, only “preparing the educational environment” and “working with children”.

The researcher returned to a supervisor randomly selected from each of the three categories of authority to undertake a second interview in order to focus on the areas not sufficiently addressed in previous interviews. These interviews were then transcribed, indexed and coded prior to being added to the categories that had already emerged. At

this point, the fourth research phase of triangulating, clarifying, modifying and integrating concepts was continued in preparation for the writing of the final report.

Data collation and triangulation

As has been described, data were collated from interviews, diaries, and ERO reports and from artifacts and observations undertaken in centres. Patterns and links between the transcriptions and other forms of data were examined to provide a means by which data could be triangulated.

As outlined in Chapter Three, the process of triangulation in the present study was designed to follow Flick's (1992) assertion that, for qualitative research, triangulation should be seen not as a strategy of validation, but as an alternative to validation, and that an understanding of contextual issues should frame the analysis of data. Denzin (1989) also suggest that an in-depth understanding is important, while Strauss and Corbin (1990) consider that triangulation should seek support for statements of relationship. In addition, Fielding and Fielding (1986, p. 33) note that

(We) should combine theories and methods carefully and purposefully with the intention of adding breadth or depth to our analysis but not for the purpose of pursuing "objective" truth.

The interviews of licensees, staff and parents were triangulated with those of the supervisors and with other data to provide the type of in-depth, contextualised statements of relationship described by the theorists (above). Observational data (artifacts, routines, behaviours) were also triangulated with interview data in order to pinpoint similarities and differences (Patton, 1990) for further examination. The triangulation procedures are detailed in Appendix F.

All of the research methods outlined above were employed to support and triangulate the interview data. They were tested in the pilot study undertaken in one centre prior to beginning the main study.

The pilot study: Centre A

The pilot study was undertaken in Centre A to help refine the data collection plans with respect to the content of the data and the procedures to be followed (Yin, 1994). A letter was sent to the supervisor of Centre A, requesting permission to approach her regarding the pilot study (see Appendix G). All other documents (Appendix B) were used; in addition to checking that each research tool (i.e. the demographic data questionnaires and consent forms) was suited to its intended purpose, the construction of each of the tools was tested. Feedback was requested from participants after each interview about such aspects as their interpretation of documents, ethical considerations, and their levels of comfort about discussing issues.

The pilot study report was prepared as a memorandum for the researcher (Yin, 1994) and can be seen in Appendix H. Organisationally, the pilot study was successful. It was also extremely helpful to the researcher to practise interviewing techniques and procedures and to develop skills in using the NUD.IST computer software. As a result of the pilot study, some minor changes were made to the research tools, and an indication was provided of possible codes that might evolve from the main study.

Chapter summary

The procedures used in the present qualitative research study were outlined in this chapter. In the first section of the chapter the research aims and questions were provided, followed by a description of the research sample of centres and participants. The principles of grounded theory outlined in Chapter Three underpinned the 54 interviews that were scheduled, transcribed and participant-checked, then analysed, indexed and coded using NUD.IST software

The limitations of interviewing were discussed and the measures taken to avoid problems were outlined. The eight categories (organisational structure, organisational culture, leadership and management, communication, teamwork, change, pedagogical and professional issues) that emerged from the analysis of interview data were noted. The use

of demographic questionnaires, the coding and analysis of supervisors' and supervisor/licensees' diaries, and the examination of the ERO reports were outlined. Issues that were raised as a result of the triangulation of data from the various sources of data collection were recorded. The use of such a variety of data sources enabled many patterns, links, trends, and concepts to be collated and triangulated, adding support for statements of relationship (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) and an in-depth understanding (Denzin, 1989) of the issues raised by participants. The pilot study was also described in this chapter, together with the minor changes that were made to the research tools prior to the main study.

The eight categories that emerged from the data formed the conceptual framework of the present study. The categories will be explored in Chapters Five and Six, using O'Neill's (1994) model of organisational relationships (depicted as a triangle of culture, structure and activities) as a base. In Chapter Five, data on centre structures and cultures will be presented and in Chapter Six, the categories of leadership and management, communication, teamwork, management of change, pedagogical and professional issues will be elaborated upon.

CHAPTER FIVE

Data presentation: Part A

Eight categories (centre structure, centre philosophy, leadership and management, communication, teamwork, management of change, pedagogical and professional issues) emerged from the interview data as important to participants in the present study. Centre structure describes the pattern of relationships, roles and lines of authority that constitute the structure of the organisation (O'Neill, 1994). In the present study, demographic data forms and interviews yielded information about participants and details of centre structures. The data describing the centres will be detailed first in this chapter followed by an outline of the structural similarities and differences between centres in the three MoE categories of authority.

The culture of an organisation is built on the basic assumptions (Schein, 1992), world views, thoughts and feelings of those who work within it, and is also articulated through the expression of espoused values and artifactual evidence (such as buildings, displays, advertising, behaviour of staff, correspondence, noticeboards). In the present study, interviews, observations, diaries and artifacts provided data that were analysed to provide an insight into the basic assumptions held by centre personnel and parents about the purposes for which their centres existed. These data will also be discussed in this chapter.

Organisational activity is defined by O'Neill (1994) as "the official curricula ...and other broader areas of activity which collectively make up the organisation's intended whole curriculum" (p. 102). The activities of the organisation are developed by those whose shared values constitute the culture of the organisation. The remaining six categories that emerged during the constant comparison of data described the organisational activities of centres. These will be discussed in Chapter Six.

As the categories in this and the next chapter are discussed, specific defining nomenclature will sometimes be needed to identify the roles of those working in centres. The terms owner, licensee, licensee/supervisor or supervisor will be used when these distinctions are necessary. As noted in Chapter 1, the collective term “centre personnel” will be used when reference is made to all persons working in a centre.

The research sample

Participants and the organisational structure of centres

In this section, centres and participants in the research sample are described using the data collected during the first research phase. The organisational structure of each centre will be a particular focus as each centre is described, and will be discussed in more detail in the section that follows. Centres were alphabetically ordered as they were introduced to the study, beginning with Centre A, in which the pilot study was undertaken. All participants were provided with pseudonyms.

Centre B

Centre B is listed by the MoE under the “corporate/institution” category of authority because it is owned and operated by a corporation for the purpose of providing early childhood facilities for staff of that corporation. The centre has been providing services for children for seven years and is a not-for-profit centre. It is located in a medium-to-high socio-economic area and is licensed for 24 children. The centre is located within the corporation building, so parental access to the centre is easy. Visits by parents are often frequent during the day.

A contracted licensee is responsible for centre matters. A supervisor, four staff members and a cook work in the centre on a daily basis. Maintenance and cleaning are undertaken by other corporation employees.

Greta, the licensee, owns her own centres, and is contracted to take responsibility for Centre B. She visits at least twice weekly and maintains telephone communication with

the supervisor on a daily basis at other times. The supervisor (Natasha) is the only staff member with a Diploma. She is currently enrolled to upgrade her qualification to a Bachelor of Education (Teaching) degree. Carol and Donna, the two staff members who were interviewed, have a two-year certificate and a one-year certificate (respectively) in early childhood education. Carol's qualification attracts 80 NZQA licensing points, with another 40 credited for hours spent working in the centre.

Susan and Bianca, the two parents interviewed, each have one child in the centre. Both Susan's and Bianca's children have been at the centre for one year.

Organisational structure

The licensee is contracted to manage the centre. She liaises with and is responsible to corporation managers over financial matters. She makes a formal report to the corporation management group quarterly, and meets monthly with the financial manager to discuss the budget. However, all other issues are her responsibility.

There is a hierarchical model of responsibility operating in this centre, with staff undertaking the daily work with children, the supervisor maintaining responsibility for overseeing staff, maintaining centre functions on a daily basis, and reporting to the licensee. The licensee, in turn, is the person legally responsible for the centre, but reports to the corporation management, especially over financial matters. There is no formal opportunity for parents to participate in centre management.

Centre C

Centre C is funded under the MoE "community" category, and is sited in a Community Centre in a medium socio-economic area. It is a not-for-profit centre.

The centre is purpose-built, licensed for 25 children, and has been in operation for just over five years. The waiting list for the centre is long, so the 149 children on the roll are restricted to attending for two sessions each per week to ensure that as many children as possible can access the service.

Three full-time and two part-time staff members are employed, along with a part-time cleaner. The supervisor, Wilma, has a Diploma, as has one part-time teacher who was interviewed (Drina). Lorna, the licensee, is also a staff member, and has more than 120 licensing points. The other staff member interviewed (Rita) is unqualified.

One parent who was interviewed (Ena) has two children enrolled at the centre. Ena's family has been associated with the centre for two years. Valerie, the second parent interviewed, has had her only child enrolled for a year.

Organisational structure

The city council provides the building and partial funding for the operation of Centre C, and a Community Centre committee is responsible for allocating that funding. The committee is comprised of the other tenants of the building (such as the Plunket Committee chairperson, the ballet teacher, the police constable), and the Centre C licensee. This committee, in turn, reports to the city council.

The supervisor and licensee work alongside each other on a daily basis in the centre, as the licensee is also a staff member (she is separately employed on one day each week to undertake licensee responsibilities). Both the licensee and supervisor expressed concern over the difficulties they each experience in trying to make this structure work, as they often inadvertently duplicate or neglect tasks because the division of labour has never been clearly defined. Difficulties are also experienced because of conflict and confusion over role responsibilities as supervisor and staff member.

In addition, the licensee and supervisor often experience tension when dealing with the employing Community Centre management committee. This committee, although willing and generous-spirited, according to the supervisor, has little knowledge of or real interest in early childhood issues. This makes many decisions difficult for all.

Regular parent meetings and the availability of opportunities for parents to help with centre activities such as meetings provide frequent opportunities for parents to contribute to decisions made about the centre.

Centre D

Centre D is a community-based not-for-profit early childhood centre housed in a Community Centre in a medium-to-high socio-economic area and funded under the “community” MoE category. The centre is licensed for 18 children. It has operated for just over ten years, but was completely restructured and moved to different premises with the same licensee but entirely new staff in 1996.

Lee, the licensee, is a trained primary teacher, but does not work in the centre with the children. The supervisor, Kate, has 120 licensing points. Two staff were interviewed, Inez and Meda. Inez is a secondary school teacher who trained overseas then qualified as a primary school teacher in New Zealand. She has no early childhood qualifications. Meda is an unqualified staff member. The two parents who were interviewed (Heidi and Nora) each have one child at the centre.

Organisational structure

The manager/licensee (Lee) was appointed by the Community Centre management committee to manage all the functions of the Community Centre. The early childhood centre is included in these functions; Lee manages the centre but the Community Centre management committee makes all final decisions. Lee indicated that the present committee, while lacking knowledge of early childhood issues, is generous and willing to try to provide competently for the centre. The licensee and supervisor liaise daily over centre matters, and are clear about each other’s roles and responsibilities. The staff members are managed on a daily basis by the supervisor. Regular parent meetings are held, and parents feel consulted over matters to do with the centre.

Centre E

This centre is a privately-owned purpose-built centre owned by John and Miranda. Miranda describes herself as the manager and licensee. As such, she is the person responsible for the 70 children in the centre. The centre is located on the outskirts of the city and caters mainly for children of families living on life-style blocks of land. The centre is described by Miranda as serving a medium-to-high socio-economic area, and has been operated by Miranda for just over six years.

Miranda is newly qualified with a Diploma, as is one staff member interviewed (Trina). The second staff member interviewed (Robyn) was to complete a Diploma within a few months of the data collection. Doreen, the only parent who agreed to be interviewed in Centre E, has two sons (a three-year old and a four-year old) enrolled in the centre.

Organisational structure

Miranda is the licensee/supervisor/owner of the centre in partnership with her husband, John. Miranda sometimes works with the children in a “float” or relieving position, and undertakes responsibility, she says, for overseeing all matters to do with the children in the centre. John is referred to by Miranda as a manager and works in the centre on a full time basis undertaking maintenance and some of the centre administration. He, too, occasionally works with the children on a float basis. They share the management of staff issues. There is no other person with designated management responsibilities in this centre, although staff and Miranda concur that specific long-serving staff members are asked to take on a variety of responsibilities if Miranda and John are away. Staff expressed difficulties over what they perceived to be a lack of responsibility structure on such occasions.

There is no regular formal opportunity for parents to contribute to centre issues; instead, they are encouraged to participate informally, and are consulted on that basis over policy and other developments.

Centre F

Brenda and her husband Ron own and manage Centre F, identified by them as being in a low-to-medium socio-economic area. Brenda is the licensee and supervisor of the centre, funded in the private category. The centre promotes its Christian character as a drawcard for families, and is located in an old building that was once part of a school. Five full-time, three part-time and one support staff work with the two owners in the centre, licensed for 50 children. It has been operating under the same management since it opened three and a half years ago.

Brenda has 120 licensing points. She undertakes the administrative and management functions of the centre, and delegates most of the supervision of the staff and children to Caroline, who has a Diploma. Ron undertakes maintenance and cooking responsibilities in the centre on a full-time basis. The second staff member interviewed is Linda, who completed a six-month childcare certificate. Carly, mother of a seventeen-month-old child who has been enrolled in the centre since he was four months old, was the only parent who agreed to be interviewed.

Organisational structure

Brenda takes responsibility for all centre matters as licensee/owner/supervisor, although she says that she delegates direct responsibility for children and for staff issues related to working with children to Caroline, and sometimes calls her a supervisor. Staff members report to Caroline about the daily activities of the centre, but to Brenda over employment-related issues. The only exception to this hierarchical arrangement is Linda, who has been given responsibility by Brenda to operate a morning programme for four-year-olds. Because Caroline does not philosophically agree that this type of programme should be offered, she declines responsibility for it and Linda reports directly to Brenda on programme issues. There are no formal opportunities for parents to take part in centre management.

Centre G

This centre is operated and funded under the “corporate/institution” category of the MoE. The services of this centre are available only to the employees of the parent organisation. The centre has been in operation for almost nine years. It is based in a large new purpose-built building and is managed by Rhonda, who is considered by the firm to be one of its company managers. The centre is licensed for 64 children drawn from the spectrum of low to high socio-economic areas as their parents travel to work in the organisation. The centre is not operated for profit, although Rhonda is expected to manage it so that it does not run at a loss.

Rhonda is the licensee/manager, has 120 licensing points, and is currently enrolled to complete a Diploma. June is the assistant supervisor and has an Advanced Diploma (involving seven papers of graduate study after qualifying with her Diploma of Teaching), while Mary, the second staff member interviewed, holds a Diploma. Of the remaining 13 staff (one of whom is the cook), five have Diplomas and seven are working towards that qualification. The two parents interviewed (Jenna and Alana) each have one child enrolled in the centre.

Organisational structure

Centre G is owned by a large multi-national firm, and provides education and care for the children of employees’ families. Rhonda explained that she is the “front” person for the centre, acting as liaison between staff and parents, doing the management and administration tasks. She reports to a company section manager, and has also been allocated a mentor from within the company structure to provide guidance and support. The accounts are kept and wages paid by staff at the company’s Head Office.

June acts for Rhonda in her absence. Responsibility for curriculum planning and implementation is devolved to “team leaders” in each age-group area, and then to “key teachers” who have responsibility for individual children. The reporting system is thus hierarchical. There is no parent committee or formal route by which parents inform centre

practice and one parent (Jenna) noted that parent representation at decision-making level would be an improvement.

Centre H

Centre H is a small privately-owned centre operated in the home of the owner/supervisor/licensee (Claire). The centre is licensed for 20 children in an area described by Claire as a medium-to-high socio-economic area and is funded under the MoE's private/private trust category of authority. It has been offering services to families for almost nine years. Claire employs two full-time and one part-time staff members. In addition, her husband assists with centre maintenance as required.

Claire has a Diploma. One staff member interviewed, Ann, has 120 licensing points, while Vera, the other staff participant, is an untrained staff member. Two parents were interviewed; Ana and Jan have two children and one child (respectively) enrolled in the centre.

Organisational structure

Claire deals with all management and administrative tasks, but delegates responsibility for curriculum planning and implementation to Ann. All staff report to Claire. Parents have no formal processes by which they may contribute to centre practices.

Centre I

Attached to an educational institution catering for adult students in a low socio-economic area, this centre is funded in the "corporate/institution" category. It is operated for the benefit of students who are also parents, and for the children of the staff of the institution. It is licensed for 36 children and staffed by five full-time and one part-time teacher and four part-time education support workers. Centre personnel take pride in the multicultural and inclusive philosophy of their centre, which has been in operation for 25 years.

The licensee (Mary-Anne) is a qualified teacher employed by the parent institution, where she has responsibilities for administration and curriculum. She visits the centre on

a daily basis to liaise with Melanie, the supervisor. Melanie has a Diploma and a Diploma of Early Intervention, and is currently enrolled in a Bachelors degree. Four staff members also hold the Diploma. Two of the staff members (Tan and Te Puia) who hold this qualification were interviewed. The fifth full-time staff member is working towards a Diploma.

Tan was interviewed as a staff member and as a parent because her youngest child is enrolled in the centre. The other parent interviewed (Cate) has the younger of her two children enrolled in the centre, and is a staff member of the institution to which the centre is attached.

Organisational structure

Parents have strong representation on the management group (consisting of all staff, the licensee, a representative of the institution's management group and parents) which meets regularly and reports (via the licensee) to the management group. While the centre retains a large amount of autonomy, the management group ratifies final decisions, with particular responsibility for financial management. Centre policies must be aligned with those of the institution, although the centre's charter differs from that of the parent institution.

Within the centre, Melanie undertakes all administration tasks, and shares some of the management role (such as appraising staff) with Mary-Anne. Their roles are clearly delineated. Staff members report to Melanie, who oversees curriculum planning and participates in its implementation.

Centre J

Centre J is situated in an area defined by the part-owner/ licensee (Marion) as a low-to-medium socio-economic one. The centre is one of two owned by the same owners; both centres are funded in the MoE's private/private trust category of authority. The original centre has been operating for 16 years, and the second centre for two; one centre is

licensed for 20 children and the other for 28. Marion holds the Diploma and her business partner is working towards this qualification.

Staff members Sona and Kath were interviewed for this study. Sona holds the Diploma and is the person responsible for overseeing Centre J. Kath is currently unqualified but is studying for a Diploma. Of the nine staff employed to work with children, (apart from the two owner/managers), three hold the Diploma and six are currently working towards it.

Organisational structure

Marion supervises the centres on a daily basis together with her business partner who co-owns the centre with her. They also employ a supervising staff member in each centre. Staff members report to the supervising staff member in their centre, or directly to Marion or her co-owner, both of whom attend centre staff meetings regularly. Parents are consulted and surveyed about centre issues, but do not have representation on committees.

Centre K

The supervisor (Jeanne) describes Centre K as drawing children from two adjacent socio-economic areas; one is low-to-medium, and the other is medium-to-high. It is a purpose-built community-based centre licensed for 25 children. 112 children attend on a sessional basis each week, with most children attending for two half-days. The centre operates on a not-for-profit basis and has been operating for 11 months.

Lynn is the licensee, and is also a parent. She holds a 120 licensing point qualification and works on a voluntary basis in the centre. Another parent interviewed, (Sally), also works voluntarily on some of the administrative tasks. Jeanne and two other teachers hold the Diploma, one other (Sandra) is studying towards it, and the other staff member is unqualified. Sandra and Rana, one of the Diploma-qualified staff members, were interviewed for this study.

Licensee/parent Lynn has her youngest child enrolled. Sally, the other parent interviewed, has her elder child on the roll and intends to enrol her younger child soon.

Organisational structure

The Community House to which the centre is attached operates the centre by way of a management committee. This committee consists of some of those involved in other Community House activities. The centre licensee (Lynn) represents the centre on the committee, and both she and the supervisor report to it. They note that they experience extreme tensions within this structure. Although the Community House owns the centre on behalf of the city council, it claims that property maintenance is not its role. This and other issues have led to deteriorating and increasingly difficult relationships between the centre and the House.

Within the centre, staff management and administrative tasks are shared between the volunteer licensee, a volunteer secretarial support person and the supervisor. The supervisor attempts to devote one day each week to administration, but finds that she is more often required to work with children to make up ratios, especially when staff are away. The supervisor leads curriculum planning and implementation processes in the centre, taking a full part in teaching children. Staff members report to her and she liaises on a regular basis (usually daily) with the licensee. Parents and staff meet regularly to make decisions about centre issues.

Centre structures

Initially, an observer could be forgiven for thinking that early childhood centres are managed and led in similar ways because of similar-seeming organisational structures. However, the structures are different, and are *used* in different ways. The use to which the organisational structure of a centre is put helps form the culture of that centre. Some of the many issues that are affected by centre structure include management and leadership styles, relationships between centre personnel and parents, management systems, decision-making processes, financial issues, and centre governance.

More similarities than differences between centre structures were seen within each of the three MoE categories of authority (private/private trust, community, and corporate/institution). The three categories will be discussed separately next, with a diagrammatic illustration of their hierarchical organisational structures (Figure 4).

Private/private trust centre structures

Each privately-owned centre was owned and managed by financially-involved citizens who operated their centre as a business, for profit. Three of the four centres in the present study were operated as family businesses, with the wife holding the centre license and the husband undertaking cooking, maintenance, administration and/or management responsibilities on a full or part time basis. The fourth (a two-centre complex) was owned and operated by two women in a business partnership.

The owners of the private centres did not directly comment on the profitability (or otherwise) of their businesses, but one commented on the level of financial risk she carried, indicating that she had found it difficult to initially undertake. Marion said:

...looking at the risk because you're actually taking out a loan on the strength that you would be able to perform this business and keep it viable, not go into the red.

Except for their responsibilities to meet the minimum standards, regulations and expectations of the DOPs through their charters, the owners of private/private trust centres were free to structure their organisations as they wished (see Figure 4). Two owner/licensee/supervisors delegated supervisory responsibilities to employees, who oversaw daily operations within their areas and reported back to the owner. Another claimed that she needed no formal hierarchy, and did not delegate responsibility to others except on an ad hoc basis or if the staff member showed interest. In this centre, however, staff and parents were familiar with an “unspoken” hierarchy that operated to maintain levels of power and control similar to other centres in the category. In the fourth (small) Centre H, the owner/licensee/supervisor (Claire) was involved in the daily centre routine,

but was encouraging another staff member to take more responsibility. Claire made all final decisions on all aspects of centre service.

It was common for the owner/licensee/supervisors to indicate that staff members had opportunities to participate in decisions made in staff meetings and to assist by recommending and selecting equipment. However, as indicated, private centre structures were hierarchically arranged, with the owners taking final responsibility for all major decisions.

While the owners considered that they provided opportunities for staff members to give an opinion (informally or at staff meetings), staff members felt that they could not always take advantage of the opportunities for reasons such as the unequal power relationships inherent in the centre structure. Trina, for example, explained how she sometimes found it difficult to tell the supervisor

...if you feel that something's not right or something that can be hard sometimes...And if it's relating to them, (the supervisor) if you feel that something's not right with them, that makes it quite difficult.

In all four private centres in the present study, no formally or frequently arranged meetings were held for staff, parents and owner/licensee/supervisors to share the responsibility of providing education and care for children. One owner/licensee/supervisor indicated that she surveyed parents at least twice each year, and another demonstrated the process by which she consulted parents about new policies by placing the policies in strategic places in the centre for parents to see. Claire consulted informally by "talking to parents", while the fourth had provided no opportunities for parents to participate in centre operations other than brief conversations with staff as they arrived in the morning and collected their children later in the day.

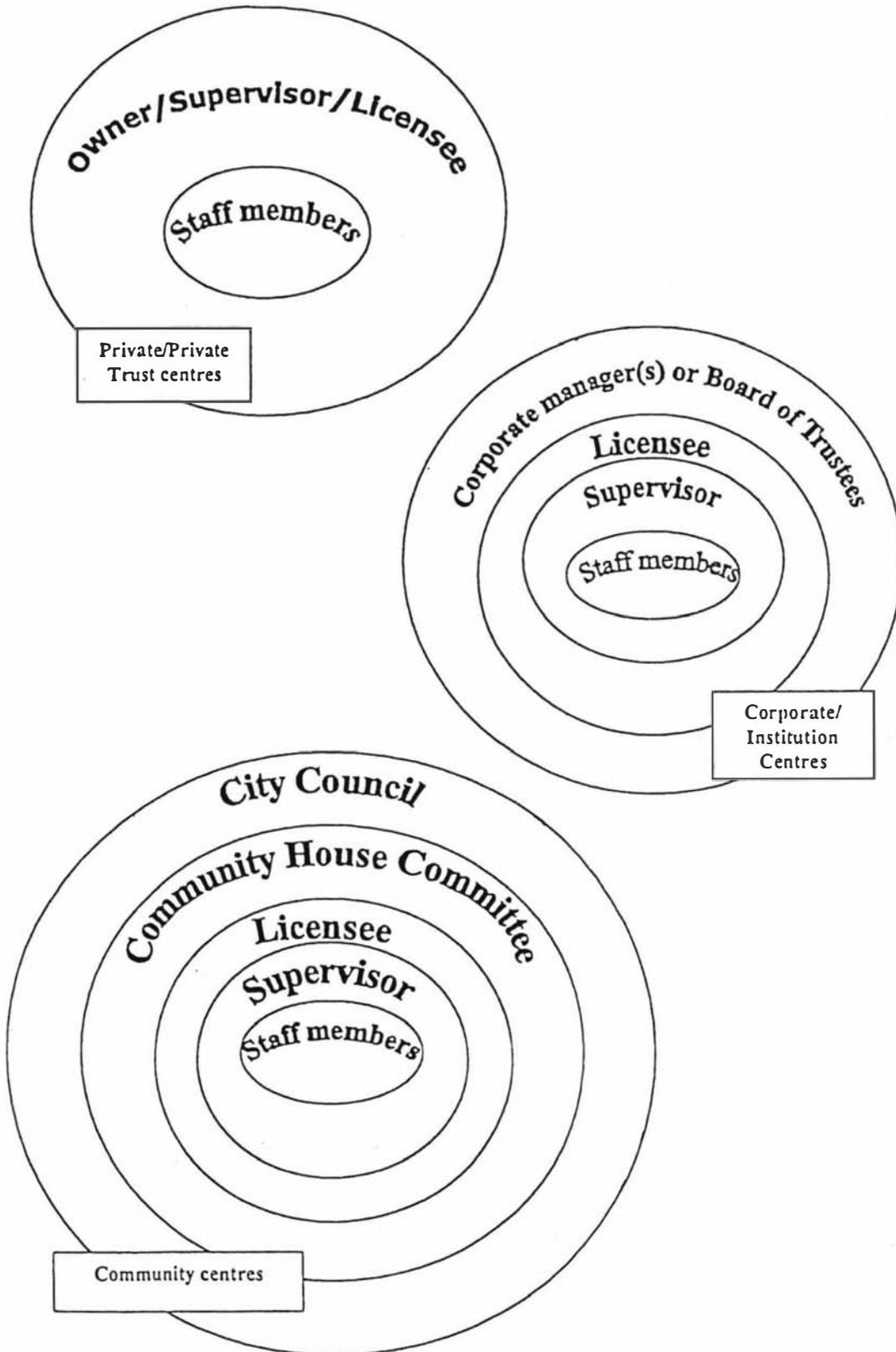


Figure 4: The hierarchical organisational structure of centres in the three MoE categories of authority.

Staff meetings were held in all four private centres, but dealt with day-to-day rosters, maintenance issues and programme planning rather than policy development and financial decisions. Depending on the size of the centre, staff reported to and were advised by the owner/licensee/supervisor (in the case of small centres) or by a senior staff member who in turn reported to the owner/licensee/supervisor (in larger centres). The hierarchical centre structures provided little opportunity for staff to participate in responsibility for anything other than programme planning and daily routines for children. The owners/licensees/supervisors of private centres spent less time teaching children (see Table 3) than any of the licensee/supervisors or supervisors in other categories of authority, although they mostly chaired staff and planning meetings.

One owner/licensee/supervisor spoke of in-centre staff development that had been a focus in the past, but most professional development, in the four private centres, was focused on individual staff members working towards qualifications.

Corporate/institution centre structures

Of the three corporate/institution centres in the present study, two utilised their five level structures in similar hierarchical ways, while the third employed a more democratic philosophy. These differences were greater within this category than they were between centres in either of the other two categories of authority.

Similarities involved the ownership of all three centres by their parent bodies. The licensees of two centres and the licensee/supervisor of the other were all required to report to their parent body (two corporations and an educational institution). In one centre, the report was made to a financial manager, in the second it was a company manager, and in the third, the report was made to a Board of Trustees (see Figure 4).

In one corporate centre, (B), the licensee was contracted to undertake responsibility for the centre and visited it at least twice weekly. The supervisor maintained regular phone contact with her at other times, but was responsible for daily centre operations. In this centre, the supervisor indicated that she tried to keep herself a little removed from staff to

ensure that she maintained “control”, although she worked with children in a relief capacity during staff breaks and programme planning meetings. She undertook most of the responsibility for administration, but the licensee chaired the monthly staff meetings. Donna, a staff member described the meetings:

Greta pretty much takes charge of them and then one of us will just write notes. Greta and Natasha sort of (take charge of the meeting) but we all have a lot of input so we all discuss when's a good time to have it and we'll sit down and Greta will say what she thinks and then she'll say what other problems do you have and so we'll all have a lot of input into that as well as Natasha.

Parents were not included in any meetings or formal opportunities to influence the direction of the centre, except where one parent had, on one occasion, been asked to help select and appoint a new supervisor. Carol, a staff member, voiced her view about providing meetings (information-providing rather than contribution-seeking opportunities) for parents as she commented:

...quite often we have a parent meeting and we had one parent turn up and they're all great - great intentions, but...

The centre was structured on very hierarchical lines, with staff mainly working together and reporting to the supervisor, who in turn reported to the (sometimes absentee) licensee. Financial reports were then made by the licensee to the corporate financial manager. The licensee was seen by staff to be “in charge” of monthly staff meetings, but otherwise had little to do with the staff members.

In Centre G, the licensee/supervisor (Rhonda) was considered by the corporation to be a corporate manager, and treated in the same way as managers in other parts of the nationwide organisation. She was able to choose a mentor within the organisation, and received the same level of in-house professional development (such as budgeting and human resource courses) as other managers. She undertook some administration tasks, assisted by centre staff. Other administration tasks were undertaken at the central corporation office. Her centre was the largest in the present study (16 staff members), and she had

organised teams of staff whose educational plans for children were overseen by “team leaders”. The teams mostly functioned separately, but met at monthly staff meetings to address centre issues. Parents did not have any opportunity to contribute to centre functioning.

Centre G was slightly less hierarchical in structure than Centre B. This was partly due to the fact that the licensee/supervisor was on site at all times and worked (as a float or relief teacher) with staff regularly. She made a point of requiring each staff member to undertake a specific aspect of administration so that she could “coach” them in that aspect of responsibility. The large size of the centre was the reason given by Rhonda for the teams of staff working more independently of each other than occurred in smaller centres. However, the hierarchical structures were still visible in staff reporting lines through team leaders to the licensee/supervisor and on to the corporate manager. In this centre, as in Centre B, a staff member indicated that she was uneasy about addressing issues with the supervisor. Mary said

I feel that certain things...like in management, I think it needs to be improved but I can't come out and tell my manager that. How do you tell the manager? I think it's probably - to be assertive for me, but can you, how do you approach your manager and just say oh this, you know?

Centre I's philosophy, as well as support for parents who were employees, was one of inclusion and bi- and multi-culturalism, with a strong focus on educational outcomes for children. This philosophy was reflected in a number of ways. Formal meetings of all staff, parents, the licensee and a Board of Trustees representative were held twice each term, with opportunities for all to make recommendations on all matters to do with the centre. Minutes were taken by the licensee and supervisor to meetings of the institution's Board of Trustees, where final decisions were taken by committee members who were parents and teachers.

Staff meetings were held each week. Parents were invited, and some attended most meetings. A range of centre matters was discussed at these meetings, including policy

development, programme planning and financial issues. Staff had responsibility for maintaining all aspects of the centre, with some designated “senior” teachers to assist those staff members still in teacher education programmes. The supervisor taught regularly, and also undertook some of the administration tasks (others were undertaken by the institutional secretariat).

The internal structure of Centre I thus reflected its philosophy of inclusion by involving all stakeholders as much as possible. Staff and parents spoke of their input into centre matters, and the supervisor talked of including others in all decision-making. While the line of responsibility was clear, all stakeholders considered that the management of this centre was democratically decided. Melanie, the supervisor, noted that coping with the complex role of enabling participation involved institutional knowledge and persistence, as well as the ability to communicate effectively.

Community centre structures

Community centres in the research sample were all owned by city councils, and had community house management committees to which licensees were obliged to report (see Figure 4). The community house committees consisted of community members (such as the ballet teacher, the local constable, retired citizens) who had often had no specific understanding of early childhood education (two supervisors also perceived that some committee members appeared to have little *interest* in early childhood matters). Legally, each committee was the employer of centre staff and was ultimately responsible, through the appointed licensee, for the centres.

While community centres operated on a not-for-profit basis, the licensee of each centre in the present study was required to work within a defined budget and take immediate responsibility for all that happened in the centre. In each case, she prepared a written report that was also verbally presented to the community house committee. At the time of the data collection for the present study, conflict over who was responsible for property was causing major disruption to centre management in one centre. Lynn, licensee in Centre K said:

...the community house has got a very different perspective on what a community-based crèche is. My perception is they kind of think that we are earning money, Jeanne (supervisor) and I are earning money off this and I'm becoming rich because of it, because they've been talking about charging us in rent for the centre, which is kind of impossible to do because they've been given a grant by the council to build a centre and do all of these things...so we're having a few disputes because we're trying to tell them that they're responsible for the environment... for the outside painting of the walls and doing the roof... That's a horrific relationship. There's people on there who have – well, they just have no idea of what's going on in the crèche.

In the other two centres, licensees and supervisors reported that the smooth functioning of the centre was often threatened by the composition of the community house committee. One of the two centre supervisors had just experienced conflict, while the other licensee felt that she had made compromises in some situations by needing to forgo what she perceived was needed for the centre, children and families in order to maintain good relationships with community house committee members.

Internally, community centres were structured in similar ways. All employed a supervisor as well as licensee (although in one centre a staff member was the licensee, and this caused tensions). In all cases, both contributed to regular staff meetings. In all of these centres regular staff and parent meetings were held to discuss all matters to do with the centre, and staff meetings were held weekly to plan programmes for children. The supervisors of the three community centres spent more time teaching children than did supervisors in other centres (see Table 3), although a centre philosophy of “care” and respite for parents rather than an “education” focus was espoused by two of these supervisors. However, supervisors in this category generally spoke more knowledgeably about individual children and assessment, programme planning and evaluation issues than did their private, and two of their corporate/institution, centre counterparts.

In summary, the city council held the ultimate responsibility for community centres, but delegated authority to the local community house committees. The interface between these and centre personnel was perceived by centre personnel to often be problematic. Within centres, all stakeholders had informal and formal opportunities for participating in centre processes, with the supervisor and licensee sharing responsibility for reporting to the community house committee. In these centres, supervisors spent more time working alongside staff while teaching children than did the private centre supervisors, and this assisted in maintaining a less formal hierarchy of responsibility and perceived power.

Organisational culture and philosophical issues: basic assumptions of centre personnel regarding the purposes of their work

In this section, the perceptions held by participants about the underlying assumptions (Schein, 1992), taken-for-granted beliefs, perceptions, thoughts and feelings held by those within an organisation about why, how, where and when they do what they do will be outlined, then summarised in Table 5. Some perceptions were more common across centres within each category of authority, while other perceptions were held across categories. Participants mostly held the belief that they were fulfilling more than one purpose in their work (for example, providing respite for parents *and* caring for children, or providing an inexpensive service for parents *as well as* a stimulating environment for children).

Participants usually explained their perception of a centre's philosophy and purpose indirectly or as a result of explaining why they chose to work there or what they admired about the way the centre operated. Some revealed their basic assumptions, taken-for-granted beliefs, thoughts and feelings in the language they used, or in the reactions they had to aspects of the interview conversation. In most centres, those interviewed expressed a similar discourse to that of their centre colleagues about their underlying assumptions of early childhood education and how those assumptions were applied in their centre.

The strongest influence on assumptions that were articulated about how a centre should be managed and led, and on what early childhood education meant to participants, was the influence of the centre founder.

The influence of founders on the philosophies of centres

The philosophy of each centre was clearly understood and articulated by all participants, and in nine of the ten centres it strongly reflected the world view (and the corresponding beliefs and values) of the founder. In some interviews in each of two centres, the founder was mentioned by name, even though they had been gone from the centre for some years. Three centres had been established for more than ten years (Centre I had been in operation for 25 years, Centre J for 16 years, and Centre D for ten years three months). In Centres I and J the founder's philosophies were still evident in the present structure and operation, although the founder was no longer working there. Mary-Anne (licensee) outlined the way in which Centre I had evolved:

In some ways, I guess, right at the very beginning we ran it just on a philosophy, a kind of belief that the supervisor of the time had and the staff that she gathered round her adhered to and we moved from there and the (parent institution) was really supportive because there were adult students and staff who needed childcare and so the place survived.

Melanie, (supervisor in Centre I) agreed that the centre was to support adult students, and further explained the philosophical legacy left by the founder:

...we're not confined, we don't have to make a profit. So we're certainly not a business... I would just like to generate within the centre community that there is a bi-cultural acceptance of the history of the country, a multicultural acknowledgement of what society is today so we can all get along...that the outcomes for them are that they (the children) are confident and that they have this desire to learn and seek and the confidence buoys up the desire (to learn).

Centre D, on the other hand, had been in operation for more than 10 years, but had undergone several changes in all personnel (except for the licensee who had been there

for six years) and was the only centre in the study which had experienced a change of premises. In that centre, minimal reference was made to a founding philosophy. Instead, the supervisor seemed to be influencing the beginnings of a new philosophy based on her own beliefs, and staff and parents were just beginning to also articulate those beliefs. Centre D was the only centre in which the philosophical discourse was slightly less emphatically expressed across all interviews, but even here there was general agreement about the purpose and philosophy of the centre.

Of the seven centres that had been open for less than ten years, only two were operated by licensees or supervisors who were not the founders. Both were centres in the corporate/institution category, and in both, the incumbent spoke both of her predecessor and of her responsibility to the corporation and its employees. Staff reiterated these assumptions, as they did in the other five centres where the current licensee or supervisor was also the founder of the centre. One example of a supervisor/licensee's comments and supporting remarks made by a staff member was:

...they have established the Centre for the parents here, the people who work here. (Greta, licensee of Centre B, a corporate/institution centre).

...well my philosophy is - or what I think the centre does is that we have lot of parent sort of input even though not necessarily on the programme but parent liaison...(Donna, a staff member in Centre B).

Another example was:

I think that mums need a break too. It's hard to have four kids, or to have two kids or even have one kid if you are feeling stressed or you are struggling financially you need a break. So we're here to help people out like that who need a break, and we really want to provide the best quality childcare we can for a really low price to help out people. (Lynn, licensee of community Centre K)

We're non-profit of course, so basically we're here to just give parents time out and those sorts of things. The cost of the - well it's donation isn't it? - for

the door is low, it's only \$4 so it's really good. We've got a really long waiting list and lots of people use it just to have time out, so it's really good that there's a place like that. (Sandra, a staff member in Centre K)

The perceptions expressed by participants about the purpose for which their centres existed were similar to the views expressed by others within each of the categories of authority that formed the basis upon which centres were selected for the present study. The basic assumptions underpinning centres in each of the categories of authority will be described next.

Private/private trust centres

The concept of family was central to the basic assumptions and beliefs that the owners of private centres held about the purpose for which their centres existed. Only one of the four privately owned centres in the present study was not still being operated by its founder, but the current owner (Marion) considered the founder to be her mentor. She had bought a centre and continued to follow the founder's philosophy, demonstrated in her statement that "it (the centre) is family-oriented and...we are an extension of their family". Miranda, another owner/licensee/supervisor, indicated that she used her own parental and family viewpoint in considering what was best for her centre:

I wanted it somewhere where children could come, an environment that I felt happy with as a parent if I was dropping my child off into an environment, into a centre, that that would be the best possible quality I could offer to that child.

The participants in two other private centres (H and F) also used the metaphor of family as they explained the philosophy of loving and caring for children in a home-like Christian atmosphere. For example, Claire, who indicated that her centre operated on a Christian basis, described her centre as "sort of like a family" and also said:

I don't want to be running a big institutional centre, I want a small, family, home-based centre...we're going to keep that at 20 and we don't want to split the ages,

we want to keep all the babies and all the ages in together because I think that's one thing that makes us different from every other centre.

Even though it was sometimes difficult with babies, toddlers and young children in one area, Claire felt that it was more “family-like” to keep them together. She spoke of a toddler:

I mean the older children, she'll sit on them, she'll climb on them, she'll pull their hair, she'll destroy their toys but they have to learn that and they learn such amazing skills of how to deal with her when she comes into the room.

Claire maintained communication and correspondence with most children and their families long after the children had left. She talked of some relationships that had been sustained over a ten-year period.

Brenda, the owner/licensee/supervisor of Centre F, a Christian centre, indicated that she hoped to have some “input into” the children in the form of establishing appropriate moral values such as not stealing or being violent. Linda, a staff member in Centre F, explained:

I like the Christian base because it's a freedom to sing Christian songs and talk about Jesus and talk about the times of the year of the Christian calendar and you're able to be quite free about that.

Corporate/institution centres

The three centres in this category of authority had originally been established by their founders to provide childcare for parents involved in the activities of the institution or corporation in which they were employed or enrolled. The discourse of care and support was articulated by the supervisor (Natasha) and a staff member (Carol) of a corporate centre when they spoke of it existing for “minding” and “babysitting” children respectively, while Greta, the licensee of the same centre, said;

...we are providing a service here for the people, the people who work here and (the) environment is set up for the children.

The not-for-profit and support issues were also features of Rhonda's view of her centre when she said that it was

...a family friendly place, it's not here for a profit, it's here for the children and the families...(it) is for equal opportunities for women to return to work, especially professional women, because the company were losing professional women because they couldn't find childcare...

The notion of supporting the "professional women" described by Rhonda was also articulated by June, a staff member in the same centre. She spoke of how centre personnel introduced mothers to others who lived in the same vicinity and used the centre. June said:

It gives the parents time to catch up with each other, knowing the busy life style (corporation) staff (have) and some of the them - they do their own networking (at the centre).

Mary-Anne, a licensee, indicated that her centre existed to "support adult students". Melanie, the supervisor of the same centre, referred to this too, and added that she, like Rhonda, placed importance on being involved in a not-for-profit organisation. She said:

We have a budget, we work to it but it is not the major focus and our budget is not ungenerous so we're not confined, we don't have to make a profit. So we're certainly not a business.

Melanie also stressed that her centre was a "very inclusive environment" which reflected the community spirit which was

...very multi-cultural...I guess what we do is we promote bi-culturalism and through that work through into multi-culturalism. Another side to our philosophy is that we encourage our children to learn a lot of the skills that will give them the confidence to take responsibility and to feel confident about owning their own ideas but be confident in sharing them ...a very strong focus on encouraging children to develop conflict resolution skills and to develop empathy.

Community centres

The influence of centre founders was articulated by five participants from each of the three community centres who, like those in the corporate/institution category, maintained the discourse of being proud to offer not-for-profit support services to their community. Wilma, when asked how the centre was funded, said that it was from

...government funding and we get a donation (from parents) which we ask for. I mean, if they don't pay it they don't pay it. A donation of \$4 a child and we just scrape through with the parents.

The support role involved an emphasis on safely caring for children to provide inexpensive respite for parents. The centre communities, however, were not the people working within a particular institution or corporation, but the local community of people residing in the area. In all cases, the centres were just one of many services provided by the community houses to which the centre was attached. Wilma, the founder and supervisor of Centre C, said

(Our philosophy is about) ...providing cheap, good quality care for the children so the parents get a break. Because it's only two sessions at the most for the majority and it's really just to give those parents who are out there, can't afford childcare, kindergarten or a private centre. There is somewhere for them to bring their children and it's safe.

Jeanne, a founder and supervisor, indicated that the purpose of the centre was based on her own background. She said :

I guess part of it comes from your own personal background, having been a parent with just my husband working, I know from experience how difficult it is to find money for child care and I've seen people who've needed just a bit of time out but they can't afford to pay \$12 and so therefore that creates that cycle of where they become stressed and then the children actually suffer from being in that environment with a stressed parent and I mean often young families they are very stressed financially and emotionally...

However, Jeanne indicated that they were only able to offer two sessions per week to individual children because they wished to support as many families as possible. This,

she indicated, had a down-side in that the stressed parents she mentioned received less support (in the number of sessions which could be attended by their children) than she was able to provide. Several children with special needs and who had individual development programmes from the Specialist Education Services were also included in the composition of the centre roll and required extra attention.

Kate, who described the factors she considered when seeking an early childhood position, indicated that she had chosen the community centre in which she now worked

...because it's non-profit, so I knew that it was going to be pouring all the funds back into the centre as opposed to paying someone else and having to make a profit...

Common perceptions about the purposes for which centres exist

In addition to the distinguishing features (already discussed) of the category-specific participant perceptions about the services their centres provided, there were a number of basic assumptions held on a common basis by participants across more than one category of authority. As noted (above), and can be seen in Table 5, 19 participants (three licensees, one licensee/supervisor, two supervisors, eight staff members and five parents) indicated that support and/or respite for parents was important in their centre.

Seventeen participants thought that the educational environment and learning opportunities for children were an important feature of their centre, although comments were very general and did not usually provide examples of these opportunities. Staff made more comments about this feature than other participants. June, for example, read from her centre's philosophy statement:

(Centre G staff) believe that children develop best when they are kept safe from harm; where they feel loved and cared for and where learning is fun and joyful.

Table 5: Specific content included in statements made by licensees*, supervisors, staff and parents about the philosophy of their centre

| Philosophical comments made regarding: | no. by licensees | no. by supervisors | no. by staff members | no. by parents |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Support and/or respite for parents | 3 1-----* | 2 | 8 | 5 |
| Educational environment | 2 2-----* | 2 | 7 | 4 |
| Family-like environment | 1 3-----* | 0 | 6 | 2 |
| Care | 0 | 3 | 5 | 3 |
| Not-for-profit focus | 1-----* | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Manners, moral development and/or Christian views | 2-----* | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Child-centred environment | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| Social development, social interaction | 1-----* | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Inclusive environment | 0 | 2 | 1 | 2 |

-----* indicates owner/supervisor/licensee role, included in licensee (not supervisor) list.

As noted in the previous section, care and a family orientation (including safety of children in a secure environment) were also assumed to be major components of centre focus. Twelve participants valued a family-like environment, with care being important to 11 participants. Marion explained her centre philosophy as being family-oriented:

I think basically where we were coming from for both of us (owners) was that we wanted to have an early childhood centre that people wanted to come to, that parents were happy to leave their children. That it was more family oriented and that we were an extension of their family so we really wanted to be small and special and just have the number of parents who were really getting a quality early childhood centre.

Seven participants indicated that the not-for-profit nature of their centre was something they fought to maintain, and was an important part of their centre philosophy. Six participants thought that the emphasis in their centres on manners (defined by such statements as sitting down to eat, being polite) and moral development according to Christian principles (such as caring for others, learning not to steal) was important. Brenda made the following point:

...one of the things that we want to do is we want to be able to send the children to school knowing that if they see somebody else's lunch in the lunch box they know they can't touch it because it's not theirs, and we hopefully will teach them here that if it doesn't belong to you, you don't touch it.

Six participants (one staff member and five parents) felt that the value their centres placed on being child-centred and respectful of children was a strength, while social development or interaction was cited by six participants as being important for children. Five participants valued what they perceived as the inclusive nature of their centre. The latter focus was specified by two supervisors, one staff member and two parents as being inclusive of those with special needs and of families from any socio-economic level and ethnic background. For one supervisor and a staff member in her centre, inclusion also involved commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi (see next section).

Commitment to te Tiriti o Waitangi

Melanie, a supervisor in Centre I, was the only supervisor or licensee who spoke consistently about her belief in her centre's commitment to the notion of partnership

under te Tiriti o Waitangi. She considered that her beliefs were inclusive of all children and families when she said:

...it's really providing a secure balanced environment where children feel comfortable or they feel part of the whole environment...Very multi-cultural, I guess - what we do is we promote bi-culturalism and through that, work through into multi-culturalism. We are quite strong about that because I think its easy to say you're a multi-cultural centre, you have to take the responsibility for the fact that we're a bi-cultural nation first and if we do that we give our country and our children a history that they can tap into. We are quite strong in our, its not promotion of the Treaty issues but identifying that Māori have a unique place in New Zealand, so we do that quite strongly...

Figure 5 illustrates the shared philosophical beliefs and basic assumptions held by participants from centres in all three categories of authority.

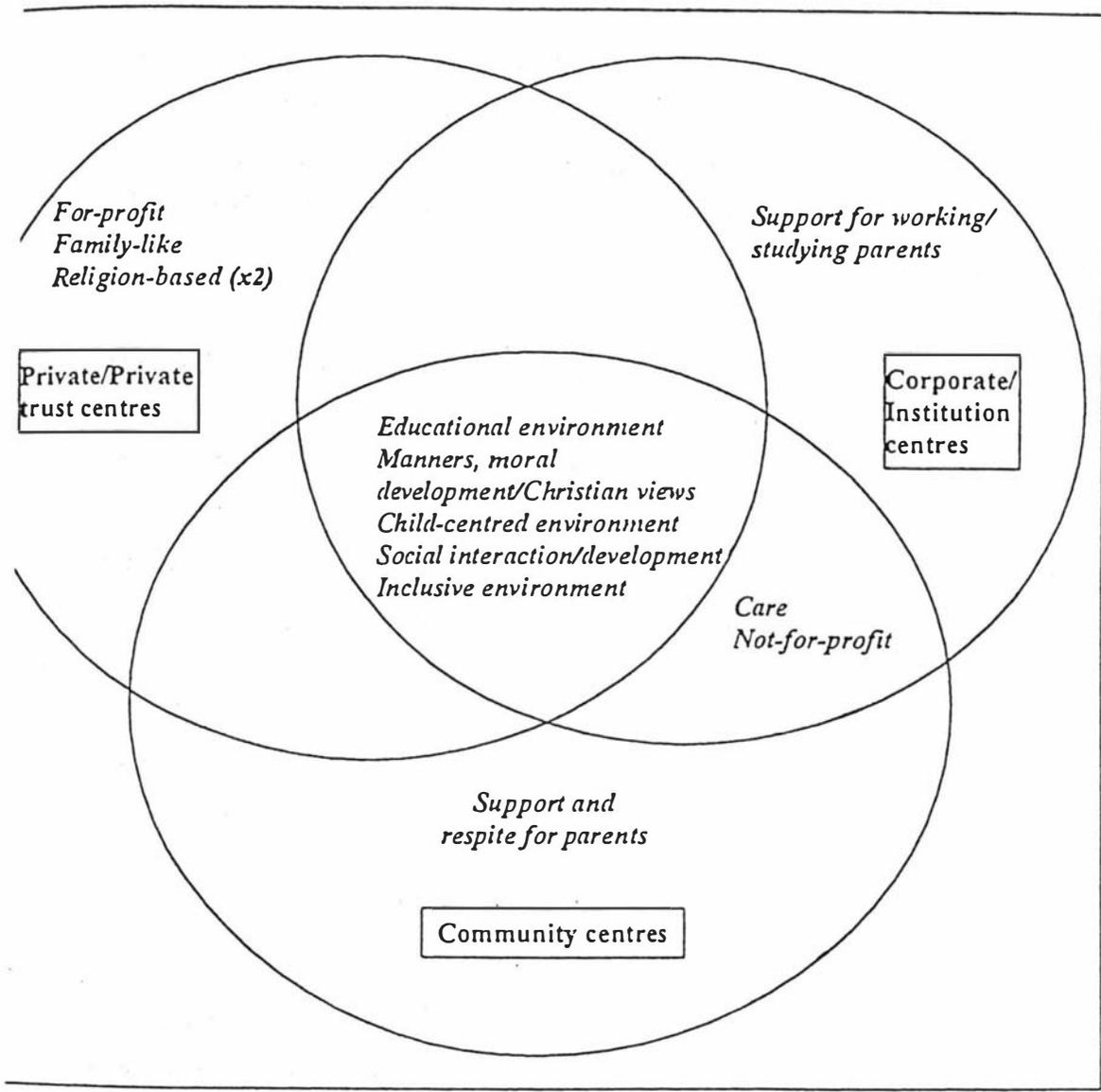


Figure 5: Basic assumptions articulated by participants regarding purpose and philosophy of centres in three funding categories

The “culture of children”; parental opinions on staff attributes

As well as the comments made by participants regarding the purpose of their centre, parents indicated that they valued particular attitudes that various centre personnel held towards them, and, more importantly, towards their children. For example, four parents described supervisors as enthusiastic and experienced. As an example, Ana said

I just think that she's got the experience with the children, she knows what is the right thing for the children.

Two parents felt that their supervisor's expertise in motivating and guiding staff was important to smooth leadership and management. Two parents valued the supervisor making herself available to them when they wished to speak to her, and others commented positively about their supervisor, using terms such as “well-organised”, “calm”, “focused”, “gentle”, “patient”, and a “role model with high standards”. One parent also appreciated the ability of a supervisor to deal with things immediately.

Parents expected that staff would be appointed to positions in their centre only if they possessed suitable child-oriented attributes. Parents' thoughts about supervisors' and staff members' values and behaviours were sometimes expressed as an overview, and sometimes about specific interactions between staff members and their child.

Nora (a parent) provided an overview when she said

...all the people there share the same values and culture regarding children and that's really good - it's what you see kids as. Are they the recipient of your power? Are they subordinate in your - or are they people who haven't grown up yet who deserve respect? What are they? Are they your possessions? What are they? They've got a very good culture there (in the centre) and I think that's very important.

Another parent, Doreen, provided an overview that focused on the employment of suitable staff:

They always seem to employ people who are very children oriented. I know that sounds silly with a centre, but I've actually seen some centres that I've gone to where the actual teachers don't seem to like children much. So I think that they do a good job of hiring their staff and generally I think that they have a good child focus rather than maybe just a monetary focus. They put a lot of money into their centre, they've got good facilities and good toys and what have you, and obviously they're willing to pay a bit extra for their staff.... I think their teachers are good, they seem to be very child-oriented and my kids are happy there.

Susan discussed the need for centre staff to be able to relate closely to her child. She said *There's a lot of people out there who are able to talk at children or talk around them or just don't really listen to them - children are immensely intelligent. I just never ever under-estimate their intelligence because they are actually more pure than we are so therefore they can see through to the core, no matter what words you stick around it. They are immensely intelligent and you've got to really respect them for that, so respecting children would be a big one (factor in choice of staff to employ). That they're (staff) not better (superior to children).*

Ten parents commented that they valued the attributes of specific staff members and supervisors who were, for example, “happy”, “joyous”, had an “out-going nature” and who were also attributed with a sense of fun. Being “up front”, open and reliable with parents was also important. Three parents enjoyed leaving their children with a “harmonious” team who shared the same values.

Providing help and support for parents was considered important by five parents, advising parents was valued by three, and “educating” parents was an issue raised by two parents. Others commented on the high regard they had for assistance they received from centre staff and supervisors in raising their children. Situations as diverse as toilet training of toddlers and obtaining specialist help for the challenging behaviour of children were mentioned in this context.

The use of language

A noticeable feature of the discourse of two centres within each of the three categories of authority (i.e. six of the ten centres in the research sample) was the common use of a number of terms. The word “industry” was used by two supervisors within the six centres in reference to the early childhood education sector; Miranda, for example, said

Because there's always new issues and trends coming up in our industry and challenges with different things that are happening...

Others used specific terms for staff members and their work with children. 42% (n=22) of all participants used language referring to “girls” (for staff members) and 32% (n=17) of all participants referred to “workers” rather than teachers or educators. Working “on the floor” (a term which could have originated on the factory floor in industrial settings) was used by 21% (n=10) of all participants. The latter term was used when referring to working directly with children, usually as opposed to completing administrative or management tasks. One licensee/supervisor illustrated the use of the terms “girls” and “on the floor”:

And it's all the little things, like the girls are freely able to talk to the parents when they come. No point coming to me when I haven't been on the floor and haven't seen how their children are, so we encourage parents to come in and talk to them...

In addition, an analysis of the discourse of the interviews revealed that 80% (n=40) of participants talked of “training” rather than teacher education, and that 39% (n=19) of participants referred to “childcare” as opposed to early childhood care and education.

Another term commonly used in all centres was “teamwork”. It was mentioned by all except three centre personnel to refer to ways of working in a centre, but meanings differed subtly between licensees, supervisors and staff members. The ways in which this term was used will be explored in more depth in a separate theme in the next chapter.

Chapter summary

The demographic data were used with details from analysis of interviews to describe the research sample at the beginning of this chapter. Fifty-one participants were interviewed initially, including parents and centre personnel. Sixteen of the 35 centre personnel and licensee participants were qualified.

Eight categories emerged from the data analysis. In this chapter, the data from two of the categories, organisational structure and culture, were presented. Similarities and points of difference in the organisational structure of centres in each of the three categories of authority were outlined. Decision-making in community centres was undertaken within a five-level structure. Corporate/institution centres operated with four levels, and private centres were maintained with only two levels of decision-making and accountability. Parents and staff were able to contribute more (through formal opportunities to participate in decision-making) to the organisational life of community centres and one corporate/institution centre (based in an educational institution) than to the other two corporate/institution centres or to the private/private trust centres. With the more democratically-structured centre cultures and structures towards one extreme and the more hierarchically-operated centres towards the other, the structural continuum thus illustrated provided the most obvious difference found between the categories of authority in the present study.

The underlying assumptions, taken-for granted beliefs, perceptions, thoughts and feelings held by participants about the purpose of the service provided by the centre with which they were involved were presented next. In all but one centre, the influence of each founder on the assumptions and beliefs of centre staff was strong, even after she had left the centre. Participants in centres in each category of authority expressed at least one philosophical assumption in common. For private/private trust centres, the concept of “family” was paramount. In corporate/institution centres, providing inexpensive care for children of parents who were students or employees was central. Participants in

community centres indicated that their purpose was to provide cheap support and respite for parents in the form of care for children.

As well as the strong philosophical beliefs expressed by participants within categories of authority, other beliefs and values were also articulated in common in at least some centres in more than one category. These included providing an appropriate educational environment, being child-centred, providing opportunities for social development, teaching from a Christian perspective, including an emphasis on moral development and “manners”, and being inclusive. Only one centre described the ways in which partnership issues under te Tiriti o Waitangi were important and outlined centre policies and beliefs that focused on bi- and multi-culturism.

One parent spoke specifically of staff members who worked well in “the culture of children” as she referred to attributes possessed by competent staff. Others commented that they valued staff who were child-oriented, respected children’s intelligence and worked harmoniously, and who could be relied upon for good advice regarding parenting. The use of specific terms (such as “girls” for staff members) was noticeable in six centres across all three categories of authority, and other common terms (such as “on the floor”) were also used across all categories.

In the next chapter, the organisational activities described by participants will be presented as six other categories that emerged from analysis of interviews and other data.

CHAPTER SIX

Data Presentation: Part B

In Chapter Five, the structural features and data relating to the philosophical values, beliefs and assumptions (Schein, 1992) which underpin the organisational cultures of centres in the present study were provided. Some similarities and differences within the two categories (organisational structure and culture) were described both within and across the three MoE categories of authority.

Besides organisational structure and culture, O'Neill (1994, p.102) claims that organisational activities also contribute to the character of the organisation. He defines organisational activities as

...the official curricula which schools and colleges are required to deliver together with the other broader areas of activity which collectively make up the organisation's intended whole curriculum. How the whole curriculum is interpreted will reflect the common values, beliefs and priorities of those within the (organisation)... The chosen activities will reflect an accommodation between the values and beliefs, or culture, of those people who comprise the institution, and the goals of those in the wider community who sponsor the organisation.

In the present study, organisational activities were revealed as participants contributed to interviews, completed diaries and demographic forms about leadership and management practices used in the centres, and their perceptions of the quality of these practices. Six categories (leadership and management practices, communication, teamwork, change management, pedagogical and professional issues) that delineated the main organisational activities of centres emerged from analysis of the data and can be illustrated as an overlay across centre structures and cultures (see Figure 6). Figure 6 consists of the detail provided in Figure 5 about the shared philosophical beliefs and basic assumptions held by

participants from centres in all three categories of authority with the six areas of organisational activity added as an overlay that is common to all centres.

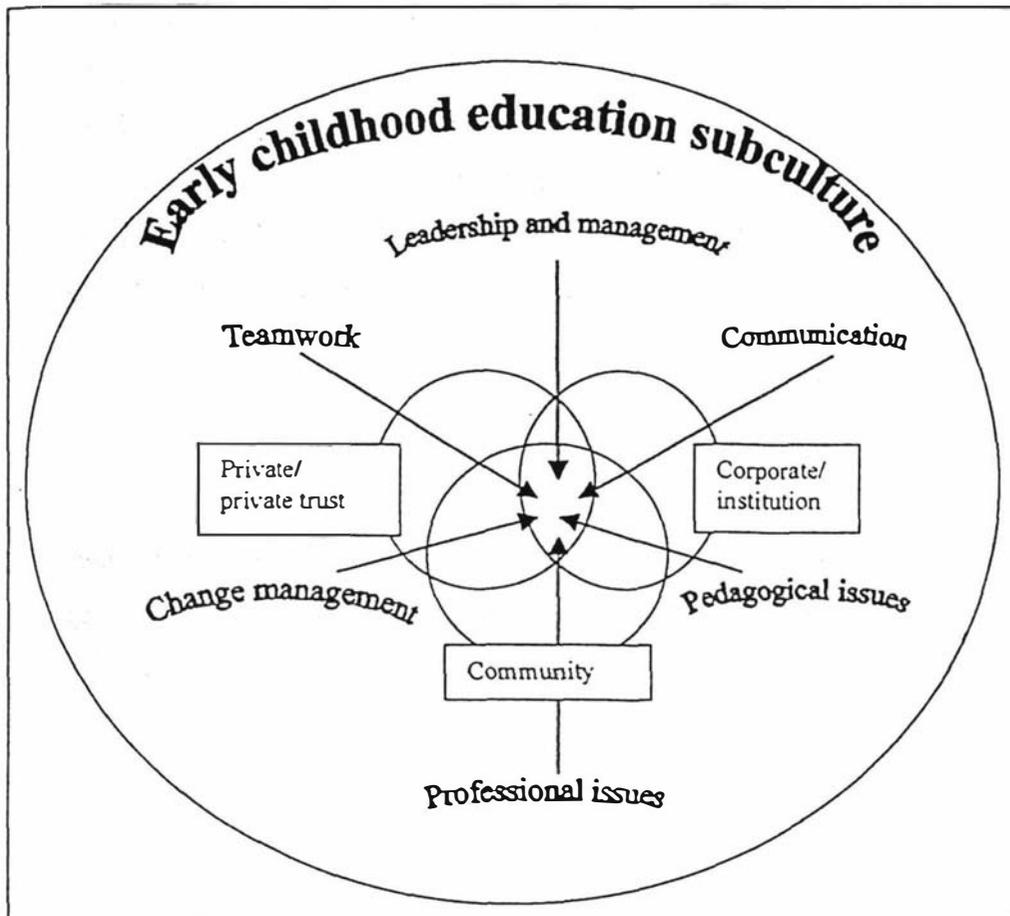


Figure 6: The six themes that were common to all centres in the three MoE categories of authority within the early childhood education subculture

Even though the activities were common to all centres to some degree, they were interpreted or viewed by participants in slightly differing ways depending on the centre in which they worked and the personnel in that centre. These similarities and differences will be explored later in this chapter.

Considering the six categories adds another layer of complexity to issues of centre leadership and management. Unlike the categories pertaining to centre structure and culture, these remaining six categories could not be attributed to particular categories of authority or to specific centres. They were held in common across all centres, reflecting the influence of the early childhood education “societal subculture” (Alvesson, 1993, p. 7). In centres, the similarities and differences in participant perceptions sometimes differed (as in perceptions of teamwork) between staff members on one hand and supervisors, supervisor/licensees and licensees on the other hand across all categories of authority. Or, as in the case of communication, participants defined two major aspects across all centres.

Leadership and management practices

The terms “leader” and “leadership” were not used in conversation by centre personnel until introduced by the researcher. There was some reluctance and seeming embarrassment by licensees and supervisors to own the role; they mostly made a self-deprecating comment such as

...they (staff) didn't think of me as a leader, I didn't think of myself as a leader myself really. (Wilma)

When asked to define “leadership” and “management” with regard to their centre, the general consensus of participants was that the two terms mostly overlap so much that they could be used synonymously, although “management” was the term commonly used. With one licensee and one licensee/supervisor exception, participants indicated either that leadership was more to do with “leading” staff (usually with perceived wisdom), or that “managing” staff was included in both roles.

Much more agreement centred on the idea that administration (usually referred to as “paperwork”) was a sub-set of managing, and several mentioned that aspects of administration could be delegated to someone other than the supervisor or licensee if necessary. Management was almost always defined as including administration activities

such as “paperwork” (ie. funding forms, Work and Income New Zealand forms, parent accounts). It also included compliance issues (such as Occupational Health and Safety, fire and earthquake) and accountability to other agencies such as the MoE and the ERO.

Only one licensee, one licensee/supervisor and a supervisor defined leadership as separate from management. Marion, the licensee/supervisor, said:

Leadership is - it's only when you step back, you see the larger picture more clearly, so I think to be a leader you actually need to give yourself time to visualise the whole picture. It's sort of getting a clearer understanding of the larger goals and where you want the centre to go.

Marion also saw the leader's role as developing and maintaining a coherent vision for the centre:

I think my strength as a leader, it's being able to pull together all the visions I think - everyone's vision, and being able to clarify that and be able to state the clear goals and being able to bring it back on track sometimes when the little things that are the daily grind - they wear us down - is to actually state the larger picture and know that we are achieving our larger goals because sometimes the little things that are happening cloud the big issues.

Mary-Anne, a licensee who was experienced in curriculum development in another position, saw the need for leadership in curriculum development in the centre. She and the supervisor brought different interests and strengths to the centre:

...both in our different ways we have that vision, I don't think it's an inconsistent vision...and that same vision now has to be put onto paper...I've probably taken a stronger role myself in leadership because I've sensed that with Quality in Action and the new regulations and things, there has had to be a movement of the centre and I believe I could help with that movement...in curriculum development leadership.

Other participants said:

Leading is the staff - and directing them, and the management is the fire compliance, the policies and the appraisal - the staff appraisal. Management and administration are the same. (Wilma, a supervisor).

A leader is someone that can get you to support them through asking their opinion and that. Management is more the person who does the paperwork. (Inez, a staff member).

Well, leadership is, I don't know because leadership is sort of making the changes and management is implementing them. (Nora, a parent)

Lynn indicated that no one in the centre really held the role of leader when she said:

I don't think there is a leader really. Jeanne is the supervisor and I'm the licensee...but generally we try and just run as a team...

The exception to using the terms “leadership” and “management” (including administration) together was noted when participants discussed leadership as being an appropriate role for anyone in the centre to take on if their superior skills or knowledge meant that others might learn from them, or if they wanted to try a new idea. Jerina, a parent, summarised the concept thus:

Leadership is about inspiring a team of people to follow a vision, if you like. Leadership can come from behind or in the middle, whereas management is more your day-to-day tick-the-box, do the job sort of issues. I see management being interwoven in leadership.

Staff members also seemed to consider that leadership could be undertaken by anyone at any time, but when they gave an example of this, it was usually to do with one of their daily activities rather than involving planning or a vision for the centre. Linda, for example, said

... we each were given certain areas of responsibility. My one was one for fun and so its just a light-hearted thing looking out to see like there might be a staff member doing something particularly great or funny or whatever that month and so I will make a certificate for that staff member.

Summary

The terms “leadership” and “management” were mostly used synonymously until participants were asked to define them. Generally, participants then described leadership as managing staff, while management was more to do with directing staff and coping with administration (“paperwork”) and tasks related to centre operations. Only three participants referred to the concept of “vision” or any other form of conceptual planning for the future.

The concept of centre personnel taking a leadership role for a particular area or project was discussed by some participants, but mostly concerned daily activities rather than planning for the whole centre.

Communication

Effective communication skills were considered by all groups of participants to be a major factor in the daily functioning of the centres in the present study. The term “communication” featured in 47 of the 51 initial interviews. Participants mainly considered that there were two main communication areas within early childhood centres; one involved parents and centre personnel, while the other concerned inter-staff communication and relationships. Few participants noted issues concerning communication with children.

Communication between centre personnel and parents

Licensees, supervisors, staff members and parents were unequivocal in reinforcing the importance of daily communication between staff and parents. Greta, a licensee, indicated that a “partnership with parents” existed in her centre, while two others (a

licensee and a supervisor) spoke of the importance of good “relationships”. In spite of an emphasis in centres on *staff members* carrying the responsibility for initiating and maintaining such communication, parents were, without exception, full of praise for the communication skills of their *supervisor* rather than staff members.

Most communication between centre personnel and parents was oral, to do with individual children, and undertaken on a casual daily basis. Written communication was, in the main, provided *for* parents by staff. It generally concerned centre matters and routines. Aspects of oral and written communication will be presented next.

Oral communication.

Some licensees and supervisors undertook to communicate verbally with parents each day, but others delegated this role to staff members who worked more closely with the children. However, a variety of espoused values about the purpose of oral communication between centre personnel and parents was revealed as participants were interviewed. The three following examples of comments illustrate different values held by centre personnel from three different centres.

Jeanne, a supervisor, said that she considered the *Family and Community: Strand 2 Belonging* section of *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996) in her concern to provide for parents and children. She said:

I think it's really important, (to talk to parents) even if it's just a minute. It actually shows that they're valued and because the child that's coming is part of that family and that culture and also when you've got a child they're watching you speaking to their parents, that actually makes them feel like they belong and that it's a safe place to be. And the parent, bringing that knowledge - it also makes it feel like it's a safe place where they can be themselves...

Claire (a licensee/supervisor) considered that parents needed to be reassured that individual attention had been paid to their child when she articulated reasons for speaking to parents. She said:

...all the staff are encouraged, even Susan and Helen (an unqualified staff member and a person on work experience), to speak to the parents every time they see them and say one positive thing about their child and their day. So even if you have some pet phrases in the back of your mind... if you can't think of anything else positive, there's always something. But generally, yeah, "they built this wonderful tower today", or "his favourite friend today, he's played with someone different". So there's always something said to the parent...

Donna, an unqualified staff member, indicated that most parents wanted to talk about their child's day. She indicated that sometimes this was difficult for staff members:

...yeah parents will (want to talk) - a lot of the parents can be really nit picking about a lot of things. But we have to be diplomatic I suppose.

Staff members were more specific than other participants about the types of communication skills that were required, suggesting that good listening skills and the ability to be supportive, caring and flexible were of paramount importance. Some centre personnel spoke of the depth of empathy needed to communicate with families. Sena, for example, indicated that relationships with parents were built on being patient and sensitive to their needs. She suggested

...that you have to develop your relationship with the parents and...to just give them time and just to sort of be sensitive to the parents and just notice if they are looking a little bit down or a little bit sad or if they've been ill, because a lot of parents when they're ill themselves they don't have any support. Communication, listening, patience, all those things about communication is what you actually do...

Parents judged centres on whether or not they perceived that staff members were "open" and "up front" in the way staff communicated with them. Heidi (a parent) said that

(The centre staff members communicate in a way that is) ...open, enthusiastic, welcoming.

Ena, a parent speaking about the supervisor, indicated that

...she's very up front with the parents. I mean if that's the situation then I like to be told and not have it softened or - I just like to be told that this is what's happening, pretty blunt. So she's quite straightforward in matters concerning my children...and I appreciate that they don't wait for weeks before they actually tell you, they communicate things as they come up. So it gives me an opportunity to get on top of it quickly as well.

Parents also often sought out specific staff with whom to discuss particular issues, basing their selection on their perception of the staff member's knowledge. Susan said:

If it's about Prue (daughter) I'll ask and someone will tell me. Depends what it is. If it's about Prue's day-to-day stuff I'll ask whoever she was with that day. Some, I feel, give better feedback than others and I like to ask them wider issues.

Natasha, a supervisor, supported Susan's comment:

I try and make it that when parents walk in we all say "hello" and then the parents quite often, you will find, will go to the person that they feel they are comfortable with...

Written communication.

In all centres, artifacts were visible which indicated the importance placed upon centre personnel *informing* parents of various issues. Parent noticeboards were prominent in all centres and newsletters were produced regularly for parents by five of the ten centres. Excursions were described on noticeboards, and parent social, information or education evenings were also notified (one centre held at least two events each year, two supervisors reported that parent functions were held each month, and one supervisor spoke of one annual function).

Noticeboards and newsletters offered opportunities for centre personnel to inform parents about the day-to-day operation of the centre; requests for such things as spare clothes,

named clothes, and for children to bring gumboots were frequently seen. Vera described how both newsletters and programme planning were considered to be main methods of communicating with parents:

We sometimes put out a newsletter and all our programming is written on the wall and stuff for the parents to come in and see. They all know it's there and what's going on...

Donna described similar methods of written communication with parents, and included a baby report book completed by both staff and parents:

(Staff) usually write up a board outside saying how the day went and the baby staff have little books for the children too, so to keep parents informed... they (parents) come every day with what the baby's done and how much they've fed and when they had their sleeps and everything and then the parents will bring them in in the morning saying what their sleep was or when their first feed was, so they communicate that way. The rest of the over 2s (staff) just communicate verbally with parents and with just a little brief description at the end of the day saying what we did on the board outside.

Six centre personnel also provided examples of individual written information for parents, such as portfolios or folders of children's work. In one centre, "parent interviews" were to be scheduled to discuss these records. In another centre, Kath gave an overview that summarised what most centre personnel provided:

We have a parent evening tomorrow evening. But we tend to find that they've all got very busy lives and the most important thing they're worried about is are their children happy and safe and unless there's a little problem somewhere we don't really have a lot to do with them. We have our developmental forms that we do on each child. Observations and fitting them into the programme and when we write out each personal one we put a little slip into the child's pocket to invite the parent to read the latest update on their child's file and they come to us and we give it to them so they can either do it there or take it home for the weekend or overnight and they can read what we've written about their child and there's a

place for their comments and if they choose to they do and if they don't we just get a little signature to show that they have been involved. Basically they're just happy to verbally communicate morning and night, magic moments pick up and drop off ...

Apart, then, from complying with regulations governing attendance and provision of medication by providing signing in/out and medication books, few reciprocal opportunities (other than those outlined above) for parents to communicate in writing with staff were offered. One centre provided a "wish" tray to provide parents with an opportunity to write comments anonymously if they wanted another avenue to provide feedback about the centre. One supervisor cited lack of time as a reason for the lack of written communication, and some parents indicated that it was quicker and more appropriate for them to receive verbal feedback about a child's day.

Using combinations of oral and written communication.

Communicating with parents about policies and strategic planning was approached differently in different centres. Melanie, supervisor of the least hierarchically-structured centre described in Chapter Five, indicated that her centre had decided to revise the charter, and that a newsletter had been sent to parents asking for written input. She said

...so it's all written but it's verbal as well. Now the final document that we came up with, I went to every parent, showed them the document, discussed it with them, showed them the DOPs and how we intend to show Ministry that we implement all of those DOPs and then...I stood alongside every parent and talked to them about it. Parents need to know; they must be part of it. We (centre personnel) agree with that...

Miranda, licensee/supervisor of a private centre, also indicated the centre's commitment to parental support for strategic planning and changes, although parents did not have a formal avenue for decision-making in this privately owned centre. Miranda asserted that

...anything we do, any changes we make in the centre, we normally notify the parents by putting it on the door as they come in...So we try to be open as much

as we can with parents as well because we feel that they've got a huge... influence on us and input into what we do, and we welcome that...

Communication between centre personnel

The second main area of communication was considered to be between centre personnel. Two issues were perceived to be of major importance; communicating through the medium of staff meetings, and effective communication between those who worked closely together.

Communicating via staff meetings.

Licensees made little comment about staff meetings while supervisors spoke mostly about using staff meetings and providing free access for staff members to write meeting agendas as two of the ways in which they communicated with staff. Six staff members felt that staff meetings were a valuable vehicle for communicating with other staff (three staff members noted that meetings were held on a fortnightly basis, two centres held them once each month, and one was held weekly). Donna said:

...you know we have an agenda which we write down for the staff meeting, all of us if we've got things to pick up on or want to discuss we do it at the staff meeting. It's good – it's all we need...

However, some staff in five of the ten centres in the present study indicated that, on some occasions, they felt too intimidated to either add items to meeting agendas, or to participate in discussion at meetings. Sandra said that the supervisor allowed any criticism of herself to “glide off her”; Mary said

...if I say something towards the management that's where I think I feel I don't get listened to, it just gets brushed away or I'm not sure. Certain people will talk, but it's always the same people who will sit back and not say anything, and I think they need to, maybe they are scared.

Interpersonal communication between personnel in centres

Staff members commented more on the value they placed on good communication skills than on any other aspect of leadership and management skills in their centre. Three staff members commented on the supervisor's ability to guide and support because she listened to their needs, and seven admired the ability of their supervisor to remain open to suggestions and seek the opinions of others. Some of the other communication skills they noted were that the supervisor responded quickly to staff issues, that she chaired staff meetings on a regular basis and therefore understood issues, that she maintained frequent contact with parents, and that she was caring and supportive.

Eleven staff members commented on the importance of appropriate systems of communication in centres which were often small and in which they worked in close physical proximity with others, and within the intimacy of close relationships with other staff, parents and children. Five staff members discussed the need for all centre personnel to maintain an on-going commitment to communicating sensitively with other staff. They used the words "up front", "honest", "direct" and "open" to discuss the communication attributes they admired. Inez for example, appreciated what she termed the "open" communication staff members used in her centre. She indicated that this was because they were encouraged to ask for help when it was needed and because their roles were clearly defined by job description and discussion.

A supervisor (Jeanne) described the intimacy of interaction between staff in her centre:

...you might be like rostered on the art duty or something but it doesn't mean that you can't ask for help if you're suddenly inundated with a lot of children or if someone has an accident. Everybody works on the understanding that while they're within that area they're still flexible enough to support other (staff)... I think it's actually having the confidence to say that you need help at the time. There has to be that good communication that they feel strong enough that they're not going to be judged and that they can (ask for help) and that's what we do.

One supervisor and a licensee explained that they felt the need to listen to and support staff members who had personal problems. In the former case staff members felt unsupported, and in the latter, staff members considered that considerable tensions existed because they perceived that the licensee was not genuinely interested.

Apart from Jeanne, who regularly worked with staff and children in a teaching role, few supervisors or licensees mentioned the closeness of staff member's relationships. Staff members, however, were faced with these issues on a daily basis and were the group who made the most suggestions for improvements and the need for on-going learning about communication skills by all centre personnel.

Respectful communication with children and others

Two supervisors, Melanie and Jeanne, offered holistic summaries about how they viewed communication processes in their centres. Jeanne described the complex roles played by verbal, written and non-verbal forms of communication in all aspects of centre work, especially to do with teamwork, professional development and managing change. She said:

I think you have to have good communication to get teamwork, so I mean it has to be open, it has to be honest, it has to be in a safe environment and it has to be respectful. And it is (between) children and children, children and parents, parents and educators, educators and educators, so it's so many different relationships.

Jeanne and Melanie were the only two participants who referred directly to communicating with children, although one other participant addressed the issue more obliquely in describing her work with children. Melanie discussed the priorities she placed on communicating with those around her, thus developing her own typology of communication. She expressed the opinion that her first priority was communicating with children. She said children "came attached" to their whānau, so family members were considered by her to also be important in terms of communication. Staff, she said, "came a very close second" in the typology. She also noted that daily verbal communication

with the licensee was of importance in her centre, as was the maintenance of lines of communication with the Board of Trustees and the management group that overviewed the operation of her centre.

Summary

Effective communication was the most frequently-mentioned leadership and management attribute in the present study. Effective communication between centre personnel and parents was considered important, and consisted mostly of frequent casual verbal interactions. The purpose of these interactions varied according to different centre personnel, but parents valued "up-front", "open" communication about their children, and all highly valued the communication provided by their centre supervisor.

Parents were provided with a great deal of written information in the form of newsletters and notices, but little in written form about their own child; lack of time was considered to be a major factor by both centre personnel and parents. However, this paucity of written material about their child constrained the contribution that parents could make to decisions about the child or the centre, except for the few centres where policy development and other decisions were provided in both written and oral form.

Communication between centre personnel was mostly considered differently by licensees and supervisors on the one hand and staff members on the other. All but one staff member emphasised the difficulty in maintaining good relationships with those working closely with them, and offered several suggestions for improvement. Licensees and supervisors, on the other hand, felt that staff meetings were the most important vehicle for in-centre communication. Some staff members felt powerless and intimidated in meetings, and unable to always contribute to the agenda.

Only two centre personnel (both supervisors) discussed communicating with children. One noted the need for communication to be respectful, in a safe environment and honest, while the other indicated that communication with children was her first priority.

Teamwork

The word “team” or “teamwork” was used by all but three centre personnel (one licensee, one supervisor and one staff member) in the present study. Six parents also used one or other of the terms as they discussed the centre. Notions of teamwork rested largely on the perceptions held by participants about who held the power to make decisions.

In any event, perceptions of teamwork differed between licensees and supervisors, who governed and managed opportunities for others to contribute, staff members who worked more closely together than other groups, and parents, who commented very little, and then from a more distant perspective. Parents’ perceptions about teamwork were limited because of the small amounts of time they spent in the centre.

In addition to the positional perceptions of teamwork, organisational structure and culture appeared to affect the ways in which decisions were made in centres. The more hierarchical the centre structures and cultures were, the less centre personnel within each centre agreed on what teamwork meant. In other words, in centres where the structures were flatter, and where collaborative and consultative decision-making took place, centre personnel were more likely to define teamwork in similar ways. In hierarchically-operated centres, decisions were more likely to be made by the licensee/supervisor, staff members were less able to participate in decision-making, and the staff members’ perception of “team” was limited to the colleagues working most closely with them.

Positional definitions of teamwork

The concept of teamwork was defined differently by those holding different positions in centres. Licensees (three from community centres and two from corporate/institution centres) and licensee/supervisors (one from a corporate/institution centre and four who were also private centre owners) generally considered teamwork as consulting staff members about decisions. They often commented that they provided opportunities for open access for staff to place items on the agenda for staff meetings. Specific examples of other types of decisions included staff selecting equipment to be bought and arranging the

centre environment, although the licensee or supervisor/licensee still retained the final decision. For instance, Claire, a private centre licensee/supervisor, indicated that staff members were relatively free to take the lead in selecting equipment, rearranging the room or changing a book display:

They (staff) come in with the ideas and it's up to them a lot of it, if they want change it's their job, you write me a list and they'll write the list and I'll get on to the next stage...

Supervisors, who were all employed in corporation/institution or community centres, were inclined to share the views of the licensees and licensee/supervisors about staff meeting agendas, but also included some insights into the daily demands of working within a staff team. They were inclined, for example, to teach for much more time; they spent between nine hours and ten minutes (Centre I) and twenty hours and 25 minutes (Centre C) over three days teaching children, while the licensee/supervisors in the other two corporate/institution and four private centres taught for between three hours, and eight hours and seven minutes over three days (see Table 3, p. 134). Wilma, for instance, said that she and other staff shared and rotated areas of responsibility:

We all have areas of responsibility, we change every term, like the nature table, the books and puzzles and the art and if someone wants to make a major change then is their time to do it. Or they can do it during - when it's not their time they could say, but they do it diplomatically...

Staff members' views of teamwork differed again. Because staff members were (with one exception) not also supervisors or licensees, their perceptions of teamwork related to the staff members with whom they worked most closely. They spoke about working within the team and being part of it on a daily, hour-by-hour, minute-by-minute basis. Frequently, the team consisted of only the staff working in their room. Sometimes, as in Centres I, B and K, the team included the supervisor, but rarely the licensee.

Donna, a staff member in a corporate/institution centre (B) said:

...the centre's so small and we don't have that many children and we've got so much limited space and we have to work in all together ...we work together as a team by them being able to say - like the under 2s staff saying I've got to do this can you help me for a minute, you know, and so we can just go over and do that... and she'll (Natasha, the supervisor) be upstairs and she'll have to do her things but she'll say if you need me yell out. So even though she's not always on the floor she's still part of the team because she's still there, she's still in the immediate area.

Staff members were less confident about participating equally in centre decision-making than licensees and supervisors contended they did; issues of perceived unequal power relations sometimes prevented full participation of staff members. They also provided a number of ideas about developing or maintaining positive team environments which were not mentioned by supervisors or licensees. These included delegation of tasks by leaders (with professional development provided to enable staff to undertake the tasks), fair and clearly defined workloads and job descriptions, and good role models.

Of all participants, parents commented least on the topic of teamwork. Because they were not in centres for long periods of time, their perceptions reflected how they and their children reacted to staff and centre issues. Parents commented on staff dispositions (such as "happy") and skills ("good communication skills") to judge the level of teamwork in centres.

Centre structural and cultural influences on perceptions of decision-making

For all licensees and most licensee/supervisors, the major components of teamwork were to encourage staff to participate in centre decisions, often through the medium of staff meetings (although final decisions rested with the licensee) and to share strengths. Providing a democratic decision-making atmosphere was also important to some. Opportunities were frequently provided by licensees, licensee/supervisors and supervisors in all centres for staff members to assist in writing newsletters, writing policy and other activities to enable them to participate more fully. While all supervisors and licensees

were aware that they held final responsibility for decisions, the structural and cultural continuum described in the previous chapter was reflected in participatory decision-making too. Those in private centres and two corporate/institution centres more strongly emphasised that they held responsibility for decisions than did the community centre supervisors and one corporate/institution centre supervisor whose centre was based in an educational institution. Brenda, a private centre licensee/supervisor, illustrated her view of decision-making thus:

I'm here as a person who will guide and help and educate and manoeuvre and that sort of stuff, rather than be an authoritarian sort of leader...(but when) I need the authority I've got it.

Claire, a private centre licensee/supervisor, said:

I would say probably I would have the bigger role in saying what goes ...

Trina, a staff member in a private centre, also endorsed the notion that the licensee/supervisor held the decision-making power when she said :

Well, basically the decisions are made by John and Miranda, but like I said there's not supposed to be a hierarchy but there almost is a hierarchy without there being one. In each area there's people who have been there the longest so they have the most say and then the people below them often come to them to find out answers.

Differences in perceptions of decision-making processes and responsibilities occurred within the more hierarchically-operated centres. For example, Greta, a corporate/institution centre licensee, explained her perception of decision-making in this way:

That is one of my styles, that everyone from, say, the 18-year-old that might have just started, right through to the supervisor and myself is that we talk about it and we are pretty democratic in our decisions.

A little later, she articulated the paradox when she also said:

Even though there is a structure and a hierarchy behind it, we are democratic.

Later again, she noted:

They (staff) have free range at changing everything within the centre, the environment and whatever they want to do. I would always hope that they would run it by Natasha who may run it by me if it was a fairly "biggie".

However, both staff members in Greta's centre were concerned that roles and responsibilities for decision-making were not clear. Even for what they considered were urgent supplies, they thought that decisions were sometimes made too late or not at all. Carol said:

I don't think that we should feel guilty about asking for things that kids need. We've been putting it on our Visa cards and going to buy it and then have said well here's the receipt can we have the cash - which we shouldn't have to do it that way.

The examples of decision-making processes and responsibilities outlined by private and corporate/institution centres supervisors or licensees (above) were different from the perceptions held by a community centre supervisor (Jeanne) and by Melanie, the supervisor of a centre based in an educational institution in the corporate/institution category of authority. Both spoke of more democratic notions of teamwork, which they related to their positions as leaders. Jeanne, for example, indicated that:

I think one of the qualities is that I'm feeling, come across as being fairly laid back in terms of things running so the staff know that I'm not going to jump on them all the time for every little thing or say who did this, who did that and running in a very dictatorial way...and I guess another one of my strengths is personally I think I'm probably a more effective role model for like communicating with children and relating to children and offering different play...

Rana, a staff member in Jeanne's centre, supported what Jeanne had said. She linked Jeanne's ability to work in a team with her leadership style:

She's got really good experience, like in the practical things, plus even the theory she's up on. Like she just seems to know what to do and what's right. Because she's done both...so she knows sort of what is good education, and what's quality education...It's not like she comes and says "Well you know we're doing it this way or anything, it's just in what she says, the way she says it, the things she does. I don't know what you'd call her style of leadership, but certainly not directive...

Melanie also spoke of being involved with all aspects of working in the centre. She said
(I am a) team member who is part of the team so I do the routines as well. I clean up, I sweep the floors, we all have our set routine. I take part in that. I work with the children also as much as I can and for me I think it's about role modelling, exchanging ideas but also being able to encourage discussion particularly at our staff meetings...I need to be a role model and I need to be able to - at staff meetings and within my working - be as professional as possible and it's important to me that I'm not officious and I'm not authoritarian. So I have to work as part of the centre and I certainly don't stand back and say you do this, you do that...I have to be very professional...there's an element of guidance. I need to have the training, I need to have the incredible depth of training and ongoing training so that I'm up with the trends...

Te Puia, a staff member in Melanie's centre, also perceived that the personnel in her centre worked well as a team in making decisions, partly because of Melanie's availability and skills:

I guess because we are kind of flexible with each other, and quite comfortable working with each other...

and

Melanie's very easy to communicate with. We have our staff meetings about issues that arise. We all address them at staff meetings, that's weekly. Melanie's always there, we are always talking throughout the day, so if there are any concerns we are able to discuss it at that very moment if something happens or when there's available time or when it's convenient...

The rights and responsibilities of working within a team

Some staff members were more concerned about job descriptions than were supervisors or licensees, who mentioned them in passing as they spoke about issues such as appraisal systems (Marion and Wilma), induction processes (Claire), and preparing to recruit staff (Mary-Anne). Two staff members felt that teamwork was difficult to achieve if staff did not know what was expected of them. One staff member indicated that she had never had a job description, one couldn't remember whether she had a job description or a contract, and two had received job descriptions when they began their jobs, but the descriptions were no longer appropriate.

Although all supervisors verbally indicated that job descriptions were available for all positions, some staff indicated that they did not have them, and that processes of revising job descriptions and using them with other data at staff appraisals frequently went awry. Without an up-to-date (or any) job description, some staff expressed concern that fair appraisals were not possible, and that professional development could not be well planned. Staff members' claims were supported by four ERO reports (two of which were current) indicating that professional development plans were not being undertaken as advised in centre documentation. In addition, while four supervisors spent between 55 minutes and one hour 25 minutes of their three day diaried time on their own and others' professional development, the other five licensee/supervisors and a supervisor spent no time at all.

Two staff members suggested that the leader (supervisor or licensee) needed to be able to delegate and share responsibility and know that the delegated tasks would be undertaken well. Lorna explained that her supervisor seemed to prefer to do most things herself, even after delegating some tasks:

I found that extremely difficult because I didn't know whether I was doing this job or whether I was not doing the job. I find that really difficult. I like it saying "this is my job description", which it was, and which I was working to, and so that's what I want to do, because that's what I've been given. I've been appointed to this job. And then it's kind of - (the supervisor said) - "no I need to do that

now”, so I found that really hard to think I’m doing this job, but then next week I wasn’t doing it. Very hard.

Staff members’ perceptions of teamwork

Staff members held a much more pragmatic view of teamwork than did supervisors and supervisor/licensees. Staff members mostly defined the team as those working consistently with them on a daily basis, which, in some instances, excluded the supervisor and the licensee. The focus of staff opinion about teamwork was on sharing strengths, ideas and responsibilities, as well as philosophies and goals. The concept of providing mutual support was articulated by Te Puia (a staff member):

We are comfortable working with each other. You know it’s not to prove a point or prove yourself; it’s just knowing that you have your limits and you had a little bit of an idea to help.

Staff members were less confident about believing that they participated equally in centre decision-making than were licensees and supervisors; issues of perceived power relations sometimes prevented full participation for staff. Sandra explained:

I think some of the staff might not feel comfortable about speaking...some things just boil up...they wanted to bring it up...(issues to do with the supervisor and others not completing their share of teaching and setting up) ...and we had the meeting but Freda (staff member) didn’t really speak up.

Parent perceptions of teamwork

Parents did not comment at great length about teamwork. Their perceptions indicated a reflection of how they felt they were treated by staff members, how their children seemed to react to staff and centre issues, and what they noticed when they were in the centre.

Two parents noted that staff “seemed quite happy”, two said that responsibilities seemed to be shared well amongst staff, one commented that staff had good communication skills, and one applauded the organisational skills of staff. One parent suggested that staff seemed to get on well together because she noticed that they chose to eat lunch together

instead of going out to eat. Another indicated that when staff are working well together, it showed in their relationships with children, and one thought that the centre employed the “right mix” of staff to work together compatibly.

Summary

The concept of “team” or “teamwork”, particularly in relation to decision-making, was important to almost all centre personnel in the present study. However, differences in interpretation of who was considered to be part of the “team” were noted between staff members who worked in the more hierarchically-structured private and one of the corporate/institution centres when their views were compared with those who worked in the community and two of the corporate/institution centres. In the former group, licensees and supervisors or licensee/supervisors (considered by staff members to be “management” and not part of the team) made most of the decisions. In the least hierarchically-structured centre, staff perceived that they could participate in almost all decisions, and considered that the supervisor was a team member.

In spite of the different ways in which staff members viewed the “team” membership, most licensees and supervisors considered teamwork to be a democratic process, frequently achieved through the participation of staff members in staff meetings. All licensees and supervisors indicated that they made some final decisions – some more than others. Staff members, on the other hand, knew that they were expected to contribute to meetings but that sometimes their decisions would be over-ridden. Sometimes, too, they felt powerless to contribute to decision-making, and were confused about where their responsibilities lay. They considered that up-to-date job descriptions, appraisals and professional development would help them to more accurately meet others’ expectations of them.

Staff members also considered teamwork to be supporting and sharing strengths and responsibilities with those who worked most closely with them. This definition, as noted above, often excluded others in the centre, especially licensees and sometimes

supervisors. Parents made little specific comment; they indicated that, if their children were happy and they were treated well, teamwork must be occurring in the centre.

Management of change

There was a great deal of consensus between the four groups of participants in the present study about the management of change in their early childhood centres. Participants discussed ways in which change was communicated, the effects of organisational structures on the ease with which changes could be made in a centre, the effects of qualified staff on change processes, the detrimental effects of staff changes, and the effects experienced when legislative changes were made.

Communicating change

Licensees, supervisors and staff all agreed that involving all centre personnel in discussion and preparation for change brought the most successful results. Greta noted that

...in a small centre they share a lot, they are well aware of what is going on everywhere and they are doing a building out for the baby area, covering it in. So everyone has a major input into that.

Open systems of communication (especially by way of staff meetings for centre personnel in centres where staff members felt able to participate fully, and by newsletters, noticeboards and verbal interaction with staff for parents) seemed to be the most often used and successful method of managing change. Melanie explained how these processes worked in Centre I:

...there is the Board of Trustees, then we have a management group and...the licensee is in the management group, the supervisor and the rest of the staff and parents ...So the structure is the Board of Trustees, management group and then supervisor and staff...any decision that is made in the centre through the management group, we write up the agenda and then we write up what came out of it and it goes to the Board of Trustees.

However, for some staff members, staff meetings were not always a forum in which “open communication” could occur. This will be discussed later in this section

Managing organisational structure and changes

In two centres, different issues regarding organisational structure were raised. In one, the licensee/supervisor was proud of what she considered to be a lack of hierarchical control in her centre. Staff, however, found that changes were difficult to initiate and manage, especially if the licensee/supervisor was away. The difficulties arose because the supervisor/licensee handled most issues herself, and in her absence, staff were unsure of who should, or how to, respond to concerns. At these times, some staff members competed to be “in charge”, basing their claims on length of service with the licensee/supervisor.

In the second centre, there had been a number of staff changes, and staff members were unsettled and unsure about their roles and responsibilities. A parent and a staff member both highlighted the difficulties of staff changes in terms of developing new trusting relationships between staff. Greta, the new licensee, felt that she was communicating well with staff at meetings and during other time spent with them. On the other hand, Carol, a long-standing staff member, felt that communication was poor and that appropriate systems had not yet been set up (for example, allocating budget responsibilities) even though staff members were ostensibly participating in staff meetings. She found working in the centre difficult and had considered leaving. Meanwhile, Susan (a parent), applauded the efforts of the new licensee in making what Susan perceived to be “gentle” and well-received changes with staff while keeping parents informed through newsletters and on noticeboards as she did so.

The effects of qualified staff on change processes

One licensee said that she appreciated having Diploma-qualified and registered staff because they had professional knowledge which made for smoother development of new

processes and implementation of change. However, Marion, an owner/licensee/supervisor, articulated a point of tension in her plans for the future of her centre:

I'd accept trained people all the time but I think the trouble is that early childhood we haven't got the money to pay the higher amounts of salary that we would like to and to have all trained people there is cost involved and I think that's going to be the hard issue looking ahead, that I'd have 100% trained people but whether I can afford to pay them would be another issue.

Two staff members discussed issues of change in reference to the employment of qualified staff and professional development. One said that, when staff changed, employing qualified staff was important, as unqualified people often do not have a wide knowledge of teaching issues. Carol explained that changes in centre personnel made it difficult to ensure that even one "person responsible" (necessary to maintain the terms of the centre's license to operate) was in the building at all times:

Oh it was really hard because when the supervisor left...I must have been here a month... there was only one other trained person; ...she had only been here three months...The other staff weren't trained and we would have to cover shifts and we would have to do longer hours...like instead of working an eight hour day which we usually do, someone was sick so I would have to do the whole 8 (am) to 6 (pm) shift and it was...yeah...and not being able to go out in your lunchtime because there wasn't anyone to cover...We were thinking "oh we can't do that, we can't do anything like that, we haven't got enough people here to cover that. We can't go on a trip because there's only one trained person"...And the children got affected by it seeing all different people come in. It was hard.

Another felt that employing unqualified staff put an extra burden of responsibility on qualified staff as they helped and supported those without qualifications. Professional networks which resulted from staff attending teacher education programmes and professional development courses were important for keeping up-to-date with changes needed in centres, according to one staff member.

Staff changes

Centre personnel were concerned with issues to do with replacing staff, attracting and inducting qualified staff, and managing the changed dynamics when a new staff member arrived. Changes caused by staff turnover were a major concern for all but one centre in which staff had been stable for some years. One centre, with no loss of staff during the previous two years, experienced three staff members (of a total of thirteen) leave at the end of one year. Two licensees spoke about the problems associated with staff leaving and the need to find and induct new staff members. One problem was the difficulty experienced in finding new staff from a scarce employment pool, and the other was the difficulty caused by incoming new staff causing changes in existing centre dynamics (between staff and children). Neither licensee suggested ways of improving these problems.

Three other participants described how they preferred to employ people who had undertaken relief work, work experience, or a practicum at the centre previously so that they could judge whether the prospective employee would fit the centre culture. Jeanne, a supervisor explained that the

...person we employed had also done her practicum here as a student so she knew when she applied she knew what she was coming in to so she did have an understanding of the philosophy behind it and how it ran.

The staff member referred to by Jeanne endorsed her statement, saying that she had been employed after spending a pre-service practicum at the centre, and had used that time to see if she would enjoy working there. Induction of new staff was reported to cause fewer changes in centre dynamics where this process was used.

Parents commented favourably about newsletters and noticeboards that notified them of staff changes. One went to some length to explain that a supervisor had managed the change well, easing one staff member out and the next in while keeping parents well informed. Others described more difficult circumstances where they perceived that staff changes had not been carefully managed. For example, they expressed concern about

their relationships with familiar teachers changing and that the effects of teachers leaving may be damaging to their children's learning and emotional development. They found changes in staffing to be the most difficult type of change to cope with. Doreen, a parent, said:

I found it a bit hard from my point of view because the parents actually bond with the teachers as well. You get used to dealing with the same people. I know that sounds silly... But having three of them leave at once was a bit of a shock, and so you have to build up that rapport with the next lot of people. But they do seem competent and like I say it's just a case of getting to that stage where you're quite comfortable with them.

Susan explained the fear she experienced when she thought that "turbulent times" in the centre might mean that her child's teacher might leave:

Heaps (of changes over a year). When we were there - from the day she started there would've been probably four staff leave, maybe even five. I can't really remember ...it was very turbulent and quite horrible for a while actually.

Changes to legislation

Some licensees, supervisors and staff members spoke of many legislative changes over the past few years. They did not speak specifically of any particular change except the review of the DOPs, the on-going changes to minimum requirements for the "person responsible", and the ever-present pressure to support centre personnel who were studying to become qualified teachers or gain licensing points.

Two licensees commented on recent changes to legislation. Both were positive about these, indicating that, while change was initially resisted, the processes had forced them and their staff to think about important issues. Mary-Anne explained:

So that's made a lot of work for me and in some ways you can say that that's a disadvantage but it also means that you sharpen your brain and your thinking about things.

Three supervisors and one staff member talked about major changes in their centres that have been driven by legislated requirements put in place by the MoE and the ERO. Because time was given to make the required changes, all three felt that they had managed them well, and commented that change of this nature is a given; it happens constantly, ensuring that refining of policies and practice is continuous. They appeared to accept such change as a manageable part of their jobs.

Concern about how unqualified staff members were to continue to amass licensing points was an issue of importance for many participants. In every centre, unqualified staff members were considering enrolling in a course of study, in the process of studying, or resting and saving between courses. Ann, for example said

I'd quite like to do it by correspondence because then I could work and, you know we need the money and I could work and just go in one day a week or two days a week to whatever course, so that would be good.

In most centres, staff rosters needed to be readjusted every semester to allow for classes or practicum attendance by staff who were studying. Relievers had to be employed and disruptions to children and centre programmes minimised. Some staff members had been financially disadvantaged by the financial collapse of a training provider just prior to the data collection for the present study, and were angry and very nervous of re-enrolling elsewhere. Supervisors and licensees expressed concern about the loss to the centre, as well as the personal loss to the staff member, when they had invested professional development money in courses for staff members, only to have them lose all. Kath, for example, indicated that, after completing what she thought was three years of study with a training provider, found that she was having to undertake extra work with another organisation:

...so sort of Year 1 with them and then I'm actually having to do some year 2s because they've got a higher standard so I'm coming up to the standard and then Year 3 as well. Yes, well I'm in it so I just have to get to the end...I've been working four hours on Saturday and about six hours on Sunday plus I've got

family. It should be more because I should be doing more in the evenings but I find that a little bit difficult.

Parents made few comments about legislated changes, although three expressed trust that the “Education Department” would oversee early childhood issues and ensure that requirements were adequate. They noted that, while centre personnel notified parents of such changes, they did not feel unduly affected by them.

Summary

The use of open systems of communication and the involvement of all centre personnel were advocated by licensees, supervisors and staff members as the most effective processes in making and managing change in a centre. In two centres, structural issues that influenced the understandings staff members had of their responsibilities caused problems when changes occurred. As in the general discussion about communication processes noted earlier in this chapter, communication systems regarding change were not always considered by staff members to be as “open” as licensees and supervisors perceived that they were.

The professional knowledge of qualified staff eased change processes that occurred as a result of staff turnover. Staff and children were affected by established staff members leaving, and replacement staff were often selected from familiar relievers or student teachers so that the changes were not so severe. Parents also expressed grave concern – one termed it “fear” – about teachers leaving, perceiving that disruption was caused to their own relationships in the centre as well as to those of their child and between centre staff.

Legislated changes (such as changed DOPs) were philosophically accepted by most centre personnel, with the exception of circumstances where staff needed to access programmes of study in order to “upskill”. All ten centres were in this position, and most had faced the difficult issues of some training providers failing to be able to provide the programmes that staff members and centres had paid for. The changes brought about by

the need for staff to reorganise their lifestyles, their wages, and their work arrangements in order to access programmes of study were difficult for some individuals and some centres to sustain initially. The added impact of losing personal and centre resources to unsound businesses purporting to upskill staff was of great concern and despair to many participants.

Pedagogical issues

Issues to do with pedagogical practices in centres were more difficult to ascertain than any other theme in the present study. During early interviews in the first research phase, it became obvious that many participants were unsure of the differences between, and confused about, assessment, curriculum planning (also called programme planning), curriculum implementation and programme evaluation. As a result, more questions relating to these issues were asked during the later interviews in the first research phase, and the main purpose of the theoretical sampling of three supervisors was to attempt to determine what pedagogical practices were employed. These issues will be presented next.

Use of Te Whāriki

Every centre displayed some aspect of *Te Whāriki* in the environment, usually on walls as a planning display. In two centres a minimal amount of material was obvious; only some posters that had been circulated with the document were visible. In three centres, assessment sheets, planning displays, programme evaluations and other documents indicated that the language of *Te Whāriki* permeated the teaching and learning. However, many aspects of centre practice related to Piagetian and psychological models of development rather than reflecting the more socio-cultural model indicated in *Te Whāriki*. An example of this was seen in Robyn's comments as she discussed the purposes to which written observations of children were put in her centre:

...we also plan, like - their social, emotional, physical, all that as well, so that we know exactly what the children's needs are and occasionally like it could be planned on the children's interests...And we also have...like a profile sort of thing

like how the child is going with each area for their parents to look at, and to see whether they're developmentally ahead or behind and need catching up and things like that.

The *Te Whāriki* document itself was readily available in all centres, and had been a topic of parent evenings in several. All centres had completed, or were in the process of completing, requirements for including the revised (April 1998) DOPs in their charters. The “words” of *Te Whāriki* (for example, “belonging”, “exploration”) were thus visible in many charter and policy documents, but the level of discourse was variable across all ten centres.

In the two privately-owned centres where just posters of *Te Whāriki* were displayed, no centre personnel mentioned the curriculum document. Only ten of the twenty staff members interviewed across all centres mentioned *Te Whāriki* either directly, or indirectly by using terms such as “belonging” and “contribution” in reference to curriculum issues. All who did so mentioned *Te Whāriki* only briefly; Inez, for example, when asked if the curriculum document was used, responded that it was the “background” for planning. She made no further reference to it.

In some centres, it appeared that the national curriculum was not well understood or embedded in centre discourse. Mary (a staff member), when explaining how planning was undertaken in her centre, said:

...at the moment we just, the Te Whāriki, we've still got to work on that - just finding the goals and because I was just saying to the girls yesterday that we seem to be focusing on themes and not having a goal to focus on for the children.

In another centre, Robyn, a staff member, provided a planning sheet headed with the five strands from *Te Whāriki* and said:

We observe the children then their observations get evaluated by Te Whāriki and we have a sheet that we tick off.

In this example, a mechanical and cursory examination of written observations of children provided the means for staff members to complete the “sheet” which was a checklist that was then displayed on the wall. The checklist indicated that, for example, “contribution” had been achieved by six children that week, and “belonging” by two children. There was no further use made of the information (for example, to inform planning, or to provide a cohesive programme or to prepare the environment).

Two supervisors (Melanie and Jeanne) discussed using *Te Whāriki* extensively, and indicated meeting minutes, children’s records and centre displays that supported their use of the curriculum. Mary-Anne, a licensee, also referred to *Te Whāriki* in connection with on-going staff development. A licensee/supervisor, Miranda, explained that her centre had been part of the pilot study for *Te Whāriki*, but her staff mentioned its use only briefly. One other supervisor/licensee mentioned that her centre was set out in areas for infants, toddlers and young children (referring to the language used in *Te Whāriki* for these age groups). Other than these examples, there were only passing references to the use of the national curriculum.

Assessment and curriculum planning

During the interviews, centre personnel described curriculum planning processes at length, and talked of “observations” (Drina, Rita, Meda) and “portfolios” (Jeanne), “files” (Wilma) and “profiles” (Robyn) as they outlined methods and systems for assessment. Many participants were unable to clearly explain assessment, curriculum planning and implementation, and programme evaluation processes. Some confused the terms, while others expressed very technical understandings of pedagogical issues. However, most participants were clear that assessment and planning was part of their work; Melanie, a supervisor, indicated that she ensured that both were undertaken:

There’s also the assessments of children, organising those. Management and the planning, making sure that that’s all done. A lot of filing and stuff so that if you have ERO in you can actually show them your planning and your trails and things like that.

Licensees delegated much of the assessment, curriculum planning and implementation to others, in spite of the background that most of the licensees had in early childhood education. Those who were supervisor/licensees maintained more responsibility for the curriculum than did the licensees; four of the five indicated that they also worked regularly with children. Supervisors' comments were mostly to do with the details of staff planning meetings, with the majority of them indicating that they contributed to those meetings.

Staff, however, indicated that only in three centres did supervisors or licensee/supervisors participate fully in programme planning. In four others, staff members indicated that *sometimes* their planning was overviewed by the supervisor, and in the other three centres, there was no evidence that a qualified person participated in or checked curriculum planning activities at all.

Planning in six centres involved each staff member (and in three centres, the supervisor or licensee/supervisor as well) developing programmes for their group of children with a special assessment "focus" on one child at any time. Wilma, a supervisor, explained how all children were focus children at least once during the year in her centre:

(Staff members focus on)...one child and give a bit of special time to that child. And then we can see... well, over two terms all the children should have had a one-on-one real special, where we all know everyone's focus child and if we see something unusual or something they've mentioned because we speak about our focus children in detail... "My focus child at this stage..." and "I've noticed this" or this or "he's getting on really well, I think I'm going to move him up".

Wilma also noted that some staff in her centre disliked "doing observations", and although they claimed they did them, often the children's folders were empty. With empty observation (assessment) files, planning for individual children's strengths, needs or interests would be difficult. The omission also contradicted centre planning documents that indicated that observations informed the planning cycle.

When a child was focused upon in any centre, particular note (usually termed “observations”) was made of his or her development and interests. The observations were mostly undertaken in the form of event sampling (a description of an event involving the child), or “a running record” (which documented some of the things a child did in a particular time frame). From these observations, a programme was sometimes planned specifically for him or her at a staff meeting. Documentation to this effect was seen in individual portfolios, and on wall planning displays. Seeking ideas and input from parents about the child’s home interests and development was encouraged in four centres, according to supervisors.

Kate, a supervisor, discussed how she involved parents:

We take parents’ suggestions about what they think their children need and put that into the programme and we put it up on the board and we point out to the parent where her suggestion has come in.

The supervisor of one community centre commented on the difficulty staff experienced in assessing and planning for large numbers of children (over 150 each week) who attended the centre when many were itinerant.

In four centres, staff did not operate under a system of focus children, but all said that they contributed to the assessment and planning for all children. Sena, a staff member, explained that:

We do it as a group. We have staff meetings once a week and we do observations. We’ve got a system of being a primary caregiving system. Each staff member has a group of seven or eight children each and we collect observations, photos and we communicate with other staff about what the children are doing and what stage they are at and we have individual scrapbooks for the children where we record observations and so from there we discover where the children’s interests lie, what we can do to help them move on or support them...

In all centres, staff kept portfolios, folders, files or other developmental records for children. Several indicated that these were kept to show parents what children did. Rita, a staff member, indicated that she observed each child in her group every two to four weeks and worked on the “little things” she picked up, adding these details to the portfolio. As with one supervisor (above), itinerant children posed a problem for one staff member, who indicated that a full assessment and planning process would often be undertaken for a child who was subsequently not seen at the centre again.

Instead of basing planning on the assessed strengths or interests of a child, three participants discussed planning activities that were to do with a weekly or fortnightly theme (such as winter, transport or families). Claire (a supervisor) described curriculum planning in her centre:

Each week is planned out for the whole year and so this week, well last week was wheels and this week leads onto transport, so we're still doing a little bit with the wheels and building onto the transport, but we can incorporate everything into that, like we've got our map here now so even when I'm doing transport - we're doing aeroplanes more so today and we're going to talk about New Zealand and flying and all the concepts that come within that.

Centre H catered for children aged from birth to five years, and Claire indicated that at mat times, all children participated in pre-arranged activities. She said:

...we're doing phonics at the moment...we're going right through and each day has a different letter and they're working on, today is "O", so we did orange ovals this morning at kindy time. Ovals, orange, talking about O and drawing them.

Claire also noted that plans were often changed when a staff member thought of a new idea one morning or afternoon. Claire did indicate that individual issues were dealt with “depending on the child’s needs and where we think they’re at and where we’d like to lead them on to”.

Curriculum planning for “older” children

Four staff members and three supervisors (Rena, Claire and Kate) spoke of different and more structured programmes prepared in their centres for “older” near-school-age children (depending on the centre, children aged from three and a half years to five years). Only one participant (Linda, a staff member in Centre F) was currently providing one of these programmes, and she indicated that although she was not a qualified teacher, she had volunteered to teach it. Caroline, the only qualified teacher in Centre F, disagreed with the provision of a programme of this nature. However, she was unable to have any influence over it because Linda reported directly to the owner, who was also the licensee/supervisor. Caroline said:

Yes, I am predominantly in charge of those children but when Linda brings them in here that's solely her. I don't really, I've tried but she ultimately relates to Brenda (owner/licensee/supervisor). She does relate to me in some aspects, but it's an area that I've sort of had to give over, because I have a different philosophy on preschool, a preschool programme.

Linda provided a number of “worksheets” prepared for the children, and commercially produced workbooks, which purported to teach literacy and numeracy. She said that the demand for the programme had come from parents:

Well, they (the parents) really wanted something that was going to prepare the children for school. They wanted them to have writing skills and then their reading skills and basic mathematics... I have visited a local school just to see what was required because I actually have a friend who is a teacher - a new entrants teacher - so I went there and sat in on the class to see what they do, what's expected of the children when they come in and so that's what I'm working towards so that they are able to transition quite easily.

Rhonda, an unqualified licensee/supervisor, indicated that she supported more structured programmes for some of the older children and advised parents thus:

...I get parents coming in saying "Have you heard of the Reading Master and what should we be doing" and so they just seem to respect what I say and I just explain to them that depending on which school they're going to - if they're going

to (local decile 10 private school), then fine, feed them whatever you want to feed them, but if they're going to your local (state) primary school don't, because they'll get bored. I mean, I have, I've found out from principals...

Natasha, a qualified supervisor, indicated that children's transition to school causes anxiety for staff as well as parents:

(Centre personnel are) trying to work on recognising what they (children) need as prior knowledge to start primary school. We have a mixture of children - I have noticed some are going to private schools. There is a longer list there from the parent interviews and there might be a bit more pressure there. Children who are going to public schools the parents are not so concerned - that is just what I have found from what I have seen.

The planning of structured programmes seemed appropriate to Claire (a qualified licensee/supervisor), who considered that children learn by being teacher-directed:

That's our sort of kindy time. It's a learning time. The children break into groups or stages, not necessarily their age, but yeah we do...Ann's great with the four year olds and they do a lot...

In general, parents did not mention curriculum planning, except to comment on how well organised (or not) staff were in providing activities and equipment for children. However, five of the seventeen parents approved of what they perceived to be the more structured programmes provided by four of the centres in the present study.

The notion that their children were "bright" featured in the conversations of eight parents. For three of these parents, a "more structured" environment was important, and became increasingly so as the children approached school age. Rowena had her son enrolled for part of the week in a second centre that did provide what she described as a "more formal" programme where he was "taught to read".

From the parents' perspectives, these programmes provided a variety of components, including the children having to "do worksheets", take turns, have a limited choice of activities, having to do what they were told and having responsibilities. Alana also suggested that children learned to:

... be orderly in the sense of mat times, being able to concentrate on something, knowing what it means to sit still, be quiet. You know, some basic alphabet stuff, scissor skills, that kind of thing. And also I think just being away from the parents, you know, for a full day and quite a bit of structure.

Doreen, also a parent, discussed her views:

Well, I've always had this fear of children going to school and not being able to cope...I just sort of felt that they have teachers there that start them on the reading and writing...it's more structured. They might have a choice of reading or writing or they will have a choice of playing, water play and with paints. But they don't have the same sort of free choice where they can just get up and run off. They have a set routine they stick to. I'm not saying they have to sit there all day once again and not have fun, but they get used to that an hour for this, an hour for that... they have to do what the teacher's telling them.

Several parents who had children enrolled at centres which did not provide a structured programme for older children considered that such programmes should be provided; one parent also felt that more excursions out of the centre would be good for her child.

Curriculum implementation

As has already been mentioned, few participants spoke of curriculum implementation during the early interviews. The licensee/supervisors' and supervisors' diaries revealed that they spent time (between two and almost twelve hours over a three-day period) that they coded as "working with children". As a result, later interviews in the first research phase and theoretical sampling in the second phase was directed at determining what they meant by that term. Their perceptions, and those of staff and parents, will be presented next.

Licensee/supervisors' and supervisors' perceptions of curriculum implementation

Claire (a licensee/supervisor) described what she did when working with children;

I just welcome the children and sit and play with them and play with their favourite toys and things like that. I'll be sitting at the puzzle table doing puzzles with them or sitting with the play dough and encouraging.

Jeanne, on the other hand, described the complexity and the constancy of on-the-run reflection on and assessment of children's learning, and the programme planning which resulted from the assessments. She felt that teachers undertake many tasks as they teach, referring to this as "multi-tasking". She gave as an example the tasks of speaking to the father of a new baby and his centre-aged child at the same time as being aware of a child playing outside on drums that had been set up specifically for his interest. While speaking with the parent, she watched and informally assessed the drum-playing, and watched another child approach and work on arranging the drums in what she thought was a horizontal schema that he had been observed in working on previously. She mentioned that all of these issues needed to be raised at a staff assessment and planning meeting, so she needed to either remember or write them down.

Jeanne made the point that teaching is not a series of individual tasks such as assessment, curriculum implementation or programme planning. She considered that a skilled teacher did all of these things as she taught, and that they were then discussed with others at planning meetings, or recorded, or mentally noted for future work with a particular child.

Melanie, a supervisor, indicated that all but one of her staff were Diploma-qualified and were able to assess during teaching time, take recorded anecdotes and observations to a planning meeting and then formulate plans for individual children. She felt that she needed to be part of the teaching team so that she could participate fully in teaching to ensure that she retained a "finger on the ... pulse" of the centre.

Staff members' perceptions of curriculum implementation

Full-time staff members were usually rostered in eight-hour shifts with a half or full hour lunchtime. June described her day:

I'm rostered eight hours a day with the children and then we have this quiet time when the children have a sleep from like 12.30 onwards to about 2 - 2.30. It varies every day and that's when we do our extra responsibilities...

However, some staff worked only some days, so rosters were complex and designed to meet compliance needs related to staff:child ratios as well as to meet the agreed employment needs of individual staff members. Centres mostly also displayed rostered duties for staff; they were usually expected to be in a particular area at a specified time. Rostered duties most commonly included staff activities such as changing and toileting children, kitchen duty (preparing food, clearing after meals and washing dishes) or supervising sleeping children. They also involved "setting up activities", being "on inside" or "on outside". A "floater" (a staff member who is designated to take up any responsibilities that other centre personnel are too busy to deal with) is also used; these terms are explained by Caroline as follows:

Yes and so whoever's on outside has a floater and whoever's on inside has a floater, and that floater, wherever the majority of the children are, they go. Jo's on outside on Monday morning, she'll go up and set up outside with what she deems appropriate for that morning...And then on mat time, the one that's on outside duty in the morning does the 11 o'clock mat time, the one that's on inside duty does the 9.30 mat time. So that's their responsibility, what they do.

Duties were sometimes rostered for a week, sometimes for a day, and sometimes rotated within a day to provide variety for staff members and continuity of staffing for children. With the exception of one staff member (Linda) who provided a "school preparation" group time for three and a half to five year olds, staff generally spoke only of "working with" or "being with" children when they described programme implementation. They were seen to be providing resources for children to work with, comforting children, guiding children's behaviour, and talking to children, but no staff members discussed

what they thought about or did during the time they spent “with” children. Linda had observed what she thought others were doing:

...some might be on in the morning on duty inside and somebody in the afternoon. That person who is on duty on the inside that day has to plan for that morning and so they have to have things sorted out for that and then they will have floaters that will just float, that sort of thing.

Linda provided examples of worksheets and colouring-in tasks as she described the way in which she implemented the curriculum for the children she worked with. She said:

Basically its just trying to get the children focused on one thing but then the freedom after they've finished that task then they've got different things to choose from that they can then go and choose something else, that they can sit with a quieter activity. Some will actually go and choose a game, they will sit at the other table and play a game with two or three other children, snakes and ladders or bingo or do something else, to get them focused on one thing because when they do go to school they need to be focused on something...

Parents' perceptions of curriculum implementation

When parents discussed curriculum implementation, their perceptions fitted one of two categories. One covered generic curriculum issues (such as social interaction, choice of activity and physical and emotional well-being), while the other depended on the age of their child in relation to the first category.

In the first category, four parents commented on the value of the social interaction that their children experienced at the centre. Four also noted that they valued the quality of the nutrition and hygiene provided by the centre, including issues such as the staff having clear routines for children eating food, encouraging children to eat wholesome food and washing hands before eating. Bianca noted that:

It's little things like for morning tea they have chopped up fruit and...they get vegetables everyday and I think that's important...it's all part of the whole person and I'm sure that encroaches on their development because if they're healthy,

they're getting enough sleep, they're getting good nutrition, then their minds and bodies are going to be more receptive to education, so I think it's a total package.

Other parents commented on the value of children being provided with opportunities to experience new learning (e.g. mathematics and toilet training) and what Susan called “fun” and “imaginative” things.

Examples of the second category included, for one mother, the knowledge that her three-year old child would receive affectionate individual attention from centre staff. Ana said:

...if we're having a problem with leaving in the morning there's always a cuddle. I know there's cuddles all day if the children need them. If they bring a book they read that book, they just fit in with the children.

Two other parents also noted that they both wanted their infant's emotional well-being encouraged. One parent commented that, when her children were under two years of age, all she wanted for them was a clean and safe environment.

Programme evaluation

Because participants initially offered only brief comments about programme evaluation, theoretical sampling was also directed at this topic during later interviews in the first research phase and in the second set of interviews. Melanie and Jeanne (both supervisors) explained that when they were teaching, they were constantly evaluating the programme and the environment. Melanie (supervisor of the corporate/institution centre which was the most democratically-operated centre in the study) indicated that complex thoughts were “mixing” in her mind about each child she was teaching, the equipment they were using and its relevance, as well as its placement. She provided a description of the complexity of these processes and her fears that she may not have been focusing on the individual child sufficiently when she explained

It's very complex and the few times I've spoken to you about this... I get all sort of intertwined inside seeing how interlinking my job is and 1) is it OK? 2) does it prevent me from working with the children really well? 3) does the centre benefit?

Sometimes I can say yes to all of those and other times I think, have I missed the opportunity with a child because my mind's taking in the global picture. So I mean trying to connect into the child but very often the bigger picture is part of it.

Formal programme evaluation was undertaken at the weekly meeting in both Melanie's and Jeanne's centres. Issues such as Melanie described were, according to Melanie, put on the agenda and all staff members contributed to discussing, debating, and deciding whether changes were to be made. As well as evaluating what impact the programme and the environment had on individuals and groups of children, an evaluation was also made of group behaviours and their impact on children's learning processes. Often, this resulted in the purchase of more equipment, or the re-arranging of furniture or specific areas.

Claire (a private centre licensee/supervisor) said that evaluations of the environment (and programme) in her centre were done on a need-to-know ad hoc basis, especially when evaluating where to best place relief staff working in the centre when staff members were away "training". Referring to herself and staff members, she said

...we do speak daily, just casually, though, on who's where, where's who, what the plan is...(It is on) a casual verbal basis, the planning is written but evaluated almost daily. I will just sort of say oh I've this idea for the afternoon and we're just going to...

Other participants spoke only briefly about programme evaluation. One private centre licensee/supervisor (Brenda) commented that staff made daily written evaluations of the programme. Examination of these evaluations revealed general comments about the weather, that "children had enjoyed" the water play, that the session had "gone really well", the number of children in attendance, and whether it had been a "quiet" or a "busy" day. Sometimes a list of resources to be replaced was included (i.e. "more paint needed" or "aprons need washing").

Six other participants (two supervisors and four staff members) also mentioned programme evaluation. Caroline (a member of Brenda's staff) indicated that she was required to complete a daily evaluation of the programme. She provided the following explanation of what the term meant to her:

We fill in sessional evaluations at the end of each day. And so I get the staff to put in what activities they might have done outside or inside and then do a little write-up in the section that links to the Te Whāriki goals. They might pick up what further action might need to be done or those sort of areas really. Or what parents bring to light.

Linda, also a staff member in Brenda's centre, said that she undertook daily evaluations of her programme too, noting that parents had access to them. She completed anecdotal comment (like a daily diary for parents to see) on aspects of the "formal" programme she offered for four-year-olds. The comments related to children's activities such as "Jamie wrote three Es today" or "Sarah finished the train jigsaw". She said:

...for my pre-schoolers I have a developmental chart for things that they can do and I'll generally make a copy of that to send with the child's book at the end of the time when they are going to school and I'll give that to the parent. They quite like to see the evaluation book how they've gone with the comments and things. For what they've come from, what they can now do.

Summary

Evidence of the national curriculum document, *Te Whāriki*, was seen in every centre, and, in most, the language of the document was also used. However, assessment of children, curriculum planning and implementation, and programme evaluation, if mentioned at all by participants, were discussed in Piagetian terms, using the developmental model which has dominated the early childhood field in Aotearoa/New Zealand since the 1960s. Only two supervisors discussed these issues in any depth, and only when interviewed a second time as theoretical sampling was being undertaken. With the possible exception of these two supervisors and one licensee who had experience in other education sectors, few participants appeared to have more than a surface understanding of *Te Whāriki*.

Files of varying types, containing observations of children and sometimes examples of their work, were kept in most centres. Six of the ten centres used the “focus child” system of making a particular effort to observe a child at least once each year. The other four centres used either a primary caregiver system of one staff person being responsible for the assessment and planning for a small group of children, or staff members completed observations on a more ad hoc basis. Few centre personnel used the observations to thoroughly inform planning; instead, they were frequently filed for parent perusal. Centre personnel found it difficult to deal with itinerant and frequently absent children in some centres, while large numbers of children in two of the community centres also prevented staff from making frequent observations of any one child.

Programme planning was mostly undertaken by all staff working together at staff meetings. Few staff could elaborate on how planning was done or on what it was based, although one supervisor/licensee explained the pre-arranged theme system she encourages in her centre. Planning for older children was considered to be more important and structured than for younger children. While only one (unqualified) staff member in the present study was responsible for a group of four-year-olds, other centre personnel spoke enthusiastically about needing to prepare children for school by offering structured, more formal programmes.

No participants related their pedagogical practices to learning theory. Most unknowingly described implementing the curriculum using a behaviourist “transmission” model of teaching, where children were expected to sit still for long periods of time and to copy, complete worksheets, and to do as they were told. Parents mostly applauded these activities, believing that such a programme prepared their child well for school.

Pedagogical practices were not described by any participants in the first phase of interviewing. Even when prompted by the researcher, staff members merely described supervisory functions as they discussed “working with” children. When theoretically sampled, one supervisor/licensee continued to describe supervising children, while two

other supervisors each offered a more detailed explanation of the complex nature of their pedagogical practices as they discussed the links between assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation, and outlined a more detailed understanding of the socio-cultural perspectives of *Te Whāriki*.

Most parents expressed a holistic interest in their child's well-being, valuing high levels of hygiene and nutrition, safety, and social interaction for their children without commenting on learning or teaching.

Professional issues

Centre personnel focused on three main professional issues; professional development and teacher education programmes, appraisal processes, and in-centre professional development. These professional issues will be presented in the next section.

In general, parents were not well-informed about either qualifications or professional development issues. Their perceptions will be presented last.

Support for personnel undertaking teacher education and professional development programmes

All licensee/supervisors and supervisors interviewed in the present study indicated that one or more of the personnel in their centre were studying to upgrade to Diploma of Teaching status. Three indicated that their centre focus of professional development support was on the staff members in this situation, although one commented that by the end of 1999, all staff would be qualified and that they could then work towards other types of professional development, including higher qualifications. Favourable comment was made by five supervisors and one licensee about in-centre professional development for special purposes (such as attention deficit disorder, child abuse and neglect). Only four qualified participants (one licensee/supervisor, two supervisors and a staff member) indicated that they were currently, had recently, or intended in the near future to continue to work towards advanced qualifications.

Teacher education programmes were being undertaken via a variety of delivery options. Some participants spoke of attending night classes during the week, others were completing courses by correspondence, and others were enrolled to attend classes for one day per week. All had to take time from their current jobs to complete practicums, (and attend day classes if applicable) and this caused difficulties for centres as they tried to find relief staff.

Some support for the professional development of staff undertaking short courses or longer programmes of study was provided by all centres. This support varied from complete payment of fees and continuation of full pay, to unpaid leave or re-arranged rosters. However, while all centre personnel were aware that support existed for professional development, staff members did not know the details or extent of that support as the licensee or supervisor judged each case on its merits. No centres had formal methods of applying for support; informal procedures (usually conversations) were reported to trigger offers of help from supervisors or licensees. This had the effect of disconcerting some staff members, who indicated that they did not know if or when they were entitled to financial support, and were not sure if it was appropriate to ask for it. Some worried about the effect on other staff if they asked for time “off” to attend courses, and said that sometimes they did not ask if they perceived that their colleagues might have to work harder.

Staff members involved in studying in teacher education programmes indicated the difficulties they had in juggling work, family, financial and study commitments, and several commented on their disillusionment with the licensing points system. One staff member was upset about a programme that had been terminated when she was part way through and for which she was not reimbursed. Another three staff members said that they were “between” programmes, indicating that they had completed a programme, which had been allocated licensing points, and were now saving for the next one.

Appraisal processes

Licensees and supervisors were much more confident than staff members that appraisal processes were successful. According to licencees and supervisors, appraisal systems were successfully used in six centres. Three licensees did not use appraisal systems at all and another was in the process of developing and trialing one with staff. Licensees of three of the six centres with appraisal processes commented on the value of the documented professional development programmes that resulted from appraisal. One thought that the appraisal and professional development policy implemented in her centre had increased staff enthusiasm about continuing with professional development. Mary-Anne, another of the licensees, considered that the teacher registration process and associated professional development had motivated staff. She said

...in order to get that (teacher registration) they had to agree to an appraisal process and a self-improvement process because you can't be a registered teacher unless you've bought into that kind of thing. Getting that certificate really meant something to the four staff...(it gives) a professional edge to looking towards things.

Marion, a licensee/supervisor, noted the links between job descriptions and appraisal processes:

We do do them (appraisals). It's annually to six months. When they (staff members) are new we do one within three months and sometimes six months later but it's at least annually...We use our job description as a basis for our performance appraisal...

Rhonda, a licensee/supervisor of a centre in the corporate/institution category of authority, discussed the bonus system that had been instigated by the corporation. She explained:

...the bonus is based on the appraisal system. It's doing all the extra things in your job. So you do your job, which is what you get paid for...So their (staff member's) goal could be to attend three inservice courses this year, music, art,

young children or you know... And it's up to them, if they don't (attend) then they lose a percentage of their bonus.

Wilma (a supervisor) was the only participant who discussed the inclusion of self-appraisal within an appraisal system.

Staff members were less enthusiastic about appraisal. Only six staff members mentioned appraisal systems in their centres; one indicated that her centre appraisal process had been implemented and had then lapsed. Another said that her centre didn't have a system for appraisal but needed it, then referred to the licensee's proposed intention to purchase a commercially-available "appraisal" kit which is used by a manager to "tick off" staff competencies and then judge them on a one-to five scale. One staff member indicated that professional development was spoken about positively by her supervisor but was arranged infrequently on an ad hoc basis. Three staff members indicated that appraisal interviews meant that they had an opportunity to "have a say" or to say "what you like". Kath felt this way, and was also the only staff member to indicate that her job description was used in the centre's appraisal process:

Once a year we get called to the office and we go through a sheet which is like your work - job description - and you go through that piece by piece and they say how they feel that you're doing and then you have a turn to say how you feel it's going and you have time and you are able to say what you like.

Parents' views of professional development issues

The parent participants in the present study were mostly not well informed about the professional development being undertaken or planned for individual staff members or the whole centre. Some did, however, express gratitude for the help and support offered by staff members and supervisors they perceived to be knowledgeable, and mostly enjoyed the opportunities the centre provided for parent support evenings.

Doreen was enthusiastic about a noticeboard in the centre which displayed photographs of staff with their qualifications or licensing points and other completed courses (such as First Aid), along with their professional development plans. She said

...you can actually go straight to the board and have a look and see who your children are going to be dealing with and basically how qualified they are and what they're doing this year...I personally don't know what they (the qualifications and courses) all are. I haven't done any teaching and so I don't really understand them, but I know that some are diplomas and some are more intensive. Some might have a nanny qualification, but doing further training. And they'll have there that some have come from being a school teacher or what have you.

Parents, on the whole, expressed individual beliefs that qualified staff should teach their children. However, none of those interviewed understood the qualifications system, and often later negated their first comments about staff needing to be qualified if they thought that a particular staff member was “good with children” or “loves children”. As an example, Bianca (a parent in a centre where only the supervisor was a qualified teacher, three staff had some licensing points and one had not completed any training) thought all staff should be qualified. When asked if she understood the qualifications system, Bianca indicated her confusion:

I've no idea, oh I know that they've all got points. I know that it works on a points system and you've got to have done so many different things to be able to be in the centre and that the centre as a whole has got to have a number of points and I know that they do have some staff there, they aren't qualified but are training or relievers or whatever but they've all got the qualifications.

Summary

Most professional development time and resources were spent on unqualified staff gaining qualifications. Some in-centre professional development was undertaken, usually for groups or all staff rather than individuals. Many of the staff interviewed were involved in programmes of study, with some expressing dissatisfaction with licensing

points and financially-collapsed training providers. While financial and other support was available for staff in centres to gain qualifications, some were unsure how or if it should be accessed.

Appraisal processes were considered to be more successful by licensees and supervisors than staff members. The latter group indicated that, contrary to what the former group indicated, few job descriptions were available and up-to-date, and few appraisal processes led to cohesive professional development plans.

Parents in the present study had little knowledge of professional development details other than somewhat hazy ideas about staff qualifications. While most expressed the need to have qualified staff teaching their children, they often later indicated that if a staff member seemed to be well disposed to working with children, that was sufficient.

Chapter summary

In this chapter, data pertaining to participants' perceptions about organisational activities as they related to leadership and management (O'Neill, 1994) were presented as six categories. They provided an overlay to the two categories that described structures and cultures presented in Chapter Five.

As the first category was discussed, it was clear that the term "management" was favoured over "leadership" as the preferred descriptor of the roles of the "persons responsible" or supervisors of the centres in the present study. Administration tasks, frequently referred to as "paper work", absorbed much of supervisors' time (see Table 2 p. 131), but was accepted as a given – part of managing the centre. Only three participants considered the leadership role to be different from management, and all three used the words "vision" or "visualise" to describe a process of seeing the "larger picture" and "larger goals". The concept of centre personnel other than the supervisor or licensee providing leadership was restricted to daily activities, not extended to considering issues outside the realm of daily tasks.

Effective communication, the second category discussed in this chapter, was highly valued by all participants in the present study. Parents particularly valued the opportunity to speak with the supervisor. However, communication between parents and centre personnel was mostly verbal and casual, and little personal written communication between them was undertaken. Only two participants, both supervisors, discussed the importance of communication with children, and only one placed communication with children as a first priority in her relationships in the centre.

Communication between centre personnel was viewed differently by staff members and the supervisor/licensee groups. The views of the two groups also extended to a third category involving their perceptions of teamwork, which they considered to be interdependent with communication systems. Supervisors and licensees were generally of the view that staff meetings were the fora for “open” communication and democratic decision-making to occur between centre personnel. They considered that the entire staff group was a “team”. Staff members, however, did not always share this perception, stating instead that they sometimes felt powerless to contribute to staff meetings and often confused about their roles. They mostly viewed just their immediate colleagues as “team” as a result – excluding supervisors in some cases, and licensees in all. For most staff members, teamwork meant sharing strengths and responsibilities quite intimately with those immediately around them. The only exception to this view was noted in the least hierarchically organised centre, where staff indicated, against the general trend, that they felt able to participate in almost all decisions, and considered the supervisor (but not the licensee) to be part of their team.

Open systems of communication were seen by all centre personnel to be essential to the effective management of change in centres, which emerged as the fourth category the study. Similarly to earlier discussion, however, staff members in two centres (in one case, where changes were occurring in staffing and in the other, when the owner was away) indicated that centre structures and responsibilities had not been clearly defined, and that

they felt unable to be open with the licensee or the supervisor/licensee about concerns because of perceived power imbalances.

Centre personnel and parents shared grave concerns about changes caused by staff members leaving. Parents were concerned for their child and their own relationships, while centre personnel found that creating new trusting relationships took time. Some staff and supervisors indicated that the impact of change on children and centre personnel was reduced if qualified staff were employed, because of their ability to manage the change more effectively.

The only other change that was perceived as difficult for all centres was the extra planning (i.e. rearranging rosters, obtaining relievers) and resources (such as fees, time spent away from the centre) involved in supporting staff to gain qualifications. Problems with training providers had also exacerbated the way centre personnel often negatively viewed the need to make changes to accommodate training requirements.

The fifth category, pedagogical issues, was the most difficult in which to obtain a view of staff and centre practices and understandings. Interviews with all participants in the initial research phase, even with selective sampling, failed to establish patterns of identifiable pedagogical understandings and practices amongst centre personnel apart from traces of Piagetian-like discourse. For the most part, the use of *Te Whāriki* appeared to be superficial. Assessments (mostly undertaken in the deficit mode of what Woodhead [1990] calls a focus on children's "needs") and evaluation processes were not linked to *Te Whāriki* in ways that could beneficially inform on-going planning. Participants' descriptions of their pedagogical practice indicated that their skills lay in the technically-focused supervision of children rather than in a critical understanding of teaching and learning theories and their practical application.

Theoretical sampling with two supervisors and one licensee/supervisor was used to focus on pedagogical issues in a further attempt to establish what theoretical underpinnings were used to view pedagogical issues. Two of the three provided an overview of the

complexities of teaching, but, even then, did not link theoretical understandings of pedagogical approaches to their teaching roles. Only one supervisor of the three explained how socio-cultural aspects of the curriculum were used to enhance children's learning.

As only 16 of the 35 centre personnel in the present study were qualified early childhood teachers, this finding is, perhaps, not surprising. However, it also appears that only two of the 16 qualified personnel were able to articulate their practice in any depth. In addition, while seven (or possibly eight) of the "persons responsible" were qualified, only one spent more than half her working week teaching (see Table 3 p. 134). Of the remainder, one did not teach at all and others spent only up to a quarter of the week working with children and staff members. Maintaining sound, high quality pedagogical practice is likely to be difficult in centres where few of the staff members are qualified and where the one qualified person in a centre may be managing the centre away from the interface with children's learning.

The final category, professional issues, revealed that the major professional focus for centre personnel was the pressure on staff to gain qualifications. Many concerns were raised in relation to this, including centre and personal financial matters, personal time management and family worries, difficulties in obtaining relievers, and problems with maintaining continuity of relationships with children. Many parents, while noticing some of these issues, exhibited little understanding about the need for staff to be qualified.

Appraisal processes were also discussed by centre personnel. In the centres in which appraisal was undertaken, it was generally considered to be successful by licensees and supervisors, but not by staff members. A number of discrepancies between the accounts of these two groups included the status of job descriptions, and the lack of links between appraisal and professional development plans.

In the next chapter, the categories of structure and culture that were presented in Chapter Five and the "organisational activity" (O'Neill, 1994) categories of leadership and

management, communication, teamwork, change management, pedagogical issues and professional issues presented in this chapter will be analysed and interpreted.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Leadership and management in early childhood centres: a discussion

...is childhood a natural state or a social intervention? We cannot deny the 'historicity of childhood' any more than we can deny our own human historicity. Childhood is a natural state, a life phase of the human project but the particular forms of childhood created through the social ideology of 'schooling' embedded in the early childhood institutions have, in many ways, eroded that life phase and imposed a false structure of meaning on the ontological development of the child.

(Suransky, 1982, p.171)

The aims of the present research were to identify and explore the quality of leadership and management practices used in centres, and to identify what constituted participants' perceptions of best practice. In addition, the literature was to be examined, and the resulting data used to develop a theoretical model of quality leadership and management in early childhood education. (A reminder is included here that the terms "quality" and "best practice" became problematic during the literature review; they will be discussed more fully in Chapter Eight.)

Three research questions were developed to focus the study. In order to address the questions, each of the eight categories that developed from the analysis of data from the supervisors' diaries, demographic questionnaires, ERO reports, artifacts and interviews and which were presented in the previous three chapters will be discussed in this chapter. Data from the literature will also be discussed, and each section will be summarised before proceeding to the next. The discussion and summary in each section will identify

key issues that will contribute to a synthesis of data to inform the theoretical model of leadership and management that will be a focus of the final chapter.

First, the data regarding two of the categories, centre structure and culture, will be discussed. From these categories emerged a core category regarding the image of the child and childhood held within a centre, or what Schein (1992), as discussed in Chapter Two, might consider to be the basic assumptions and values upon which centre culture is built. Strauss (1990) notes that a core category is a dominant process in the social scene under study, forming, Charmaz (1994a) says, the underpinning thesis of the written report. The importance of the core category and its influence on centre structure and culture will be discussed with regard to the research questions.

O'Neill (1994) claims that the shared values of the "wider community who sponsor the organisation" (p. 102) are also visible in organisational structure, culture and activities. Following O'Neill's premise, the basic assumptions, beliefs, and shared values about how the core category of the present study (the image of the child and childhood) is viewed in the wider societal community must also impact on the way in which centres are led and managed. The influences of ways in which children and childhood are viewed within the "societal subculture" (Alvesson, 1993, p. 7) of early childhood education (see Figure 6, p. 182) and aspects of subcultures of other interests, such as business or religion, may combine to lead to "unique patterns and dynamics with a strong 'local touch' " (Alvesson, 1993, p. 75). These considerations will also be addressed in the discussion.

Next, the interlinked and interdependent findings that developed in the form of the six other categories (presented in Chapter Six) will be explored. The types of data that were collected were influenced by the concept of the two less abstract levels of Schein's (1992) model of organisational culture (espoused values and visible organisational structures and processes), noted above. Data that emerged from interviews, demographic information, ERO reports and supervisor diaries were presented as organisational activities that participants indicated were associated with leadership and management. Kieviet and Vandenberghe (1993) claim that organisational culture is communicated

through daily activities, at the same time that daily activities are shaped by the existing organisational culture. The circularity of this argument and its links to the core category discussed earlier is echoed by O'Neill (1994), who says that, collectively, organisational activities make up each organisation's intended whole curriculum which is then interpreted according to the common values, beliefs and priorities of those within the organisation. He notes that the shared values

...constitute the culture of the organisation. The chosen activities will reflect an accommodation between the values and beliefs, or culture, of those people who comprise the institution, and the goals of those in the wider community who sponsor the organisation. The collective commitment of those working in the organisation to carry out those activities will, in turn, be reflected in a customised management structure to support agreed policies and accompanying procedures.
(p. 102)

The discussion will provide a synthesis of issues and implications that will be used in the final chapter to contribute to a theoretical model of leadership and management in early childhood centres.

To summarise, in order to address the research questions of the present study, the three organisational dimensions described by O'Neill (structure, culture and activities) and revealed in the data presented in the three previous chapters will be discussed in this chapter. The beliefs and assumptions on which centres' cultures and structures were founded and maintained, and the core category that emerged from these two categories, will be discussed first. Centre activities, expressed as six categories that contained more commonalities than differences across categories of authority, will also be discussed. Finally, the findings will be synthesised and used to contribute to issues that might be considered in a theoretical model of leadership and management in early childhood centres. The model and the implications of this synthesis will be presented in Chapter Eight.

Organisational structures, organisational cultures, and images of the child

Many influences have impacted on the basic assumptions, values and beliefs that participants in the present study held about the purpose for which their centres exist. In this section, some of the possible influences on centres within each category of authority will be traced and discussed.

Before proceeding, it is important to be reminded that, while social, economic and political changes occur within any era or period of time, fragments of earlier beliefs and values continue to exist in newer transformations. Sometimes these combine, resulting in a “new” perspective which bears traces of several others. In addition, overlapping time spans mean that no definitive periods can be determined. Writers frequently refer to “eras” (Hendrick, 1997) to describe approximate spans of time, or “influences” (Barraclough & Smith 1995; Wylie, 1994) to describe social, political, technological, economic or other perspectives that have impacted on the ways in which issues are viewed.

Private centres; the “family” image of the child

A critical examination of history reveals that the concept of the *family* has varied considerably throughout the ages. Donzelot (1979), writing from a postmodern view, considers that the history of family has been a socio-political transformation at any given time, understood only within the multiple relationships that it maintains with society and that society has forced on it.

The literature review revealed a consensus of views about ways in which various combinations of historical (Hendrick, 1997), political, religious (Sommerville, 1982) and contextual factors have provided the discourse of patriarchy (Cannella, 1997; Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999; Hayden, 1994; May, 1993) which influences considerations of early childhood education in Aotearoa today. An example of the continued notion of the

child being owned by parents or family was seen when an Aotearoa/New Zealand journalist, writing of child abuse in 1990, indicated that

...while the pendulum has swung forcefully away from the concept of the woman being her husband's possession, it has swung to reinforce the notion that a child is the chattel of its parents or family. (Max, 1990, p.18)

The discipline of developmental psychology that was supported through the work of Binet, Piaget and others during the twentieth century (Cannella, 1997) also promoted the scientific positivistic constructions of the child, childhood, and motherhood during the early twentieth century (Morss, 1990). In these constructions, children are generally portrayed as helpless, small, weak and dependent (Solberg, 1990).

Support for the concept of family in the data

Private/private trust centre personnel in the present study worked towards the objective of providing a “family-like” environment and structure to replace or to extend the child’s own family environment. Three of the private/private trust centre owners/licensees/supervisors used the metaphor of family when describing their philosophy of early childhood education. Marion wanted her centre to be “an extension of their (the child’s) family”, while Miranda made decisions about her centre that rested on her own family values and what would be best for her own children. Claire used words like “loving” and “caring” for children and deliberately structured her centre so that all age groups could be together in a “family-like” environment. All used their own family experiences as the main base for forming the environment and making decisions about their centres. From the purchase of equipment to their relationships with parents and staff, their own values and beliefs about family structures and behaviours guided judgements and decisions.

Claire and the fourth owner/licensee/supervisor, Brenda, both operated their centres on Christian principles. Brenda had opened her centre for the purpose of offering a Christian environment for children, and advertised accordingly. Claire did not advertise for this purpose, but spoke freely of her church affiliations and the fact that she used “Christian principles” to guide her. Brenda indicated her interest in ensuring that children did not hit

others or steal, and her staff talked of emulating the family structure advocated by their church in the relationship between God, Jesus, and children.

It is likely, then, that the cultures of the privately-owned centres in the present study were built upon basic underlying assumptions (Schein, 1992) about the child in relation to “family” and/or Christian beliefs.

Private centre structures

The patriarchal principles embedded in the discourses of religion and/or family can clearly be seen in the philosophical beliefs and practices of those in private/private trust centres. These centres functioned hierarchically, in similar fashion to the patriarchal family, where the head of the family made the decisions and took the “responsibility”. Staff were included in making some decisions, although the owner/licensee/supervisors indicated that they sometimes vetoed or changed staff decisions. The owner/licensee/supervisor of each of these for-profit centres made all final decisions, particularly to do with finances. No formal regular opportunities were offered to parents to participate in decision-making; apart from occasional surveys in one centre, consultation was undertaken by either telling parents what was planned, or discussing issues on a casual daily basis as they collected children from or left children at the centre.

Corporate/institution centres; discourses of “support for working/studying parents” and “care”

Participants in the three corporate/institution centres (two corporate and one educational institution) in the present study spoke of their philosophies incorporating the notion of “support for working/studying parents” with that of “care”. However, while participants in two (corporate) centres in this category of authority demonstrated similar structural and philosophical beliefs, those in the third centre (attached to an educational institution) deliberately and specifically articulated the combined concepts of “care” and “education”. This “split” was the only noticeable and clear difference *within* MoE categories of authority in the study, and, it is argued, was due to the structure and purpose of each centre reflecting the nature of its own parent body. Support for working/studying parents

and the notion of “care” within this MoE category of authority will be discussed next; the “education” focus will be included in a section which includes all MoE categories of authority later in the chapter.

Support for working/studying parents

In Chapter One, the increase in numbers of Aotearoa/New Zealand’s women in the paid workforce over the last century was briefly described; from 17.7% in 1916 (Department of Statistics, 1990) to 64.8% by 1999 (Statistics New Zealand, 2000). Provision of early childhood services for women in the paid workforce has grown accordingly. Centres in the corporate/institution MoE category of authority existed to provide a service to the employees of the corporation or to the staff or students of a educational institution. Parents who interacted with the centre personnel were usually mothers, indicating that women’s responsibilities for children may not have changed greatly since 1978, when Swain (1978) wrote:

...while there may be some changes for men, parenthood is largely a female experience here, and parent and mother are largely synonymous. (p. 31)

Solberg (1990) provides a brief analysis of the division of labour within households in Norway, indicating that although women now spend less time at home than they traditionally did, they still carry out four times as much housework as men. Her analysis examined housework duties only, and did not take the responsibilities for children into account except as they related to housework (such as extra cleaning, food preparation, etc.). Ledwith and Colgan (1996) note that studies in many other countries provide similar results. It could thus be expected that, as an extension of Swain’s comment, women still take most of the responsibility for arranging services for their children.

Various feminist movements since the late 1960s have had, as a central theme, the concept of patriarchy. As Ledwith and Colgan (1996) point out, this concept has a variety of meanings. For example, radical feminism considers patriarchy to refer to male domination and to the power relationships by which men dominate women, while socialist feminists relate the subordination of women to the organisation of the prevailing

modes of production. Ledwith and Colgan, using a range of feminist views of patriarchy, argue that it is clear that perceived and actual familial demands on women dominate their relationship with paid work (and, by extension of that argument, their access to programmes of study which are a route by which women may reach paid work). This view of patriarchy, combined with the perception of the erratic nature of women's participation and commitment to work, serves to lower women's labour market value, and to deny them an identity independent of family.

Howe (1999) writes critically of feminism as an "adultist" (p. 53) perspective that has marginalised children, without noting that patriarchy is a much more well-established adultist perspective that has marginalised both women *and* children for centuries. However, Cannella (1997) reminds us that it is not only the work of feminists that has informed different constructions of the roles of women; postmodern scholars, she says, have also contributed to further understandings of social justice and perceptions of the societal roles of adults as well as of children and childhood. These include theorists such as Foucault (1980) who analysed power relationships, everyday discourse and cultural representations, and critical theorists like Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Kinchenloe (1991), who proposed that the negotiation of power relationships between groups of people legitimate the truths that are constructed and accepted.

The personnel in corporate/institution centres in the present study knew what work or study responsibilities each parent (usually the mother) had. The support they offered was to ensure that the parent did not need to worry about the child during the day, but could concentrate on work or study activities. It was clear that the support provided by centre personnel also benefited the parent organisation, as employees were free to focus on work or study. "Professional women" were retained in the workforce (Rhonda) and "adult students" (Mary-Anne) continued to be able to undertake their studies, thus allowing the parent organisations to maintain productivity and income. June even suggested that centre personnel extended their support of parents beyond providing a childcare service; she gave the example of how staff members introduced parents to other parents to facilitate professional "networking".

The capitalist mode of production in Aotearoa/New Zealand is strongly connected to the systems of the state, the economy and family and to the structures of class, ethnicity and gender (Codd, Harker & Nash, 1990). Codd et al. note that both the economy and the education system can be understood in terms of “a continual struggle between competing interests for the control of production and the distribution of rewards” (Codd et al., p. 7). Corporate/ institution centre provision of childcare clearly shows the links between systems, structures and capitalism, especially when considered from Ledwith and Colgan’s (1996) position. They argue (see also above) that patriarchal influences dominate women’s participation in the paid workforce. The parents (usually mothers) are encouraged to access childcare so that they can continue to engage in paid work (or study that will lead them to it) to support the capitalist economic system.

The image of the child afforded by this philosophy is one of a child whose parent (usually mother) is struggling to maintain or improve the status of the family by gaining access to cultural and social capital that is obtained through the education system, and which then leads to the ability to accumulate financial capital and participation in the capitalist economic system. The child, part of an “at risk” family (Moss, 1997; Pence & Brenner, 2000) is considered an obstacle to this participation, and must be provided for while the parent continues the struggle. In the community category of authority in the present study, these images of the child, together with notions of care (see next section) appeared to be the taken-for-granted beliefs upon which centre culture was formed.

Care

The image of the child needing *care* is derived from what Hendrick (1997) refers to as “the dominant social reconstruction of childhood this century” (p. 49, emphasis in original); the welfare orientation. He suggests that the earlier (late nineteenth and twentieth century) era of the “psycho-medical child” had given rise to a prolonged focus on the physical and mental condition of school children. Both the psychological emphasis on the child’s mind, and the medical and “scientific” definitions of the child have left a legacy which includes the child development movement. This movement strongly

influences the early childhood field at the present time and is reflected, for example, in notions of developmentally appropriate practice (Bredenkamp, 1987).

The era of the “welfare child” occurred during the twentieth century, according to Hendrick (1997). This was as a result of the State attempting to create a comprehensive welfare programme that would address a number of problems (including domestic unrest, foreign economic and military competition) by providing “moral socialisation” (Hendrick, 1997). The welfare of children (through attempts to prevent cruelty and neglect, school medical inspections, the nurturance of infants through organisations such as the Plunket Society, and an emphasis on hygiene), contextualised in times of domestic unrest and war, and influenced by political issues such as class control, led to a view of children as “belonging to the nation” (Hendrick, 1997, p. 50). Welfare schemes were provided to care for such children. “Care”, then, is a by-product of the welfare and medical/psychological models, and promotes the image of the child who needs to be kept free of disease, hygienically clean and well-nourished in order to develop into a healthy adult who will contribute to the social stability of the nation.

The welfare concept still has a strong influence on present practice. Early childhood services were moved from the auspices of the Department of Social Welfare to the Department of Education as recently as 1986 (May, 1993), and the term “childcare” is still used colloquially to differentiate these services from kindergartens. The discourse of care is thus perpetuated in language, although efforts have been consciously made to attempt to move to the use of “early childhood education and care”, “early childhood education”, and more recently “early years education” in legislation, publications, union activities and teacher education (May, 1999b).

The term used to describe the person most intimately involved with the child in an early childhood setting also illustrates this discourse; middle class women with a philanthropic and charitable bent established the first kindergartens (May, 1993) and eventually formed Kindergarten Associations which provided *teacher* training from 1950 (Hughes, 1989). Those who worked in childcare centres, however, were referred to as childcare *workers*

(May, 1993). The terms “teachers” and “workers” added to the divisive perceptions held by each group about each other’s roles, and this has continued into current discourse in spite of the MoE attempts to use the term “educators” to include everyone, with or without teacher education, as the person “responsible for promoting and extending the learning and development of each child” (Ministry of Education, 1998a, p. 61).

Across the early childhood sector, other examples of the legacy of welfare and care can also still be seen today. For example, organisations like the New Zealand Child Care Association and publications such as *What counts as quality in childcare* (Education Review Office, 1994) still use terminology that privileges the “care” concept.

The two corporate centres in the present study used the image of the child as needing care in terms of a “service” for parents. Participants in these centres spoke of “babysitting” and “minding” children, following the historical notions of care already described. In the centre attached to an educational institution, care was used much more often with reference to “care and education”; this focus will be discussed in a separate “pedagogical issues” section later in this chapter.

Corporate/institution centre structures; reflections of parent body structures

The two corporate centres each had a large corporation as their parent body, and were designed to cater only for parents working within the wider organisation. In one of these centres, a licensee was contracted to be responsible for the centre and visited regularly. In the other, the licensee was also the supervisor. Both centres displayed hierarchical structures similar to those of private centres, with only rare opportunities for parents to formally participate in centre decisions. In both cases, the centre licensee had a budget to work within, but any expenditure beyond the daily operating expenses was required to be checked by a corporate manager. In neither centre did the corporate manager have an understanding of early childhood issues or principles.

The third (educational institution) centre in this category of authority operated in the least hierarchical manner of all centres in the study. It was operated under the auspices of a

management group through the licensee, who was a senior member of the institution's staff. She and the supervisor had a collegial relationship in that each spoke of always involving the other in any decision, and respecting each other's skills as complementary to their own. Parents, all staff members, the supervisor, the licensee and a representative of the Board of Trustees formed a management committee that met twice each term. The discourse of "education" was strong in the parent body, and was also perceived as an important factor in this centre. As an example, the supervisor indicated that she viewed education as ensuring that children "are confident and that they have this desire to learn and seek, and the confidence buoys up the desire". In addition, this centre was the only one across all categories of authority in which the prevailing view of "education" was underpinned consistently by the principles of inclusive practice and of te Tiriti o Waitangi when examined through all three of Schein's levels of organisational culture (Schein, 1992).

The operational mode of each of the corporate/institutional centres strongly reflected the structure of organisations to which they were attached. The two corporate centres were operated in more authoritarian, hierarchical ways than the third centre which was attached to an educational institution. In the latter, stakeholders were positively encouraged to participate in decision-making, but in the former two centres, such participation was not offered. The view held in the two corporate centres was that parents were too busy and were not particularly interested in centre management, and that they were being offered a business-like service to meet their needs. The staff members of the centre attached to the educational institution catering for adult learners, on the other hand, offered more democratic opportunities for parent participation with an expectation that parents would attend and contribute if they could. The latter perception of sharing leadership is probably the closest any centre in the present study came to Blackmore's (1999) concept of harnessing the strengths of many to do things that could not be done by an individual – what she sees as "power through and with others" (p.161).

In all centres in this category of authority, personnel spoke of the "non-profit" nature of their organisation, but without clarifying why this was important to them.

Community centres; the discourse of “support and respite” for parents and “care” for children

Centre personnel in all three community centres spoke of their pride in being able to offer cheap (one participant said \$4 per session) *care* in a safe environment for children as a way of providing *support and respite* for parents. The two main aspects of the philosophies of these centres were thus care (with a safety focus) for children, and support and respite for parents. The notion of care needing to be inexpensive was held in common with those who worked in corporate/institution centres.

Care

The image of the child needing *care* was outlined in the previous section, and the same principles apply in the community centre category of authority. This shared image of the child as is shown in Figure 7, which also illustrates other images of the child held in centres within the three categories of authority in the present study. All images are illustrative of Schein's (1992) deepest or most abstract level of organisational culture, revealing the unconscious, basic underlying assumptions that constitute the foundations upon which organisational culture is built.

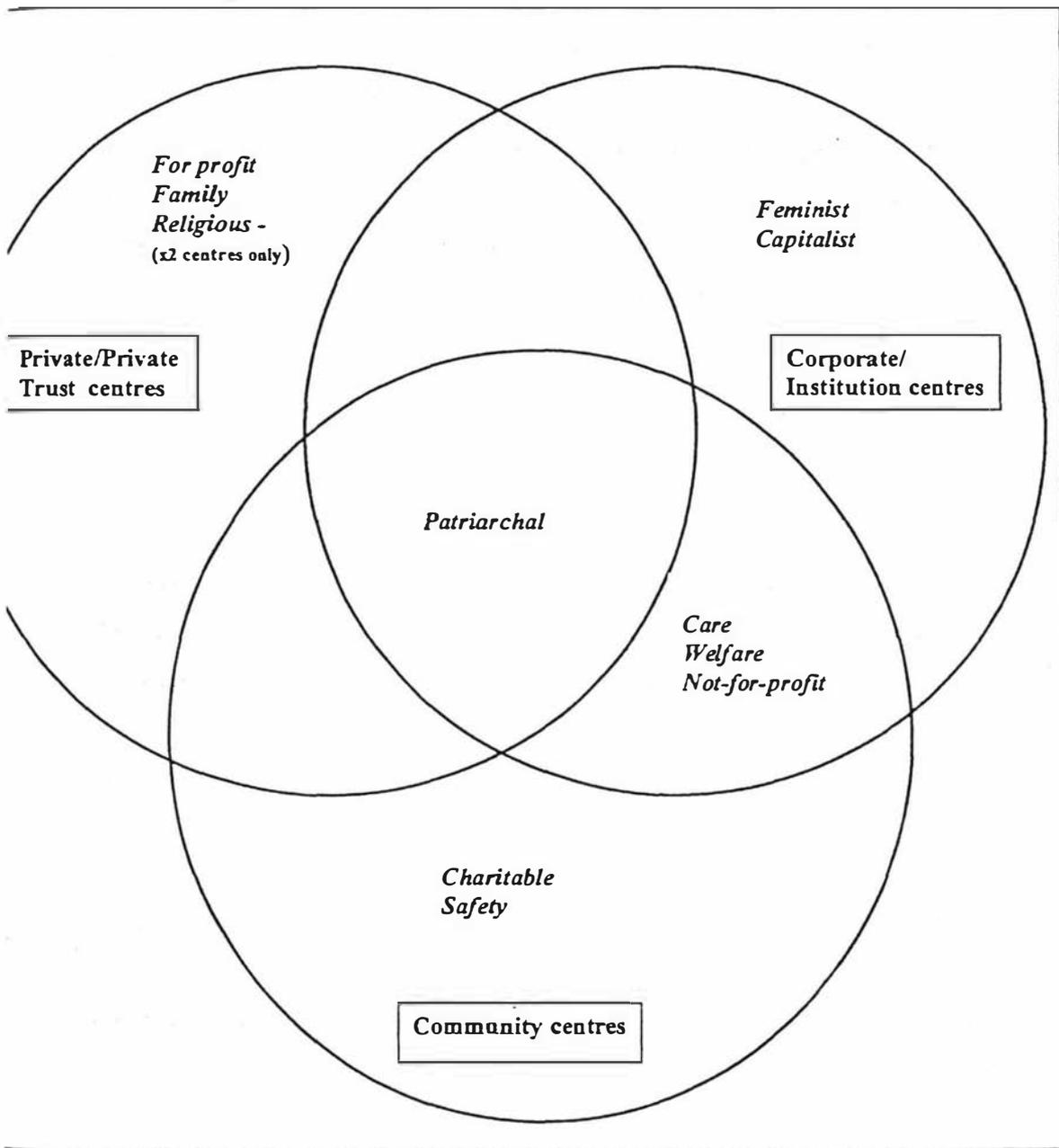


Figure 7: Images of the child (*in italics*) held in centres in three funding categories

“Respite and support” for parents; possible charitable and welfare functions

The respite and support for parents advocated for and supported by those who provide community centre services in the present study has limited historical precedence, and can be best explained as an amalgam of historical perspectives. Sommerville (1982) provides a general overview in indicating that a range of views of the rights and responsibilities of parenthood have matched each era of the child, and that issues of gender, class and ethnicity within each era have layered further complexities on the parenting task. However, there has been little sympathy for the plight of parents throughout the history of childhood, and there is a scarcity of literature on the topic of parenthood (i.e. the social roles of mothers and fathers), although there is a great deal on child rearing and children (Swain, 1978, p. 40).

Hendrick (1997) claims that the “era of the psychological child” (p. 51) (circa 1918-1950) led to the use of physical, mental, familial and social data to institutionalise the psycho-psychiatric dimension of childhood, and that the family had then to be preserved to maintain that concept. The “era of the family child” which followed provided a new emphasis on the primacy of the family in providing the appropriate environment for the child’s development, strongly influenced by Bowlby’s theories of attachment and maternal deprivation (Cannella, 1997, p. 73). Cannella, writing from a postmodern viewpoint, considers that women “were blamed for all the conditions that society placed on its young members” and that the concept of the child moving from stereotypical feminine attachment to culturally determined masculine “detachment” is thought to demonstrate maturity. Such concepts, she says, foster patriarchy and perpetuate the oppression of women.

Perhaps the oppression of women was what the (women) participants in the community centres in the present study were responding to as they promoted giving “mums” “a break” (Lynn and Wilma) or “time out” (Sandra). All three also commented on financial considerations as they spoke of needing to support mothers, thus indicating that they perceived that poverty was linked to women’s stress. Lynn mentioned the pressures of

having more than one child as influencing the difficulties faced by mothers, and Jeanne linked all these issues as she recalled her own struggle to raise her children on one wage. Perhaps, too, a combination of charitable and welfare considerations was behind community centre philosophies. The discourse of charity (giving voluntarily to those in need) underpinned the founding of the first childcare centre in Aotearoa/New Zealand by the Sisters of Compassion in Wellington's Basin Reserve in 1895. The aims of the charitable mission were to support "mothers who are compelled to go out working by the day" (Cook, 1985, p.18) by feeding, washing and caring for their children. The concept of the charitable focus of the first childcare centres changed to become more of a development of a service to mothers in the 1930s. At this time, crèches for meeting the needs of shoppers or those from the country needing to keep appointments in town were developed, but retained the focus of caring for children whose mothers needed or wanted time for other activities. Supporting those in financial and emotional difficulty by providing inexpensive (charitable) safe care (welfare) for children may have been considered a charitable function by those in this category of authority, especially by those who referred to their own experiences of childrearing as examples for their practice.

Community centre structures

The organisational structures of the community centres in the present study contained five levels of accountability but offered opportunities for all stakeholders to participate in a fairly flat organisational hierarchy. Parents were encouraged to participate in centre decision-making, and in all community centres different individuals undertook the roles of licensee and supervisor. The community house committee, while posing some problems in terms of conflicting interests, also enabled democratic community involvement and interest in the centre operations.

Parental images of the child

Parents commented obliquely on aspects of the images that they held of the child as they discussed the attributes of centre personnel. They variously noted that only those who were "child oriented" (Doreen), "respected children" (Susan) and who "shared the same values and culture regarding children" (Nora) should be employed. Susan also considered

children to be “immensely intelligent”, and others thought that people working with them needed to be happy and out-going, amongst possessing other similar qualities.

Summary

In the first section of this chapter, the different philosophies relating to the education and care of children underpinning organisational structures within each category of authority were traced, then illustrated in Figure 7. In each case, the organisational culture that was revealed was seen to support a particular image of the child. The images of the child held by participants were based on assumptions, beliefs and values that were focused on notions of family in private/private trust centres (with religion also in two of them), psychology, medicine and welfare in corporate/institution centres, and charity and welfare in community centres. The image of the hygienic, well-fed child who was well-cared for also prevailed in the discourse of community and corporation/institution centres. It was argued that all centres shared a patriarchal focus at the core of their cultures.

Organisational structures reflected the philosophies originally held by the founders of each centre, and were articulated by those currently working in them. Private centres with a family patriarchal focus tended to be more hierarchical in structure than the more democratically structured community centres and the centre attached to the educational institution catering for adult students in the corporate/institution category of authority. The other two corporate/institution centres exhibited some patriarchal characteristics involving hierarchical structures, but were tempered with the concept of care, shared with the community centres. Democratic staff and parent participation in decision-making in all of the private and two of the corporate/institution centres was minimal, while it was positively encouraged in the other centres.

Organisational activities

O'Neill (1994) claims that organisational activities reflect the values and beliefs of those working within them, and the goals of those in the wider community who have an interest

in them. Some of the political, social, economic and “interconnected contextual influences from the past, present and future” (Mintzberg & Waters, 1990, p.10) initiated from sources external to the centres (i.e. from the business sector, the education sector or the early childhood education subculture) will be discussed first. This will be followed by discussion of each of the six categories, or organisational activities, that were outlined in Chapter Six. The organisational activities reflect the visible structures and processes as well as the espoused values of Schein’s (1992) model of organisational culture. Each activity will be summarised, and a concluding section will draw together the common and different strands of these and the cultural and structural issues already outlined in relation to the research questions that form the basis of the present research.

State or private provision; tensions and influences

The political and ideological history of the Aotearoa/New Zealand education sector rests on Government decisions about the provision of education articulated by Fraser in 1939. Fraser, representing the first Labour Government, made the now famous statement that included the premise that every person is entitled to a free education (Grace 1998; Lauder, 1991). Grace notes that “Welfare Labourism entailed a view of education as a public good which ought to be provided by the State at all levels from early childhood care [sic] to university scholarship” (Grace, 1998, p. 29). The New Right ideology, promulgated in Aotearoa/New Zealand throughout the 1980s, attempted to “de-legitimate the existing settlement in education and advance ‘radically’ new principles for policy” (Grace, 1998, p. 29) with the promotion of education as a market-place commodity. The tension between those who hold the view that education in the non-compulsory early childhood sector should be State-provided, and those who have taken advantage of the increased privatisation of the sector during the 1990s to develop businesses offering services to parents is visible in the present study.

Most reference to the tension came from those working in the community and corporate/institution centres. These six centres did not operate for the purpose of making a profit. Some licensees and supervisors spoke of needing to keep within a budget, but could generally charge lower fees to parents than those charged by private centres. Seven

participants from community and corporate/institution centres spoke of their preference for working in a centre that was not-for-profit. Some perceived that more money was available to be put back into the centre for the benefit of children, but made no comment about considering arguments about education as a private or public good (Clark, 1998; Grace, 1998). It is possible that their comments resulted more from a “charitable” philosophy (see above) than from an understanding of attempts to provide equality of educational opportunity.

No one in private centres mentioned the profit-making aspect of their business, although owners spoke of the financial load they had taken on, the responsibility of keeping staff in jobs, and having children and parents rely on them to keep the centre open. One commented on the financial risk she had personally taken.

Evidence of the invasion of New Right principles into the domain of early childhood education was noted in the discourse of the language used in conversations with participants. The use of the word “industry” in reference to the early childhood subculture or community, and the common use of “training” as a term for any early childhood-related course (from those which offer low levels of technical learning through to programmes of teacher education) denote the incursion of commerce and industry into education (Adler, Laney & Packer, 1993). Similarly, discussing “workers” or “girls” (instead of women teachers) who worked “on the floor” (a term probably derived from factories where workers operated machinery and undertook manual work as opposed to office or other non-manual labour) is another example of the language of industry and economic rationalism. So too is the frequent use of the word “childcare” with its philosophical roots in care (discussed earlier).

The practice of centre managers in all categories of authority employing staff with no qualifications was also obvious in the present study. All centres in the present study employed at least one unqualified staff member; in some, most staff members were unqualified. Part of the reason for this was financial; for example, Marion, a private

centre owner, commented that she was unable to afford to employ a full complement of qualified staff.

Another aspect of economic rationalism's commodification of education is the notion of parental "choice" in selecting a centre which best suits their aspirations for their child (Barraclough & Smith, 1995; Gordon, 1995). The argument that competition in the market place will force unsuitable services out lies behind the choice argument. Part of the defence mounted by centres which had few diploma-qualified teachers was to provide a noticeboard in the foyer that displayed many certificates and awards (such as First Aid certificates, bible course qualifications, attendance at a budgeting seminar). Parents were inclined to be impressed or confused by the array of certificates; Doreen, for example, indicated that she didn't "know what they all are... I don't really understand them", but left her child in the centre in spite of that.

The disturbing effect of unqualified staff members on the programmes offered to children will be discussed later in this chapter.

Concepts of leadership and management in early childhood education

Henderson-Kelly and Pamphilon (2000) claim that children's services have been managed through a "common-sense approach" (p. 8) which has often been reactive in nature, and that women have used the skills developed through home and family management to apply to the provision of services for women and families. Leadership, they say, has "taken second position to management", and that, in today's climate of economic rationalism, privatisation, competition, and quality assurance practices, leaders, not just managers, are needed. (Henderson-Kelly and Pamphilon do not mention children in this context, but if the same principle was applied, women would be using family-related skills in their work with children, incorporating the concepts explored in the family images of childhood noted already discussed). Petrie (1992) summarises this notion neatly when she says that the management of children's services has been undertaken by "maternal feminists who exhibit a set of values, attitudes, ideas and beliefs that are essentially patriarchal, sexist, racist and materialist in their orientation" (p. 14).

The present study supports the sentiments expressed by Henderson-Kelly and Pamphilon. The women in licensee and supervisor positions discussed management (and administrative tasks) freely, but only three mentioned the need to see the “larger picture” (Marion) or to plan strategically for the future in any way. If plans were being made, they were usually financially and/or technically-focused (such as preparing to build a new centre or to expand the “business”) rather than to focus on issues to do with philosophical understandings or educational concerns (such as the development of staff pedagogical understandings and practices).

The growing professionalisation of the early childhood subculture (Bredenkamp & Willer, 1993; Cullen 1994; Katz, 1995; Vander Ven, 1988) during recent years has created advantages within the subculture, such as increased advocacy and improved environments for children (Finkelstein, 1988). Tensions have also developed, including a de-valuing of the status of what Vander Ven (1988) calls “novice” (p.141) practitioners (those who have worked in children’s services for many years but who have no formal qualifications). The tendency to employ beginning teachers straight from their pre-service teacher education programmes as supervisors in centres because of the lack of availability of qualified and experienced supervising teachers is also cause for concern.

Bloom and Sheerer (1992) note that the amount and effectiveness of leadership training that the centre’s supervisor or head teacher has had, and their level of experience, is also important. This person shapes the environment for all the teachers in the centre, thereby impacting on children’s experiences and overall centre quality and culture. No supervisors in the present study had qualifications in educational leadership or management, and there must be questions asked about quality in centres where unqualified or beginning teachers are employed as supervisors.

The “masculine” language of leadership (Blackmore, 1999) used in much of the literature provides another tension that may need to be revisited to develop a model suitable for women in leadership positions, and who work mostly with other women, children and

families. Models of women's leadership are seen, for example, in Helgesen's (1990) eight principles of women's leadership and Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule's (1986) promotion of the use of five levels of knowledge that could be used as a framework to empower women and support their development. Kagan and Bowman (1997) also expand conventional notions of leadership in early childhood education from management and administration to include pedagogical, advocacy, community and conceptual roles.

It may be possible, then, that resistance to, or the exclusion of certain phrases and words in the present study may have been due to the discomfort that some participants felt about their understanding of the terms. Certainly, most participants resisted using the word "leader", and questions using the words "strategic planning" and "vision" often had to be rephrased by the interviewer as "forward planning" or "planning ahead". The word "vision" was used as an expression to describe conceptual planning by only three participants.

However, while difficulties with the concept of leadership language may exist, there may also be a need for those with responsibility for leading and managing staff in early childhood centres to have access to programmes of study that enable them to underpin their practice with a theoretical understanding of their roles. With women-oriented postgraduate programmes available, persons responsible could move from the family image of the child and skill base noted by Henderson-Kelly and Pamphilon (2000) to a strong, informed, critical conceptual understanding that encompasses understandings of leadership and management in the context of early childhood education. Recognising and reflecting on one's own values, beliefs and assumptions about children, and the ways in which these influence the organisational structure, activities and culture of an early childhood centre, are essential to informed centre leadership and management.

Bowman, writing in 1997, asserts that the support of American universities and colleges in promoting leadership in the early childhood sector had not been forthcoming prior to that time. She claims that several reasons exist for this. One is that most professions are organised around a baseline qualification and registration process, and graduate and

postgraduate studies are provided as preparation for later leadership roles. This does not occur in the early childhood sector in America, or here in Aotearoa/New Zealand. In the latter at least, newly diploma-qualified teachers are often employed in leadership roles as supervisors, often before they have practised as a beginning teacher. In addition, the sector is non-compulsory and diverse, for- and not-for-profit, and frequently viewed as not requiring qualified staff, let alone postgraduate-qualified leaders.

Only four of the eighteen diploma-qualified participants in the present study were considering or undertaking study towards advanced qualifications at the time of interview. Three of these participants were already then in supervisory roles and only one held a postgraduate diploma (not in leadership and management). As Grey (1999) notes, visionary leaders are “broad long-term thinkers who are able to include diverse perspectives in a collaborative way to achieve the vision” (p. 2), they set standards of excellence that inspire and empower those around them, and they are agents of change. They need support from formal leadership programmes which focus on collaborative educational leadership that “emphasise consensus-building, shared responsibility and relationships” (Bowman, 1997, p. 108). Bowman indicates that only if these foci are included will graduating leaders be able to extrapolate a parallel process for children, families and colleagues.

Summary

Management, consisting mostly of administration tasks, was perceived to comprise most of a supervisor’s role in the present study. Leadership was not a term that was frequently used, nor were the leadership qualities of vision or forward planning employed philosophically or educationally to any extent. Possible reasons for the non-use of the term may include women’s discomfort in using the “masculine” (Blackmore, 1999) language of leadership. However, the lack of clear or articulated leadership practice underpinned by theoretical understanding in most centres in the study belies the belief that the early childhood education subculture is growing professionally and leaving behind commonsense and family-structured views of managing a centre.

The quality of leadership in the early childhood subculture is being impeded by a system that fails to ensure that all who supervise are adequately prepared for the role. The recently announced regulations (Mallard, 2000) to ensure that all supervisors are qualified by 2005 is welcome, although the awarding of a Diploma denotes the beginning of a teaching career, not of a supervisory one. Continuing professional development that encourages deeper levels of reflection and understanding should follow, particularly in the form of postgraduate study in the field of leadership and management. Graduates of such programmes should be strong, collaborative educational leaders who are visionary agents of change. As Bowman (1997) notes, only then can they provide the vision and guidance needed by others, especially children.

Communication

The term “communication” was frequently used in the present study and was considered by participants to be the most important aspect of leadership and management. Participants spoke about using oral and written communication for two main purposes; between centre personnel and parents, and between centre personnel as they worked.

Centre personnel and parents/whānau: communication and/or partnership?

In *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996) it is noted that “links between home and early childhood education programmes are considered important” (p. 18). The guiding principles of the revised DOPS (Ministry of Education, 1998b) also mention the notion of partnership, suggesting that management and educators should work together

...in partnership with parents, guardians and whānau by acknowledging parents as first educators and by working collaboratively to develop shared goals and expectations. (p. 14)

Partnership is also mentioned in relation to assessment (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 30), but little other discussion about the concept is included in either the DOPs or *Te Whāriki*. No definition of the term “partnership” is provided in either publication so it is possible that there is not a common understanding across centres or the early childhood education subculture.

Keesing-Styles (2000), in discussing partnership between parents and centre personnel, claims that partnership implies “a sharing of power, not merely a sharing of information”. She suggests that the

...basic building blocks of desirable partnerships...(involve) trust, mutual respect, open reciprocal communication, common goals which both parties understand, mutual recognition of contributions and strengths of each other, shared decision-making, sensitivity to perspectives of the other, teamwork, and absence of rivalry.
(p. 5)

Because the DOPs include the term “partnership” to describe the relationship between management and educators in centres on the one hand, and parents/caregivers and whānau on the other, it was anticipated that participants’ perceptions about communication in the present study would involve the notion of collaboration in an equal (or at least reciprocal) relationship. However, although the relationships articulated by participants in the present study varied widely, the notion of equal or reciprocal partnership was rhetorical rather than actual. Partnership as a sharing of power with parents (Keesing-Styles, 2000) was not a notion described by most participants.

One centre requested individual parental communication by seeking written information twice each year. Others merely relied on casual conversations between parents and staff to gain any input from parents about a child’s strengths and interests. Only one participant (Greta, a licensee) used the term “partnership” with regard to parent:staff interactions, and spoke of it in relation to the friendly relationships that she thought existed between staff and parents in the course of providing a service for parents. Mostly, staff members relied on casual daily verbal communications with parents that were of a technical or friendly nature, and were keen to provide a service rather than become involved in an equal or reciprocal partnership.

An examination of the literature published in the 1990s indicated that three views of parent involvement dominated; parents as teachers was the most common view, with

parents as programme collaborators and parents as decision-makers being seen as the other forms of parent involvement (MacNaughton & Hughes, 1999). Like Keesing-Styles, MacNaughton and Hughes consider that the possession of power determines the status of parent:staff relationships. They cite Gramsci, who considered that expertise is always associated with the balance of power and influence in a particular society, and they extrapolate from his perspectives to infer that staff members are likely to hold “expert” power over parents. They suggest that an option to resolve some of the problems associated with parent involvement in early childhood settings involves staff choosing to act as “organic intellectuals” (MacNaughton & Hughes, 1999, p. 31). This term is used by Gramsci to describe those able to use their knowledge and expertise to improve democratic relationships by introducing new ways of thinking that causes social and political change. They argue that once expertise is “co-created” by staff members who are organic intellectuals, parents are able to collaborate with them in educating their children as citizens instead of being subjected to the traditional view of staff as experts in a non-democratic relationship.

Is the notion of an equal partnership unrealistic? Perhaps the early childhood community should debate the issue about whether “equal partnership” or “reciprocal (not necessarily equal) partnership” or “providing a service” is what is intended, and what the implications may be for children. Or perhaps MacNaughton and Hughes’ (1999) advice (that the parent:staff relationship should be reconceptualised) ought to be considered. This would require staff to see themselves as constructors of their understanding of children, of teaching and of learning, and to encourage parents to see themselves in the same way. Staff would consider their own values to be historically and culturally specific, not neutral and independent, and thus open to interpretation, criticism and reconstruction by and with others; parents would be also encouraged to see their values in this way. Finally, they suggest, staff would communicate with parents in professional, equitable, and ethical ways.

In addition to the perceived lack of common understanding already discussed, another reason for the seemingly casual oral communication with parents by centre personnel and

their tendency to inform parents (rather than encourage reciprocal discussion) in written communication may lie in the lack of teaching qualifications held by many staff members. Because of a lack of theoretical understanding about social and political issues as well as about children's cognitive and other competencies, many of the centre personnel in the present study were unable to articulate, explain or justify pedagogical philosophies and practices beyond repeating the centre philosophy outlined originally by the founder. Drummond (1989), writing in 1989 about the British provision of early childhood services, suggested that a "conceptual vacuum" (p. 5) existed at that time; an "intellectual hole at the centre of the early years universe" (Drummond, 1989, p. 7). It is likely that such a void still exists for many well-meaning, caring staff members who have not gained a teaching qualification or maintained currency in their professional development, and that such a void makes equal or even reciprocal partnership with parents impossible. The result is, perhaps literally, the delivery of a *childcare* service.

For teachers, effort, time and experience are essential ingredients in developing the ability to work in partnership with parents. Both Katz (1995) and Vander Ven (1988) suggest that the stage of development achieved by a teacher may influence the type of relationships formed with parents. Katz indicates that a level of maturity and a broader perspective, probably acquired after at least a year of practice as a qualified teacher, and into the "consolidation phase" of teacher development (Katz, 1995, p. 203), is necessary before reciprocal relationships with parents can be developed by staff members. Katz considers that, at the earlier "survival" stage of teacher development, teachers frequently display authoritarian and paternalistic tendencies in their relationships with parents. Beginning teachers may consider that parents do not have the necessary knowledge and skills to bring up their children. Vander Ven (1988) argues that the development of teachers' awareness of the necessity to work collaboratively with parents may not occur until teachers have made a commitment to a career in early childhood education. It may also be that programmes of teacher education simply do not focus on teaching student teachers about the individually different perspectives of families (Powell, 1998) or about reflecting on their own values, beliefs and assumptions about the social, cultural, moral and political nature of their work (Smyth, 1989).

Jeanne, a supervisor in the present study, noted that appropriate relationships between parents and staff are valuable in themselves, but that they also have an impact on children's well-being and sense of belonging as they observe parents and teachers interacting. Jeanne's views, for which support can be found in the work of Huttunen (1992), Phillips and McCartney (1987), and Pugh (1996), contribute to the poignancy of the implication of Katz' and Vander Ven's research when it is noted that only nine of the 20 staff members and seven (possibly eight) of the ten persons responsible were qualified teachers. Given that reciprocal relationships with parents require staff members in centres to have considerable understanding of the complex issues of teaching, and that many staff members are not qualified teachers, it cannot be surprising that parent:staff relationships in the present study were generally far from equal, power-sharing or reciprocal.

Grey (1999) notes that parental contribution to creating visions for the organisation results in "confidence-building, greater awareness, and encouragement to participate in their children's education, which can lead to real involvement and genuine parent-teacher partnership" (p. 3). At the organisational level, four centres in the present study (the three community centres and one corporate/institution [educational institution] centre) were structured in a "flatter" and more democratic hierarchy than the other six centres. All stakeholders in these four centres were provided with opportunities to collaborate in strategic planning. Power differentials were minimised within a more democratic framework of decision-making, and more parent participation was evidenced than occurred in the three private and two other corporate/institution centres. Stakeholders were thus able to contribute more readily to the building of respectful relationships and to work towards the parent-teacher partnership advocated by Grey (1999).

Communication between centre personnel

The structure of centres and the links between this and the three centre activities of teamwork, communication and managing change in the present study are particularly noticeable when discussing any one of them. For example, many staff members placed great value on open and direct communication with their "team" (this term will be

discussed later in the chapter) about issues that affected their work. They discussed the intimacy of working in close contact for long periods of time with others, and noted that confidence to ask for assistance was seen as a strength in such a close environment. Hay's (1997) comments support what staff members in the present study said, adding that the basic requirements for working well together are shared aims and objectives. She says that individual interests and needs in such an environment must sometimes be subordinated to achieve common purposes.

Some staff members mentioned their appreciation of their supervisor's skills including supporting, listening, and acting quickly when necessary. These comments support Garner's (1995) belief that channels of communication between the team and the supervisor must be direct and be used on a regular basis to be successful, and that the interpersonal processes of listening, supporting and differing allow staff members to function as a unit.

However, a number of staff members also indicated their fear of contributing to staff meetings on some occasions. This fear was based on a lack of trust about responses from others (particularly the supervisor) and, perhaps, on what was sometimes a lack of appropriate management of change. The latter is connected to centre structure and the ways decisions are made in centres. The more opportunities that were available for staff to collaborate in decision-making and therefore to gain understanding of all the issues involved in a decision, the less conflict occurred, as several participants noted.

Another consideration, which was touched on by some participants but not clearly articulated, was the need for more selective use of specific communication processes. Staff members noted their appreciation of the skills of some supervisors and other colleagues in listening and supporting, but did not elaborate on how they did this. The use of dialogic and discussion skills (Garmston & Wellman, 1998), for example, could assist in communication between centre personnel, both individually and at staff meetings.

Dialogue, according to Garmston and Wellman, is a reflective learning process in which group members seek to understand other viewpoints and deeply held assumptions.

Suspension of judgement is an essential skill in this process. Discussions are “organized, collective efforts in critical thinking” (Garmston & Wellman, 1998, p. 31) and need defined parameters such as clarity of boundaries surrounding the topic, clarity about decision-making processes and rules for conducting the meetings. Further assistance with aspects of *how* to talk in collegial and collaborative ways such as these may help reduce anxiety for staff members and increase opportunities for shared, “bottom-up” (Dimmock, 1995; Katz, 1995) decisions and policies. Katz (1995) indicates the importance of colleague relationships, noting that, unless they are “good” (p. 125), the provision of quality programmes for children is improbable.

Communication with children

In spite of communication being a central strand of the early childhood curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1996), communication with children was discussed by only two participants, both supervisors. The importance of communicating competently with children will be addressed further in the theme “pedagogical issues” later in this chapter. In brief, communicating with children is central to the role of a teacher if children are considered to be strong and competent learners, healthy in mind and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging, and secure in their knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society (Ministry of Education, 1998a). It was anticipated, that, with the emphasis placed on communication in *Te Whāriki*, those who work in centres would have emphasised much more strongly the importance of centre leadership involving the encouragement and role modelling of good communication skills with children for staff and parents.

Fyfe (1994) explains that teachers must

...value the process of exploring children's ideas, theories, questions and opinions. They (teachers) can see that these kind of interactions with children support positive dispositions toward learning as well as perseverance and depth of learning. (p. 25)

Communicating with children, according to Rinaldi (1994), involves teachers asking themselves how and what children can learn from a particular situation. From this,

significant experiences can be constructed for the child and adult so that the child can find a deeper understanding of the topic, an understanding of their own learning style and of themselves. Children require adults to understand the synergies of their wishes, demands, curiosities, and hypotheses, and to listen to, observe, and support them by recording, transcribing, reflecting upon, respecting and sustaining their processes.

Summary

In general, communication by centre personnel with parents or whānau about children was casual, friendly and willing, but could not be considered reciprocal or reflecting equal partnership. It is possible that the term “partnership” may need to be debated across the early childhood subculture to clarify its meaning, especially in relation to issues of power (Keesing-Styles, 2000; MacNaughton & Hughes, 1999). The difficulty experienced by many (particularly unqualified) staff in explaining theoretical underpinnings to their practice may be a further reason for the lack of reciprocal communication between centre personnel and parents. Communication between parents and staff regarding policy and planning in four of the ten centres was more aligned with the principles of partnership and collaboration between stakeholders, but in the other six centres, formal opportunities to contribute and communicate were not offered.

In some centres, staff felt unable to always communicate fully at staff meetings. Issues of trust and of a lack of understanding about all of the issues that contribute to changes made in centres were possible reasons for this. More specific communication skills and a “bottom-up” approach to communicating about making changes would help alleviate both problems.

Only two participants spoke of the importance of communicating with children. Like partnership with parents, communication with children is central to the early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki*. It could reasonably be expected to also be central to leadership and management of early childhood centres because it lies at the core of early childhood education – that is, if the focus is on the child as a strong and competent learner.

Teamwork

When participants discussed communication, the closely related topic of teamwork was also usually raised. The terms “team” or “teamwork” were used by all but one of the centre personnel, and by six of the parent participants.

Perceptions of teamwork related to centre structures and cultures

Earlier in this chapter, centre structures were discussed. Community centres and one corporate/institution (educational institution) centre were structured so that more democratic stakeholder contribution to centre culture and activities was evidenced than in the four private and two other corporate/institution centres. The continuum of participant perceptions about teamwork reflected similar effects. While most supervisors and licensees considered that they were responsible for some final decisions, those who worked in centres with less hierarchical structures and more democratic decision-making processes stepped in to make such decisions far less often than their counterparts in other centres. The timing of intervention (if any) in decision-making may be partly due to what Handy and Aitken (1986) consider to be authoritarian or democratic leadership styles. These, they say, are sited at either extreme of the continuum noted above, with leaders in more hierarchical organisations demonstrating more authoritarian leadership styles.

An atmosphere of trust and the quality of relationships seem to be the most important aspects of organisational teamwork noted in the literature (Bertacchi, 1996; Garner, 1995; Larson & LaFasto, 1989). Garner considers that team structure and levels of autonomy are often not paid sufficient attention as initial team-building is developed, and that this lack of attention prevents successful teamwork at a later time. In the present study, all but one centre experienced problems with staff turnover, so re-building a team with new staff occurred reasonably frequently, with a resulting focus on re-adjusting relationships and levels of trust.

Not only were decisions made more democratically in the less hierarchically-structured centres, but supervisors in those centres also participated in teaching much more frequently than did the supervisor in one corporate/institution centre or the five

supervisor/licensees (in one corporate institution centre and in the four private centres). Staff members spoke about the team being those with whom they worked on a daily basis and only the supervisors who taught frequently were included in this category. Unlike the “all-staff” team described by most supervisors and the licensee/supervisors, the team described by staff members was a close-knit group who understood each other’s philosophy and personality well. As noted in the earlier section of this chapter, open and sensitive communication between centre personnel was a vital component of teamwork for staff members.

Waniganayake et al. (2000) undertook a study of the perceptions of teachers, assistants and supervisors in three childcare centres in Melbourne, Australia. They found that patterns of traditional line-management styles of leadership were reflected in comments about the nature of decision-making in all of the centres, although “the jargon of democratic governance” (such as “we all have our say”) was also used. They also noted that day-to-day decision-making was participatory, particularly within each room. These findings were also noted in the present study, with most staff members naming the supervisor as the primary source of advice and authority, and their emphasis on the collegiality, collaboration and shared decision-making experienced within their small teams, which frequently excluded the supervisor and licensee.

Because of their more frequent participation in teaching, the supervisors and one licensee/supervisor in the present study spoke of the need for diplomatic and careful communication within the team, and about sharing tasks and responsibilities for programmes for children. They perceived that they needed to be role models for staff, as well as encouraging a culture of collaboration and consultation. This included undertaking, at least some of the time, all tasks that other staff members were expected to fulfil. Leithwood (1992), discussing leadership in schools, describes actions such as these as the goals of instructional or transformational leaders, as opposed to the actions of control-oriented, transactional, or “fixing and dealing” (Cardno, 1990, p. 14) forms of leadership and teacher development. According to Leithwood (1992) the goals of transformational leaders are helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative,

professional school culture, fostering teacher development and helping teachers to solve problems together more effectively. Leithwood's emphases indicate centre culture that has more emphasis on collaborative ownership of problem solving and professional development than was generally noted across all staff groups in the present study.

Leithwood's attention to teacher development also covers a further concern expressed by staff members regarding the links they needed to make between their job descriptions, appraisal and staff development. While this will be discussed more fully later in this chapter, it is important to note here that, for some staff members, such considerations as keeping their job descriptions up to date, or using them for appraisal purposes, or, in one case, linking these with individual plans for professional development, were important issues. Most were unaware that each of these could be used to benefit the quality of the teamwork in the centre if they were incorporated into a regular, cyclical, interlinked process. Cardno (1990) considers that ensuring that these functions occur are essential to the role of a collaborative educational leader, who promotes the management responsibilities of the organisation by "appraising, recognizing, celebrating and developing" (p. 14) the potential of all staff members.

Summary

As noted in the section on communication, the concept of teamwork was closely linked to issues of communication as well as centre culture and structure. Where centre structures were flatter, communication processes were more inclusive, and teamwork, including decision-making, was more inclusive of all stakeholders.

Differences in definition of team were noticeable between staff members, and supervisors and supervisor/licensees; the former were more inclined to view the team as those they trusted and communicated with most frequently and intimately, while the latter group mostly considered the whole staff group as a team. However, where centre structures were flatter, the distinction was less clear; staff members were more likely to include the supervisor as a team member. In the more hierarchically structured centres, a linear pattern of decision-making, authority and support was identified, similar to the findings

of a study undertaken by Waniganayake et al. (2000). In addition, it was noted that transformational (Leithwood, 1992) rather than just transactional leadership was more likely to occur in more democratically operated centres, partly because the supervisors also taught more often and were *au fait* with issues involving staff and children.

Links were noted, too, between teamwork and professional development, which will be discussed further in a later section. Teamwork could have been enhanced in all centres with a more coherent focus on maintaining job descriptions, appraisal and professional development as part of a process of communicating about teamwork. Strong educational leadership would ensure that such processes were in place to support teaching and children's learning.

Management of change

Participants in all centres in the present study specified two main arenas in which they perceived that change was initiated. The first was *within* centres, where it was considered to be mostly self-imposed and largely centred on decision-making. The only specified major concern across most centres was managing staff changes. The second arena involved externally imposed change that was initiated by other agencies (e.g. by the MoE). These issues will be discussed next.

Internal change

Many changes were initiated within centres, where communicating reasons and processes for change was considered important. Open methods of communication (discussed above) and participatory decision-making were cited as being central to good change management, so centre structure (also already discussed) was an important factor in enabling both to occur.

In two of the more hierarchically structured centres, the two staff members who were interviewed in each centre talked about problems to do with decision-making. They claimed that inappropriate or no decisions were being made (Centre B) or that staff members were confused about who should be making decisions (Centre E). In both

centres, the licensee or licensee/supervisor made most decisions in spite of both claiming otherwise, and neither was aware of the staff concerns. Bloom's (1995) four levels of participation in decision-making (outlined in Chapter Two) are useful when examining the centres in the present study. In the more hierarchically-operated centres, (the four private centres and two of the corporate/institution centres), licensee/supervisors or supervisors either made decisions in a unilateral fashion, or consulted with staff prior to making the decision, reflecting Bloom's first two (least participatory) levels of participation. The other licensee/supervisors or supervisors consulted staff prior to making decisions on a few occasions, but almost always collaborated with staff and parents so that all participated in deciding on issues (Bloom's third level).

Bloom's fourth level, delegated decision-making, occurred in most centres, but in the more hierarchically organised centres, the issues were more structured by the supervisor or licensee/supervisor. Choices were thus controlled (for example, Greta claimed that staff had input into decisions about an extension to an area of the centre, but the parameters of the decision were largely already predetermined by cost, building regulations and practicality).

Staff changes

Participants, particularly parents, were in agreement about the difficulties caused by staff turnover, which was a concern for all except one centre in the present study. The concerns related to the rate of turnover itself, and the disruption to children, centre personnel and centre routines and culture (Humphries & Senden, 2000) as the new person was gradually enculturated into the espoused values and basic underlying assumptions of the organisation (Schein, 1992). There was concern to try to minimise time that a new staff member might take to fit the culture of the centre, so applicants who had previously worked or studied at the centre were often offered positions for this reason.

Parents generally found staff changes very difficult because of possible damage they perceived could be done to children's emotional development and learning. In one centre, a parent described a staff change that had been managed well. In that case, parents and

other staff had been informed of the impending change well before the event. Occasions were arranged by various staff and parents to farewell the staff member and she wrote about her plans in the centre newsletter. The incoming staff member was also welcomed officially and spent a week taking over responsibilities from the outgoing staff member. These staff-initiated processes allowed for parent and staff ownership of what Dimmock (1995) calls a “bottom-up” (p. 9) strategy, encouraging participation of all stakeholders in the change.

Changes in staff employment were smoothed if the level of qualified staff members in the centre was high, according to several participants. Staff members with theoretical pedagogical knowledge were better able to apply this to disruptive situations for children and parents than could staff members who were not qualified. The licensee/ supervisor of one private centre indicated that, while she would prefer to employ a team of fully qualified staff, she was unable to afford to do so. Issues she and other participants raised about preferring qualified staff covered many aspects from needing to meet licensing requirements to understanding pedagogical matters.

Some of the concerns about the rate of turnover were predicted by May (1996), who indicates that compromises made in funding the early childhood subculture have resulted in an imbalance between fees parents can afford to pay, appropriate remuneration for qualified staff, and quality for children. Such compromises in resourcing, according to Katz (1995), usually lead to less than optimal environments for staff including low wages, long working hours, low staff morale, burnout and a high turnover of staffing in centres. While this issue can be assisted by appropriate management and leadership strategies (such as collaborative, non-hierarchically structured management practices) within centres, it also needs to be addressed at an external political level. Other external issues will be explored next.

Externally-initiated change

The other main arena in which participants noted change was initiated was the external education sector, and, within it, the early childhood subculture, where legislation (such as

changes to DOPS and training requirements) caused centres to make changes. Here, as Mintzberg and Waters (1990) note, the environment is influenced by factors such as economic forces, market perceptions, or political decisions which are forced upon centres rather than being part of centre decision-making.

On the whole, those who discussed these changes felt positive about them. The exception to this positive view was in regard to the externally imposed changes to training requirements, which had led, ripple-like, to problems with a training provider with a record of unsatisfactory performance. In these instances, the resource costs had been considerable and many staff had experienced problems that made them angry, financially disadvantaged and resistant to continuing with other programmes. While centre personnel shared the anger and concern felt by their colleagues, centre resources, too, had frequently been depleted because of the support being provided for staff members. Centre personnel had provided moral support, but no other method for absorbing the change was noted.

Summary

Change management was viewed by participants as being required for two main purposes. One of these was change initiated within a centre by centre personnel. Internally initiated change was well managed in the view of most participants. They considered that open communication was the key to this, and appreciated the opportunities offered to all stakeholders in the less hierarchically structured centres to participate in collaborative decision-making. They considered that this and a policy of open communication ensured that changes were implemented smoothly.

Staff turnover changes were the most difficult internal change that participants raised. When staff changes occurred, it was clear that having qualified staff employed in the centre eased the change processes. However, some of the issues to do with staff turnover were also externally initiated as a result of insufficient resourcing at the political level. Most other externally initiated changes were perceived by the participants to have been managed well in centres in spite of the difficulties experienced with some staff members

accessing and maintaining enrolment in some training programmes as a result of legislative changes imposed on centres.

Pedagogical issues and the “educated” child

Providing an “educational environment” or “education” for children was advocated by centre personnel across all categories of authority as an important feature of their centres (see Table 5 p. 172), in addition to the different philosophies articulated within each category. In general, the quality of pedagogical practices largely depended on the philosophy of the founder, whether centre personnel were qualified or not, and whether or not on-going professional development (especially work on the philosophical underpinnings of *Te Whāriki*) had been accessed for all centre personnel.

It is not surprising that understandings of what might constitute education were variable across the centres in the present study, given the historical and current situations regarding the educational focus of the sector. Education was not traditionally considered part of the role of childcare “workers” prior to the early 1980s before childcare was moved from being the responsibility of the Department of Social Welfare to the Department of Education. It was not until 1990 that early childhood teacher education, integrating kindergarten and childcare training programmes, was offered at all six Colleges of Education in Aotearoa/New Zealand for the first time (Cooper & Tangaere 1994). And it is not until 2005 that at least one person in each centre will be required to be a qualified teacher (Mallard, 2000).

The variety of activities provided for children in most centres pleased parents, while some valued the social interaction, emotional support, and the quality of nutrition and hygiene offered. A strong trend of support for more structured programmes as a child reached three and four years of age was evident in many parents’ comments. However, not one parent who was interviewed understood the early childhood licensing points and teacher education qualification systems. Most were confused (or impressed) by the plethora of certificates, often for low-level introductory early childhood programmes,

displayed in some centres. However, in general they were not disturbed by the lack of qualifications of the staff members who may have been working with their children.

In this section, a concern for a general lack of educational and pedagogical knowledge amongst many centre personnel will underpin the discussion. The limited use of *Te Whāriki* in centres will be addressed. Assessment and curriculum planning, with a focus on the provision of structured programmes for older children, curriculum implementation and programme evaluation will also be considered.

The use of Te Whāriki; perception and reality

The use of *Te Whāriki* is not compulsory in centres, but, as was discussed in Chapter Two, the mandatory DOPs contain the discourse of the curriculum. As a result, chartered centres (as all in the present study were) are required to use the language in policy documents. In the present study, all centres purported to use *Te Whāriki* as the basis for curriculum provision. However, in the majority of centres, embedded evidence of such practice was not seen or discussed.

Only two supervisors (of Centres I and K) and one licensee (of Centre I) clearly articulated using or considering *Te Whāriki* as the framework on which the pedagogical practices of assessment, curriculum planning and implementation and programme evaluation were based in their centres. And, in spite of the two centre supervisors explaining their understandings about *Te Whāriki*, staff members in those centres, and the remainder of the participants in the study, did not describe their practices as being firmly underpinned by the principles of the document.

In 1996, Cullen predicted that the implementation of *Te Whāriki* is “likely to be constrained by a superficial understanding of its rationale and implications for practice” (Cullen, 1996, p. 116) on the part of practitioners. This superficial understanding, she claimed, would be partly the result of the piecemeal or incomplete training many practitioners had received as a result of the grandparenting, licensing points and equivalency schemes put in place during the early part of the 1990s by the MoE.

While Carr (1999) claims that *Te Whāriki* is based on socio-cultural theory, Cullen (1996) argues that the developmental philosophy espoused by early childhood educators in Aotearoa/New Zealand during the twentieth century is evident in the document. She also considered that practice would be difficult to change given the longstanding free play philosophy that favours the child actively constructing knowledge rather than being scaffolded or guided by an adult.

Cullen's claims and predictions about the use of *Te Whāriki* are supported by the perceptions of most centre personnel in the present study with regard to understandings of assessment, curriculum planning and implementation, and programme evaluation. These issues will be discussed next.

Assessment and curriculum planning; theory and practice

Centre personnel in the present study, as noted above, espoused the use of *Te Whāriki*, at least in the language of policy documents and in posters in centres, and at most in children's records and (only in two instances) in personal staff discourse. However, evidence of use of the psychological model, rather than the socio-cultural model advocated by Carr (1999) was more obvious in both assessment and curriculum planning activities in all centres. For instance, observations of children revealed that interpretations made of them focused on physical, social, emotional, language and/or intellectual *needs* rather than, for example, on a child's *interests* in terms of exploration, and how learning might be facilitated from that basis.

Claims that the socio-cultural model poses practical problems are made by L. Smith (1989). He questions whether teachers can carry out regular assessments of children's learning, given "typical classroom conditions" (p. 22); perhaps his comments would realistically apply to many assessment models. Assessment processes were certainly problematic for centre personnel in the present study for reasons that will be discussed shortly. Smith is also concerned about the realities of individualising programmes for children; he indicates that if a teacher is to scaffold children's learning, employ a model of reciprocal teaching between learner and teacher, or overtly model expert strategies

which have been identified by relevant diagnoses, the present teacher:child ratios are too high. Cullen (1994) suggests that one approach to this problem involves greater use of small group contexts which provide shared learning experiences.

Carr (1999) notes that effective assessment is observation-based, includes an understanding of children's learning, and is interpreted by knowledgeable practitioners (as well as families and children). Carr & Cowie (1997) suggest that ethical and practical considerations are involved in recording assessments for different audiences, including community agencies, families, programme planning, teachers and children.

Participants in the present study did describe their assessment tools as being observation-based. They were most frequently in the form of a running record, or occasionally an event sample. Sometimes an observation included an anecdotal note written by a staff member about a specific incident or about a parental comment. Less frequently, photos were taken of a child participating in a learning experience. This material was stored in a variety of systems such as a "portfolio" (Jeanne), a "file" (Wilma), a "profile" (Robyn), or a "scrapbook" (Sena). Mostly, documentation was not prepared with a particular audience in mind, apart from the report book, written in anecdotal diary form, that was sent between home and one centre. Some centres did not use the observation documentation again, although it undoubtedly served the purpose of complying with contractual requirements of external community agency audiences (such as ERO and the MoE) described by Carr and Cowie (1997).

The process of assessing "focus" children ensured that some attention was paid to assessing each child on a cyclical basis (perhaps four times each year as noted by Rita, but possibly only once, as described by Wilma in Centre C). Unfortunately, such attention lapsed during the remainder of the year. Another method of organising assessment was described as a "primary caregiving system" (Sena). In this system, one staff member spent the majority of her working day with a specific group of seven or eight children. This allowed the staff member to complete observations and plan for each child in that group, as opposed to working with many different children each day. Staff

maintained that this process enabled them to gain more specific knowledge of a few children. In both processes, the observations were sometimes discussed (the extent to which they were discussed varied) at a staff meeting, as in Centre I, or at a “room” meeting (Centre B). In such cases, some individual aspects were entered into the centre, room or group plan to cater for specific children. In some centres, the documents were used to show to parents (Kate, Robyn), sometimes with what Carr and Cowie (1997) describes as “tourist value” (p. 7), or without being embedded in an educational framework.

In other centres (such as Centre H) where curriculum planning occurred on a pre-arranged “theme” basis and topics were prepared well in advance, observations were filed without discussion or further action. This process did not allow for individual children’s interests or strengths to be capitalised upon, although staff claimed that they addressed these in an ad hoc (mostly reactive) fashion as required.

The “typical classroom conditions” noted by Smith (1989, p. 22) and reported earlier can be elaborated on to explain some of the concerns noted in the present study. First, none of the observations or storage systems were *systematically* used to *consistently* and *continuously* assess or inform planning for a programme for a particular child, or to implement a particular child’s programme continuously over the period of time the child was enrolled in the centre.

Second, the methods of assessment outlined by participants in the present study are predicated on the ability of staff to assess children’s learning. Given that less than half (16 of 35) of the centre personnel in the research sample were qualified teachers (see Appendix E, Table E1, p. 406, for findings of demographic data analysis), such assessment was unlikely to be of high quality. In the focus child system (one or more staff members observing a particular child for a week or over several days) some oversight of assessment practices *may* have been provided by qualified staff as each child was discussed (albeit infrequently) at a staff meeting. However, it was possible that the primary caregiving system described by Sena (observation of a small group of children

by the staff member primarily responsible for them) received no supervision by anyone who had an understanding of the principles of assessment, or of how to use assessment to plan for individuals or groups. It is likely that what Carr (2001, p. 2) refers to as a “folk model of assessment”, defined as everyday intuitive theories about learning and teaching, may have been the most commonly used model of assessment undertaken. For Carr, this involved checking off a fragmented list of competencies which had a deficit focus instead of enhancing children’s learning, developing learning dispositions, and encouraging their increasing participation through the use of a credit emphasis.

Licensee/supervisors and supervisors were engaged in teaching for widely varied amounts of time (from two hours 10 minutes during a 3-day diaried period to 20 hours and 25 minutes during a 3-day period). While two, (possibly three) of the group of ten licensee/supervisors and supervisors were not qualified early childhood teachers, two of those three employed a qualified person on their staff. However, none of the three considered it necessary to specify that someone qualified and with an understanding of current theoretical issues should oversee assessment procedures. Neither did they consider it necessary to ensure that assessment procedures were based on the principles of *Te Whāriki*. In addition, those in the larger group who taught infrequently did not consider that assessment processes should be supervised.

Third, the focus child system allowed assessment that informed curriculum planning for a particular child at most four times, and possibly only once per year. What was happening for that child at other times? Similarly, the primary caregiving system, undertaken by unqualified staff members, would not have enabled sufficient assessment to occur to fully support the scaffolding, guided participation and/or co-construction of children’s learning involved in the socio-cultural model.

Fourth, individual and group plans which incorporated the principles of the socio-cultural model were impossible to prepare and implement for children with the current adult:child ratios in centres. This was especially evident in those centres where 150 children could

each attend up to two sessions only each week and were all taught by the same five centre personnel.

Finally, Alcock (1999) points out that a further tension exists between an endorsement in DOP 3 (Ministry of Education, 1998b) of an individualistic focus to assessment, and a wider interpretation in the supporting documentation that refers to the need for learning objectives to be set for “individual children and groups of children” (p. 6). This interpretation, says Alcock (1999), is reinforced by DOP 2 which states that educators should “demonstrate understanding of current theory and principles of learning and development” (p. 7). She notes that current theory acknowledges that learning is social and context is critical. The levels of theoretical understanding required by staff members in order to address the tension between the need for individual assessment on the one hand and the social nature of learning in a socio-cultural approach on the other would be likely to challenge a qualified staff member, let alone an unqualified person.

The tensions of planning programmes for three and a half to five year olds

In the present study, four of the centres provided structured programmes that were designed to prepare three and a half to five year olds for school. Only one participant in the study (Linda) worked in one of these programmes but supervisors in other centres (Rena, Claire, Kate) spoke approvingly of their own “more formal” programmes. Linda, an unqualified staff member, talked of providing worksheets and workbooks to teach children “reading skills and basic mathematics”. Curriculum planning and implementation for children of three and a half to five years was discussed by many parents, who mostly wished to see more structured, teacher-directed programmes put in place, or continued if such a programme was already offered in their centre. They spoke, amongst other things, of children needing a formal programme, doing worksheets, and having a limited choice of learning experiences.

Providing programmes for children who have left toddlerhood and are approaching school age can be fraught with anxiety for teachers who aim to follow the *Te Whāriki*, approach to teaching and learning and also want to support parents. While these aims are

not mutually exclusive, some parents' views that structured, didactic programmes are best suited to ready children for school make curriculum planning difficult. Graue (1998) says that readiness is a "murky idea" (p. 13) for which there is no measure – and no known intervention will reliably enhance it. She suggests that the concept of readiness "is integrally tied to our ideas about how children develop and what we can do to support that process" (p. 13). In the present study, tension between teachers and parents, or between qualified and unqualified staff members in centres, resulted from different ideas of readiness, and of how readiness might be achieved.

Meade (1997) notes that early childhood researchers and teachers have been warning against didactic, teacher-directed "school models", where the aim is to transfer knowledge. The school models of instruction have also been promoted in commercial kits which are advertised widely for parent consumers (Corrie, 1999) and for centre personnel who uncritically promote products such as the Reading Master (Rhonda) and workbooks and worksheets (Linda). Some of the pedagogy in these models and products involves predetermined, fragmented tasks practised in isolation, a lock-step approach that does not cater for different rates of learning, and decontextualised programmes which assume all children have the same cultural and linguistic understandings (Corrie, 1999). Resources that incorporate such non-interactive experiences for children are more likely to promote boredom than to advance literacy achievements (Cullen, 2001).

David (1999) calls the tension between school and early childhood a "battle for pedagogies" (p. 10) and suggests that the battle is not only about curriculum, but also about culture, assumptions, epistemologies and beliefs held by those working in early childhood and in the primary sector. Meade (1997) says that models which aim to transfer knowledge from teachers to learners do not place enough emphasis on children constructing their own knowledge and understanding, which is one of the goals of the "exploration" strand of *Te Whāriki*. She recommends that early childhood teachers need to move further from the behaviouristic influences that still predominate in the sector, towards the Vygotskian approach that helps children to theorise. More importance is placed on curriculum content and teacher subject knowledge in this approach (Berk &

Winsler, 1995; Cullen, 1996; Haynes, 1999; Meade, 1997), and both individual child and group approaches are used. Meade (1997) also points out the importance of including parent education about young children's learning in centre plans.

Earlier in this section, concerns were expressed about the lack of qualified teachers in the present study (only 16 of 35 supervisors and staff members were qualified). Centre personnel need to have a theoretical understanding of the issues involved in order to reduce the gap between what parents and unqualified staff on the one hand, and qualified staff on the other hand, may understand about how and what young children learn as they approach school age. Unqualified staff should be provided with teacher education, qualified personnel must be provided with continuous opportunities for professional development, and both groups need be able to articulate their practice to help parents to understand the issues.

Curriculum implementation

Most centre personnel, when discussing what they meant by "working with children", indicated that it involved rostered duties through which they perceived they implemented the curriculum. A supervisory rather than a teaching role was discussed; only eleven centre personnel ever used the term "teaching" in relation to their work, and only two supervisors, of all the participants, spoke at length about the complexities and pedagogical issues involved in the act of teaching. Parents were generally just pleased with the range of curriculum areas offered in their centres.

Terms such as "set up outside" and being "on outside" indicated the child-centred, resource-based nature of most curriculum provision and implementation in the present study. Within this model, the teacher practises in a supervisory, resource-providing capacity, setting up and maintaining an environment in which children choose an activity, play and actively learn. The discourse noted above reflects the influence of developmental psychology and of the constructivist perspective supported by Piaget's stage theory of cognitive development (Cullen, 1996). The terms used by participants also indicate that, while it was suggested by centre personnel that children's assessments

informed programme planning and implementation, in reality most staff members were rostered to “set up” equipment and activities rather than to work with children on specifically planned programmes which had been informed by assessment.

Two supervisors (Jeanne and Melanie) were able to articulate and give examples of how they perceived that they facilitated children’s learning by constantly assessing the impact of their teaching styles and curriculum content on the children with whom they worked, and making adjustments as they taught. Both noted the need for reflection on their work, and both indicated that they chose to participate in the teaching role consistently to ensure that assessment, planning, delivery and programme evaluations were undertaken rigorously. They were the only supervisors or licensee/supervisors to indicate that they placed value on maintaining strong *educational* and *curriculum* leadership roles in their centres. The lack of recognition of the importance of such leadership by other supervisors and licensee/supervisors may have been a reflection of their lack of knowledge about teaching and learning, and further evidence of the “overwhelming “feminisation” of childcare work...and the way society values the work of caring for and educating young children” (Nuttall, 1992).

Jeanne and Melanie both recognised the need for them to be involved fully in teaching children and, at the same time, working closely with staff. Melanie referred to this as keeping her “finger on the...pulse”. Most of the educational leadership literature is written about schools, and in the school sector, generally only qualified staff members are employed. Thus, writers base their arguments on the premise that educational organisations are staffed with qualified teachers, and discuss concepts that involve staff who at least share similar professional understandings. Notions such as constructivist leadership (Lambert, 1998), educational leadership (Cardno, 1990; Walker, 1994), and instructional leadership (Cardno, 1990) are all mentioned in the literature, presumably assuming that common professional expertise and pedagogical understandings exist among staff. This is not the case in early childhood education, where, at the present time, no one on the staff of a centre must be a qualified teacher. Educational leadership, and the

different considerations required for working with unqualified staff members, perhaps need to be redefined for the early childhood sector.

While the demands of operating a for-profit business mean that some time and energy must be focused other than on educational issues, there is another, less obvious but invasive concern. Unqualified staff may have nothing but “commonsense” knowledge of pedagogy that is just superficial, technical knowledge, usually based only on their own values, beliefs and intuition, according to Vander Ven (1988) (see also Rodd, 1998). While unqualified staff are less expensive for employers, they usually provide low-level quality programmes for children because of a lack of theoretical knowledge upon which to base their practice, and thus become an extra burden on qualified staff. The burden involves qualified staff, including the educational leader, in carrying extra responsibility for overseeing the work of others, and/or becoming worn down by attempting to uphold professional values and standards. This will be discussed further in the last section of this chapter that is about professional development.

As well as being burdened by the workload of maintaining professional roles in the day-to-day tasks of early childhood teaching, it is possible that an even more invasive and destructive force is at work in centres where there are few qualified staff members. As (Kilmann, 1989) notes, the influence of the founder is a key influence in shaping organisational culture. The founder’s objectives, principles and behaviour provide important clues as to what is expected of members now and into the future, and become the cultural norms of the organisation that are passed on to incoming staff members. The hidden power of the culture provides strong and immediate pressures, Kilmann says, for employees with different or new views to align themselves to the organisational culture. Qualified early childhood teachers who join a centre where the founder developed the centre for purposes of providing an extended family similar to her own, or for caring for or minding children, may face difficult philosophical dilemmas. These are compounded if, as in the present study, there may be few or no other qualified personnel in the centre to support a view of teaching that is based on strong theoretical underpinnings and which values an image of the child as competent, confident and able to face new challenges

(Ministry of Education, 1996). In such cases it is likely that the pressure to conform to the centre culture may cause even qualified staff to “deny their own perceptions when confronted with the group’s norms of ‘objective’ reality” (Kilmann, 1989, p. 54), thus reducing the possibilities for educational leadership and minimising opportunities for children to explore in and contribute to their world.

Grace (1995) decries the fact that, in Britain, the New Right ideological influence on schooling has seen market relations, instead of pedagogical issues, dominate with “the emergence of the headteacher as entrepreneurial leader and chief executive” (p. 42). He describes the practice of managing an organisation with an indirect, utilitarian and directive relationship with teachers (it is assumed that Grace refers to qualified teachers) as one of cultural management. He suggests that such managers are more concerned with the technical mechanics of efficient delivery than with pedagogical issues. He also notes that the political climate of economic rationalism during the last two decades has increased the numbers of managers who function under this model. Although he writes of British schools and their principals, the features he describes also fit evidence in the present study of few supervisors or licensees being actively involved in pursuing the pedagogical and educational interests of their centres, instead busying themselves with administrative and management details.

Programme evaluation

In Chapter Two, the literature review indicated the relative recency of the development of interest in the evaluation of early childhood education programmes in Aotearoa/New Zealand. The lack of focus on programme evaluation prior to the latter part of the 1990s was partly due to the psychologically-inspired developmental focus of assessment on individual children which has been the prevalent form of assessment in early childhood during the second half of the twentieth century. If evaluation was undertaken in a centre, it was usually to do with using a deficit model to focus on resources needed to improve an aspect of development of an individual child. Such aspects of development were identified by an assessment of each child that measured their performance against “orderly sequences” of development (Atkinson, Atkinson & Hilgard, 1983). In the past

decade, socio-cultural perspectives have influenced curriculum provision (Cullen, 1996; Edwards et al. 1998) especially, in Aotearoa/New Zealand, since the introduction of the final draft of *Te Whāriki*. Different forms of assessing children and then evaluating programmes against socio-culturally based criteria have been since been sought (Carr, 1997; Cubey & Dalli, 1996; Haggerty, 1996; Podmore, May & Mara, 1997, 1998).

According to most centre personnel in the present study, assessment of children was still mostly based on running records, which reflected the psychological, developmental approach of earlier decades. Some centre personnel referred to learning stories, but these, when examined, were very similar to running records. No one indicated an understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of the curriculum they were using, or of how their assessment processes were linked to the perspectives of that curriculum. Similarly, the links between curriculum, assessment and programme evaluation were not discussed at all.

In the interviews, no one volunteered the topic of programme evaluation. When asked about this, responses reflected future planning for the resource-based provision of “activities”. These were designed to meet the developmental needs of specific children that had been identified in the observations; for example, writing “three Es today”. In one centre, personnel retrospectively linked activities undertaken by individual children during the day to the goals of *Te Whāriki* as they wrote “evaluations” at the end of the day.

When theoretical sampling was undertaken to focus on this issue, two of the three supervisors considered that they were constantly evaluating the programme with regard to the environment and behaviours exhibited by groups of children. But, even then, programme evaluation processes seemed somewhat ad hoc and were not discussed with a theoretical understanding of the principles of programme evaluation. Each considered that part of the evaluation process was undertaken at weekly staff meetings. However, their staff failed to comment on the relationship of the content of staff meetings to programme evaluation.

In summary, programme evaluation was not an area that many centre personnel involved themselves in. If it was mentioned, it was explained in a technical fashion, mostly based on the psychological model used in the early childhood sector prior to the introduction of the final draft of *Te Whāriki* in 1996. Only two supervisors spoke of the complex issues they considered when evaluating a programme, but did not discuss theoretical understandings of the processes involved.

Summary

Given the historical issues regarding early childhood teacher education, and the lack of regulation requiring staff to be qualified before being employed, it is perhaps easy to justify why many centre personnel found it difficult to articulate their perceptions and explain their practices of assessment, curriculum planning and implementation, and programme evaluation. Little in-depth understanding of *Te Whāriki* was displayed or discussed, reinforcing Cullen's (1996) warning that the introduction of the national curriculum would need to be well-resourced if its "theoretical richness" was to be understood, and used to guide curriculum planning.

Nuttall's (1992) research into the feminisation of childcare provides one view of why those who work in childcare, and who live in our society, should re-examine the valuing of the work of those who educate and care for young children. Reflections of higher value and improved status would be seen in improved resourcing, universal teacher registration, and increasing professionalism. Much deeper pedagogical understandings by all centre personnel, and informed, competent educational leadership (Cardno, 1990) are required. Also required is an understanding of how changes might be made to existing centre organisational cultures that do not foster or encourage images of the child as competent, powerful, curious and capable.

Professional development issues

Two main issues to do with professional development were raised by participants. In this section, the use of resources and appraisal will be explored.

Use of resources

A major professional development drive, involving time, financial resources, energy and commitment by many personnel in all centres was noted during the data-gathering phase of the present study. This focus was on at least one, and mostly more staff members in each centre, as well as one licensee/supervisor, who were undertaking courses of study. Some were working towards licensing points, and some were studying for a Diploma of Teaching (ECE). Support for this type of professional development was the first priority for most centres. Other participants, not currently studying, spoke of taking a break in study to save for the next set of fees and study costs.

While this focus on initial qualifications seemed encouraging in terms of upgrading professional skills, knowledge and professional understandings, many unqualified participants were accessing low-level licensing points courses rather than Diploma of Teaching (ECE) programmes. Such programmes were shorter (and therefore cheaper in fees) and lessened the time away from work and earning potential. Student loans were being used for short courses, requiring interest payments that reduced the incentive for students to enrol in higher-level courses because further enrolment not only added to their loan, but also reduced their ability to repay. In addition, many were angry about financial, energy and time losses made during the collapse of a training provider. They and others expressed distrust about investing in training again.

Many, too, were studying in addition to full time work, in part-time programmes that would take a long time to complete. In 1996, May wrote of the strong tradition of on-the-job training in early childhood education. She noted that, while the “do-it-yourself” syndrome and the strong philosophical principles of linking theory with practice in an immediate way still held sway, there were still remnants of the view that women and girls do not need training to work with young children. From evidence in the present study, it is argued that the patriarchal views of the (lack of) abilities of children and of the roles of

women and girls still hold strongly at the beginning of the 21st century. Five years since May's comments, the same problems exist.

Perhaps it is time, too, to address issues of curriculum provision for teacher education. Although studies identify education and training as important, Phillips and McCartney (1987) point out that the actual training that links to the most positive outcomes has been little discussed. This may have a particular bearing on the situation for Aotearoa/New Zealand early childhood teachers where there are many teacher education providers with a range of approved programmes of study reflecting varying philosophies, different balances of theory and practice, varying curriculum content, and different intensity and nature of learning environments (Smith et al. 2000). Farquhar (1995) indicates that there is no national policy about a core set of principles, theories and skills to be taught in early childhood teacher education programmes, and May (1996) argues that more cohesion is required.

While there was strong evidence from all centres that resources were mostly being used to assist staff members to gain initial qualifications, it seemed that this was due to external pressures such as the quality funding for centres, rather than for intrinsic purposes or for the benefit of children. There appeared to be lack of commitment to on-going professional development amongst all but a few participants. Supervisors and licensee/supervisors spent little time on it (four of the ten spent between 55 minutes and one hour and 25 minutes over three diariied days on their own or others' professional development). Gaffney and Smith (1997) also found a lack of commitment to professional development a difficulty in their research into curriculum implementation in centres, citing resistance from staff, participants not completing set tasks, and a low interest in the topic as some of the problems faced. Practical issues such as finding time for meetings, high staff turnover rates and variable levels of understanding of the topic were also noted.

The number of qualified participants (four) who were either studying at postgraduate level or intending to do so in the future was low, but, given the emphasis on improving the qualifications of unqualified staff, supporting postgraduate study was not a priority for centres. And, as Bowman (1997) points out, there is not yet a clear focus on continuing or formal leadership education for staff in the early childhood subculture. This needs to change so that there are clear pathways of early childhood-related postgraduate programmes for centre personnel to pursue.

Appraisal

A division of opinion about appraisal existed in the present study between most staff members on the one hand, and licensees and supervisors on the other. Of the latter group, six indicated that successful appraisal systems were in place in their centre. Some mentioned extrinsic purposes for appraisal, such as bonuses paid to staff if professional development goals were reached. Others mentioned intrinsic reasons such as opportunities to self-appraise or discuss own professional development interests. All felt positive about the benefits of their systems.

In general, staff members felt indifferent about appraisal. Four made positive comments indicating that they felt it gave them a way of communicating how they felt about their workplace and conditions, but most comments were more negative, indicating that, generally, appraisal did not occur regularly, had lapsed or was disorganised.

A climate of trust needs to be present if improved outcomes for children are to result and if appraisal is to be positive for staff, according to Townsend (1998). Given the lack of trust expressed by some staff (expressed when discussing teamwork and communication), it is not surprising that appraisal processes have not been viewed as successful by some staff in the present study.

Edwards (1992a) suggests a number of criteria for a worthwhile appraisal system. The criteria include ensuring that participants understand the system, that procedures are realistic and kept under review, and that data are confidential. Both self-assessment and

professional development need to be promoted, according to Edwards, within a system that produces a broad and an accurate picture, that does good, and is just.

In the present study there were indications that, for some staff members, many of Edward's criteria were missing in the considerations of their appraisal processes. For example, most staff members did not appear to fully understand the purposes of appraisal or the "broad picture"; they merely discussed the *processes* in their centres, and these seemed to be irregular or postponed in most cases. Neither self-assessment nor professional development was promoted effectively amongst staff. Review of procedures was not undertaken except in the centre that was introducing a system. The remaining criteria could not be accurately judged from the data, but from the lack of enthusiasm portrayed by staff, attention needs to be paid to issues of doing "good" and being "fair" and "just", as well as allowing all to maintain a broad and accurate picture of the process and results.

Martin, Bary, Laird and Slater (2001) claim that appraisal systems that are introduced and developed as "ongoing reflective dialogue ... in a common working environment in which all collaborate" (p. 33) are likely to be more effective in promoting individual growth and in leading to organisational revitalisation as well. Martin et al. describe changes made in their centre using Prebble and Stewart's (1984) professional development cycle. The model involves "staff and their leaders solving problems by sharing ideas and providing reciprocal feedback in a framework of regular meetings" (p. 30). Such a model, however, is predicated on the structure and culture of a centre being conducive to the development and maintenance of collaborative, trusting relationships. The criteria in Edward's (1992a) prescription, including doing good, and being fair and just, also underpin the process outlined by Martin et al.

Summary

Six years ago, May (1996) commented that the upgrading of early childhood teachers to a minimum benchmark qualification of a Diploma of Teaching (ECE) was resisted because, amongst other things, society considered that women and girls did not need

training to work with young children. Resistance to studying for a Diploma has been exacerbated by problems with training providers, aversion to student loans and the constant juggle to maintain study alongside work. The emphasis on improving the level of qualifications for currently unqualified staff was evident in all centres, but the means for gaining credible teaching qualifications remain difficult for potential or current students to access. This emphasis seems to have created something of a professional development holding pattern as centres use most of their resources for this purpose. Given the time that it will take for staff to be upskilled, it is unlikely that other professional development (apart from the in-centre professional development available free of charge from agencies contracted by the MoE) will be well supported. However, there seems to be a need to begin to focus on postgraduate programmes for qualified staff if momentum in upskilling early childhood personnel is to be maintained.

Appraisal processes do not appear to be meeting the purposes of providing opportunities for self-reflection or professional development. Centre managers need to be aware of the importance of addressing issues of trust inherent in their organisations and then to ensure that staff understand the processes and purposes of appraisal. The resulting systems should be reviewed at pre-arranged times to ensure that all centre personnel are contributing to them on a basis of full understanding and trust. Only then will appraisal processes contribute to the development of staff, which in turn will enhance relationships they have with children and the programmes they plan for them.

The research questions addressed: A synthesis

This study was concerned with three questions focused on participants' perceptions of leadership and management in centres in three MoE categories of authority. Their ideas about how centres were led, by whom and in what ways, and examples of good practice were sought. These questions will be addressed next.

What were the perceptions, ideas and views of participants about leadership and management practices in their centre?

The perceived purpose of each centre was explored in interviews. Within each of the three MoE categories of authority the basic philosophical assumptions about the purpose for which each centre existed was remarkably similar, and each category was clearly distinct from the other two categories except for a care focus common to two of them. Participants in private centres considered that the centre existed to provide an extension of the family. In corporate/institution centres, support for working or studying parents and care of children were the main purposes, (although those in one centre claimed that the education of children was also a major feature) and in community centres, the focus was on providing respite and support for parents and care for children. The strong historical values, beliefs and assumptions about the child reflected in the centres in each of the categories of authority were, with only one exception, established by the centre founder in the structure and culture of each centre.

Each MoE category of authority and centre thus promoted an image of the child and of childhood (the core category of the present study) that centre personnel continued to foster in activities that were undertaken and in the discourse that was maintained in that centre. Participants' perceptions were that the organisational activities most concerned with leading and managing their centres involved leadership and management tasks, communication, teamwork, management of change, pedagogical issues, and professional issues.

How were early childhood centres managed and led, by whom and in what ways?

Participants' perceptions of the quality of the organisational activities were explored, providing responses that were triangulated with the literature and other data. Eight categories emerged in the study; the six noted in the previous section, as well as organisational culture and organisational structure. The ways in which each centre was led and managed depended on a combination of many variables. The culture of the organisation was especially influential, setting the base on which the centre structure and the organisational activities in the other six categories were built. For example, when

discussing some activities, most participants held similar views of what they perceived to be good practice (as in indicating that a low staff turnover was beneficial for centre personnel, parents and children). At other times, the groups of participants articulated diverging opinions (for example, when providing various opinions about teamwork).

What were examples of good practice in leadership and management according to participants and the literature?

Examples of what participants perceived to be good practice were frequently provided in interviews, as well as in practice (e.g. as evidenced by what supervisors spent time on and recorded in their diaries). Participants' examples varied from centre to centre, depending on the image held of the child in each centre, the centre culture and structure, and the ways in which centre activities were constructed from the interactions between all of these. Many of the examples that were provided have been compared with the literature and other data and discussed in this chapter; the results of those comparisons have provided the implications and recommendations for future research, policy and practice that will be discussed in Chapter Eight.

The interconnected influences and practices involved in current leadership and management of early childhood centres

The interconnectedness of the image of the child and the culture, structure and activities of a centre that were described and explored by participants is illustrated in the theoretical model of current management and leadership in Figure 8. The usually subconsciously-held values, assumptions and beliefs that lie at the third level of Schein's (1992) model of organisational culture provide a clear picture of the image of the child that is central to each organisation. This image influences and is subsequently influenced by the espoused and surface levels of organisational culture and structure noted by Schein (1992). Organisational activities, including leadership and management, pedagogical and professional issues, communication, management of change and teamwork, are all influenced by each other as well as by the organisational culture, structure and the image held of the child.

The influence of the early childhood subculture, encompassing such issues as the New Right influences and industry-based discourse, the provision of *Te Whāriki* and the DOPs, and the lack of resourcing for qualified staff members, can also be seen in Figure 8. The outermost layer of the model indicates the “nation’s beliefs and values about children and early childhood care and education and about the rights and responsibilities of children” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 19). These beliefs and values are included in the socio-political influences that impact on, and are, in turn, reflected by the early childhood centre.

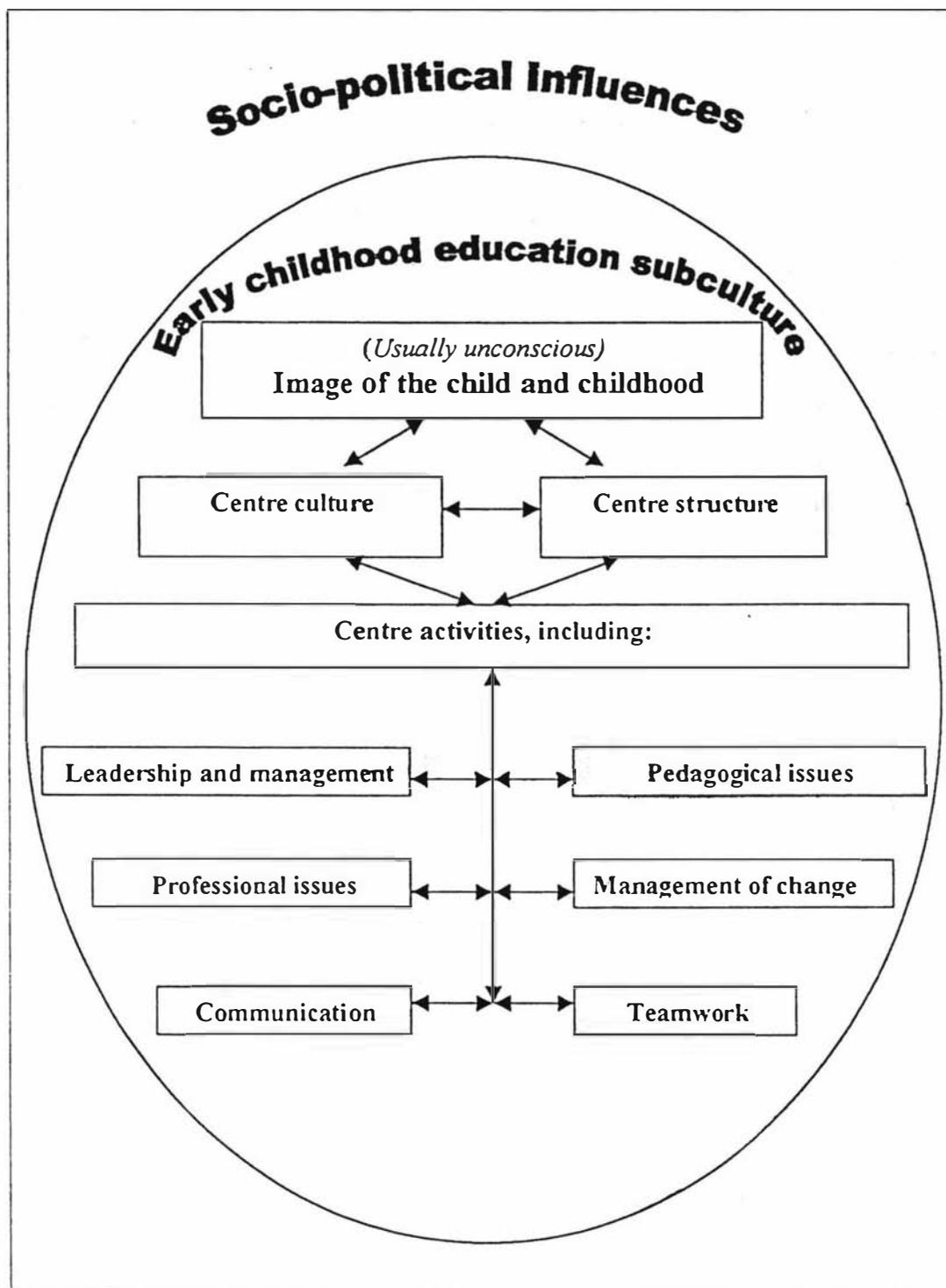


Figure 8: Theoretical model of interconnected influences and practices concerning the current management and leadership of early childhood centres.

Chapter summary

In this chapter, the research questions have been discussed. Three MoE categories of authority (private, community and institutional/corporation) formed the sample base for the present study, and participants were interviewed to identify and explore current leadership and management practices in centres in those categories. The core category of the present study (the usually unconsciously held image of the child and childhood articulated by centre personnel as they were interviewed) emerged during the analysis of data. It revealed the common patriarchal view of children that was held in centres across all categories of authority. In addition, however, it became clear that very similar basic philosophical assumptions were held in common by participants within each category of authority that were different from the views held by participants in the other categories. For example, centre personnel in private centres spoke of the child as a family member; in corporate/institution centres it was indicated that parents required care for their child as they were supported to study or work; and in community centres, personnel felt that they needed to provide care for children in order to give respite and support to parents. Except for a care focus across two categories of authority, the assumptions were thus different *between* them.

A key concept argued in this chapter is that the organisational structure and culture of most centres was strongly influenced by the image of the child and childhood held by each centre's original founder, and was promoted in centre discourse and activities. Schein's (1992) model of three levels of organisational culture (visible structures and processes, espoused values, and taken-for-granted assumptions, beliefs, perceptions and thoughts) provided a useful framework against which to consider the data, through the constant comparative method of grounded theory analysis. Schein's deepest level, that of basic assumptions, was illustrated as participants discussed centre philosophy and revealed deeply-held beliefs held about children and childhood. Espoused values were also offered in interviews, and triangulated by being compared with artifacts (such as documents and centre records) and centre activities and processes. Visible structures and

processes (such as centre activities, displays and routines) provided opportunities to analyse ways in which children were actually considered.

Insight into participants' perceptions about the six other categories (leadership and management, communication, teamwork, change management, pedagogical and professional issues) that emerged in the study added a conceptual overlay to centres' organisational structure and cultural foundations. Unlike the varying images of the child held by those in centres in different MoE categories of authority, the organisational activities provided more similarities than differences between the MoE categories of authority, perhaps reflecting influences of the early childhood subcultural and socio-political influences. Each category of organisational activity was summarised in an in-chapter summary as the chapter proceeded, and will not be repeated here. The detail provided in those summaries will contribute to the implications and recommendations for possible future practice in Chapter Eight.

The "pedagogical issues" category proved the most difficult to gather data on. The education of children was promoted as important in most centres, although it was almost always secondary to the professed basic values and beliefs upon which the centre was founded, such as the importance of care or family. However, a number of constraints, such as the number of unqualified staff in most centres and a general lack of understanding of pedagogical principles and their links to each other, appeared to prevent cohesive programmes being provided for children in many instances. The image of the child and childhood held within each centre culture may also have been a major impediment to the provision of quality programmes. After all, little educational expenditure is needed for the "family child" who is seen as helpless, weak, small and dependent (Solberg, 1990), or the child who is an obstacle to be provided for as parents work or study. Nor does the image of the child needing care, such as the welfare (Hendrick, 1997) or charity child (Cook, 1985; May, 1997) inspire the need for programmes that will, as promoted in *Te Whāriki*, support children

...to grow up as competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge

that they make a valued contribution to society. (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 9)

In the final chapter, ways in which children's potential might be realised will be discussed in relation to strengthening the leadership and management of early childhood centres by identifying and utilising the strong links between the image of the child and childhood, centre culture, centre structure and centre activities.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Implications, recommendations and conclusion

(I)t is a study of adult attitudes as much as the actual lives of children. It is about the abstraction "childhood", which is made up of the expectations, hopes, and fears societies have expressed with regard to their youngest members.

(Sommerville, 1982)

The purpose of the present study was to identify and explore participants' perceptions of leadership and management practices in early childhood centres. The data, together with participants' perceptions of best practice and suggestions for improvement, and notions of best practice from the literature, were to be used to develop a theoretical model of quality leadership and management in early childhood education centres.

As was briefly outlined at the beginning of Chapter 4, notions of "best" practice and "quality" have undergone theoretical discussion in many fields since the research questions were initially developed. In early childhood, it is clear that both terms were indicative of a search for improved opportunities for children, but the theoretical trail shows that a universally appropriate definition of either is not likely to be found (Holloway & Fuller, 1992). Some examples of the search for quality during the 1990s were the gazetting of charter guidelines and DOPs for centres (Ministry of Education, 1990a) and their subsequent revision (Ministry of Education, 1998b) as an attempt was made to standardise provision. Other legislative moves were also introduced, such as the introduction of different funding levels designed to improve the provision of "key determinants" like staff-child ratios, group sizes, staff qualifications, resources (Education Review Office, 1996).

A move away from what Pugh (1996) refers to as quality indicators and ideas of best practice has occurred as changes in thinking have included, for example, concepts of stakeholder ownership and vision (Grey, 1999) and the recognition that values and

judgements differ in different contexts (Dahlberg, Moss & Pence, 1999). Consideration has also been given to reflection on what a society, consciously and thoughtfully, wants for its children – its present and future citizens. Moss (1999), for example, suggests that the language of early childhood services today is the discourse of “technology, management and the market” (p. 142), but that there is also a social task for those services to perform. He advocates for early childhood institutions being forums or “public spaces” (p. 149) where opportunities for participation, dialogue, encounter and critical enquiry encourage the practice of democracy.

It would seem consistent with the progression of more recent theoretical understandings of the term “best practice” to discard it from the research question, and adopt the notion of raising critical issues that might be considered when centre personnel critically self-review centre practices with regard to leadership and management. In this chapter, the issues that were discussed by participants will be synthesised as critical issues that might be considered by citizens of our society and by centre personnel and parents as they review why and how they do what they do.

In the previous chapter, participants’ perceptions of leadership and management were discussed in relation to the literature. A theoretical model that addressed the research questions with which the present study began was developed from the data presentation (see Figure 8, p. 298). This Figure illustrated the interconnectedness of the core category (the usually unconsciously-held image of the child and childhood held in a centre) with centre structure, culture and activities. Perceptions of good practice and ideas for improvement that were discussed by participants revealed the complexity and interdependence of many of the issues they raised.

In this concluding chapter, the implications of the present study will be discussed. The proposed theoretical model for early childhood centre leadership and management will be reconstructed from Figure 8 in Figures 9 through 12 and detailed finally in Figure 13. The final proposal utilises many of the features currently employed (and included in Figure 8), but retains, at the heart of leadership and management, the image of the child as

agreed by society, the community and the centre. Recommendations will be made to contribute to possible conceptual considerations or modifications to current practice, research and policy. The methodology of the present study will then be reviewed and limitations to the findings detailed before the report is concluded.

Implications of findings for early childhood education

The present study, designed to contribute to understandings of leadership and management in early childhood centres, used O'Neill's (1994) three dimensions of educational organisations as a conceptual framework in which to consider data. The three dimensions, organisational culture, structure and activities, will also be used to frame the implications of the findings of the study for centres, for the early childhood community and for society.

Reciprocal influences; organisational culture, structure and image of the child

Howe (1999) considers that, once the concepts of the child and of childhood are seen as social constructs, and they are separated from the reality of the "child" and his or her biological, psychological and physical ties to the everyday realities of the world in which communities live, the political and ideological potential is far-reaching. James and Prout (1997) support the notion of potential when they, like Howe, note that social realities, as social constructions, can be unmade as well as made; they are not fixed entities.

Glauser (1990) suggests that, mostly,

...(p)eople do not form the concepts which they use but rather apply those currently hegemonic within their society. Those with social power (which may have a variety of sources) can therefore define the reality of others by shaping and constraining the ways it is possible to talk and think about issues in society. This does not mean that hegemony flows automatically to the politically and socially powerful. It is always contingent upon the balance of forces in an ideological struggle. (p. 144)

How, then, to use the concept of socially constructed images of the child and childhood and the powerful ideological and political potential therein, while still maintaining a pragmatic and sensible view of the child in his or her reality? How can the ideological and political potential be harnessed, together with notions of organisational culture and structure, to initiate, build and continue to improve our provision of early childhood centres that do not impose hegemonic discourses which prevent children from being rich, strong and powerful (Rinaldi, 1993), competent, articulate, accepting of difference, and socially just? Who should determine what is appropriate? And what is the role of supervisors of centres, who, as early childhood leaders, are in positions of influence?

The beliefs, assumptions and values that the wider society of Aotearoa/New Zealand holds about children are reflected in the early childhood subculture, and then in centres. These views influence political, religious, social, technological, philosophical, scientific and philanthropic issues within our society and are reflected in legal, legislative and professional arenas, forming specific discourses and images that we hold of children and childhood (Howe, 1999). Howe, writing in the Australian setting (which may be considered to have a similar socio-political context to this country), asserts that the current overriding macro level influence in society is capitalism, with its base in the maximisation of profit and a “seemingly corresponding lust for power” (p. 80). He considers that the individual within this regime seeks self-fulfilment and maximum personal autonomy, with parents the consumers and children the instrumental resources to a product that is frequently an abusive childcare system. Howe indicates that, within this system, a stratification system which has mirrored the class structure and division of labour within the macrosocial system has been developed.

Moss and Pence (1994) provide support for Howe’s argument when they claim that “the discussion on early childhood education and care is tied, more and more, to the questions of economy, productiveness and effectiveness” (p. 165). They note that the rhetoric of educational policy is, more and more, becoming based on “economic and management theory rather than educational philosophy”. The literature review (Chapter Two) elaborated on some of the effects of such influences.

The influence of societal and economic influences on the management of early childhood services in Australia is also noted by Hayden (1996). Three macro issues that currently affect the development and delivery of these services, according to Hayden, are the prevailing concepts of motherhood, gender equality and child care responsibility, an increasingly economic rationalist approach to social services, and the public image of childcare in Australia. Similar issues are evident in Aotearoa/New Zealand, and indications are, as a result of the present study, that the image of the child and childhood held by society and those who hold leadership positions in childcare centres and in all early childhood services could also be added to this list.

Other effects are seen, as was discussed in Chapter Seven, in the lingering effects of legislation that placed childcare services under the auspices of the Department of Social Welfare. Further, the effects of discourse that underpin the legislation and our reasoning as a society are seen everywhere - even in the word *childcare*.

How might these concerns be turned around so that early childhood centres begin to shape the lives of our youngest citizens in ways that will enhance their lives and those of others in the 21st century? Bottery (1994), writing about the similarities and differences between schools and businesses, points out that a school is to provide a “training ground and partial model for the society within which it works” (p. 150). He suggests that the choice should be made to facilitate deliberately empowerment, consciousness-raising and participation rather than the business model of efficiency, calculability, predictability and control. He claims, as is illustrated in Figure 9, that educational organisations can, by conscious choice, be organisations in which democracy is strengthened by accepting key values, acknowledging the contestability of visions inspired by those values, and then by dispersing power within society’s institutions to reflect that diversity.

Bottery’s notion of conscious choice is crucial to his considerations about how organisations might be structured. In the next section, as the overall theoretical model is constructed progressively from its constituent parts, it will be argued that most early childhood centres in the present study were built, culturally and structurally, on the values

and personal assumptions of each centre founder, perhaps without a conscious or knowledgeable choice being made about what effects might result.

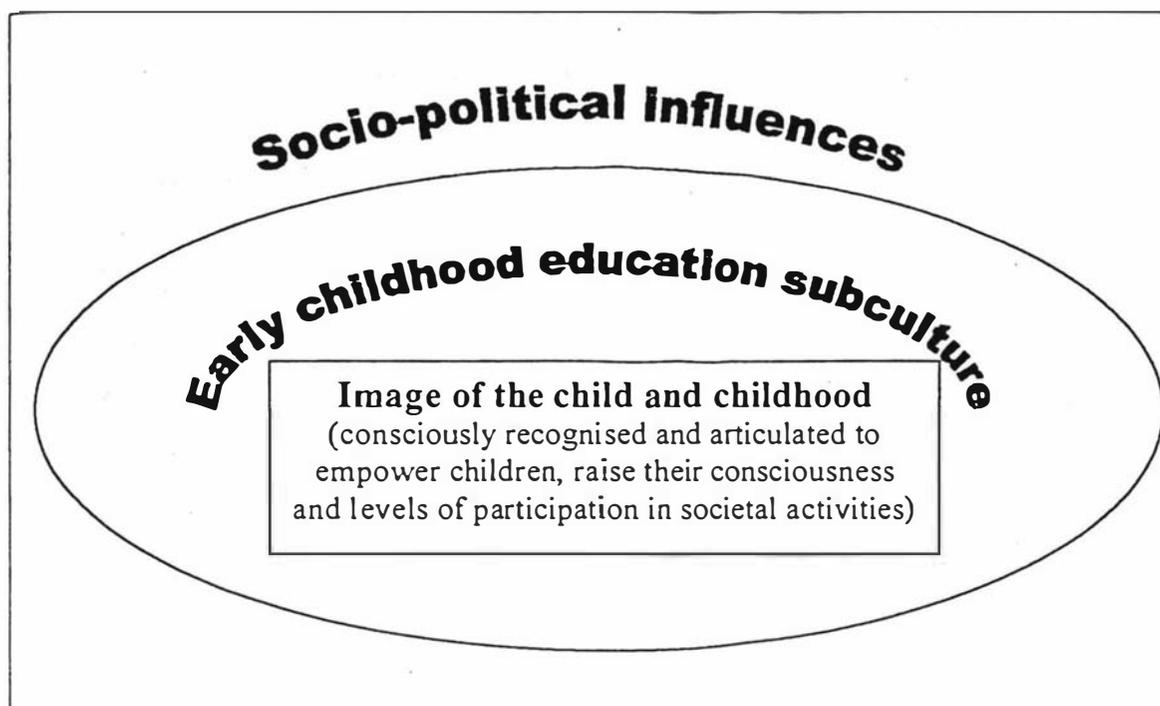


Figure 9: Bottery's suggested model for engaging societal debate to encourage the democratic participation of children in society

The development of organisational culture in centres

The present study was designed to examine the perceptions of participants about current leadership and management practices in centres. It quickly became clear that participants recounted past experiences in their centres to explain current practices, and that the organisational culture and structure of centres shaped their current beliefs and legitimated their practices.

The influence of the founder on centre formation and development was a major feature of the present findings. The three MoE categories of authority that formed the base for the research sample were clearly differentiated by basic philosophical assumptions held in

common. In each case, these related directly back to the centre founder, except for one centre, where the present supervisor was establishing a new culture after disruptions to staffing and changes to geographical location.

During the interviews, participants discussed aspects of leadership and management, communication, teamwork and change as well as pedagogical and professional issues. As they did so at artifactual and espoused levels (Schein, 1992), they often revealed the underlying assumptions on which they based their perceptions. Schein (1992) suggests that basic assumptions are usually neither confronted nor debated, are “taken for granted” (p. 21), and are hence extremely difficult to change. He claims that rather than tolerating the anxiety levels caused when learning something new in this realm, individuals tend to attempt to maintain congruence between events around them and their assumptions. Often, he says, this results in people distorting, denying, projecting or falsifying to themselves what may be happening in their vicinity. In the present study, an example of this could be seen in most discussions about assessment. Most participants had little theoretical understanding of the processes and purposes of assessment and were inclined to deflect questions or comments about it. If asked specifically about observations, which most participants readily claimed to undertake and which could be used as a form of assessment, they frequently indicated that observations were for portfolios or scrapbooks that were rarely used again without realising or acknowledging that little purpose was served in this process.

Similarities, often noted in identical words and phrases used, were articulated by those who worked together in the same centres in the present study. In most interviews, centre personnel were unaware that they revealed the beliefs of centre founders as they explained the philosophy of the centre in which they worked. These beliefs formed the organisational culture of the centre, as seen in Figure 10. Participants’ perceptions about *how* they offered centre services to children and parents (the centre structure) reflected the centre culture. Centre culture and structure impacted on the activities undertaken in each centre, which, in turn, reinforced the culture and structure.

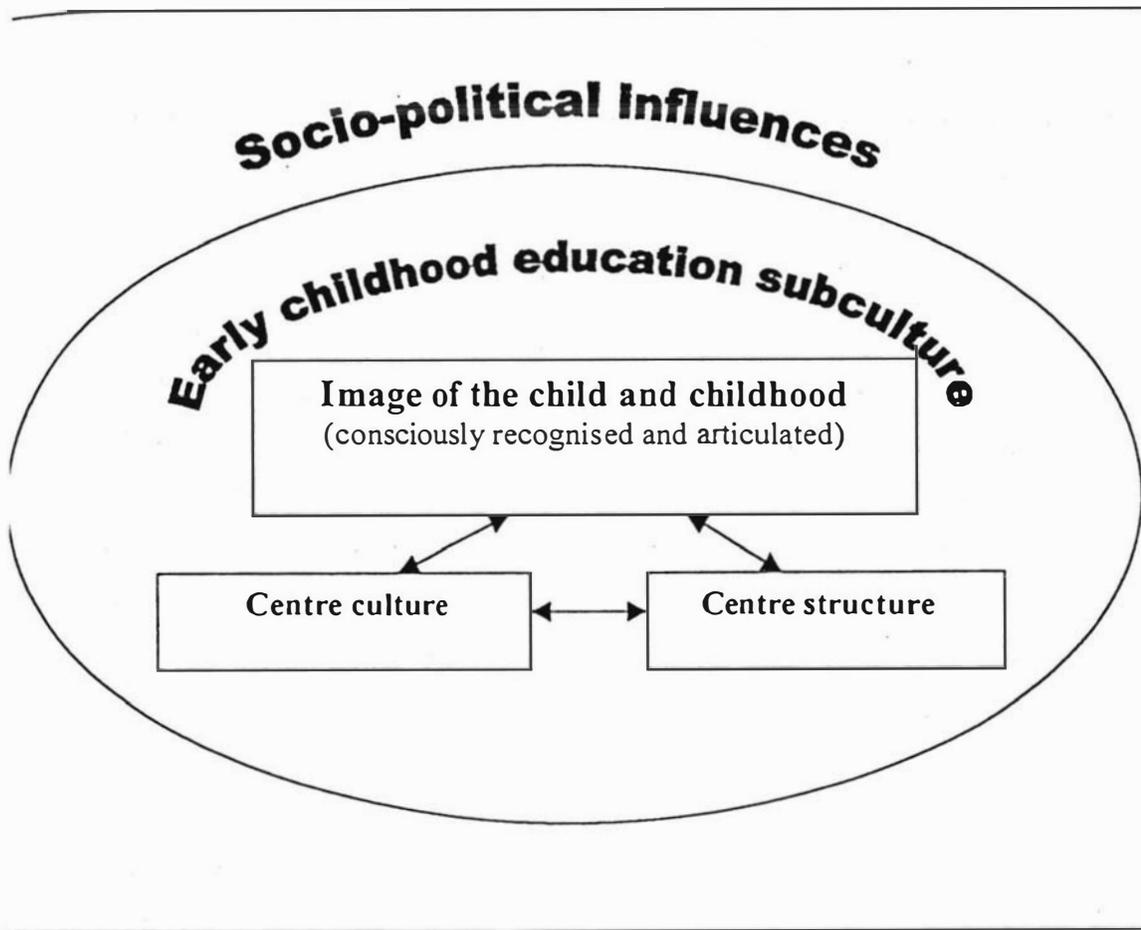


Figure 10: The relationship between the organisational culture and structure of a centre and the image held of the child

Images of the child; difficulties for parents

The data in the present study provided evidence of at least three different perceptions of the child and childhood (notions of family, care for children and support for parents, and care for children and respite for parents) that influenced the ways in which centres operated and thus promoted different options for families and children. The data also indicated that all parents were confused about the qualifications of centre personnel and that many did not have a full understanding about how their children learn.

The literature indicates (Smith & Barraclough, 1997) that many parents have limited experience with the range of quality encompassed by early childhood centres, perhaps being only able to compare facilities with those found at home. They may also have to

settle for lower-quality childcare due to lack of availability of good centres or their own employment, income or transportation situation.

Parents in the present study suggested a list of desirable staff attributes such as being fun, calm, and child-oriented, that also indicated, by implication, some of the views they held of the child. One parent, (Susan) thought that children are “immensely intelligent”. Nora provided insightful comments about what she called “the culture of children” when she asked rhetorical questions that indicated the ways in which she perceived children were considered and treated in her centre. She asked “are they (children) recipients of your power? Are they subordinate...or are they people who haven’t grown up yet who deserve respect? ... Are they your possessions?” as she spoke about the positive ways in which she thought her child was treated.

These insights were atypical, however. In general, the findings suggest that, in addition to other issues about choosing a centre, many parents may not be aware of or easily able to discern the image of the child embodied in a particular centre philosophy. It follows from this that parents may not possess understandings about children and their learning that could help them to make appropriate choices about the early childhood arrangements that would best suit them and their children.

The misalignment of centre cultures and the use of Te Whāriki

Most centre personnel revealed, through explaining centre philosophy or describing their practices, that they adhered to the tenets of the beliefs of the centre founder. Depending on their centre’s MoE category of authority, they perceived that they worked to provide an extension of the child’s family, or to provide support and respite for parents and care for children, or to support working parents and to provide care for children. Each of these three historically-influenced beliefs about centre purpose reflected different images of the child and childhood. As a result, each centre image was central to the culture and structure of that centre.

In addition to the images noted above, 17 centre personnel perceived that a further purpose of their centre was to offer an “educational environment” and learning opportunities for children. When asked specifically about what these terms meant, only two supervisors were able to explain clearly their views of assessment, curriculum planning and implementation, and programme evaluation, and to explain how these pedagogical issues aligned with their use of *Te Whāriki*.

Te Whāriki, the national curriculum document, is not compulsory in centres and was mentioned only infrequently by most participants. However, its terminology is incorporated in the DOPs, and should therefore also be used in centre policy. From interview data, it could be surmised that the aims and philosophy of *Te Whāriki* are not embedded soundly in the pedagogical practices of centre personnel. Does this mean that the basic (often unconsciously held) assumptions held central to centre culture cannot sit comfortably with the stated philosophy of the national curriculum? Or is it that most centre personnel have not reflected deeply on those basic assumptions or attempted to align them with those of *Te Whāriki*? Until this issue is explored further, it is likely that the aims of *Te Whāriki* to support children to grow as secure, confident and competent learners and communicators may be difficult to achieve in centres where the culture is underpinned by a different and possibly opposing image of the child.

The impact of the image held of the child on centre structure

Centre structures were examined during the present study through the comments of participants, the ERO reports and demographic data. Structures based on two, four and five levels of accountability were revealed in centres in the private, corporate/institution and community categories of authority respectively. The image of the child held by each centre in each category of authority was also similar to the others within that category, with the sole exception of the corporate/institution centre attached to an educational institution catering for adult students. In addition to their perception that this centre existed to provide childcare to support working or studying parents, participants in the centre all considered that this support was provided in the form of education for children. This centre was the only corporate/institution centre that used its structure to include

parents in formal decision-making processes in ways that were similar to the functioning of all the community centres in the study.

The limited size of the present research sample precludes any conclusive results regarding the correlation of the centre image of the child influencing the structure of a centre and the way it is used, but it appeared to be more than coincidental that private centres, which held an image of the child as a family dependant, were the most hierarchically structured. By comparison, community centres and the one corporate/institution centre attached to an institution catering for adult learners were the most democratically structured.

It would seem that further research into the hegemonic concepts described by Glauser (1990) earlier in this chapter is needed to explore the issues related to the ways in which centre structures (and the ways in which they are used) are related to centre-held images of the child. If they are related, how do the ideological principles that underpin each image-structure combination affect children's realities and potential? Do the resulting discourses support or work against the principles of *Te Whāriki*? How do parents and staff members maintain partnership relationships as advocated in *Te Whāriki*, if their centre is hierarchically-operated and they have no formal decision-making opportunities? How, for example, should a centre be structured to encourage citizens to be socially just, competent, articulate and accepting of difference as described by Rinaldi (1993), and/or respectful of others and understanding of multiple realities as suggested by Cannella (1997)? There are many questions to be asked and answered before those working with young children can be sure that the structures of centres appropriately support the child to grow into the adult citizen envisaged by society.

Internal and external influences on organisational activities

Issues concerned with centres' structures and cultures and their interconnectedness with the image of the child held in each centre have been discussed. These can loosely be described as "internal" centre issues, largely derived from the basic values, assumptions and beliefs of the centre founder and perpetuated by others who work in a centre. While

external influences (i.e. regulations, DOPs, other agencies such as ERO) undoubtedly impact on centre culture and structure, they appear to affect organisational activities much more obviously. The visibility of the impact of external influences on organisational activities may have been due to one or a combination of issues.

First, the culture and structure of centres had been formed with little specific instruction or direction (apart from compliance issues, usually to do with financial accountability and the physical safety of children) from external sources. For example, no legislated directive had insisted that religious beliefs should form part of a centre's culture, or that centres should provide respite for parents. Neither had any structural design been imposed on centres by external agencies; providing they met chartering and licensing requirements, centres were able to determine their own structural arrangements.

Second, it is possible that the present research design merely included insufficient focus on collection or analysis of data regarding the extent of internal (centre cultural and structural) influences on centre activities. If so, further research into this aspect of centre functioning might assist in raising the visibility of organisational culture and structure on those activities.

Third, organisational activities were very evident in centres. For example, they could be seen in the centre layout, stories told about the organisation, staff behaviour and language, and in interactions between centre personnel, parents and children. Schein's (1992) three levels of organisational culture were discussed in detail in Chapter Two. In the present study, organisational activities were much more apparent at the artifactual or least abstract level described in that chapter and, to a lesser extent, at the espoused (second) level, than they were at the deepest (third) level of basic underlying assumptions. Understandings about centre philosophy and culture, on the other hand, were more difficult to ascertain because they were usually unconsciously expressed in the form of organisational discourse. Reflections of the discourse were gleaned from some documents and other artifacts, but mostly from interviews at the second and third levels of Schein's model as strategies, goals and beliefs, thoughts and feelings were discussed.

As opposed to organisational culture and structure issues, organisational activities shared many similarities across centres in all categories of authority. For example, almost all centre personnel in all centres used the term “communication”; the centrality of this aspect of centre functioning and its importance to organisational structure and organisational culture is noted in Figure 11. The artifactual and espoused issues concerning communication were similar in all centres. For example, parent:staff relationships were similar in most centres, issues of power affected some staff members in most centres, and few centre personnel in any centres discussed communication with children.

The organisational activities may thus have been noticed by the researcher simply *because* they were so visible. However, the similarities may have also been due to external influences (such as shared discourse influenced by the MoE and ERO, practices advocated in common by training providers, knowledge of the existence of *Te Whāriki* and familiarity with its language) of the early childhood education subculture. Alvesson (1993) suggests that external influences are frequently “a local reflection of societal macro-culture (a societal subculture)” (p. 7). The commonality across all centres of many of the organisational activities in the six categories that developed in the present study would support Alvesson’s claim. Some examples of these similarities that may have been influenced by external sources will be discussed next.

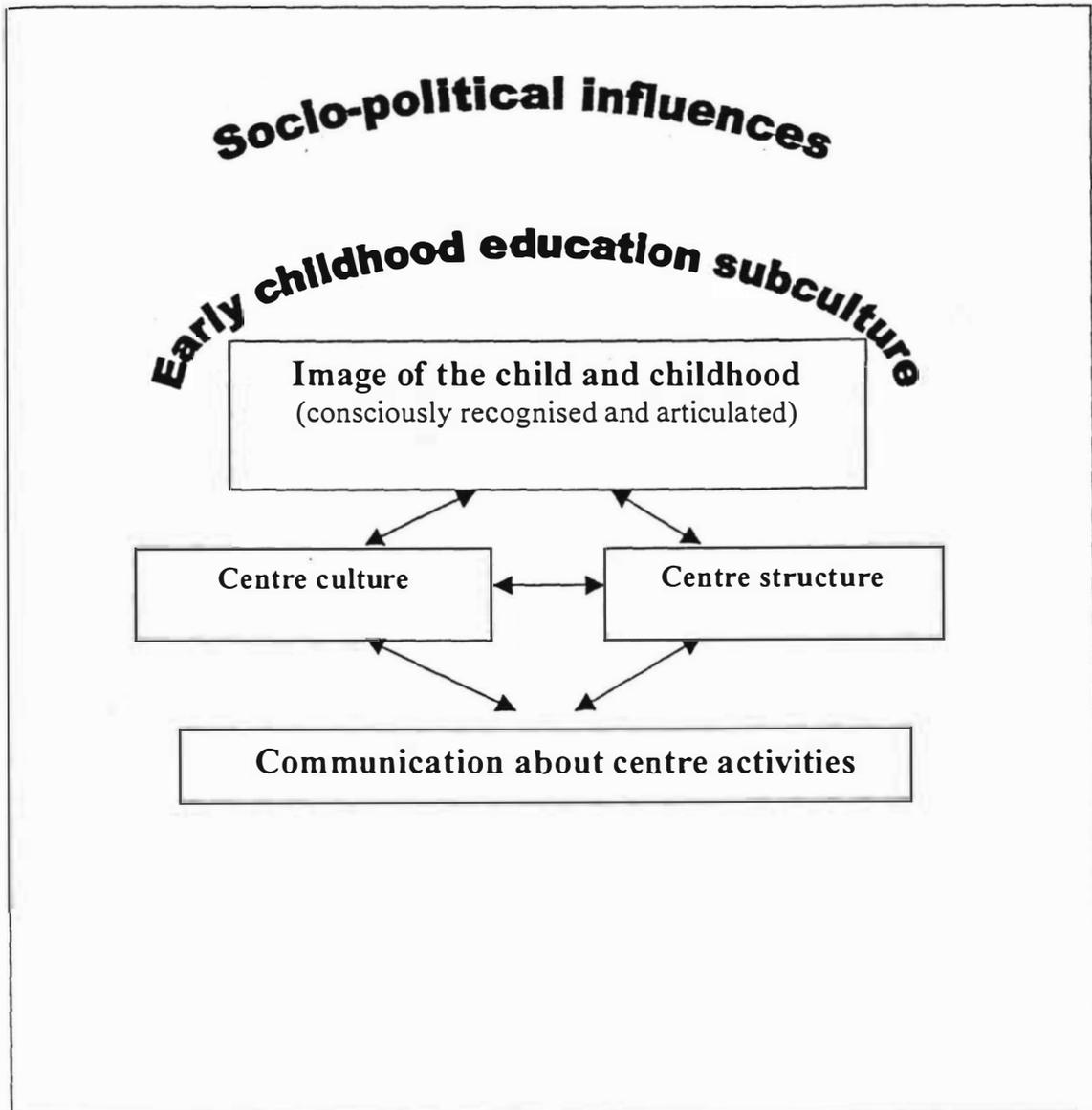


Figure 11: The importance of communication to centre functioning and its relationship to organisational culture and structure.

Educational leadership

The historical development of concepts of educational leadership was discussed in Chapter Two, from early trait theory (Handy, 1985) and style theory (Handy & Aitken, 1986) to transactional (management) and transformational (empowering, envisioning, inspiring) leadership (Foster, 1989) and visionary leadership (Bolman & Deal, 1991).

Feminist views were also explored, indicating some resistance to hierarchical models and the term “leader” (Hatherly, 2000; Rodd, 1996) and the promotion of multi-dimensional and multi-directional ways of working (Blackmore, 1989).

In the present study, it could be claimed that traces of the transactional approach to educational leadership were seen in the preference of almost all participants for the use of the terms “manager” and “management”. Was the preference for these terms a response to the industrial (Hayden, 2000; Penman, 1999) and managerialist influences of efficiency (Codd, 1989) and cost-effectiveness (Harker, 1998) on the competitive market of the early childhood subculture? Or was it due to the tendency of women to prefer not to stand out from the group as a leader, but rather to work more inclusively and collaboratively, as Hatherly (2000) and Rodd (1996) suggest? In the present study, a more specific research focus on issues of collaboration (as advocated by Grey, 1999) and collegiality would have been useful because, while some licensee/supervisors considered that they worked collaboratively, some staff members employed by them disagreed, indicating that imbalances of power inhibited their involvement.

Visionary leadership

The three participants who did speak about leadership referred to the need to consider the “larger picture” and to have “vision”. The purpose of the vision varied; for example, one licensee/supervisor related vision to achieving centre goals and a licensee spoke of leading curriculum development. Because of their involvement across organisational boundaries (each had roles in other organisational, community or national areas), it could be claimed that these notions may comply with Kagan and Neuman’s (1997) characteristics of “conceptual leadership” (p. 60) which include thinking in terms of the whole field; responsiveness to diverse perspectives; thinking long term; pushing the what-is to the what-might-be, and seeking to impact the social good.

Kagan and Neuman’s definition of conceptual leadership is included in a list of five “faces of leadership” (Kagan & Bowman, 1997) which also includes pedagogical, administrative, advocacy and community leadership. Their definition contributes usefully

to an overview of the leadership role in early childhood education, although the reference to social good is non-specific apart from comments about participatory democracy and contributing to a more just and equitable society. However, their definition does not extend to a focus on reflective practice, and neither did the majority of participants in the present study discuss this issue explicitly.

The idea of the concept of vision being central to the leadership role is important to Grey (1999). She uses the term “broad long-term thinkers” (p. 2) to describe visionary leaders who include diverse perspectives in a collaborative way to reach a vision. The need for support for supervisors and others to understand and incorporate such leadership knowledge and skills in their practice is paramount, given that only three of the ten supervisors in the present study offered any ideas about the value of working towards a vision, shared or otherwise.

Reflective leadership

Three participants (a licensee and two supervisors) discussed issues that revealed an implicit commitment to “reflection-in-action” (Schon, 1983, p. 42). Schon describes this as “on the spot surfacing, criticising, restructuring and testing of intuitive understandings of experienced phenomena” (p. 42). More emancipatory notions of “pedagogical” and “educative” educational leadership used by Smyth (1989) to describe a form of critically reflective leadership that includes the notions of transformational activities noted earlier were not revealed by participants in the present study. Smyth uses the term “pedagogical” to describe the creation of “participatory forms of learning” and a “dialogical method of teaching” (p. 200) which develops understanding that is empowering. Educative leadership, he says, is informed by self-knowledge that enables people to utilise persuasion, debate, criticism and analysis to understand the concept of power. The analyses of data in the present study point to a need (that could possibly be generalised across early childhood services) for supervisors and others in leadership positions to incorporate the concepts of critical reflection articulated by Schon and Smyth (above) into their practice.

Pedagogical and curriculum leadership

Few accounts of educational leadership and management refer to the core business of schools or centres as being teaching and learning. In his overview of different perspectives on educational management, Bush (1994) illustrates this omission as he categorises many theories into bureaucratic, collegial, political, subjective, and ambiguity types, none of which include a focus on teaching and learning. However, Edwards (1997), writing about the compulsory education subculture, does include the role of teacher (as experienced and understanding of curriculum and classroom activities) in his list of four conceptual components of principalship. Angus (1989), too, includes the complexities of teaching in his conception of educational leadership.

In the early childhood literature, Hayden (1996) is one of the few who articulates clearly the need for centre managers to have a content or educational focus at the heart of their practice. Little attention is paid by writers such as Hay (1997), Rodd (1996) and Simons (1986) to aspects of the leadership role that concern what children learn and how they learn it. Katz (1997) discusses pedagogical leadership as including the tasks of understanding ideology, interpreting research and practice, and setting the pedagogical agenda for those involved in the field. Her comment, however, is focused on the role of the researcher who works in academic fields outside of the realm of day-to-day centre practice. Only as an afterthought does she consider that “programme directors and teachers ... may share (innovative teaching practices) with practitioners” (Katz, 1997, p. 20).

So, where in the literature is there an emphasis on pedagogical and curriculum leadership *within* a centre? Who undertakes this role? In the present study, only one licensee discussed curriculum leadership and two supervisors outlined an understanding of their roles as pedagogical and curriculum leaders. In most centres, other staff – frequently unqualified – undertook assessment, programme planning and curriculum implementation roles, often without supervision. The findings of the present study thus indicate a need for curriculum and pedagogical leadership in most centres. The latter role encompasses the ideological understandings outlined by Katz (1997) and could also be expected to include

knowledge of the ideology upon which the centre culture, structure and activities of a particular centre foster the image of the child and childhood. The importance of addressing how deeply-held beliefs about curriculum and pedagogical issues relate to the image held of a child is illustrated in Figure 12, where consideration of pedagogical issues is consciously embedded as part of that image. The organisational activity of leadership and management incorporates a strong curriculum leadership component, ensuring that learning-centred leadership (Southworth, 2002) remains close to the heart of the organisation. This, too, is shown in Figure 12.

A void in the area of curriculum and pedagogical leadership shown in the data of the present study indicates that provision of educational management and leadership programmes targeted at the early childhood subculture might be timely. So too, is the need for those who work in early childhood to be qualified, and for all who are preparing to be teachers to focus on critical reflection, pedagogical issues and curriculum theory in their initial teacher education programmes. Not only should the person responsible in an early childhood centre be able to articulate their practice and vision at a conceptual level, but all other centre personnel need to be able to support them to do so.

In the face of a continuing demand for increased professionalism (Hayden, 1996; Rodd, 1997; Stonehouse, 2000) and to ensure that children are exposed to learning experiences of high quality, there are a number of provisions that could be made. The universal registration of teachers (about which more will be said later in this chapter), ensuring that all who work in centres are qualified as teachers, including critical reflection as a component of teachers' pre-service education and the provision of postgraduate programmes in leadership and management would all be worth considering to assist in filling the void.

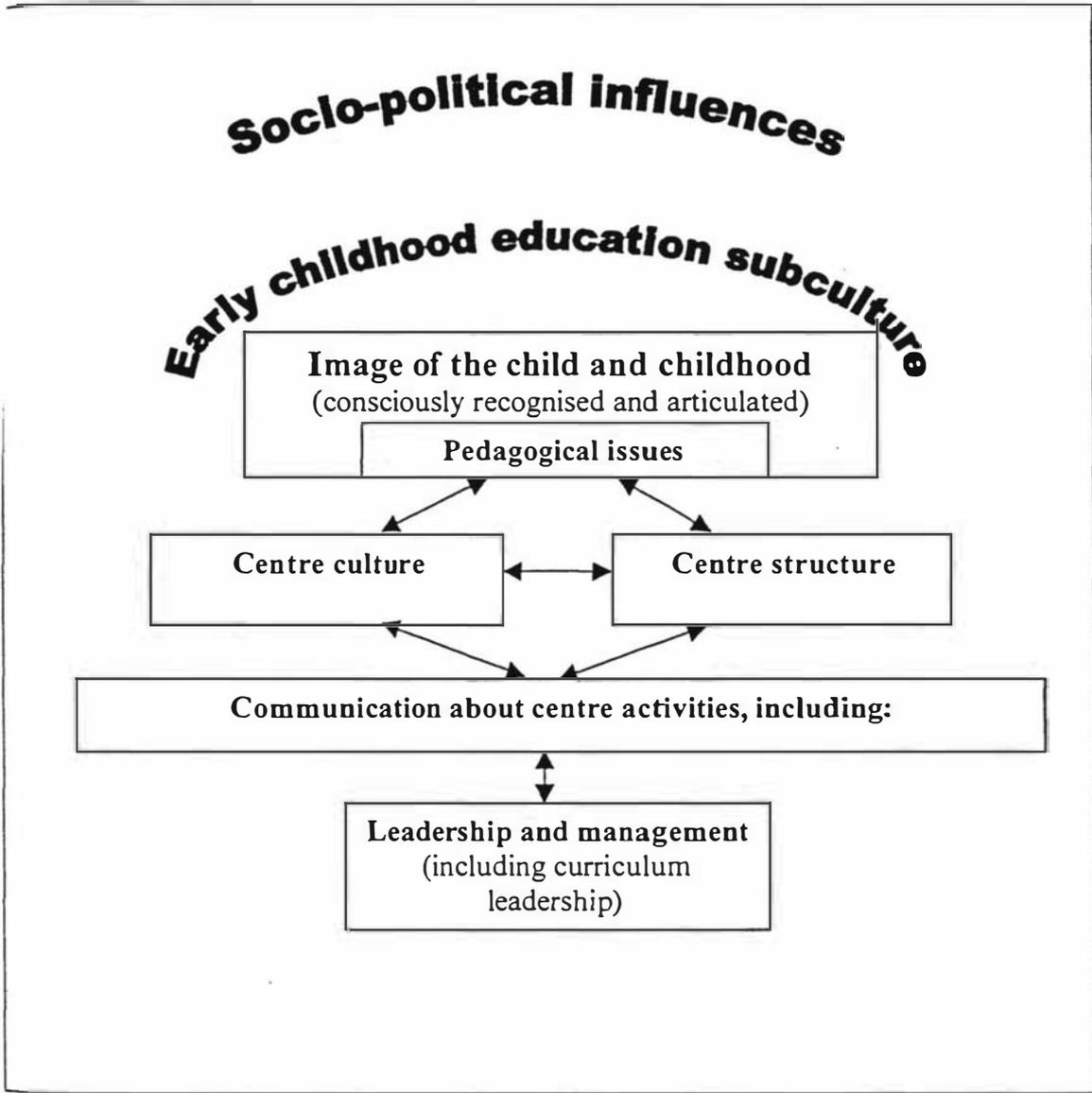


Figure 12: The centrality of pedagogical considerations within the image held of the child, and the relationships between these, leadership and management (with specific attention to curriculum leadership) and centre structure, culture and communication.

Provision of an educational environment

After stating the individual purpose of their own centre, providing an educational environment was considered by centre personnel to be the most important purpose across all centres in the present research. All centres are required, by an external agency (the MoE, through the DOPs) to provide for the learning and development of children (Ministry of Education, 1998b), so it is not surprising that this purpose was espoused across all categories of authority. The mismatch of the aims of *Te Whāriki* with various images of the child has been outlined, but the lack of ability of most centre personnel to articulate clearly their educational practices within an educational environment was also a noticeable feature of the present study.

Centre personnel spoke frequently about “doing observations” and about programme planning. Much time was spent undertaking these two tasks. However, observations were technical in nature, and were usually filed. They were sometimes provided for parental viewing, but mostly were not used for providing a base for informed, theoretically sound programme planning. In addition, assessments were focused infrequently on most children (sometimes only once each year), and were thus of questionable value.

Only two supervisors spoke knowledgeably about their pedagogical practices, including the complexities of assessment, curriculum planning and implementation and programme evaluation in their discussion. Other participants were unable to articulate clearly the pedagogical processes involved in teaching. Given that only nine of the 20 staff members interviewed and seven (possibly eight) of the ten persons responsible were qualified, the lack of understanding of pedagogical issues can, perhaps, be partially explained as a lack of a critical mass of qualified staff members. It also helps to explain why reflection on the personal or centre image that is held of a child, or how that image fits with the aims of *Te Whāriki* (discussed above) are difficult if not impossible tasks to expect of most staff members and some persons responsible.

Another alarming example of a lack of knowledge about teaching and learning theory was seen in the enthusiasm of some centre personnel and most parents for the provision

of formal structured programmes for children aged three and half to five years. Such programmes attempt to transmit or transfer knowledge (Meade, 1997) from teachers to children. The use of worksheets and workbooks that included fragmented, predetermined tasks, and the provision of a limited choice of experiences were among the qualities that were promoted by those who advocated for the programmes. Again, a lack of understanding of appropriate practices, and an inability by centre personnel to articulate those practices to parents were noted. The trend for centres to provide structured formal programmes, especially by staff members who do not have a thorough theoretical understanding of pedagogical issues and content, seems inimical to the increasing professionalism that is advocated by writers such as Stonehouse (2000). Stonehouse claims that early childhood professionals must speak “powerfully and articulately” (p. 7) about their practice and ensure that parents and others understand reasons for it.

A further reason for the general paucity of pedagogical understanding may also lie in the fact that although the national curriculum was introduced in 1996 with prior consultation, even qualified teachers may not have accessed or fully understood the content of professional development opportunities that have been offered since then. In addition, qualified personnel have acquired their qualifications by various means (for example by being grandparented or through equivalency) which may not have provided a cohesive programme of teacher education (Cullen, 1996). It is possible that gaps exist in their initial teacher education and that these gaps (such as that identified by the Education Review Office [2000b] for literacy and numeracy assessments in early childhood settings to be more appropriately analysed) have not been challenged by professional development.

A further consideration with regard to the quality of teacher education and on-going professional development is that there is no requirement for staff members in childcare centres to be registered teachers. To become a registered teacher, an approved programme of study must first be undertaken, then two years are spent working in a programme of advice and guidance, under supervision, as a provisionally registered teacher. After the requirements of the advice and guidance programme have been

successfully met, full registration status may be granted. Every three years thereafter, a teacher must re-register, providing evidence that on-going professional development has been accessed. While there are some pitfalls in these processes, there is thus a professional expectation (formalised by the Teachers Council) that professional development should continue. Participants in only one centre in the present study indicated that teacher registration was a focus and only four qualified participants indicated their intention of beginning or continuing postgraduate qualifications or consistent on-going professional development. Further research into the professional development of beginning teachers, together with resourced support for the advice and guidance programme provided for them are avenues to be explored in the future.

Reciprocal communication

According to the participants in the present study and as illustrated in Figure 11, communication is the essential “glue” that holds centres together. In the previous section, provision of an educational environment was discussed. In order to implement an educational environment, communication between staff members and parents in a reciprocated and co-operative partnership relationship (Mara, 1999) is essential. Communication between centre personnel, and between them and children is also vital to the well-being of children and their families (Ministry of Education, 1996).

The data in this study provided evidence that reciprocation and partnership issues between parents and centre personnel seem to be difficult to fully implement. Some of the reasons for this appear to lie in the lack of understanding by some staff members about the importance of both issues, and the inability of all centre personnel to articulate their practice to parents. This in turn, may be due to the lack of qualified staff members who are knowledgeable enough about their practice to involve parents and share interests and concerns about children.

Similarly, communication between centre personnel is sometimes fraught with misunderstanding and difficulty. As in relationships between parents and staff members, reciprocity and perceived status seem to sometimes feature as obstacles between staff

members. Increased understanding of professional relationships between teachers (Staessens, 1993) that includes “relationship-based communication” (Bertacchi, 1996, p. 2), focused on shared understandings about ethics and values, sensitivity to context, respect for the person and commitment to growth and change are part of what good communication processes might incorporate.

Without structural support that offers opportunities for parents and staff members to communicate well, and shared organisational cultural assumptions (Schein, 1992) that consistently support a positive image of a child as a capable and competent learner, communication between children and staff is unlikely to enhance positively children’s learning. Staff members and children spend most time together involved in centre activities which mostly involve curriculum experiences; the alignment of these with centre philosophy and structure is essential to reciprocal and meaningful communication between them.

Teamwork; communication, trust, change and shared understandings

Centre structures and how they were used were powerful indicators of the way in which participants viewed the concept of teamwork in the present study. Structures in which communication processes and shared understandings were more inclusive of all stakeholders supported teams with less perceived differentiation between those who held various staff roles. On the other hand, more hierarchically-operated centre structures maintained perceptions of differing status levels of staff members, with less trust expressed between the levels.

Centre culture also influenced the notion of teamwork held within each centre in the present study. Similar basic assumptions held by centre personnel about the child and childhood within each category of authority, combined with some beliefs about other issues held in common across other categories (as noted in Figure 6, p. 182) aggregated variously to form part of the individual culture of each centre. The centre culture, supported by the centre structure, then helped to shape what individuals working in the centre perceived about teamwork and the nature of the team in that centre. This

relationship is depicted in Figure 13, together with management of change and professional issues, which will be discussed in the next sections.

An example of the effect of centre cultural and structural beliefs was seen in the most common belief espoused across all categories of authority; that is, the value of “education” for children. Centre teams, as products of the cultural and structural design of the centre, produced the environments in which children learned. Tracing the process of providing for education revealed that a conceptual domino-like effect began with the image of the child held at the heart of the culture of a centre. This image shaped the centre culture and structure. The culture and structure affected the type of teamwork undertaken, which, in turn, produced the environment that was provided for children. While some staff members from all centres espoused the value they placed on education and the “education environment” provided in their centres, the team or teams providing for children did not necessarily have a qualified teacher within them. Therefore, many of the teams perceived by centre personnel to be operating capably (perhaps, as in several cases, excluding the supervisor from their view of a team) included no sound curriculum leadership. Their perceived successful teamwork was likely to be based on such things as being sensitive to each other’s needs and being able to ask for help in difficult situations – not about reflective educational practice. Teamwork, then, was more likely to be perceived to be about inter-personal relationships than about good practice with regard to children’s learning.

The management of externally instigated change in centres was generally considered by centre personnel to be successful, although the organisational arrangements (arranging rosters, maintaining stability of staff for children) and cost in resources to individuals and centres as staff members attempted to gain qualifications caused some difficulties. The most problematic issue for all centres with regard to change was managing the situation as staff members left centre employment and new employees arrived. While the successful management of change in centres rested on good relationships between centre personnel, parents and children, the perceptions of some supervisors were that qualified staff members managed staff changes much more smoothly than did unqualified staff

members because of their understandings of the processes involved. They commented that qualified staff members were attuned to the needs of parents and children and carefully planned transition arrangements that were open and which anticipated concerns.

Participants in one centre described an example of planned transition arrangements for outgoing and incoming staff members which demonstrated attention to working on maintaining levels of trust, collaboration, and democratic involvement of centre personnel, parents and children in centre decision-making. This process, as opposed to a traditional linear model of management based on positional authority and influence (Waniganayake, Morda and Kapsalakis, 2000) would enhance some of the other communication practices that currently occur in centres (Leithwood, 1992) and that were outlined in the present study. In addition, if a transparent understanding about the centre's image of the child was promoted, and improved curriculum leadership that supported it was provided, it is probable that centre teamwork would be more enjoyable for centre personnel as well as more appropriate for children's learning.

The integral nature of leadership and management (that includes curriculum leadership) with teamwork involving trust and shared understandings is illustrated in Figure 13. The positive management of change, which is contingent upon successful teamwork, is also depicted in Figure 13, together with professional issues, which will be discussed in the next section.

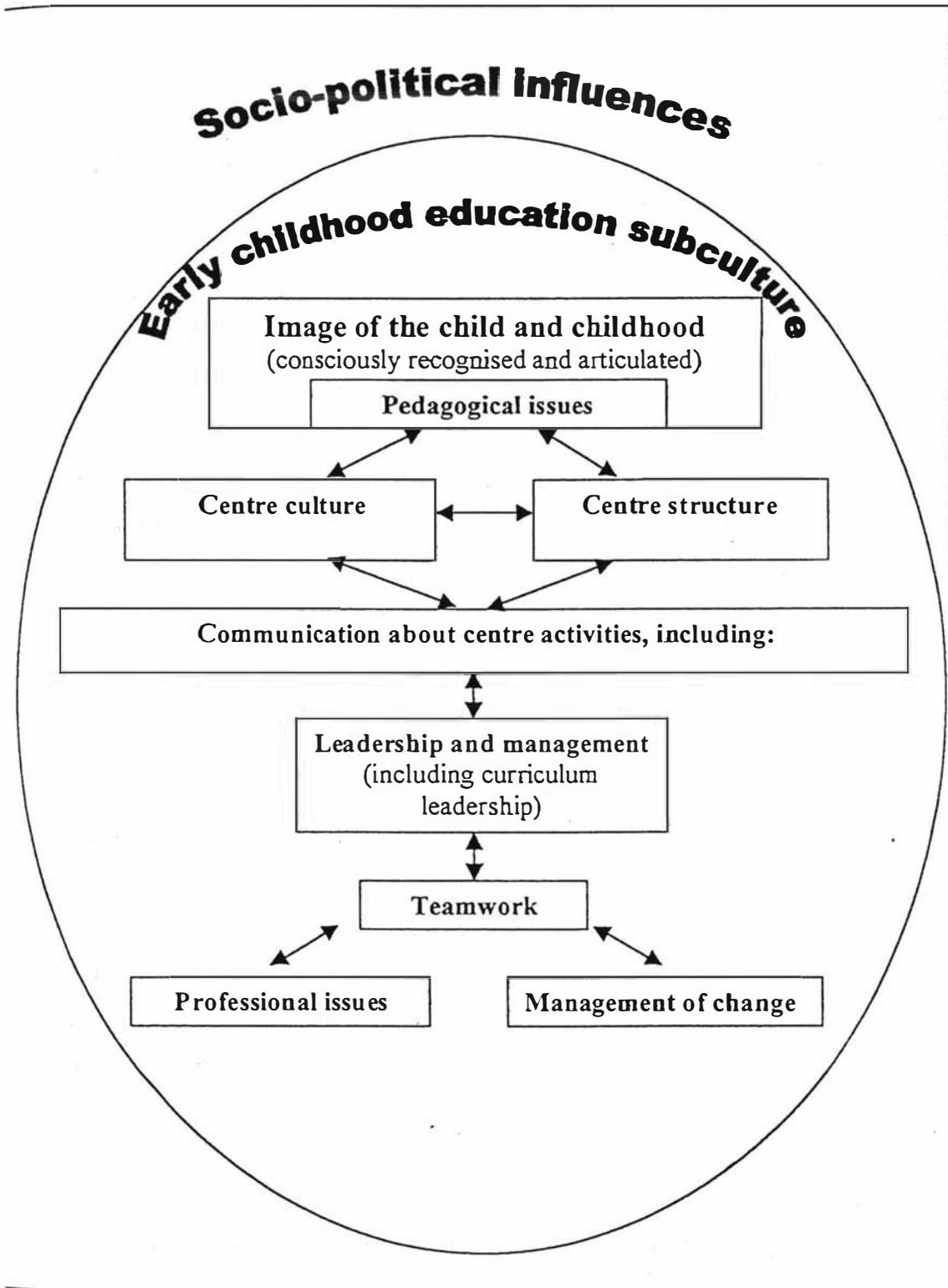


Figure 13: Theoretical model of leadership and management in early childhood centres

Professional issues

Most centre personnel in the present study demonstrated a lack of soundly based theoretical knowledge of pedagogical issues, as has already been discussed. It was noted in Chapter Seven that most of the professional development resources in centres were reported as being used to assist unqualified staff members to obtain training. At the time of the data collection, the courses available still included a medley of licensing-point certificates and short diplomas. These were cobbled together to form a patchwork of points that gained status for centre funding, and were used for employment purposes. Since December 2000, licensing points have been discontinued except for students in uncompleted courses, and by 2005 all who currently hold person responsible status with 100 licensing points will need to have upgraded to a Diploma (Ministry of Education; 1999a) in order to keep their positions. Few qualified centre personnel had been or were continuing with cohesive programmes of professional development.

In the next few years, support for those gaining an initial teaching qualification will no doubt be stretched even further as pressure is applied for persons responsible to achieve the Diploma by 2005. It is probable that professional development for those already qualified (to gain full teacher registration status, for example) will be limited because of scarce resources. It is also likely that sorely-needed postgraduate programmes in leadership and management, curriculum disciplines, education and other fields will be even more difficult for more experienced staff to access for reasons of finance and time, as they may be required to work longer hours to cover for colleagues who are studying for beginning teacher status.

Early childhood advocates such as Dalli (1993) and Meade (1988) have argued for years for more resources for early childhood education. An injection of targeted resources and incentives is required to lift early childhood education out of the morass it has descended further into under more than three terms of government that promoted New Right economic rationalism (O'Neill, 1998) and a free market ideology (Lauder & Hughes, 1990). This climate encouraged the privatisation, and therefore the proliferation, of early childhood centres without a planned or even a considered view of how the personnel,

environment and curriculum of a particular centre might influence the type of citizen a child might become as a result of attending.

It is clear that qualified and registered teachers were not a major part of the government equation for early childhood education during the last decade of the twentieth century, but that they need to be in the future to ensure that sound pedagogical practice is an expected part of centre culture and activities. Providers of programmes of early childhood teacher education may need to examine the content and quality of their programmes to ensure that graduates can justify and explain their philosophies and practices (Drummond, 1989). A stronger focus and more resources should be targeted for the attainment of registered teacher status by beginning provisionally registered teachers through advice and guidance induction programmes under the supervision of fully registered teachers who support and mentor neophyte teachers into the profession (The Teachers Council, 2002). Through such programmes of on-going professional development, not only pedagogical knowledge but other essential understandings and skills can be fostered for both the fully and provisionally registered teacher in areas such as educational leadership and management, organisational culture, communication and appraisal.

Cohesive postgraduate programmes that focus on the aspects of leadership and management that have been identified in this study (see Figure 8, p. 298) should be accessible to registered teachers. An example of the need for such understanding was seen in concerns expressed by staff members about appraisal processes. Their concerns were patterned across most centres, but supervisors and licensee/supervisors did not share those concerns. Technically rather than reflectively designed, the appraisal systems mostly failed to address issues of trust between appraiser and appraisee or to be developed by both parties with a full understanding of the purpose, implementation and power of an appraisal process. Neither did most appraisal processes link into cohesive (or mostly, any) professional development.

In summary, as a centre activity, professional issues require sensitive teamwork and informed leadership and management attention, as illustrated in Figure 13. To develop such leadership capabilities, policies will be needed that target resources for increasing the number of qualified teachers in centres, for ensuring on-going professional development, and for postgraduate programmes in leadership and management for supervisors and other centre personnel.

Implications for other early childhood services

The sample of early childhood centres in the present study was small and was restricted to childcare centres within the early childhood subculture. It is possible that the implications of the study outlined thus far might also be applied to other services (for example, Playcentres, kindergartens). It is acknowledged that each early childhood service and/or centre operates within its own culture, under a different structure, and possibly with some different activities from others. However, the concepts implicit in the core category of the present study (the image of the child) and each of the eight other categories could be usefully examined, debated and critiqued within those other services. Care should be taken that the implications of the present study are used as tools for debate and negotiation, rather than being generalised without consideration for the new contexts in which they may be located and discussed.

From implications to recommendations; a summary

The eight categories that emerged from the present study, and the core concept, involving ways in which society holds a variety of images of the child, have provided a complex set of interwoven implications for research, policy development, and practical work. The implications and recommendations of the present study have been outlined in previous sections of this chapter; in this section, the recommendations will be summarised.

First, the findings provide support for much more research into early childhood leadership and management. This study was limited to a small sample of childcare centres, so similar research into other types of service (such as kindergartens) would provide valuable insights that would lead to further recommendations for policy, practice

and research. Research methods different from those used in the present study (for example, participant observation) could be used to triangulate the findings noted here and further develop the body of knowledge on leadership and management across early childhood services.

The core category (of the image of the child) and the eight other categories that emerged in this case study could each form the basis for research projects that would better inform the leadership and provision of early childhood education in centres in Aotearoa/New Zealand. For example, a study of the relationships between hegemonic concepts (Glaser, 1990), centre structures and cultures, and their relationships to images held of the child would be of interest to those in teacher education and early childhood service provision, as well as to other agencies and disciplines. The ways in which pedagogical issues and their relationships with organisational culture impact on children's learning has been raised as an area of particular concern worth further investigation. Further work on parent:staff relationships in centres, and in centres with different structures would also be beneficial. The development of the notion of curriculum leadership is an example of a particular focus for further development in the fields of teacher education, centre practice and research. It is certainly timely, with current popular interest in the rate and severity of child abuse in this country, that the image of the child held within our society should be debated nationally. Further research would inform such a debate that could positively influence societal discourses and perceptions held about children and their lives.

Second, the findings of the present study indicate that an understanding of organisational culture is generalisable as essential for those who teach in any early childhood service. Service founders and all staff members need to be aware of the ways in which the image they hold of a child influences the values that are incorporated into the development and maintenance of the organisational culture, structures and activities. Organisational leaders and staff members should also be familiar with the principles and pervasiveness of organisational culture in order to understand it in their own service and, if necessary, to make carefully planned changes so that the service's culture and structures positively enhance learning for children.

These issues have policy and practice recommendations for those involved in early childhood teacher education and for the resources that need to be focused on the early childhood sector. The need for every service or centre to have a full complement of reflective, qualified and registered staff members is one recommendation. Further recommendations have been made in the present study for the provision and expectation of on-going professional development for registered teachers, especially those who seek positions as service or centre leaders or supervisors.

Professional development could include both in-centre or in-service programmes (where all personnel work collaboratively towards improving their understanding and practice in a specified area such as developing an appraisal system) and post-graduate qualifications that support the development of, for example, visionary leadership, critically reflective practice, pedagogical and curriculum leadership skills. Given the emphasis and resources that participants in the present study claimed is being placed on staff gaining access to initial teacher education, it may be necessary to provide incentives, policy and legislation to also encourage the provision of post-graduate programmes that incorporate conceptual and practical aspects of leadership and management.

Third, this study identified the need to help parents to understand how their image of a child influences their parenting. Part of this understanding is knowledge about how children learn, so familiarity with *Te Whāriki* and the philosophy of their centre would be central considerations in recommendations for policy that informs programmes of support for parents.

Fourth, the findings of this study provide recommendations for policy and legislation that support the employment of only fully qualified (as opposed to unqualified) centre personnel. Qualified teachers are more likely to have a sound theoretical base for their practice and to be able to articulate this clearly to parents and others. This study provided evidence that participants considered that the provision of an educational environment is important, but in many cases were unable to either articulate their practice or to provide adequate education programmes for children. The literature, discussion and data analysis

revealed that centre personnel *should*, but often do *not* have a comprehensive understanding of *Te Whāriki* in relation to pedagogical issues such as assessment, and curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation. Teachers need to be cognisant of organisational cultures, structures and activities that support the theoretical stance of *Te Whāriki*. They also need to be able to work with other qualified staff in order to improve their own practice. Recommendations for policy decisions that resource support for beginning teachers and on-going professional development for fully registered teachers are also explicit in the findings of this research.

Finally, the theoretical model of leadership and management in early childhood centres (Figure 13) and the concepts which have been discussed within the core and eight other categories should be applied to other early childhood services as a tool for debate and discussion. Further research into how the concepts might apply in other services would also be useful to encourage and conceptualise the provision of improved education and care in the early childhood subculture as the commitment to improving the quality of services continues.

Conclusion

David and Powell (1999) consider that

...perhaps the most important debates to be initiated concern our constructions of early childhood and values exposed by those constructions, for it is the ideas and discourses concerning the "child" which shape educational provision. (p. 216)

In support of David's view that important debates regarding how our society values (or should value) children are yet to be argued, the findings of the present study have provided evidence that differing constructions of the child and childhood exist in different centres. However, the constructions mostly exist at Schein's (1992) third and deepest level of organisational culture (basic underlying beliefs, values and assumptions) and are not consciously recognised, acknowledged or discussed in centres. Reflection on issues of personal values and beliefs and their transference into the culture of an

organisation would assist centre founders and supervisors to construct more sensitive and congruent links between centre philosophies, centre structures and centre activities.

This study suggests that a model for developing or reviewing practice in centre leadership and management should, then, begin with a close consideration of the image held of the child and how childhood should be lived. In a centre to be developed, reflection on this image by the founder and intended staff should be a basic building block, as illustrated in Figure 13 (p. 327). In an already-established centre, reflection by all centre personnel should identify what image already exists and how it was arrived at. This discussion needs to be transparent in each centre and participated in by licensees, supervisors, staff members, parents and children.

Consideration of what pedagogical practices would follow from the shared image of the child need to be embedded in the vision that shapes centre culture, structures and activities (see Figure 13, p. 327) so that the child remains central to all planning, maintenance or change undertaken in centres. If the philosophy of *Te Whāriki* is to be encompassed in centre culture and structure, the leadership role would involve ensuring that centre personnel develop plans that include ways of involving a child in “socially mediated learning” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 9), reciprocal and responsive relationships, collaboration with adults and peers, and in other aspects of the national curriculum framework. A centre culture and structure then can be shaped to promote the realisation of such an image, perhaps being informed by already established models. These models might include, for example, multi-agency organisations such as Pen Green (Whalley, 1999) that focus on the concept of a community of learners working together to encourage organisational change through mutual education.

Communication, described by participants in this study as the most important part of the leader’s role in a centre, is a key feature in ensuring that all stakeholders are familiar with the underpinning features of centre culture, structure and activities. Analysis of the data in the present study drew attention to centre structure and culture being important

prerequisites in initiating and maintaining communication processes that will effectively reflect the image of the child articulated within the centre.

Curriculum leadership should be considered as a major feature of leadership and management to support the centre's views about pedagogy. In the present study, a lack of curriculum and pedagogical leadership (due mostly to lack of qualified staff members and the paucity of on-going postgraduate professional development) pre-empted the cohesive development of cycles of assessment of children, planning of programmes, curriculum implementation and programme evaluation. The data analysis also highlighted that professional issues and change, if managed by all staff members working as a team, are likely to be inclusive and supportive rather than reflecting a top-down approach. These considerations are all illustrated in Figure 13 (p. 327).

Impacting strongly on all that happens within any centre are the influences of the early childhood education subculture, and the education sector in which it resides. Since the education reforms of the early 1990s, education has been viewed more as a private than a public good (Clark, 1998), and the New Right market economy issues (Smith, 1999a) of productiveness and effectiveness have influenced the socio-political and economic structures of society.

It is in this restrictive climate that the elusive search for quality in early childhood continues. This study identified some steps that could be taken, phased in over time, which would enhance what is offered to our young children and their families. Attention to ensuring that only qualified (Carr & May, 1996) and reflective teachers work with the youngest citizens of Aotearoa/New Zealand is one clear goal identified in the present research. Some examples of possible research topics have already been provided; further examination of issues raised in the present study will be important. Effective pre-service teacher education that focuses on critically reflective practice and theoretically sound pedagogical understandings was also noted as essential. Notions of universal teacher registration and on-going postgraduate and other professional development (such as educational leadership and mentoring) that support competent educational and curriculum

leadership are also amongst areas that must be addressed if centres are to be led and managed in ways that provide environments in which children can reach their potential.

A review of the methodology and methods and their limitations

In this section, issues of the soundness of the present study will be addressed. The choice of methodology and methods used in the research will be reviewed, and aspects to do with researcher and participant bias and motivation, sample size, organisational culture and the literature review will be examined. In some areas, possibilities for further research will be suggested.

Criteria of soundness

Qualitative research is, by nature, a complex process that reveals multiple realities and truths. While aspects of the grounded theory method were used in this qualitative case study to ensure that the categories that emerged were grounded in the data and are therefore credible, the findings cannot be replicated because no other study will ever encompass exactly the same features (Kinchenloe and McLaren, 1998). However, the findings, implications and recommendations of the study can be generalised to other settings and subjects as considerations to be discussed, shared, reflected upon and debated (Eisner, 1991) rather than viewed as a top-down definitive set of procedures for practitioners, for future research, or for policy development. If the findings are to be applied, they should be used as tools for inquiry and negotiation and be shaped in the context to which they are being considered.

Choice of methodology and methods

The present qualitative case study was undertaken as “an intense examination of a setting” (Bryman, 2001, p. 48) to determine the perceptions of adults who are most closely involved in centres about the leadership and management practices of those centres. Aspects of grounded theory were selected as the most appropriate method of researching participants’ perceptions and a number of other methods, such as

demographic questionnaires and supervisors' diaries were used to triangulate so that breadth and depth (Fielding & Fielding, 1986) and rigour (Flick, 1992) could be assured.

The choice of the use of aspects of grounded theory as a tool to gather "thick description" (Geertz, 1973, p. 6) through interviewing participants about their lived experiences was an appropriate one. The interviews were transcribed verbatim, member-checked (Taft, 1988) and analysed, remaining grounded as the words actually uttered by participants throughout the process of constant comparison and writing. Together with the concepts of organisational culture, structure and activities (O'Neill, 1994), the grounded theory process allowed the researcher to see culture as an ordered system of meanings and symbols in terms of which social interaction takes place, and social structure as the pattern of interaction itself. As Geertz (1973,) says,

(O)n the one level there is the framework of beliefs, expressive symbols, and values in terms of which individuals define their world, express their feelings, and make their judgements; on the other level there is the ongoing process of interactive behavior, whose persistent form we call social structure. Culture is the fabric of meanings in terms of which human beings interpret their experience and guide their action; social structure is the form that action takes, the actually existing network of social relations. (p. 144-5)

However, while rich description viewed through a framework of organisational culture provided a valuable way of examining data firmly grounded in what participants actually said about the type and quality of leadership and management practices in centres, the multiple perspectives gained from across the study cannot be summarised or captured in a way that reports all tangents, slants and considerations. Attempting to capture and categorise the rich description thus seems a rather forced, clinical and unworthy way of reporting findings. It is hoped that further research into specific areas discussed in this chapter may be developed to follow specific trends or issues raised here.

Theoretical sampling

Theoretical sampling was undertaken on a formal basis with only three participants (one supervisor randomly selected from each of the three categories of authority) in the third phase of the present study. Some informal telephone and face-to face conversational checking of data occurred between some participants and the researcher when minor items needed to be clarified, but checks were focused mostly on specific issues that did not allow time and space for participants to suggest alternative issues. More resources (especially time and funding) may have enabled a more thorough sampling occurrence to be established in order to increase the richness and depth of the concepts that have been identified here. Further research will be needed into aspects that were identified for theoretical sampling and have been noted in the discussion and findings. Pedagogical issues are an example of an aspect of early childhood leadership and management thus identified for more detailed and urgent research.

Bias, and interpretation of data

Not only were each participant's perceptions one person's view; they were also heard and interpreted by one researcher in this study, who, using personal qualities and motivations, skills and interests (or biases) was likely to select issues that she noticed or understood, perhaps ignoring others just as valid. Both participant and researcher bias are open to interpretation and need to be considered as a study is prepared and the findings read. The triangulation processes noted above were put into place to attempt to reduce the possibilities of bias and inappropriate interpretation, and the constant comparison of interview data afforded by the grounded theory method also assisted in providing further checks and balances in producing the findings. However, further research projects of a similar type would be useful in triangulating the findings of the present study.

Participant motivation

The motivation of participants to take part in the research was not studied and may have influenced data to an unknown extent. It is likely that a number of reasons may have existed as possible motivating forces, from a philanthropic desire to further early childhood progress, through pressure from a supervisor or considerations of researcher

status, to seeking an opportunity to complain about others. An awareness of these issues needs to be maintained in using the findings.

Sample size

The present study sample was small (ten centres, 51 participants) and located in a geographically limited area of Aotearoa/New Zealand (i.e. in one city). While the first selection was made randomly within three MoE categories of authority, each subsequently-selected centre was approached only if it was different in some way from those previously selected (such as from a different type of socio-economic area or of a different size). The findings are therefore not generalisable to other populations, and may not be appropriate to centres developed for particular cultural or philosophical purposes (e.g. ngā Kōhanga Reo, Montessori, Steiner) or with different organisational arrangements, such as kindergartens, or in rural settings. The findings of the study are intended to offer considerations and trends that could be explored more specifically in future research.

The literature review

The literature review provided a useful method of assisting with extending and focussing ideas as well as triangulating data, but much of the organisational culture and structure literature was based in other education sectors and in the masculine and corporate world, as little is available in the field of early childhood. While the use of research as it relates to other fields may be useful, caution must be employed in transferring it to early childhood.

Organisational culture

The size and resourcing parameters of this study prevented thorough observation of behaviours and collection of further information that would have assisted in increasing the richness of the data relating to the concept. Participant observation, for example, is a method commonly used in qualitative case studies (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) which may have enhanced the data collection and provided more focus on aspects of organisational culture that could not be seen from the status of an outsider (Owens & Steinhoff, 1989).

Further research using this method could provide a deeper understanding of organisational culture in early childhood centres in Aotearoa/ New Zealand.

The need for further research into aspects of the present study that were identified for theoretical sampling (for example, pedagogical issues) has been mentioned briefly already. However, pedagogical issues and their relationships with (and possible dependency on) organisational culture require further specific research to ensure that early childhood centre culture is not impeding children's learning. As an example, it may not be enough to require that increasing numbers of staff members become qualified if centre culture actively works against the implementation of the newly attained skills and knowledge of beginning teachers. If this was the case, further strategies that impact on centre cultures may be needed to ensure that teachers are able to use effective pedagogies to enhance learning opportunities for children.

The concept of organisational culture has been more difficult to incorporate in this study than was originally anticipated. As noted in the Chapter Two, it was difficult to locate literature that focused on situations in early childhood education settings in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Hatherly, 1997; Livingstone, 2001). As could be expected, the small amount of literature on organisational culture from other countries regarding early childhood education and the large amount from other subcultures in education, and from other areas of enterprise (such as the corporate world) could not be transposed in their entirety for use in the present study. Difficulties were thus experienced in making clear links between evidence from the present study and the main body of theory on organisational culture.

In addition, further problems were experienced because of the lack of knowledge about organisational culture demonstrated by centre personnel. These difficulties arose, perhaps, because of the minimal attention that has been given by successive governments to ensuring that qualified early childhood staff members, who understand the importance and the impact of organisational culture, are in positions to implement it positively. Possibly, a lack of resources, and societal beliefs about children merely needing care

(noted in earlier chapters) are two further reasons why there has been a dearth of expertise and research in the field. However, it is possible that issues raised in this study will form the basis for further research on organisational culture in the early childhood subculture, thus informing and expanding the field. Issues pertaining to the hegemonic influences of images held of children within organisational cultures, structure and activities in early childhood and other education sectors could be the topic of future research possibilities implicated by the present study. Research that further identifies ways in which organisational culture impacts on curriculum and pedagogical leadership is another example of a possible future focus that could enhance children's learning.

Epilogue

Organisational culture is, according to Schein (1992) “a pattern of basic assumptions” (p. 12) that is considered valid by a group and taught to incoming members. This study has used the lens provided by theories of organisational culture to examine the layers of beliefs, values, assumptions and understandings of some of those who work in early childhood centres. This was done in order to suggest ways of focusing on the provision of centres in which leadership and management skills and knowledge will enhance learning environments for children. The findings highlighted the importance of considering how the image we hold of children will affect them in the educational environments we construct for them. It also provided a theoretical model of considerations that could assist in the construction and maintenance of those environments to ensure that children’s opportunities to maximise their potential are realised.

The education sector, however, reflects the hegemonic practices of the wider society in which we live. Ultimately, only when our society has a clear and conscious image of the child and childhood will early childhood education truly hold

...the image of the child as rich, strong and powerful. The emphasis (should be) placed on seeing the children as unique subjects with rights rather than simply needs. They have potential, plasticity, the desire to grow, curiosity, the ability to be amazed, and the desire to relate to other people and to communicate.

(Rinaldi, 1993)

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Appendices

Appendix A

**NUD.IST: Nonnumerical, Unstructured Data in qualitative research by
supporting processes of Indexing, Searching and Theorising**

NUD.IST: Non-numerical, Unstructured Data in qualitative research by supporting processes of Indexing, Searching and Theorising

(notes sources from mini-manual for NUD.IST 3.0.4, Microsoft Windows System revised 1 May 1994)

NUD.IST is designed for both organisation and creativity. It allows users to combine data in ways that feed the results of one process back into the project for further exploration and combination with other explorations. Any of the processes of searching text or indexing produce automatically formatted and documented output, with simple statistics, easily read or saved as a file to be opened in a selected word processor. NUD.IST has its own editor, so ideas can be kept in editable memos and ideas or data segments saved or copied directly into reports.

Qualitative research requires managing records that are complex and rich. This means that they can be messy and hard to do justice to, and be very difficult to analyse rigorously. NUD.IST is designed to help users handle such records. The user can:

- create a document system to store documents without losing their complexity or context;
- combine documents that are on the computer with text or other documents that are off-line (photos, reports, cuttings, letters, etc.);
- store and retrieve text from any document;
- store a header about the context of any document;
- record factual information about documents, cases, people, etc.
- write and edit a memo about a document;
- search for words or patterns of characters in the text of documents;
- automatically index the finds from text searches.

Qualitative research further requires the development of ideas and categories for thinking about the data records, and, as these ideas grow, linking them and exploring their links

with data. NUD.IST helps you create such categories for thinking about the data, and manage them in an index system. The user can:

- create codes or categories for thinking about the data;
- do any amount of indexing of segments of text, on screen;
- bring together passages of text and related ideas at a category for interpretation and analysis;
- search for combinations of indexing, to explore patterns in the data and ask questions about it;
- record emerging theorising, the user's understanding, explanations "making sense" of the data, in notes and memos;
- record the answers to questions, and use them as a base for further exploration of the data;
- test theories or hypotheses.

The index system

- provides a tree-structured index system (for an example, see overview of family tree system in Figure 14 on p. 380, and node headings in Figure 15 on p. 381),
- provides nodes with: titles, definitions, memos, references to text units in data documents (see p. 384/386 for examples),
- can be browsed in many ways, structure rearranged and contents changed at any time.

Data documents

- have a header about the file
- have documents divided into sections with sub-headers
- include numbered text units defined by the user
- contain memos about documents

Using the NUD.IST computer software programme within each research phase

The NUD.IST programme facilitated the storage of data, enabled continuous comparisons to be made between codes (nodes) and categories, and enabled quick and easy access to

all data throughout all of the research phases. Use of the programme is detailed here for the research phases outlined in Chapter Three (p. 100-107).

Phase 1: Collection, coding and categorising data.

Collection and transcribing of interviews

In the present study, the NUD.IST software programme was used to enter and store the fifty-one interview initial transcripts. These were transcribed verbatim and then entered into the NUD.IST software programme with pseudonyms provided for each. Each transcript was labelled with a letter of the alphabet denoting the centre with which the participant was linked (e.g. B for Centre B) and a number denoting the participant's role in the centre. 1 was used for the licensee, 2 for the supervisor/ manager, 3 or 4 for staff and 5 or 6 for parents. Thus, the participants from Centre B were B1Greta, B2 Natasha, B3Carol, B4Donna, B5Susan and B6Bianca.

Analysing interview data into "nodes"

Entering each transcript in the NUD.IST programme enabled each line to be numbered. The transcripts were then coded by nominating sections of each transcript to be stored in files. These files are ordered in a structure similar to a family tree with a "root" title determining the category under which code files (called nodes) will be stored. (Please note that the term "node" will be used in this appendix, but "code" will be used in the body of the research report).

As an example of a node, "Communication" was nominated as a root, and four nodes (licensee, supervisor, staff and parents) were constructed as the first level of nodes. Under each of these nodes were listed sub-nodes such as "oral", "written" and "regarding child". If needed, sub-sub nodes were labelled to store further material; as an example, coded under the "Communication" (root); "parent" (sub-node); "regarding child" (sub-sub-node) were "assessment of development" and "health". Memo-writing provision is connected to each node.

The root and node titles were determined from the content of the transcripts by the researcher. 46 files were created for the licensees' transcripts, 44 for supervisors' transcripts, 36 for transcripts of staff members, and 38 for parents' transcripts (a total of 164 files across the four main categories). An example of a list of nodes is on p. 356-8.

Some sections of transcripts were stored in several nodes (e.g. a staff member discussing "teamwork" in the centre in which she was employed had that section of her transcript entered in files "3 12 Teamwork", "3 15 Leadership" and "3 13 Philosophy of Centre" because all three issues were addressed in her conversation).

Categorising nodes

The process of categorisation in NUD.IST involves checking through nodes, some of which are extremely similar. The nodes are combined or stored in close proximity to each other for later attention.

Phase 2: Constant comparison of data leading to concept formation

When the initial interviewing and coding set was completed, a print-out of nodes revealed the numbers of entries in each. Those with the highest numbers of entries reflected issues which participants discussed more often, and were re-read by the researcher first. Common patterns and links were noted in nodes and sub-nodes across all four first-level nodes (licensee, supervisor, staff and parents). A second coding phase of this study then began with a new set of files being set up (still separated in the four licensee, supervisor, staff and parent categories) to accommodate the links noted.

Phase 3: Concept development

The new set of files resulted in eight categories and 48 nodes that captured the issues most frequently raised in the interviews. The smaller nodes in the first coding set were then re-visited, and in many cases were included within the categories that emerged in the second coding set. Some were not used because they had only one or two documents, indicating that they had not been widely supported. The process of re-organising provided a matrix-like method of checking each node and its sub-nodes within the first coding set,

and allowed the researcher to continuously compare the data across the nodes of both coding sets.

As each category or node was entered into the second coding set of this study, an electronic audit trail was kept of the original node and its destination in new node or category entries. Theoretical sampling, involving interviewing three supervisors for a second time, involved further transcribing and categorising.

Phase 4: Clarification, modification and integration of concepts and writing of the research report

The overlapping nature of the research phases meant that interviewing, coding and categorisation was undertaken simultaneously at times. The NUD.IST software allowed aspects of transcripts to be copied directly into the report, and continuous comparisons to be made between categories and nodes throughout the report-writing period.

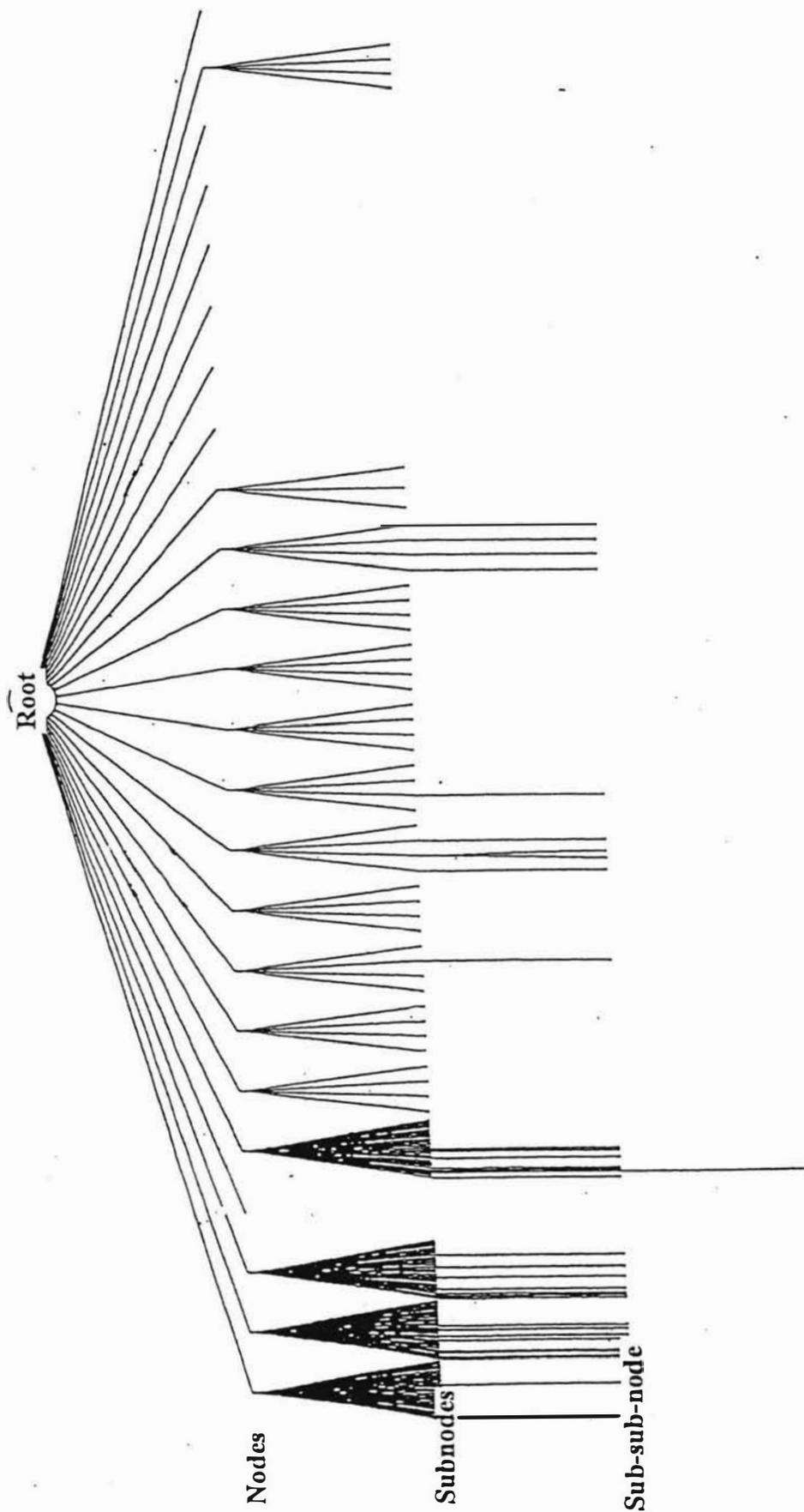


Figure 14: A diagrammatic illustration of the “family tree” storage system of the NUD.IST software programme, showing its root, node, sub-node and sub-sub node capabilities as used in the present study.

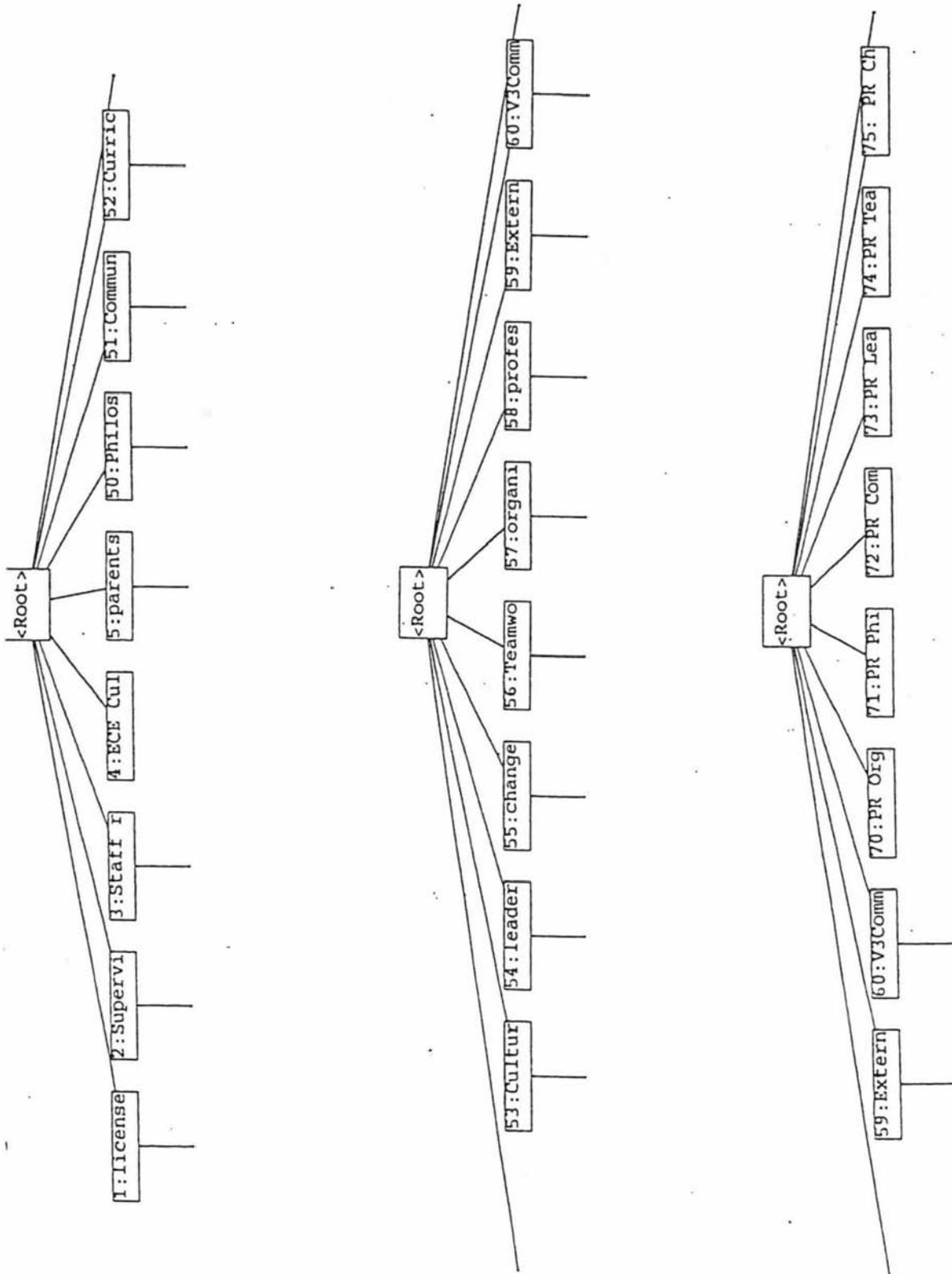


Figure 15: A diagram of the nodes used in the NUD.IST software programme to store categorised data.

An example of sub-nodes and sub-sub-nodes listed under the "1: Licensee management" node in the NUD.IST system.

Q.S.R. NUD·IST Power version, revision 3.0 GUI.
Licensee: L.McLeod.

PROJECT: PHD, ..User Lorraine McLeod, 9:53 pm, Oct 5, 2001.

```
*****
(1) /licensee management
*** Definition:
licensee managing staff, finances, purchases, tax, appraisals
This node indexes 10 documents.
*****
(1 28) /licensee management/administration
*** Definition:
admin undertaken or defined by licensee
This node indexes 3 documents.
*****
(1 18) /licensee management/beginning as a licensee
*** Definition:
licensee beginning job
This node indexes 5 documents.
*****
(1 3) /licensee management/communication withparents
*** Definition:
any form of communication with parents
This node indexes 4 documents.
*****
(1 3 3) /licensee management/communication withparents/curriculum provision
*** Definition:
planning and delivering the curriculum
This node indexes 3 documents.
*****
(1 3 1) /licensee management/communication withparents/face-to-face
*** Definition:
comm with parents orally on a face-to-face basis
This node indexes 7 documents.
*****
(1 3 2) /licensee management/communication withparents/meetings
*** Definition:
comm. with parents at arranged meetings
This node indexes 4 documents.
*****
(1 30) /licensee management/Culture
*** Definition:
myths, legends, other aspects contributing to culture of centre
This node indexes 3 documents.
*****
(1 9) /licensee management/curriculum provision
*** Definition:
lic. view of responsibility for curriculum provision
This node indexes 7 documents.
*****
(1 23) /licensee management/dis advantages of belong to larger org
*** No Definition
This node indexes 3 documents.
*****
(1 24) /licensee management/Disciplinary procedures
*** No Definition
This node indexes 4 documents.
*****
```

```

(1 19)                /licensee management/employing staff
*** Definition:
licensee view on employing staff
This node indexes 8 documents.
*****
(1 4)                 /licensee management/environment in centre
*** Definition:
licensee view of importance of centre environ
This node indexes 6 documents.
*****
(1 16)                /licensee management/getting support
*** Definition:
where licensee gets support from
This node indexes 5 documents.
*****

(1 25)                /licensee management/management structures
*** No Definition
This node indexes 4 documents.
*****
(1 21)                /licensee management/mentoring
*** No Definition
This node indexes 3 documents.
*****
(1 31)                /licensee management/outside agencies
*** Definition:
reporting to or dealing with outside agencies
This node indexes 2 documents.
*****
(1 20)                /licensee management/owner role
*** Definition:
combined role of owner and licensee
This node indexes 2 documents.
*****
(1 20 1)              /licensee management/owner role/beginning role as licensee own
*** Definition:
own view of issues faced as beginning licensee owner
This node indexes 3 documents.
*****
(1 15)                /licensee management/parent input
*** Definition:
parental input into centre issues
This node indexes 3 documents.
*****
(1 5)                 /licensee management/philosophy
*** Definition:
licensee view of centre philosophy
This node indexes 9 documents.
*****
(1 10)                /licensee management/prof. dev.
*** Definition:
licensees arranging own or others' prof dev
This node indexes 4 documents.
*****
(1 27)                /licensee management/relationship with supervisor
*** No Definition
This node indexes 3 documents.

```

```

*****
26) /licensee management/Sense of responsibility
* Definition:
pressed sense of responsibility
is node indexes 4 documents.
*****
11) /licensee management/staff dispositions
* Definition:
aff attitudes and dispositions around chn.
is node indexes 3 documents.
*****
1) /licensee management/staff management
* Definition:
1 things to do with managing staff
is node indexes 6 documents.
*****
1 12) /licensee management/staff management/appraisals
* Definition:
censee using appraisals to make goals
is node indexes 4 documents.
*****
1 13) /licensee management/staff management/change
* Definition:
censee leading change
is node indexes 7 documents.
*****
1 6) /licensee management/staff management/communication
* Definition:
mmunication with and between staff
is node indexes 7 documents.
*****
1 14) /licensee management/staff management/compliance
* Definition:
* Definition:

```

Appendix B

Information for participants, consent, questionnaire and diary forms

- B1: Introductory letter to participant p. 386**
- B2: Information sheet p. 387**
- B3: Statements of informed consent: Manager/Owner/Chairperson/Licensee p. 389**
Staff and Parents p. 390
- B4: Demographic questionnaires : Owner/Manager/Chairperson/Licensee p. 391**
Staff p. 393
Parents p. 394
- B5: Centre Licensee/Supervisor or Supervisor diary form p. 395**

B1.

Introductory letter to participant.

(date)

Dear

My name is Lorraine McLeod, and I am studying for a PhD at Massey University while working atIt is in my role as a student that I would like to look at the management of early childhood centres as my PhD topic. I am writing to explain a little about the project in the hope that you will be willing to consider sharing your ideas and thoughts and take part in the study, together with staff and parents from your centre.

I am interested in what centre managers and/or owners, staff and parents identify as leadership and management practices currently used in centres. I would like to explore their ideas about the most important practices, and which ones are considered "best practice". I am also interested in those practices which need improvement, and how they might be improved.

The enclosed Information Sheet explains the study. Briefly, it will involve participants undertaking a one-to-two hour tape-recorded interview initially, with the possibility of a second, shorter interview at a later date. I would be happy to conduct the interviews at any quiet venue in work hours, lunch hours, or at weekends. All centres and participants will remain confidential to me and my supervisors, and will not be identified in any way in the final report. Any participant is free to withdraw from the study at any time.

In addition to an exploration of ideas about leadership and management practices, my interviews with the owner or manager would also involve reading the latest ERO report on the centre and discussing any documents (such as newsletters, programmes) which are identified by the owner / manager as important. As well, the owner or manager who is in the position of running the centre on a day-to-day basis will be asked to keep a diary of activities for three separate days and to discuss it at the time of interview.

I am really looking forward to talking to and learning from early childhood centre people about their work, as very little information is available about the management and leadership roles of those who "manage" early childhood centres.

If you are willing, I will arrange to visit to discuss the study and explain more details to you, and then discuss it with the parents and staff you think might be interested in participating.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have, and to talk further about the study. I will ring you within the next week to see whether or not you are possibly interested in participating. I look forward to talking to you then.

Regards,

Lorraine McLeod
ph.(a/h) or
..... (wk)

B2

INFORMATION SHEET

Title of investigation: Leadership and Management in Early Childhood Centres: A Qualitative Case Study.

Researcher: Lorraine McLeod.

Research Supervisors: Dr. Sarah Farquhar, Massey University (first supervisor)

Dr. Wayne Edwards, Massey University (second supervisor)

Purpose of study:

The purpose of the study is to:

- a). Identify leadership and management practices currently used in centres.
- b). Explore participants' perceptions of the quality of centre leadership and management practices.
- c). Identify what is considered to be "best practice" in each centre in the study.
- d). Use the above data to develop a theoretical model of quality management in early childhood education.

Centres and participants:

Ten centres will be randomly selected and approached to participate in the study. Participants (the owner/ manager or committee chairperson, the centre licensee [if this is not the manager], two staff members and two parents who have no direct involvement in centre management) will be invited to participate in the proposed study. The sample will thus include 50 - 60 people from the ten centres.

Each person who agrees to take part in the study will be asked to fill out a consent form and a questionnaire providing personal and professional information about their role in the centre and the centre itself. All participants have the right not to answer any particular questions in the questionnaire or subsequent interview(s), and may withdraw from the study at any time.

Interview procedures:

During the first interview (of one-to-two hours duration), each participant will be asked to identify and then discuss leadership and management practices used in "their" centre. They will be asked to explain their views and ideas of what constitutes "best" leadership and management practices and their thoughts about what could be improved. Suggestions about how improvements could be made will also be sought. Interviews will be tape-recorded; participants can terminate the interview at any time, decline to answer any question, or indicate that particular responses not be tape-recorded. A copy of the transcribed interview will be sent to the participant so that changes can be made if desired.

The centre manager or owner (whoever runs the centre on a daily basis) will, in addition to the above, be asked to keep a diary of their centre-related working activities for three days, and to discuss it with the researcher at the time of the interview. The latest ERO report will also be read and discussed in relation to management and leadership issues, as will any other documents suggested by the manager/owner.

It is possible that the researcher may contact the participant at a later date to clarify certain points, or to request a further (shorter) interview to explore some details in greater depth, and to verify previous comments and ideas. Each participating centre will be sent a concise draft summary of the main findings by May, 2000. I hope to complete my PhD report for examination by the university by 2004.

Confidentiality:

Every possible attempt will be made to ensure that research data will remain confidential to the researcher and research supervisors. Confidentiality and anonymity is assured to the extent allowed by law. Each participant will be recorded against a code, and no individuals or centres will be identified by the researcher in any published material or to any other person or centre. However, it must be made clear that the researcher has no control over what participants choose to discuss with other people. In order to

maintain full confidentiality, it will be important that participants do not discuss the study with other people outside of their centre.

All data will be stored in a locked office to which only the researcher has access. Files containing tapes will be coded, locked, and stored separately from lists which identify participants and if tape recordings are transcribed by anyone other than the researcher, those people will be required to sign confidentiality statements.

Recorded material will be safely destroyed within twelve months of the study's completion for the protection of the research participants.

Freedom to refuse or withdraw:

Participation is entirely voluntary and participants can withdraw at any time.

Contact persons:

Research Supervisor:

Dr Sarah Farquhar,
Massey University
Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North
ph. (06) 356 9099 ext 8620

Research Supervisor:

Dr Wayne Edwards
Massey University
Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North
ph. (06) 356 9099 ext 8968

Researcher:

Lorraine McLeod,
(address).....
ph (.....) (wk)
(.....) (hm)

B3
Title Of Investigation:
Leadership And Management In Early Childhood Centres: A Qualitative Case Study.

STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT: Manager/Owner/Chairperson/Licensee

1. I have read and understood the "Information Sheet" for this study.
2. I have consulted centre staff and parents, and agree that the centre I own / manage will participate in the study.
3. The nature and possible effects of this study have been explained to me by Lorraine McLeod, PhD student, Massey University.
4. I agree / do not agree to the interview being taped.
5. I understand that I may be asked to participate in a second interview to discuss some issues in more depth and to check interpretations of what I have said.
6. I undertake to show and discuss with the researcher any items which I consider relevant to the study, as well as to complete a diary for three days.
7. I understand there are no anticipated physiological or psychological risks, and that I may request that the tape recorder be stopped or the interview terminated if I feel uncomfortable or unhappy about issues discussed.
8. Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.
9. I agree that research data gathered for the study may be published provided that neither I nor the centre in which I work can be identified, and that the information will be used only for this research and publications arising from this research project.
10. I agree to participate in the investigation described in the Information Sheet, and understand that I may withdraw at any time.

Name of participant:

Signature of participant:..... Date:.....

10. I have explained this project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe the consent is informed and that she / he understands the implications of participation.

Name of researcher:.....

Signature of researcher:..... Date:.....

STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT: STAFF AND PARENTS

Title Of Investigation:
Leadership And Management In Early Childhood Centres: A Qualitative Case Study.

- . I have read and understood the "Information Sheet" for this study.
- . The nature and possible effects of this study have been explained to me by Lorraine McLeod, PhD student, Massey University.
- . I agree / do not agree to the interview being taped.
- . I understand that I may be asked to participate in a second interview to discuss some issues in more depth and to check interpretations of what I have said.
- . I understand there are no anticipated physiological or psychological risks, and that I may request that the tape recorder be stopped or the interview terminated if I feel uncomfortable or unhappy about issues discussed.
- . Any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.
- . I agree that research data gathered for the study may be published provided that neither I nor the centre in which I work can be identified, and that the information will be used only for this research and publications arising from this research project.
- . I agree to participate in the investigation described in the Information Sheet, and understand that I may withdraw at any time.

Name of participant:

Signature of participant:..... Date:.....

. I have explained this project and the implications of participation in it to this volunteer and I believe the consent is informed and that she / he understands the implications of participation.

Name of researcher:.....

Signature of researcher:..... Date:.....

15. My educational / training background (please list qualifications and dates with the most recent first) is:

16. My work background (please include dates, and any non-early-childhood work experience and parenthood) is:

17. There are (number) staff, including support staff, employed in this centre. Their roles are:

Title of investigation: Leadership and Management in Early Childhood Centres: A Qualitative Case Study.

Staff details:

Please note: All details recorded below are confidential to the researcher and her supervisors. You may decline to answer any question.

1. Name:
2. Position:
3. Centre address & ph. no.

4. I have worked in my present position for years months

5. The number of hours I work per week are:
6. My daily work time schedules are:

7. My age now is: under 20, 20-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60, 61 plus (please circle one)
8. My current gross salary is:
 or my current gross weekly / fortnightly / monthly wage is:

If more writing space is needed, please add extra paper.

9. Family / personal details which I must consider in relation to my work (eg. children, if any, and their ages, distance travelled to work, study or other commitments)

10. My educational / training background (please list qualifications and dates with the most recent first)

11. Work background (including dates, and non-early-childhood work experience and parenthood)

Title of investigation: Leadership and Management in Early Childhood Centres: A Qualitative Case Study.

Parent details:

Please note: All details recorded below are confidential to the researcher and her supervisors. You may decline to answer any question.

1. Name:

2. Centre name and address:

3. I have (number) child/ren aged enrolled at the above centre.

4. I have been associated with this centre for approximately years and months.

5. I selected this centre for my children because

6. Please complete a) or b):

a) My involvement (eg, fundraising, parent helping, management committee) with the centre has included:

b) I have had no involvement in the management or daily operation of the centre except to deliver and collect my child(ren).

B5

Title of investigation: Leadership and Management in Early Childhood Centres: A Qualitative Case Study.

Centre Licensee/Supervisor or Supervisor diary form

The person who manages each centre involved in the study will be asked to keep a diary of the tasks undertaken on any three "typical" centre days. The purpose of the diary forms is to determine the many and varied roles performed by the person who manages the daily operations of an early childhood centre, and their feelings or views of these roles. When completed, the diary will be discussed and coded by the manager and the researcher. The data will then be used in the study.

It is recognised that managing an early childhood centre is a busy and demanding role, so the diary form should only contain sufficient notes to outline each task undertaken, the time each one took, and brief notes about your views of the task. It is fine to write in note or abbreviated form, and it is not expected that each form will be in pristine shape at the end of a day! Please do not worry if it looks untidy.

It would be helpful if a 3cm column could be ruled down one side of each page so that codes can be decided upon and written alongside the text during your discussion with the researcher later. Apart from that, your diary needs only to have your name and centre on it, and for each page to be numbered.

Each page could look similar to this:

Mary Johnston
Park Centre
Date:

1

| Time | Activities / Comment | Code |
|------|----------------------|------|
| | | |

Appendix C

Guiding questions/ideas for interviews.

Guiding questions/ideas for interviews.

The following guide was used by the researcher to provide conversational ideas as a reminder to the researcher if the participant did not volunteer the topics. The guiding questions (within the interview structures noted) were not asked in any particular order, and were not necessarily worded as they appear below.

Introduction

Personal details:

- Nature of responsibilities?
- General view of role in centre?

Personal history with centre:

- What positions did you hold previously?
- Why did you choose this centre?
- What length of time have you been employed here?
- Did your expectations of the centre match the reality of working here?

Probing questions:

After most probing questions, the question *Can you think of any ways of improving on what happens here?* (or similar) was asked.

- What are some of the things you need to do in order to get on well here?
- How do you feel about doing those things?
- Please describe how the centre is managed.
- What *is* management? – leadership? – administration?
- How do people interact, communicate, get on with each other?
- Who makes decisions here? How?
- What is the philosophy of the centre? (Or-- what is the centre here for?)
- Who makes sure that the philosophy is followed? How did you know about it?
- If staff don't follow the philosophy, what happens?
- Are there "unwritten" expectations here about what you should do?
- Do the processes (or atmosphere) suit you? Why, or why not?
- Who decides what the children will do? (If not you, how do you know what they will do?)
- Who /decides future directions / does forward planning / leads the centre? If it is done, how far ahead is planning considered? What sorts of things are planned?
- Who (if anyone) is consulted about future plans or changes?
- Who makes changes? How? Why? With what effects? How often?
- Who ensures compliance with regulations and legislation? What effect does this have?
- How is the centre financed? Who makes financial decisions? How are they made?
- How do you (or the identified leader) manage / lead? What are the strengths/ weaknesses in the management or leadership style here? Why are they strengths/weaknesses?
- What customs (or rituals or ceremonies or celebrations) does the centre have? Why did you instigate them? / How did you learn about them?

Ending questions

- Is there anything else you can think of that would help me understand how this centre works?
- Is there anything else you'd like to tell me?

Appendix D

Examples of memos written during interview analysis

Examples of memos written during interview analysis

The following three pages are an example of a NUD.IST memo, generated as items were added to node 5 18. Sections of interview transcript were entered, as well as ideas for linking with other interview sections.

On p. 403 is a photocopy of a memo made during fieldwork, taken from the researcher's journal.

D6Nora discussed the 'culture of children'-- all the people there share the same values and culture regarding children and that's really good' --- 'It's what you see kids as. Are they the recipient of your power? Are they subordinate in your --- or are they people who haven't grown up yet who deserve respect? What are they? Are they your possessions? What are they? They've got a very good culture there and I think that's very important'.

***THIS SEEMED TO FIT WHAT DOREEN SAID:

E5 Doreen 'They always seem to employ people who are very children oriented. I know that sounds silly with a centre, but I've actually seen some centres that I've gone to where the actual teachers don't seem to like children much. So I think that they do a good job of hiring their staff and generally I think that they have a good child focus rather than maybe just a monetary focus. They put a lot of money into their centre, they've got good facilities and good toys and what have you, and obviously they're willing to pay a bit extra for their staff'.

E5 Doreen I think their teachers are good, they seem to be very child-oriented and my kids are happy there.

***LINK 5 1 1 WITH 5 18 IN TERMS OF CULTURE OF CHILDREN / STAFF ATTITUDES -- AND WITH B6BIANCA LINE 346 AND ELRENA 364

AND WITH 1 11 AND 2 15 OR 2 26 AND 1 22

1 22 Brincia lines 201 -222

I2 Melanic

*Q2 What's that satisfying bit? What is it because it is its different? 31

++ Text units 40-55:

sitting and looking at all the accounts trying to figure them out and I enjoyed that but there is 40

something incredibly soul satisfying working with people. When I walked in this morning, I 41

came in and the traffic was horrendous, I slept in, only had time for a quick shower, didn't have 42

time to wash my hair so I zapped in here and I walked in the front door and a little three year old 43

boy said I'll carry your bag and somebody else ran up and gave me a hug and there is something 44

incredibly personal and something really soul, it gets to your soul. If one of our children is sick we take our role in helping that child get 45

over the illness. Its probably less tangible than being in an office. You can call it a downside, but if there is a slight downside 46

to working in childcare, its much easier to leave things at the office, childcare it is less easy. 47

48

*Q3 Is that the intimacy of it? 49

50
Melanic 51

I think that's a good word. It is the intimacy, the personal involvement, it is, we become part of 52

the extended family and in many cases decisions for a child are sometimes not made unless we've 53

been consulted and we really value that. We are part of the team. 54

55

ALSO I135 Tepe -- ATTITUDES OF TEACHER . SEE 3 28 OR LINES 310-347 310-347:

Tepe 310

Saa, for me, because she, just seeing her work with the children and talk with the children and they 311

just respond to her, just automatically. 312

313

*Q54 What was that she could talk and she could relate to them? Why was it so special? 314

315
Tepe 316

You know, she just. People were people to her, it didn't matter if they were a child or an adult, or 317

nationality, she just took everybody as they were. 318

319

| | | | |
|---|--|-----|-----|
| *Q55 | Must have been very special? | 320 | |
| | | 321 | |
| <i>Tepe</i> | | 322 | |
| Yes, she was. | | 323 | |
| | | 324 | |
| *Q56 | And so, her way of thinking, is still around? | 325 | |
| | | 326 | |
| <i>Tepe</i> | | 327 | |
| Yes. | | 328 | |
| | | 329 | |
| *Q57 | Tell me a bit about how and in what way? It's just that a lot of people have mentioned her. | 330 | |
| | | 331 | |
| <i>Tepe</i> | | 332 | |
| Yes. Her, one of the strong points was the children's rights, not rights, but you speak to the children. And respectful people. To allow them to, to allow them in their own way to learn and | | 333 | |
| | | 334 | |
| | | 335 | |
| *Q58 | And to be respected or whatever by the sound of it, or whatever they thought? Its | 336 | |
| | interesting because you know she's obviously made a mark on the centre. When I spoke to M she talked with pride about, I didn't know about this other woman. | 337 | |
| | | 338 | |
| | | 339 | |
| <i>Tepe</i> | | 340 | |
| Mira? | | 341 | |
| | | 342 | |
| *Q59 | Yes. The thing that M spoke with pride about the children with special needs and the | 343 | |
| | multicultural aspect of the centre and the bi-cultural nature there and it's probably coming through still. | 344 | |
| | | 345 | |
| *** | AND SALLY WHO TALKS ABOUT QUALITIES OF CENTRE -- STAFF ATTRIBUTES. DOES THIS LINK WITH ATTITUDES AND DISPOSITIONS ABOUT CHILDREN? | | |
| | 345-387: | | |
| | That's what we're talking at the moment, I value having seen here at the creche full time employees as opposed to part time. There's a huge difference in the commitment they all give to extra curricular work. Even myself, now that sounds really strange, but seeing that same person here everyday its really nice for me to see the same person and not looking round to see who's on today so I imagine for the children to be able to walk in every day whenever that may be and see the same people there would be also very calming so my preference is for full time, more full time staff. | 345 | |
| | | 346 | |
| | | 347 | |
| | | 348 | |
| | | 349 | |
| | | 350 | |
| | | 351 | |
| | | 352 | |
| *Q49 | What sort of skills and attributes do they need do you think? | 353 | |
| | | 354 | |
| SUSAN | | 355 | |
| Well qualifications are great, because to have the knowledge behind what you are doing, the friendliness and the smile, and being able to talk to children obviously. | | 356 | |
| | | 357 | |
| | | 358 | |
| *Q50 | Can you just elaborate on that a little bit more? What does talk to children mean? | 359 | |
| | The reason that I'm asking is that it comes through a lot of times and I'm just trying to pin it down. | 360 | 401 |
| | | 361 | |
| | | 362 | |
| | | 362 | |

SUSAN 363
Talk to them on their level. There's a lot of people out there who are
able to talk at children 364
or talk around them or just don't really listen to them, so I'm talking
about communication 365
in its entity, so being able to listen and help them express but on an
even level and you can 366
notice that like some of the cultural things. I've just noticed with my
children how a different 367
culture, and I like that but I think it needs to be explained to the
children sometimes, about 368
people's cultures and things and different teachers and I just think its
wonderful, particularly 369
here, we've been able to have several different teachers from different
cultures and that's been 370
wonderful. 371
372

*Q510Right and children get the experience of working with 373

SUSAN 374
Yes. So that's what I meant by talking to children. 375
376
377

*Q520Thank you. I'm just trying to come up with a definition for it.
Its hard to, if I get 378

enough input I'll be able to 379
380
381

SUSAN
Yes, well so many people just don't attribute them. Children are
immensely intelligent. I 382
just never ever under-estimate their intelligence because they are
actually more pure than we 383
are so therefore they can see through to the core, no matter what words
you stick around it 384
they are immensely intelligent and you've got to really respect them for
that, so respecting 385
children would be a big one. That they're not better. 386
387

LINK TO 5 18; SUPERVISOR SPEAKING OF STAFF DISPOSITIONS.
KIL
+++ Retrieval for this document: 17 units out of 684, = 2.5%
++ Text units 176-192:

*Q.25 What do you look for when you're employing staff, what are the main 176
criteria? 177
L .: For me, I like someone who I can see is going to have a rapport
with the 178
children. I'm really more interested in imagination, creativity, I love
music and 179
movement mat times, so I look for someone who's fun and that kind of
stuff. But 180
I also like someone who's very steady and very solid because I like the
kids to have 181
a kind of continuity inasmuch as they know that that person's just going
to be 182
there the same every day. I don't like flighty kind of people who are up
and down in 183
their moods and stuff like that and I tend to avoid people who are too
smothery, 184
you know, you can get some early childhood teachers or caregivers or
whatever 185
who are very smothery and I always remember that saying, you know, a
mother 186
should be like a quilt to keep her children warm but not to smother them.
And I 187
think that sometimes we or they or whoever you want to say, tend to
overcompensate for bad days for us by cuddly cuddling with the children
so I tend 188
avoid people like that who I think are going to use the children to help
them deal 189
with their own problems. 190
191
192



Here I read Kegan's note - top.
 - back to back p. 137 - leadership & management functions: leaders do things right
 - change right
 - also note from organization structure in ECE context - leaders are also managers

She also said that the physical layout of the centre means that she cannot 'switch off' - is always with her and she feels like head & arms with children
 - even when she is not restricted with children
 - what is support is really what is
 - she also said that the physical layout of the centre means that she cannot 'switch off' - is always with her and she feels like head & arms with children
 - even when she is not restricted with children
 - what is support is really what is
 - she also said that the physical layout of the centre means that she cannot 'switch off' - is always with her and she feels like head & arms with children
 - even when she is not restricted with children
 - what is support is really what is

Diary: Betty's overview (see) suggested that she oversees staff and works a lot with children (ie specific area where staff weaknesses exist - eg person rostered to work with babies on a particular day) or to cleaning or whatever - wherever support is needed

All interviews on NWOIST have Betty's diary. What will I do with them? How do they fit?
 Betty (supervisor)
 forget to check what improvement can be made. King & Clark
 Offer into on management structure - something to ask others about?

not such an articulate interviewee - was tired after day of work so found concentration difficult.
 (parent)
 18.07
 H4
 18.07

Appendix E

Summary of demographic data provided by licensees, supervisors and staff

Summary of demographic data provided by licensees, supervisors and staff

Full details of the demographic data supplied by four licensees, two licensee/supervisor/owners, three licensee/supervisors and one licensee/parent, five supervisors, and 20 staff members are presented in Table E1. The data were entered into Table E1 directly from the demographic questionnaire forms completed by each participant before their first interview. (The forms can be seen in Appendix B, p. 385).

The items to be completed (some by supervisors and others by all) included the centre name (pseudonym in the first column), the participant's name (pseudonym in the second column), the participants role in the centre (recorded in the third column), the centre category of authority, the number of children for which the centre is licensed, the socio-economic area served by the centre, the length of time the participant had worked in the centre, the hours she worked each week, and the range in which her age is located. In addition, each participant was asked her wage or salary (which was translated into an hourly rate) her professional qualifications and early childhood work experience, the number of staff employed in the centre, and the number of years for which the centre had been operating.

Table E1: Demographic data provided by licensees, supervisors and staff of centres

| Centre B | Participant code | Participant role | Centre funding category | No. of Chn | Socio-economic area | Participant held position for: | Hours per week worked | Participant age |
|----------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------|---------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| | B1Greta | Licensee | Corporate | 24 | medium-high | 6 months | 10 | 41-50 |
| | B2Natasha | Supervisor | | | | 6 months | 45 | 21-30 |
| | B3Carol | Staff | | | | 1 year | 40 | 21-30 |
| | B4Debra | Staff | | | | 10 months | 40 | 21-30 |

| Centre C | Participant code | Participant role | Centre funding category | No. of Chn | Socio-economic area | Participant held position for | Hours per week worked | Participant age |
|----------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| | C1Lorna | Licensee | Community | #25: (149 p/t) | medium | 9 months | 26 | 41-50 |
| | C2 Wilma | Supervisor | | | | 2 years | 32.5 | 41-50 |
| | C3Drina | Staff | | | | 6 months | 18 | 41-50 |
| | C4Rita | Staff | | | | | 32.5 | 20-30 |

| Centre D | Participant code | Participant role | Centre funding category | No. of Chn | Socio-economic area | Participant held position for | Hours per week worked | Participant age |
|----------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| | D1Lynn | Licensee Parent | Community | 18 | medium-high | 6 ¼ years | 40 | 41-50 |
| | D2Kate | Supervisor | | | | 2 years | 32 | 20-30 |
| | D3Inez | Staff | | | | 7 months | 27.5 | 31-40 |
| | D4Meda | Staff | | | | 3 years | 23.5 | 31-40 |

| Centre E | Participant code | Participant role | Centre funding category | No. of Chn | Socio-economic area | Participant held position for | Hours per week worked | Participant age | |
|----------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------|
| | E1Miranda | Licensee Supervisor | Private 2 centres | 50 | medium-high | 6 2/3 years | 55 | 31-40 | |
| | | Owner | | 20 | | | | | |
| | E3Trina | Staff | | | | | 3 1/3 years | 40 | 20-30 |
| | E4Robyn | Staff | | | | 4 ½ years | 40 | 20-30 | |

#: p/t = part time enrolments

| Centre B (cont) | Wage/ salary (p/wk) | Hourly rate | Professional Qualifications | ECE work experience | No. of staff in centre(s) | Centre(s) provided service for |
|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | \$432.00 | \$43 | Not provided | Not provided | *7:1L,1S, 4s, 1cook | 7 years |
| | \$673.00 | \$16.80 | Dip Teaching (ECE) | 6 years ECE | | |
| | \$615.00 | \$15.38 | 100+ licensing points | 5 years ECE | | |
| | \$461.00 | \$11.00 | None | No previous | | |

| Centre C (cont) | Wage/ salary (p/wk) | Hourly rate | Professional Qualifications | ECE work experience | No. of staff in centre(s) | Centre(s) provided service for |
|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | \$464.00 | \$17.80 | 100+ licensing points **Dip. Teaching (Primary) | 5 years | *6:1L,1S, 3s,1cleaner | 5 ½ years |
| | \$500.00 | \$15.38 | Dip. Teaching (ECE) | 9 years ECE | | |
| | \$312.00 | \$17.00 | Dip. Teaching (ECE) **Dip.Teaching (Primary) | 9 years ECE (part time) | | |
| | \$422.00 | \$12.98 | None | 6 years (nanny, part time) | | |

| Centre D (cont) | Wage/ salary (p/wk) | Hourly rate | Professional qualifications | ECE work experience | No. of staff in centre(s) | Centre(s) Provided service for |
|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|---|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Paid as other | part of job | **Dip Teaching (Primary) | None | *6: 1L, 1S,4s | 10 ¼ years |
| | \$450.00 | \$14.00 | 100+ licensing points | 6 years ECE | | |
| | \$250.00 | \$14.00 | **B.A.(Education) , **Dip Tchg (Secondary) | 1 year ECE | | |
| | \$300.00 | \$12.00 | **Professional Childcare Cert | | | |

| Centre E (cont) | Wage/ salary (p/wk) | Hourly rate | Professional qualifications | ECE work experience | No. of staff in centre(s) | Centre(s) provided service for |
|-----------------|---------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | \$900.00 | \$16.00 | Dip. Teaching (ECE) | 6 2/3 years ECE + 7 years Play Centre | *15:13s, 1cook, 2 managers | 6 2/3 years |
| | Not provided | Not provided | Dip. Teaching (ECE) | 2 years ECE | | |

* s=staff L=licensee S=supervisor

** qualifications not recognised for licensing centres

Table 1 (cont): Demographic data provided by licensees, supervisors and staff of centres

| Centre F | Participant Code | Participant role | Centre funding category | No. of Chn | Socio-economic area | Participant held position for | Hours per week worked | Participant age |
|----------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| | F1Brenda | Licensee Supervisor | Private | 50 | Low-medium | 3 years 5 months | 45 | 51-50 |
| | F3Caroline | Owner Staff | | | | 3 years 5 months | 40 | 41-50 |
| | F4Linda | Staff | | | | 3 years 6 months | 23.75 | 51-60 |
| Centre G | Participant Code | Participant role | Centre funding category | No. of Chn | Socio-economic area | Participant held position for | Hours per week worked | Participant age |
| | G1Rhonda | Licensee Supervisor | Corporate | 64 | Draws from all areas | 1 year 10months | 55 | 20-30 |
| | G3June | Staff | | | | | 40 | Not provided |
| | G4Mary | Staff | | | | 1 year 2 months | 31-40 | Not provided |
| Centre H | Participant code | Participant role | Centre funding category | No. of Chn | Socio-economic area | Participant held position for | Hours per week worked | Participant age |
| | H1Claire | Licensee Supervisor | Private | #20: 13f/t 15p/t | Medium-high | 8 years 9 months | 50 | 20-30 |
| | H3Ann | Owner Staff | | | | 4 months | 40.5 | 20-30 |
| | H4Vera | Staff | | | | 2 years | 36 | 20-30 |
| Centre I | Participant code | Participant role | Centre funding category | No. of Chn | Socio-economic area | Participant held position for | Hours per week worked | Participant age |
| | I1Mary-Anne | Licensee | Corporate | 36 | Low | 13 years | 10 | 51-60 |
| | I2Melanie | Supervisor | | | | 6 years | 40 | 41-50 |
| | I36Tan | Staff | | | | 16 ½ years | 39 | 31-40 |
| | I4TP | Parent Staff | | | | Not provided | 40 | 20-30 |

#: p/t = part time enrolments; f/t = full time enrolments

| Centre F (cont) | Wage/ salary (p/wk) | Hourly rate | Professional qualifications | ECE work experience | No. of staff in centre(s) | Centre(s) provided service for |
|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|---|---|---|--------------------------------|
| | \$400.00 | \$8.00 | 100+ licensing points | 8 years ECE | *8s (5 part time, 3 full time), 2L/ managers, 1 support | 3 years 6 months |
| | \$600.00 | \$15.00 | Dip. Teaching (ECE) | 4 years ECE | | |
| | \$285.00 | \$12.00 | **Professional Childcare Certificate | 3.5 years ECE | | |
| Centre G (cont) | Wage/ salary (p/wk) | Hourly rate | Professional qualifications | ECE work experience | No. of staff in centre(s) | Centre(s) provided service for |
| | \$1000. | \$18 | 100+ licensing points | 8 years ECE | 16: 1L, 14s, 1cook | 8years 10 months |
| | Not | provided | Dip. Teaching (ECE) Adv. Dip. Teaching | Not provided | | |
| | Not | provided | Dip. Teaching (ECE) | 5 years ECE | | |
| Centre H (cont) | Wage/ salary (p/wk) | Hourly rate | Professional qualifications | ECE work experience | No. of staff in centre(s) | Centre(s) provided service for |
| | Not | paid | Dip. Teaching (ECE) | 10 years ECE | *4: 1L, 2s full time & 1s part time | 8 years 9 months |
| | Not | provided | 100+ licensing points | 2 years ECE | | |
| | \$374.00 | \$10.00 | None | 2 years ECE | | |
| Centre I (cont) | Wage/ salary (p/wk) | Hourly rate | Professional qualifications | ECE work experience | No. of staff in centre(s) | Centre(s) provided service for |
| | Paid as other | part of job | **Dip. Education **Dip. Social Sciences **Dip. Teaching (Sec) | None (but oversees secondary staff of 11) | *7: 1L, 1S, 5s full time & 5 part time SES support | 25 years |
| | \$570.00 | \$14.00 | Dip. Teaching (ECE) **Dip. Early Intervention | 12 years ECE | | |
| | \$533.30 | \$13.60 | Dip. Teaching (ECE) | 16 ½ years ECE | | |
| | \$596.15 | \$14.90 | Dip. Teaching (ECE) | 11 years ECE | | |

* s=staff L=licensee S=supervisor

** qualifications not recognised for licensing centres

Table 1 (cont): Demographic data provided by licensees, supervisors and staff of centres

| Centre J | Participant code | Participant role | Centre funding category | No. of Chn | Socio-economic area | Participant held position for | Hours per week worked | Participant age | |
|----------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|--|
| | J1Wanda | Licensee | Private | 20 | Low-Medium | 5 years | 45 | 51-60 | |
| | | Owner | 2 centres | 28 | | | | | |
| | J3Sena | Supervisor | | | | 5 months | 40 | 51-60 | |
| | J4Kath | Staff | | | | 3 years | 37 | 41-50 | |

| Centre K | Participant code | Participant role | Centre funding category | No. of Chn | Socio-economic area | Participant held position for | Hours per week worked | Participant age | | |
|----------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-------|
| | K1Lynn | Licensee | Community | #25: 112 p/t | Medium-high and low-medium | 11 months | Not provI'd | 20-30 | | |
| | | Parent | | | | | | | | |
| | K2Jeanne | Supervisor | | | | | | 11 months | 40 (paid 32.5) | 41-50 |
| | K3Sandra | Staff | | | | | | 11 months | 32.5 | 20-30 |
| | K4Rana | Staff | | | | 4 months | 19.5 | 41-50 | | |

#: p/t = part time enrolments

| Centre J (cont) | Wage/ salary (p/wk) | Hourly rate | Professional qualifications | ECE work experience | No. of staff in centre(s) | Centre(s) provided service for |
|-----------------|---------------------|-------------|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | \$692.30 | \$15.38 | Dip. Teaching (ECE) **Cert. ECE (Massey) | 15 years ECE + Play Centre | *12: 2 managers, 9s, 1 cook | 16 years 2 years |
| | \$475.00 | \$14.61 | Dip. Teaching (ECE) **Cert. ECE (Massey) | 19 years ECE | | |
| | \$375.00 | \$10.13 | None | 3 years ECE | | |

| Centre K (cont) | Wage/ salary (p/wk) | Hourly rate | Professional qualifications | ECE work experience | No. of staff in centre(s) | Centre(s) provided service for |
|-----------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | Not paid | | 100+ licensing points | Not provided | *7: 1L, 1S, 3s, 2 support | 11 months |
| | \$464.00 | \$14.27 (32.5 hrs) | Dip. Teaching (ECE) | 9 years ECE | | |
| | \$422.50 | \$13.00 | 100+ licensing points | 3 years ECE | | |
| | \$230.00 | \$11.00 | Dip. Teaching (ECE) **Dip. Teaching (Primary) | Not provided | | |

* s=staff L=licensee S=supervisor

** qualifications not recognised for licensing centres

Appendix F

Triangulation Procedures

Triangulation Procedures

Triangulation is the process of cross-checking multiple sources for evidence of the same phenomenon and to seek support for “statements of relationship” between concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 109). Flick (1992) considers that, in a qualitative case study, triangulation aids credibility as a combination of methods, data and perspectives add depth, breadth and rigour to an investigation. He and others (Delamont, 1992, Denzin and Lincoln, 2000) share the view that there is not one “truth” to be exposed in a qualitative study, but that multiple perspectives form a pattern of “truth”.

As each centre was included in the present study, a range of data was collected and analysed by one researcher. This permitted a consistent focus on the constant comparison of the various forms of data, and also led to consistent triangulation processes being applied to ensure that rigorous cross-checking of data continued throughout all phases of the research. In this appendix the processes of triangulation will be described.

Data used in the present study

The data included:

- Interviews, which were recorded, transcribed using pseudonyms, participant-checked and entered in the NUD.IST database. They were then coded (for details of the NUD.IST processes, see Appendix A (p. 374).
- Recorded notes made by the researcher in a journal and in NUD.IST memos. These notes sometimes recorded data that could not be removed from a centre (i.e. a description of a centre “qualification noticeboard” or notes about the physical evidence of *Te Whāriki* in a centre) and at other times noted the thoughts and impressions of the researcher.
- Demographic data questionnaires, which were collected, recorded (see Appendix E p. 404) and analysed.
- Supervisors’ self-reported diary forms. These were analysed and reported in Table 1 (p. 129), Table 2 (p. 131) and Table 3 (p.134).
- An ERO report for each centre, which was analysed and reported in Table 4 (p.138).

- Artifacts, which were collected and coded for the centre of origin. For example, the supervisor in Centre C gave the researcher a copy of the February newsletter, which was coded Ca, a template of a sheet for recording observations of a child (Cb) and a staff performance appraisal sheet (Cc).
- A literature review, reported in Chapter Two.

Triangulation of interviews with other interview data

The constant comparative method of coding interview data in the NUD.IST programme (see Appendix A, p. 374) provided opportunities to triangulate each chunk of coded data with every other chunk of interview data in the study. Each section was coded by the researcher, who read the material already in a code to ensure that new material would fit. As each new section was added, further reading and comparisons occurred. Often, new sub-codes (sub-nodes) were formed as new data provided a slightly different tangent to earlier codes. Frequently, the triangulation process triggered memo and journal writing (see below), which was then used to compare with new and existing data. The second coding set provided opportunities for the researcher to again read and cross-check the coding of all of the interview data.

Because only one researcher undertook all the fieldwork, details of memos were relatively easy to record and store. After each centre's interviews were complete, memos attached to NUD.IST codes and journal entries were re-visited to ensure that links had been activated for triangulation with other data. The NUD.IST programme recorded and dated searches and changes that were made, to aid the researcher in keeping an audit trail to track triangulation processes.

Triangulation of interviews with demographic data questionnaire details

As the interviews were recorded and listened to by the researcher, aspects were frequently triangulated with the demographic data. Comments, for example, about the cook in Centre B, about qualifications held by staff, or about the culture of centres in relation to the years for which they had been operating were coded from the interviews

and immediately triangulated with the demographic data. Notes were made in a journal or a NUD.IST memo, or in the first drafts of the written report, as these issues were noted.

Triangulation of interviews and other data with supervisors' diary forms

Supervisors kept diaries of their activities for three days (two days in one case). As the interviews were coded and supervisors spoke about how much time they devoted to various tasks, these comments were compared with their diary details and with those of the other supervisors, and with other participants' perceptions of what the supervisors did. Memos and journal entries, as well as artifacts (such as staff rosters and staff noticeboard notices) were also checked against the interview data and diaries. The issues that arose from these triangulation processes were presented in Chapters Five and Six.

Triangulation of each centre's ERO report with other data

The ERO reports were not all recent enough to permit accurate and reliable triangulation with other data. This was reported in Chapter Four.

Triangulation of artifacts with other data

As has already been outlined, artifacts (such as meeting notes, staff rosters, appraisal forms, and observation sheets) were noted in journal notes or collected from centres and were coded according to each centre. Various cross-checking procedures were employed according to need. For example, a memo was prepared or direct comment was written into the draft report if an artifact supported or provided a contradiction to what staff said (such as the worksheets and colouring-in tasks mentioned by Linda and recorded in Chapter Six). The diary analyses were studied if a supervisor provided a staffing roster that scheduled her to work with children. Cross-checking of interview data and artifacts was triggered if the interview data were coded and indicated a particular artifact like the meeting minutes, children's records and centre displays that were indicated by two centre supervisors as they discussed the use of *Te Whāriki* in their centres (see Chapter Six).

Triangulation of data with the literature

One of the research questions in the present study required the perceptions of participants in the study to be compared with the literature. This occurred in the third and fourth phases of the research (see Figure 1, p.108) when eight categories and a core category had emerged from the data analyses. The literature that reflected each category was reviewed, and similarities and differences between the perceptions of participants, the other data and the literature were highlighted, providing further opportunities for understanding the complexity of the issues surrounding the leadership and management of centres.

Appendix G

Letter to supervisor of Centre A re involvement in pilot study

Title of investigation: Leadership and Management in Early Childhood Centres: A Qualitative Case Study

Letter to Centre Manager requesting permission to undertake a pilot study.

Dear Betty

As I have previously discussed with you, I am beginning a research project designed to explore the perceptions held by managers / supervisors, some staff and some parents in ten full-day early childhood centres about leadership and management practices in their centres.

Before I begin the main study in 1999, I need to trial possible methods of data collection and work out the best and most appropriate approaches to take. I also need to be sure that the results of the study are likely to be meaningful. This is why I am asking you and your centre to help.

I need practice in approaching a centre, explaining the study, gaining permission from all parties to undertake a series of interviews, and then conducting the interviews. As part of approaching a centre and gaining permission to carry out the study, I have prepared an introductory letter, information sheet and consent form. I have also drafted a form to ask participants personal and professional questions.

I will phone you within the next week to see whether you could be interested assisting me. I look forward to talking with you further then.

Yours sincerely,

Lorraine McLeod

ph

Appendix H

Pilot Study: Centre A

Pilot Study

Preliminary arrangements

Centre A, classified as funded under the corporate/institution “category of authority to operate” (Education Review Office. 1996, p. 9), was approached to participate in a pilot study for the proposed research. After an initial discussion with the researcher, the supervisor chose a meeting of management, staff and parents as the forum for the first meeting with possible participants. The licensee, two staff members and two parents volunteered to participate during the meeting. Information sheets, consent forms and demographic questionnaires were given to the volunteers at the end of the meeting. All were asked to consider and to comment on (at their interview) how effective and appropriate the documents were. Interview appointments were made with staff and parents after the meeting. The supervisor was given similar forms and the diary form, and elected to make an interview appointment when the diary had been completed.

Interviews

One staff member chose to be interviewed in the centre staff room at the end of her working day; the licensee, the other staff member and the two parents chose to be interviewed in the researcher’s workplace office. Interviews with these five participants averaged 50 minutes in length.

The supervisor sent her diary to the researcher the week before her interview. After a telephone conversation with the supervisor about the completed diary task, the researcher used the supervisor’s comments to tentatively code the diary into seven codes prior to the interview. The interview with the supervisor took one hour and five minutes of recorded time, as well as ten minutes during which the tape recorder was turned off while the supervisor read and commented on the coded diary. She agreed that the codes were appropriate, and expressed interest in the time she had spent on the categories.

Coding of interview data

As each interview was completed, it was transcribed and then entered by the researcher onto the NUD.IST software programme. Initial coding produced 27 codes (or, in the language of NUD.IST nodes) of which nine had one, two, or three sub-nodes (in NUD.IST language, children). One sub-node also had three further sub-nodes.

The largest number of nodes and sub-nodes (12) was to do with the perceived importance of communication amongst all involved in the centre. However, one parent provided most of the comments. She discussed a variety of communication relationships (for example, her perceptions about how she obtained information about routines for her child at the centre, how written information about the centre was provided for parents).

Eight nodes were developed for the structural management of the centre. While four participants agreed that it was the supervisor whose influence was most strongly felt in matters to do with centre management, the other nodes in this group were mostly commented upon by the licensee, the supervisor and the acting assistant supervisor, rather than other staff or parents.

Linked to the structural management nodes were six nodes tentatively labelled “collegial structure”. These included issues of staff stability, staff views on change, staff decision-making, and teamwork. The latter is a term that was frequently used, and was noted as a possible area of importance to be explored further. Only the licensee, staff members and the supervisor (not parents) commented in these six areas.

Five nodes were entered in NUD.IST in relation to the culture of the centre. The centre philosophy was defined by four participants and commented on in other ways by the licensee, supervisor, staff and parents.

Coding of supervisor's diary

The diary described the work of the supervisor on three different days. The researcher spoke by telephone or personally with the supervisor prior to the interview to seek advice

on categorising the activities listed. One of the dilemmas discussed was in regard to the supervisor doing more than one of the categories at any one time. For example, she spent time on one day holding and talking to a baby (working with children) while speaking to the mother about the child's routines in the centre (working with parents). The supervisor suggested that the time be evenly divided between the two activities for the purposes of recording. The researcher then tentatively sorted the diary form into categories that were agreed by the supervisor. The categories were:

- administration (ie. "paper work" [as defined by the supervisor] phone calls, arranging for supplies and maintenance)
- management (working or talking with staff on issues to do with the staff person, the centre or children)
- educational leadership (planning for or overseeing a student teacher's or children's educational programme)
- working with children ("hands-on work on the floor" [as defined by the supervisor, who spoke of "on the floor" not in a realistic sense, but as factory workers might work on the factory floor rather than in an office]).
- own professional development or study (in this case, one of eight weekly sessions of professional development at a local College of Education)
- routine tasks (ie cleaning)
- talking or working with parents (anything to do with assisting parents, such as filling out Social Welfare forms, supporting and counselling, custody issues).

Over the three days, the supervisor had spent most time working with children (almost seven hours). Management issues consumed six and a half hours, and administrative concerns took just over six hours. The next largest amount of time (four hours and twenty minutes) was spent on her own professional development, but she indicated that this was one of eight weeks of a programme, and was not typical of most weeks of the year. One hour and forty minutes over three days were spent in working with parents, and the least amount of time (one hour and thirty minutes) was devoted to educational leadership (all of the time in this node was spent working with a student teacher, not in planning for

work with children). This supervisor works more than nine hours each day during thirty-eight weeks of the year and takes overtime (beyond eight hours of work per day) as time in lieu during the summer holiday period when the centre is closed.

Triangulation of leadership and management issues in centre's latest ERO report with the supervisor's diary and all interviews

The centre's latest ERO report had been issued three weeks prior to the pilot study. It noted that, while Centre A was managed under an institutional "umbrella", much of the management had devolved to the supervisor.

The supervisor had recorded (in interview and diary) that most of her time was spent on management and administration activities. The licensee (new to the role) and supervisor agreed that the poorly-defined management structure was an historical construct which had degenerated to "a semi-autonomous outpost" which was responsible to the organisational management financially and morally, but with little real interest or support provided on a day-to-day basis. The licensee is now expected to clarify the areas of responsibility and accountability of all parties involved in the management structure, including the lines of accountability in decision-making processes.

In addition, the ERO report noted that strategies to "systematically identify the strengths and needs of all children using the centre" needed to be put in place. These strategies are to include a focus on the methods used for "programme planning, evaluation and review to ensure that these are more responsive to the identified needs of individual children". It was also recommended that a review of the "routines and programme structure and the ways these impact on children's learning" be undertaken.

The lack of a comprehensive approach to the planning and implementation of children's educational programmes which was noted by the ERO reviewers was also supported by the data provided in the supervisor's diary. No time was spent by the supervisor on planning for the educational needs of the children, and staff indicated only daily incidental planning for this. While the report stated that staff "provide developmentally

appropriate activities on a daily basis” and that they “demonstrate an understanding” of *Te Whāriki*, it also noted that staff need to develop strategies to systematically identify the needs and strengths of all children using the centre. Further planning and evaluation could then be developed from the sound basis provided by such an assessment process. The licensee, supervisor and staff are expected to consider ways in which parents can be supported and informed about child development and educational information.

Discussion

Organisation of initial information dissemination and interviews

Organisationally, the pilot study proceeded smoothly. The invitation to speak to the management and parent meeting was highly valued by the researcher, as all potential participants were able to access the same information about the research and ask and hear questions relating to it. Interviews were informative and participants provided feedback that procedures were appropriate. Interviews were changed on two occasions, once due to the illness of the supervisor and the second to child care arrangements needing to be changed. It is anticipated that the need to remain flexible and accommodating about changing interview times would be an on-going consideration of the researcher for the participants in the main study, as the role of working with and parenting children does not necessarily keep to time.

Changes to research tools.

Some minor changes were made to the demographic questionnaires as a result of feedback given by staff and parents. These changes included the addition of participants' home telephone numbers and addresses, as on-going contact through the centre was a burden for the centre and a nuisance for the participants and the researcher. Interview plans and times were changed several times due to work and child-related issues, so quick and efficient methods of contact were deemed essential.

Interview techniques were developed over the course of the pilot study. A list of cue questions was devised which would continue to be modified as they became informed by the analysis. It seemed that fewer initial “easy, non-personal questions” (Anderson, 1990)

which were outlined in the research proposal would need to be asked, as the subject did not seem to be one with which participants had a significant emotional attachment.

The NUD.IST programme proved invaluable for the storing and initial analysis of data. The tentative nodes (NUD.IST nodes) formed model upon which to begin the main study, but would easily be modified and changed. Because so few interviews were undertaken during the pilot study, further analysis and comparison of nodes was not undertaken.

Triangulation of data

The interviews were designed to be the main source of information in the present study. The research design employed the use of the supervisor's diary and the most recent centre ERO report, as well as artifacts from the centre to add to and to triangulate the information. In the pilot study, each set of data fulfilled its role well. An example of this was seen in the lack of curriculum planning and assessment of children's progress in the centre; in her interview, the supervisor did not directly refer to this, but in her diary time spent in this role was noticeably absent. The researcher was then able to ask her about it, and have her responses confirmed by comments in the ERO report. Staff were also asked about this issue and responded in a way that further supported the other sources. A second example of triangulation was the strong agreement noted in interviews with the licensee and the supervisor with the ERO report regarding the centre management structure.

