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Kindergarten Bulk Funding

**Teacher and parent perceptions of
Salary Bulk Funding and its effects
on the quality of care and education
provided by kindergartens.**

A Thesis presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education at Massey
University.

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ABSTRACT

Bulk Funding of teachers' salaries was introduced into the New Zealand kindergarten system on 1 March 1992. This thesis focusses on the perceptions of parents and teachers regarding this new government policy, and its effects on the quality of care and education provided by kindergartens. This case study documents the experiences of parents and teachers of five kindergartens during the first 18 months following the introduction of Bulk Funding. The purpose has been to gather high validity, qualitative data. Most of the data was gathered by interviewing, but a Likert rating scale was also used to measure changes in factors that contribute to "quality" in the centres.

Overall, Bulk Funding has produced a range of effects — some negative and some positive. In order to maintain quality, the workload of some teachers and some mothers has increased. These women hold misgivings about the present and future level of funding for kindergartens, and about the on-going commitment and support from the state towards kindergartens. In an effort to retain their present level of quality some centres are asking for increased funding from their parents. This response may lead to differences in quality between centres, with those in low socio-economic areas disadvantaged.

The findings are discussed in light of previous literature and research; and within a socialist feminist perspective, and suggestions made for future research within this gendered area of the education system.

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