Measuring Social Well-being: A Critical Review of the Development, Reliability and Validity of Social Well-being Measures with Particular Reference to Selected Measures in New Zealand

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Abstract

An overview of the major overseas and New Zealand measures of social well-being is provided in the thesis. The research methods employed are forms of documentary and interview research. The relevant literature is reviewed and the principal researchers from some of the New Zealand measures were interviewed concerning the issues surrounding the measurement methods. The measures described include poverty lines, deprivation and standard of living indexes and social indicators. The reliability and validity issues of five New Zealand recent measures of social well-being are critiqued. The thesis also discusses the possible developments that these five measures might undertake in order to address their reliability and validity issues.

The thesis argues that social well-being measures could be developed in terms of their concept definition, choice of indicators for assessment and level of public participation in order to provide more valid estimations. This would allow for more detailed research findings concerning the experienced types and levels of social well-being and would enable more adequate social policy initiatives because the specific resource needs of different population groups could then be more easily identified and targeted.

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List of Acronyms

Benefit Datum Level	BDL
Business Economic Research Limited	BERL
Department of Social Welfare	DSW
Economic Living Standard Index	ELSI
Genuine Progress Indicator	GPI
Household Economic Survey	HES
Household Expenditure and Income Survey	HEIS
Ministry of Social Development	MSD
Ministry of Social Policy	MSP
New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services	NZCCSS
New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project	NZPMP
Pensioner Datum Level	PDL
Poverty Indicator Project	PIP
New Zealand Royal Commission on Social Security	NZRCSS
United States of America	USA

1 Introduction

What are the levels of social well-being, standards of living, deprivation and poverty in New Zealand? These are some of the questions that researchers have asked through a variety of social statistics measures including social indicators, standard of living and deprivation indexes and poverty lines. The last decade has seen an increase in social well-being measurement employing such methods both in New Zealand and overseas. There are a number of reasons for this growth and these are discussed in the main text of this thesis as a precursor to the critique of the reliability and validity of the major current New Zealand measures of social well-being. The literature reveals that the majority of measures have emerged from non-government organisations, such as individual researchers and political interest groups, in an effort to argue for changes to social policy to increase social well-being (such as decreasing levels of poverty by increasing income maintenance payments). For example, in New Zealand, a sharp increase in measures occurred following the 1992 income maintenance reductions as interest groups sought to provide quantitative evidence of decreasing levels of social well-being. The increased capability of computer data storage and sharing has also enabled a growth in measures over recent years. However, the history of measurement extends back at least a century and a variety of measurement methods have been developed and refined since then. This thesis also discusses the major measures that have emerged throughout this time period.

1.1 The Definition and Measurement of Well-being

Measuring social well-being is a form of social statistics measurement. It primarily aims to assess the extent and/or degree of social phenomena which typically relate to the resource areas that are deemed by researchers to affect social well-being. The most commonly measured resources in the literature are those that relate to income (the amount of income earned through the market place), health (the cost of food) and housing (the cost of accommodation).

As a starting point for a measurement study, a definition of social well-being may be

given and this sets a frame of reference for what the measure will set out to assess. Even if a measure does not provide a definition, a notion of social well-being can be surmised through the set of resource areas and specific resources that are measured. For example, if a measure assesses the levels of income and the cost of food and accommodation of a population group, social well-being in the context of this measure is restricted to these three resources. Providing a definition of social well-being involves making value judgements concerning the resource requirements of individuals. Obviously, there is a range of opinion regarding the resources people need in order to achieve and maintain social well-being and consequently over the last century a myriad of measurement methods reflecting different concepts of social well-being has been developed. A selection of social well-being measures has been chosen for discussion and critique in this thesis, which involve the concepts of poverty, deprivation, standards of living, quality of life and social exclusion and the measurement methods of poverty lines, social indicator reporting and standard of living and deprivation indexes. These types of concepts are focused upon because they comply most aptly with the subject matter that I wished to research, namely the measurement of poverty which is typically characterised in the relevant literature through assessments of basic resource needs achievement. Those resources include food, clothing, housing, electricity and medical care to name but a few.

It is important for a society to incorporate some measure of social well-being as a tool in the social policy making process to aid in the determination of the present and future resource needs of its members. A measure of social well-being can inform the general public and government about the levels of social well-being that exist and the extent to which government intervention contributes to the maintenance and/or enhancement of these levels. If measures of social well-being become more reliable and valid then there is a greater opportunity for social policies to more adequately meet the resource needs of the public. This thesis outlines a number of limitations in a range of measurement methods and concludes with ideas on how these limitations can be addressed.

1.2 The Motivations of the Research

Over the last decade, I have developed through direct and indirect observation a greater awareness of increasing low levels of social well-being (such as homelessness, substandard housing and foodbank use) in New Zealand's urban areas. Whilst living in the United Kingdom in recent years, one of the most publicly noticeable effects of poverty, namely homelessness, became a visual reality for me everyday. I started to wonder if homelessness would ever be that visible in New Zealand and embarked on a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree research report to find out more about what constitutes poverty in social and economic terms, and the extent to which poverty exists in New Zealand. From the poverty measurement literature I have become aware that poverty was primarily and most easily measured in terms of a lack of specific resources such as income, food and housing and that in a New Zealand context, poverty had increased since the early 1990s. However, after learning about the deficiencies of the data utilised in the measures, in particular deficiencies arising from the relatively small population samples, I remained uncertain as to the actual level of poverty in New Zealand. After this initial research on poverty measurement, I decided to include an array of measurement concepts and methods related to poverty in an investigation of social well-being measurement. I wanted to focus on the technical aspects of the measures to further understand how reliable and valid certain estimations of social well-being are. In these terms the resulting thesis can be perceived as an attempt to answer my original queries concerning the levels of social well-being in New Zealand.

1.3 Research Aims and Objectives

The aim of this thesis is to investigate the development, reliability and validity of social well-being measures, with particular reference to selected New Zealand measures of social well-being. To this end, the thesis has three objectives. The first objective is to provide an overview of the major social well-being concepts and measurement methods that have emerged from both overseas and New Zealand over the last century. The second objective is to critique recent New Zealand-based measures of social well-being in relation to their reliability and validity. This is done through the presentation of five

case studies. Taken together, the case study measures chosen are recent and ongoing, micro- and macro-population-based, and cover the range of the most commonly employed measurement methods in the literature. The third and final objective is to identify possible developments that would increase the reliability and validity of social well-being measures.

It must be noted that the focus of this research is primarily on the technical capabilities of the measures themselves and not on the specific influences affecting the development of the measures or the policy implications of their findings. Nor does this thesis aim to identify the effects of government policies on social well-being. There is a comprehensive array of New Zealand literature that to some extent assesses the overall impact of recent policy initiatives (see for example, Blaiklock et al., 2002; Boston et al., 1999; Cheyne et al., 2000; Child Poverty Action Group, 2003; Dalziel and Lattimore, 2001; Kelsey, 1993, 1995; Rudd and Roper, 1997; St. John, 1994).

1.4 Thesis Structure

Chapter 2 provides an outline of the research design and methods employed in this thesis research. These include an analytical research approach with the collection and assessment of mostly public documents, and primary interview data from some of the researchers involved with the case study measures. The key elements of the research design and measures and their strengths and weaknesses are discussed in this methods chapter.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of the nature and measurement of social well-being. This is done through discussion of the concepts and measurement methods under review in the thesis. The reasons why the measures themselves have been created in a social policy and political context are also discussed briefly here. This chapter provides the background for the two following chapters which go into detail about specific concepts, measures and reasons for measurement.

Chapter 4 focuses on the identification and description of the major social well-being concepts and measurement methods of the twentieth century that have emerged from Western societies outside of New Zealand. The measures cover a range of concepts such as poverty, deprivation, standards of living, quality of life and social exclusion through the measurement methods of poverty lines, social indicator reporting and standard of living and deprivation indexes. The chapter shows how measures have evolved to incorporate improved data collection methods (notably though the development of national statistics databases) and a broader notion of social well-being with a wider range of resources under assessment.

Chapter 5 identifies and describes the major New Zealand measures of social well-being. The trends in New Zealand measurement have largely followed those from other Western countries with the transition from poverty line measures emerging from interest groups to social indicator reporting at both non-government and government levels.

Chapter 6 describes the technical components of the five New Zealand case study measures. The five measures are the New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project's poverty line, the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services' poverty indicator project, the Ministry of Social Development's social report and living standards index and the collaborative Department of Public Health and Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences' NZDep index.

A critical review of the capabilities of those five measures is provided in Chapter 7 with reference to their reliability and validity. In particular, the concepts that structure each measure, the measurement methods and the data employed in the measure are critiqued. The major reliability and validity issues concern the definition of concepts as researcher-based, the limited choice of resources assessed in the measures, and the limitations of national statistics employed to estimate macro levels of social well-being.

Finally, Chapter 8 offers recommendations for New Zealand measures of social well-being to enable more reliable and valid methods of measurement. Developmental areas

for such measures include concept differentiation, a more multi-dimensional range of resources for assessment and a wider representation of population groups in data collection.

2 Research Design and Methods

The research design and methods along with their strengths and weaknesses are described in this chapter. The research process primarily relied upon documentary and interview research methods. The documents sourced were mostly of a public nature and the interview process involved discussions with some of the principal researchers involved in the case study measures.

Spicker (1995:189) describes the research process as involving the selection of a research topic and research methods, the gathering of data and the interpretation of results. This research was primarily based on the social well-being measurement literature. I utilised an analytical research design with documentary and primary data collection. These methods were the most appropriate and adequate processes that would allow me to critique a wide variety of social well-being measures through the gathering of literature and undertaking of researcher interviews.

2.1 Literature Based Research

The research process consisted initially of the review of the relevant literature on social well-being measures that have emerged from New Zealand and overseas. A major strength of this research approach is its flexibility, allowing me to access and assess a wide range of literature and to make observations on a variety of measurement issues. The majority of the relevant literature was readily accessible, as it took the form of public documentation.

Documentary research had strong advantages, such as those claimed by Sarantakos (1993) as the quick and easy access to relevant material and low costs. This research method allows an analysis of a broad array of materials covering a long time span. However, a weakness of documentary research, as pointed out by May (1993), is that documents may be biased depending on what information researchers decide to include or leave out. The views of the researchers can also bias their findings.

To initially source documents I accessed a variety of Internet databases including Academic Search Elite, Web of Science, Massey University's Library Catalogue Kea, and the MSN search engine. The major keywords I used in my databases searches were the measurement of deprivation, poverty, social exclusion, social well-being, standards of living and well-being. Specific measurement types were also searched including deprivation indexes, poverty lines, social indicators and standard of living indexes.

The database searches identified many public documents produced by national and local government and non-government agencies. This was particularly true for the New Zealand material. Here social well-being measures have primarily been developed and implemented through community organisations (such as the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services and the New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project) and government departments (such as the Ministry of Social Development).

Most of the documents sourced were obtained from the Massey University library and a significant number of journal articles and government and non-government agency reports were downloaded from the Internet. Some documents were sourced through the Massey University interloans service. I also sourced documents under the provisions of the Official Information Act (1982) from the Ministry of Social Development and the New Zealand Treasury. I did not experience difficulties in obtaining any documents.

2.2 Interview Based Research

To add to the information accessed through the relevant literature on the New Zealand case study measures, I decided to approach some of the principal researches involved with the development and implementation of these measures. I felt that I needed more indepth information concerning the research aims and the political and theoretical influences on the measures. It was also decided to attempt to find out what the researchers thought the strengths and weaknesses were of their own measures. A particular strength of the interview research method is that it allows the researcher to gain firsthand indepth information that is not revealed in the relevant literature.

I decided who to approach for an interview by identifying the main authors of the literature on the case study measures and through introductions to the principal researchers through an official information request (in the case of the Ministry of Social Development Social Report) and through a personal recommendation (in the case of the Ministry of Social Development's Economic Standard of Living Index). The contact details of the researchers were easily accessible through published materials and Internet searches.

To initially request interview appointments, I posted out an introductory letter to one researcher from each case study measure. This letter outlined the nature of my research and the type of information I would attempt to obtain trough the interviews. For the full introductory letter see Appendix A. Along with this letter an information sheet was attached providing more detail on the research project, full contact details for my thesis supervisors and I, and a list of the participant's rights (see Appendix B).

Through discussion with my supervisors a preliminary interview schedule was developed. The topic areas included in this schedule would facilitate questions that focused on the developmental influences on the measures, the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the measures, and the planned future developments of the measures. For the full interview guide, see Appendix C.

I was successful in obtaining one-off interviews that lasted for approximately one hour with the principal researchers of four out of five of the New Zealand measures critiqued as case studies. Andrew Green represented the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services' Poverty Indicator Project and was interviewed on the 30 September 2003 in his Wellington office. Conal Smith of the Ministry of Social Development was interviewed in his Wellington office on the 1 October 2003 regarding the Social Report. Peter Crampton of the Department of Public Health and Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences was interviewed on the NZDep index on 2 October 2003 in his Wellington office. Charles Waldegrave, representing the New Zealand Poverty Measure Project's poverty line, was interviewed via a telephone conversation on the 28

November 2003.

Primary data was collected via transcriptions of three of the audio-taped interviews. The interview with Andrew Green was not audio-taped because of a malfunction of the tape recorder and the primary interview data in this case was based on the hand written notes I took at the time. I transcribed the interviews myself. The researchers were promised either a copy of the full completed thesis or an executive summary at the end of the interview, depending on their preference. All of the interviews followed the interview guide that was initially sent to the interviewees, and I did not encounter any difficulties with the interview process itself.

2.3 Research Ethics

The primary interview data was the only type of research material that required ethical consideration. The interviews concerned the technical, developmental and outcome aspects of the measures and did not include personal material, other than the professional interests and expertise of the participant which were relevant to the construction and implementation of the particular measure under discussion. The interview content was discussed and agreed upon with the thesis research supervisors in advance. Pursuant to the regulations of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, the necessary application was made for the approval of the interview process and approval was granted. Details of the interview participant's rights can be found in Appendix B. On completion of this thesis the interview audio tapes and transcripts will be destroyed.

3 The Nature and Measurement of Social Well-being

This chapter discusses the various ways in which social well-being has been conceptualised and measured. Reasons as to why well-being has been measured will also be discussed in terms of their social policy and political contexts. The types of concepts and measures that are discussed in the main body of the thesis are introduced here along with the discussion of the relationship between the concept being measured and the measure itself. This relationship is important as it is pertinent to the validity of the measure; that is, its ability to measure what it aims to measure.

3.1 The Concept of Well-being

The nature of well-being is broad and there are many definitions and measures reflecting the different perceptions and aspects of it. Well-being in a general sense can be viewed as "a state of being well, healthy, contented, etc" (Pearsall and Trumble, 1996:1640). This is a vague and limited definition as it does not identify what may constitute a "state of being well" and it is indicative of the generalist notions of well-being that have been offered in the literature.

Theoretically, a conception and a measure of well-being can refer to any one or more aspects of human life. Different scientific disciplines have incorporated a diverse range of definitions that include physical, biological, psychological, economic, and social perceptions of well-being. Paim (1995:297) explains that well-being has been defined in various economic, social, and socio-psychological terms. The Department of Labour (1999:A1, 3) states that well-being "can take many forms including physical, material, psychological, social and cultural". Forms of well-being are interconnected in complex ways. Dukeov et al. (2001:1031) explain that:

> *Well-being may be seen as the composite of a number of components related to the actual living conditions, such as food, health, education, housing, time use, security and economic*

opportunities.

Similarly, Paim (1995:307) states that:

> *...well-being, conceptually, is an outcome of human activities. It represents a state or condition of life one has attained. It is a result of many factors, including consumption of goods and services.*

In other words, the conceptualisation of well-being specifically relates to the resource requirements of humans.

Generally, the four broad concepts of well-being which are repeated in the literature are economic, social, environmental and cultural in nature. These four concepts are interrelated, in the sense that an aspect of any one of them can be incorporated into one or more of the other concepts. For example, an individual's income may be perceived as being an economic resource and a social resource as it relates to the individual's ability to maintain both types of well-being. To explain in more detail, income allows an individual to participate in the economy by consuming commodities and in doing so an individual is able to participate in society. Often, in the literature, the economic and social conceptions of well-being are perceived as having a significant inter-relationship.

Social well-being can be viewed as a distinctive classification of well-being because it relates to those aspects of well-being that are constructed by societal influences. For example, the New Zealand Royal Commission on Social Policy (NZRCSP) (1988:450, 2.2, Vol. II)) states:

> *Wellbeing refers to quality of life. In its simplest and most straightforward interpretation it means a state of contentment or happiness. In its social dimension, however, it must refer to a state that is enjoyed in specifically social activities.*

It must be stressed that in the literature there are not explicit boundaries to the types of resource needs and outcomes that relate to the four commonly used notions of well-being. For example, the resources assessed in an economic indicator measure may well be used in a separate social indicator measure. It seems to be the choice of the

researchers as to the blend of resources that their social well-being concept and measure relate to rather than practiced conventions in the social science discipline. This vagueness surrounding the definition of well-being and social well-being as a distinctive categorisation stems from the inherent difficulties in defining a concept that can mean many different things to many people.

Conceptualising well-being obviously has a subjective dimension as it involves making value judgments about what well-being consists of. Griffin (1986; 1991) discusses the philosophical difficulties in defining well-being because different people can have different perceptions of it, rendering one specific definition of well-being inadequate to describe the meaning to all people at one point in time. Establishing a well-being concept for use in a measure can therefore be fraught with difficulties as it might only relate to an individual researcher's perception of well-being or only that of a particular group within a larger population. For example, different population groups can have different perceptions of well-being that can change across characteristics such as gender, age, ethnicity, occupation and regional location, to name but a few. Dasgupta (1993) also argues that the concept of well-being is difficult to identify accurately. Dasgupta (2001:15) states that:

> *Different people know different things and possess different skills and talents, and not all people can observe the same things.*

The Department of Labour (1999:A1, 3) states that well-being concepts depend on "individual, societal, cultural, spiritual, political and theoretical views of the world".

3.1.1. Social Well-being

The concept of social well-being has been chosen as the focus for this thesis because it relates most effectively to the original research area that led to the formulation of this research project, namely that of poverty. The literature on poverty measurement consistently refers to a number of resource areas that are influenced not solely by the economy, but also by government in the form of welfare state intervention including income maintenance, housing and health social polices, to name but a few. In order to explore the area of poverty measurement, I needed to focus on measures of social well-

being as opposed to measures of economic, environmental and cultural well-being. However, there is, of course, cross-over from these other types of well-being into the measures of social well-being discussed in the thesis.

In general terms, social well-being concerns the provision, access to and use of the resources required to maintain an adequate standard of living. These resources relate to the broader aspects of social well-being such as food, housing, clothing, income, health, education, employment, communication, participation, leisure, spirituality, information, and citizenship. Specific resources can be categorised into each of these aspects of social well-being. For example, housing resources can include: running water, electricity, heating, and household appliances. These types of resources can be provided for and exchanged within the formal and informal economy, the public sector and private communities. There are a number of views on what resources are required to maintain social well-being or an adequate standard of living and this is one of the fundamental difficulties in the conceptualisation of social well-being. While it is possible to list a number of resource areas and/or specific resources that affect social well-being as part of the definition of a concept of social well-being, it is more difficult to establish what an adequate level of resource use (or standard of living) is required to maintain social well-being. This has led to an often used practice of associating below average levels of resource consumption with a lack of social well-being.

Poverty is a lack (or the "flip-side") of social well-being, however there are other related concepts that are discussed in this thesis which relate to poverty and refer to a low level of social well-being – namely, deprivation and social exclusion. The concept of inequality, which is sometimes associated with the concept of poverty in the literature, is not reviewed in this thesis because it relates to different levels of income or other resources without explicit reference to associated levels of either social well-being or a lack of it. For example, a measure of income inequality can identify the distribution of income over a given population, but it cannot be said that a population group experiences a lack of social well-being just because of low income; there must be evidence of a low level of income causing a low level of social well-being. For recent

major studies of income distribution in New Zealand, see Barker (1996), Bedggood (1980), Chatterjee and Srivastav (1992), Creedy (1997), Ministry of Women's Affairs (2001), Mowbray (2001) and Podder and Chatterjee (1998).

Traditionally, the concept of poverty was related to a standard of living termed "subsistence" which was an experienced lack of resources such as food, clothing and housing, for maintaining human physical well-being. Townsend (1993:27) observes that:

> *Poverty has become one of the organising concepts for statements about 'the social condition' of rich and poor countries alike. There is a voluminous literature in the United States, the United Kingdom and all the English-speaking countries of the world.*

The debate on the concept of poverty has concentrated upon absolute and relative notions of poverty (Howard, 1982). For example, Mukhopadhaya and Chatterjee (2000:32) state that:

> *The absolute concept may suggest greater precision and objectivity, while the idea of relativity may convey a sense of subjectivity and arbitrariness. The choice between these concepts would depend partly on the purpose for which the concept is to be used, and partly on philosophical and moral considerations.*

Similarly, Perry (2002:102) argues that:

> *The absolute notion is generally focused on those goods and services that are necessary for a person's physical existence (for example, nutrition, clothing, shelter and health care). On the other hand a relative definition takes as its reference the average and generally accepted standard of living in a given society at a given time and goes beyond what is required for mere physical existence.*

In recent times, and especially in the economically developed countries, poverty is most often conceptualised in relative terms (Andre, 1998; Perry, 2002).

The concept of poverty has been developed over the last century in some of the literature into the term "deprivation" which incorporates the notion of a lack of resources relative

to the standard of living of the majority of a society. This has meant the inclusion of other types of resources, not just those related to physical well-being (for example, leisure time, community activities and Internet access). Ringen (1988:353-354) distinguishes between a subsistence notion of poverty and a deprivation notion as follows:

> *According to the subsistence definition, people are poor if they do not have the resources which are deemed necessary to achieve a certain minimum level of consumption.*
> *According to the deprivation definition, people are poor if their standard of consumption is seriously below what is considered decent in their society so that they are, in effect, excluded from the ordinary way of life and activities of their community.*

Another definition of deprivation is that given by Townsend (1987:125) as:

> *...a state of observable and demonstrable disadvantage relative to the local community or the wider society or nation to which an individual, family or group belongs. The idea has come to be applied to conditions (that is, physical, environmental and social states or circumstances) rather than resources and to specific and not only general circumstances, and therefore can be distinguished from the concept of poverty.*

Although the thesis does not include any New Zealand measures of social exclusion, the concept and measure are discussed here at it is a burgeoning area of social well-being measurement overseas and it is likely that similar measures will be developed here in the future. Peace (1997; 2001) explains that the concept of social exclusion is currently a dominant metaphor for poverty in many of the European Union countries. According to Williams (1998) the concept has its origins in France and has grown into Europe from there. Social exclusion is a low level of well-being where an individual or population group is excluded from a social environment. It has been argued that social exclusion is merely a replacement term for poverty (O'Brien and de Haan, 2000; Peace, 1997). However, the concept of social exclusion can differ from poverty by focusing on the

ways in which people are excluded from participating in society, rather than just on the proportion of the population who are excluded. For example, a lack of accommodation may be assessed in relation to population characteristics such as gender or ethnicity, rather than income which a poverty measure would typically use to assess housing resources. Kronauer (1998:62-65) argues that the international literature identifies agreement on the central dimensions of social exclusion such as exclusion from the labour market, economic exclusion, cultural exclusion and social isolation. Atkinson et al. (2002:169) states that social exclusion can:

> *arise not only on account of inadequate private consumption or blockage in access to the labour market, but also because people lack access to essential public or private services.*

3.2 The Measurement of Social Well-being

Just as there are diverse ways of defining well-being, there are diverse methods of measuring well-being. For every related concept of social well-being listed above, there is at least one measure to match it. Added to these types of measures are those that measure a spectrum of levels of well-being, not just low levels. These include measures of social indicators, standards of living, quality of life and social well-being. A measure of well-being attempts to quantify and/or qualify one or more aspects and levels of well-being. A measure of social well-being can concern the provision, access to and use of resource categories such as food, housing, clothing, income, health, education, employment, and communication and leisure facilities that are required to achieve an adequate level of human life. A measure might then study one or more specific resources in one or more of these categories. For example, a measure of housing resources can include assessing the provision of, access to and use of running water, electricity, heating, and household appliances.

Typically, researchers have employed indicators of income and consumption of resources as proxies of well-being. For example, measures of well-being have used indicators of resource expenditure in areas such as food, housing, health, education and

leisure activities (see Paim, 1995; Ringen, 1995). A measure may include only one indicator or a range of indicators and it may provide qualitative and/or quantitative data. An indicator is an area of data related to the resources under observation. For example, an indicator of housing could be the proportion of a population group living in housing with running water.

Ringen (1995) provides a typology of well-being measures with three types of direct measures (expenditure, consumption, and way of life) and three types of indirect measures (income, resource, and capabilities). Ringen (1995:7) defines direct measures as those that use data on the choices people have made, and indirect measures as those that use data on the choices people can make. These approaches include indicators of: market place commodities (expenditure and consumption); non-market place commodities (consumption); non-commodities such as leisure (way of life); single income indicators (income); command of resources over time (resource); and utility of resources (capabilities).

3.2.1 Social Well-being Measures in the Context of the Thesis

For the purpose of this thesis, the measures of social well-being to be discussed in detail will be poverty lines, deprivation indexes, standards of living indexes and social indicator reporting. These measures have been chosen to reflect the concepts of social well-being in the context of the thesis research aim as explained above. In particular, this research focuses on measures that relate to a lack of either the provision of, access to or the use of the resources required to maintain social well-being, as the concept is defined within each measure. These include measures that assess social well-being at a macro and/or micro population level. The technical aspects and the limitations of these types of measures will be discussed in subsequent chapters as part of the critique of the reliability and validity of five recent New Zealand measures.

3.3 Why is Social Well-being Measured?

The measurement of social well-being can have the functions of informing the policy

development process, monitoring and evaluating policies and directing public and media attention towards particular social phenomena. Dasgupta (2000) discusses measuring well-being in relation to the evaluation of public policies and states that this can be done through providing an aggregate index of economic activity, comparing the state of affairs in different places, making welfare comparisons, comparing economic standards of living, and evaluating economic policies. Paim (1995:298) demonstrates that the measurement of well-being has occurred for specific purposes which are pursuant to the needs of the researchers, such as aiding the design of public policies and assessing the impact of social and economic changes on individuals. The reasons why measurement has occurred can be discussed in the context of the social policy and political influences on the development of measures. A brief overview is provided in this chapter, with specific developmental influences and trends discussed in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.3.1 The Social Policy Context of Measuring Social Well-being

The social policy context is discussed here to provide an overview of the theoretical foundations for measures of well-being. In the context of social policy, social well-being relates to a range of policy goals including (in general terms) the areas of justice, equality, freedom, meeting need, and citizenship. This includes the meeting of a vast array of resource requirements through the state (for example, income maintenance, equal employment opportunities, education, health services and voting rights, to name but a few). Cheyne et al. (2000:49) state that:

> *Having well-being might involve material needs being met....*
> *The welfare and well-being of people is also associated with the acknowledgement of the dignity and rights of individuals. This involves extending benefits to people on the basis of their membership of the human community (universal human rights) or membership of particular political communities such as nation states (citizenship rights).*

Measuring well-being can play a role in the policy making process by informing policy

in the development, monitoring and evaluation aspects of policy proposals and initiatives. More specifically, measuring well-being can help to identify the resource needs of certain population groups, assess the levels of achievement of the aims of social policies, and assess the levels of adequacy and achievement of specific policy outcomes. Dasgupta (2001:30) reinforces this point in explaining how the measurement of social well-being aims to evaluate policies. Carlisle (1972:23) identifies how one method of measurement, in this case social indicator reporting, has the following three aims:

- *to produce more complete and precise answers to many socially relevant questions,*
- *to monitor more adequately the effectiveness of social policy,*
- *to give warning of emerging problems.*

Alternatively, measures of well-being such as poverty lines can be utilised to assess the financial adequacy of income maintenance payments (Walker, 1987:225). It is important for a society to measure social well-being in order to adequately determine the levels of social well-being experienced by its members. A measure can inform the general public and government about the levels of social well-being that exist, current unmet resource requirements and the extent to which government intervention contributes to maintaining and enhancing social well-being for all members of a society.

In recent years, New Zealand government agencies have identified the need for more informed policy making and evidence-based policies. This has included the development of broad measurement frameworks and specific measures of well-being such as social indicator and standards of living measures (see Ministry of Social Policy, 2001a, 2001b; Ministry of Social Development, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2003; Statistics New Zealand, 2002, 2003).

3.3.2 The Political Context of Measuring Social Well-being

Social policies are influenced by the political philosophies of the researchers, bureaucrats and politicians that dictate the formulation of policy initiatives that include measures of social well-being. Measures are developed over time to allow for their findings to be more informative and therefore more effective in the policy making

process. The type of measure chosen can reflect the political underpinnings of those responsible for the development and implementation of the measure. As noted above, New Zealand in recent years has experienced a policy shift towards developing frameworks for measuring well-being and this can be attributed in part, to a political shift towards more open practices of state expenditure. The developmental framework for the current Government approach involves an analysis of what government services are currently provided and an ongoing monitoring and evaluation regime. Hence, there has been a growth in measures of social well-being at a New Zealand government agency level in recent years.

The development of measures from outside of the state has also been influenced by the political philosophies of the researchers involved. At different times throughout the previous century within New Zealand and overseas, different measures have been publicised in order to influence social policies and draw public attention towards particular social issues. For example, one of the reasons for the social indicators movement of the 1960s was "a belief that important social issues were being ignored by planners preoccupied with economic performance" (Watson, 1979:6). Miles (1985:25) states that the movement was "an attempt to bring new methods to bear on the persistent problems of the 'post-industrial societies' supposedly emerging in the West".

It is not always clear what the political influences are of those responsible for the measures. However, the nature of the concept and measure used by an organisation or independent researcher can help to identify some degree of influence. For example, a narrower concept of social well-being will typically be associated with a measure that reports a smaller low level of social well-being that will be used to argue for a continuation of current or reduced levels of state intervention. Specific political influences will be discussed with their associated measures in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter provides a preliminary understanding of the relationship between a social

well-being concept for measurement and the components of the measure itself. For instance, a measure should aim to make an assessment of those resources which are referred to in the definition or notion of the concept under measurement. The content validity of a measure is dictated by how well a measure's concept is reflected in the components of the measure.

Well-being has been defined and measured in numerous ways. There has been no consensus on how to most adequately conceptualise and measure well-being. The changing social policy and political influences on the development of measures of social well-being are in part responsible for this variance. The concepts and measures under review in this thesis which relate to social well-being are those which seek to assess levels of poverty, deprivation, social exclusion, standards of living and quality of life. A detailed analysis of the issues involved in measuring social well-being will occur in subsequent chapters. The following chapter provides an outline of the major social well-being measures that have emerged from outside of New Zealand over the last century.

4 The Development of Social Well-being Measurement Outside of New Zealand

An overview of the developmental stages of the major measures of social well-being and their associated concepts that have been developed by researchers outside of New Zealand is presented in this chapter. It is ordered chronologically, and by concept, showing the developments in each type of measure over the last century. The types of measures discussed here have been categorised into measures of poverty, deprivation, social indicators, social exclusion, and well-being. The social policy and political contexts are also discussed here to identify some of the influences that contributed to the developmental processes of different measures and impacted upon the structure of the measures. This chapter does not provide coverage of an exhaustive list of quantitative measures but includes the major works from a variety of Western countries, particularly those from the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

4.1 Early Twentieth Century

The early twentieth century saw the introduction of poverty lines as a measurement tool for assessing levels of poverty in Britain. Prior to this time poverty was generally assessed quantitatively through the use of charitable aid records and qualitatively through the use of ethnographic accounts of poverty. During this period, the consumption and cost of resources referred to as "basic needs" or "necessities" (such as food, housing, clothing and fuel for cooking) were utilised as indicators for measurement.

4.1.1 Poverty

Poverty measurement is the form of social well-being measurement that has the greatest representation in the relevant literature. It has its origins in the late 1800s and it focuses on analysing minimum standards of living or low levels of social well-being. Early British poverty researchers, such as Booth (1889) and Rowntree (1901), proposed poverty concepts (for example, primary and secondary classifications of poverty) and

the notion of a poverty line (defined below). Their concepts, including the poverty line notion, generated much debate that lasted well into the twentieth century (see Bradshaw and Sainsbury, 2000). That debate concerned the degree to which different poverty concepts and measures are capable of providing an adequate account of what poverty is, the extent to which it exists and which population groups are more likely to experience it. In particular, the debate focused upon the ability of researchers to determine the resources necessary to maintain physical well-being; for example, the specific quantities of food required by individuals according to gender, age and energy output.

Traditionally, the concept of poverty was related to a lack of access to minimum resource needs or necessities. Poverty measurement studies defined poverty as a standard of living where people were deprived of basic needs (such as food, housing and clothing). The term 'poor' is often synonymous with poverty, but more specifically it relates to having access to a minimum level of resources, whereas poverty might be a level below that minimum. As will be shown further on, this notion of basic needs has been developed to incorporate other types of resources such as medical care and education.

Charles Booth developed one of the first poverty line measurement methods employing definitions of people experiencing poverty as being 'poor' and 'very poor'. Booth (1889:33) categorised the poor as "those who have a sufficiently regular though bare income and whose means are barely sufficient for decent independent life", and the very poor as "those who from any cause fall much below this standard and whose means are insufficient for this according to the usual standard of life in this country". Low-income earners were interviewed to establish how many households could not afford basic needs (identified by Booth as food, clothing, housing, and fuel for heating and cooking) and were therefore below the poverty line. Booth concluded that low-income levels were the cause of poverty and that 30.7 percent of the population of London was living in poverty in 1889 (Booth, 1889:64).

Seebohm Rowntree carried out similar research in York in 1899 to investigate if poverty

existed in provincial region to the same extent as it did in the urban region that Booth studied. Rowntree's work was one of the first to identify poverty cycles within the human lifespan. These cycles depended on the temporary status of employment, the ages of dependents in a household, and specific social problems of drinking and gambling. He also differentiated poverty into two categories. 'Primary poverty' was where a household had an income that was inadequate to afford the minimum level of food, clothing and shelter necessary to maintain the physical health and efficiency of its members (Rowntree, 1901:117). 'Secondary poverty' was where a household had an income above that of the primary poverty line, but it was wasted by choice or lack of knowledge to meet the requirements of the household (Rowntree, 1901:118). Rowntree's poverty line was also based on a monetary estimate of basic needs, with nutritional needs defined by a nutritional scientist. His study reported that 10 percent of the population of York lived in primary poverty and 28 percent lived in secondary poverty (Rowntree, 1901:102).

In 1936, Rowntree no longer measured secondary poverty and he expanded the concept of primary poverty to include basic needs as well as personal and social expenditure. This time, 17 percent of the population of York was deemed to be living in primary poverty (Rowntree, 1941:84). By 1950, however, Rowntree's estimate indicated that a major change had occurred, with only 2 percent of the population of York now living in a state of primary poverty (Rowntree, 1951:52). His findings led him to the same conclusion as Booth; namely, that low-income levels were the main cause of poverty. However, Rowntree deduced that the industrial revolution had increased living standards markedly and accounted for the decrease in poverty found in his later study.

The early studies of Booth and Rowntree remain unique in that they used a large survey sample (at least 10,000 households) and related their findings to a specific region of one country. Their work heavily influenced future poverty measurement studies, and the survey-based poverty line method is still utilised today. The research findings of Booth and Rowntree were used to argue for an increase in state intervention in improving the living standards of low income households in the United Kingdom. Townsend (1962)

states that their measurement methods were employed in the formulation of United Kingdom income maintenance rates in the 1940s. Governments and social researchers in the developed countries replicated their poverty line method to further investigate the incidence of poverty throughout the twentieth century.

4.1.2 Social Policy and Political Contexts

There is little evidence of other poverty research of a similar magnitude having been undertaken at the same time in other Western countries. Certainly the work of Booth and Rowntree is the best documented. Hill and Bramley (1986:40) state that during this time period:

> *...quantifiable definitions of the poverty line were used in political controversy to seek to persuade governments there was a problem of poverty, and those definitions were taken into account in the determination of policies.*

Williams (1998:13) asserts that this period was an important initial developmental phase for the concept of poverty as:

> *The concept of poverty emerged from the liberal political economy of the nineteenth century. It moved through the practices of charitable institution in the early twentieth century and was usurped by Fabians and social reformers who tied the measurement of poverty to arguments about inequality and redistribution.*

From the literature it can be seen that both of these researchers carried out their measurement studies as philanthropic exercises that would hopefully lead to informing debate on the issue of poverty with empirical knowledge and to aid in the development of solutions to decreasing poverty.

4.2 Mid-Twentieth Century

During the 1950s and 1960s the application of national statistical databases allowed for well-being measures of poverty, deprivation thresholds and social indicator frameworks to be applied to national population groups instead of specific regions of a country. The

concept of poverty was expanded upon to encapsulate resources other than food, housing and clothing. The concept of deprivation was introduced as a development of a relative concept of poverty. Social indicators began to be employed as a means of assessing national statistics on particular aspects of social well-being other than the resources referred to in traditional poverty measures. Social well-being measures became more detailed and diverse at this time due to changing perspectives on human needs and the greater availability of social statistics collected by government agencies.

4.2.1 Poverty

The 1960s saw a growth in poverty measurement research that followed on in the direction of earlier methods. In the developed countries, government agencies began to collect data on national income levels. Basic needs were defined by researchers or through survey research asking respondents to list their basic needs. An income level based on the monetary costs of those needs could now be generalised for the total population of a country.

Harrington (1962) reported that 50 million people in the United States of America (USA) were living in poverty. This poverty estimate attracted a great deal of public attention and sparked a new era of poverty research. Harrington used low income as an indication of poverty and utilised national income data to calculate his poverty estimate. In 1965, the USA was the first country to institute an official poverty line. It was derived from the poverty research of Mollie Orshanksy (see Orshanksy, 1963 for a backgrounder), formulating the cost of the minimum dietary requirements of a household as a percentage of total income. A household lived in poverty if it spent 35 percent or more of its income on food (Orshanksy, 1965). This poverty line was used primarily to set levels of income maintenance and it is still used for this purpose. The USA remains today one of a few countries that employs an official poverty line. Abel-Smith and Townsend (1965) used a poverty line of 140 percent of the Basic National Assistance Scale plus rent and other housing costs, to estimate that 18 percent of British households lived in poverty.

During this period, international organisations such as the United Nations and the World Bank began to report on a range of indicators to provide evidence of poverty. The United Nations Development Programme, for example, used indicators that included access to safe water, income, mortality rates, access to education, literacy rates, pollution, and population density. The World Bank employed indicators of non-income resources, education, health, access to services and infrastructure, risk, vulnerability, social exclusion, and access to social capital. The reporting of these indicators occurred along with the use of poverty lines that still focused on access to basic needs in relation to income expenditure, to provide a multi-dimensional framework for measurement.

The 1970s were an important period in the debate over absolute and relative concepts of poverty. Early twentieth century poverty measures were viewed as being structured around the notion of 'absolute poverty', because they measured poverty in terms of minimum levels of material needs and were based on the evidence of people who were living below the associated poverty line or just above it. 'Relative poverty' measures became popular in the 1970s where poverty was perceived in terms of minimum levels of material needs in relation to the levels of material needs of the majority in society. Different poverty researchers argued for the use of either one concept or the other, as both were deemed to have advantages and disadvantages (for example, see Robertson, 2001).

The debate also revolved around notions of objectivity and subjectivity where the absolute approach to measurement was traditionally viewed as objective and the relative approach as subjective. It is often argued that a measure is somewhat subjective because it relies on a perception of poverty; either that of the researcher or of the research participant. However, there is mixed opinion as to what precisely is an objective or subjective concept. For example, Robertson (2001:4) argues that:

> *...absolute and relative concepts of poverty are not distinguishable on the grounds of objectivity versus subjectivity: any absolute poverty standard will be subjective, in the sense of being defined on the basis of a judgment and within a social context....*

4.2.2 Deprivation

Townsend (1979) pioneered the concept of deprivation and the use of a deprivation index based on living standards survey data for people across a range of income levels in the United Kingdom. A wide ranging set of indicators was employed that included food, clothing, medicine, transport and entertainment. Here deprivation was viewed as being relative to the standard of living of the majority of society. Townsend argued against a view of basic needs that equated to a minimum subsistence level of living and that his relative definition of need was objective and therefore accurately measurable. His research findings indicated that social security payments were too low and did not afford people an adequate standard of living, relative to the standard of living of higher income earners.

4.2.3 Social Indicators

The social indicators movement began in the 1960s when a range of indicators, including those typically used in poverty measures were assessed to give an overall description of well-being. Cazes (1972:14) describes a social indicator in a broad sense as a "measurement of social phenomena". Crothers (2000:102) describes social indicators as "institutionalised measures of social well-being or quality of life". Whilst both of these definitions of social indicators provide generalised notions, indicators of these kinds can include a range of resource areas that relate to social well-being. For example, national data can be assessed in terms of the proportion of the population who experience a certain level of housing conditions, educational qualifications or who attain a certain level of income. Social indicators provide proxies for different aspects of social well-being. For example, they can identify trends over time in the use of resources (such as access to health care) and/or outcomes of resource use (such as life expectancy).

Andrews and Withey (1976) provide an example of social indicator analysis applied to social survey research to investigate the public perception of well-being in America. They utilised a wide range of indicators including housing, income, standard of living, religion, and government. The study is rare because it has a focus on assessing the levels of public satisfaction with their standard of living.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (1976) was the first international organisation to develop a social indicator framework for measuring social well-being. The framework entails nine areas of well-being (examples of indicators in brackets): health (life expectancy and maternal mortality), individual development through learning (education and cultural heritage), employment and quality of working life (unemployment rates and accident rates), time and leisure (work and leisure hours), personal economic situation (income levels, material deprivation and sickness compensation), physical environment (dwelling space), the social environment (social attachments), personal safety and the administration of justice (crime rates) and social opportunity and participation (social inequality, voting rates). This was a theoretical social indicator reporting framework for future use which heavily influenced social indicator reporting in the developed countries and has since been developed into annual national statistical reports by a number of governments such as New Zealand and Australia and those of many European countries.

4.2.4 Social Policy and Political Contexts

A part of the broader international social policy context is the international aid funded by various developed nations. International aid in developing nations began in the late 1960s and it aimed to alleviate absolute poverty by providing an adequate level of basic needs. The organisations that administered aid programmes began to measure poverty in the context of a lack of physical and non-physical resources. For measurement of social well-being in the developed countries the focus was on more socially constructed resource areas such as income, employment and income maintenance.

A growth in social science research occurred during this time, employing the techniques of poverty and social indicator measurement. Crothers (2000) explains that since the 1960s social scientists and policy analysts have argued for a more systematic policy process that made use of social indicators. This was to better facilitate the social policy development process with more specific data on resource needs, and where policies were succeeding and failing. Cobb and Rixford (1998:9) explain that "the perceived

limitations of economic thought and economic indicators also led to a call for greater support for social indicators". Throughout the different methods of social well-being measurement, more detailed analysis had developed to allow greater insight into a wider range of aspects of social well-being to help account for perceived increases in lower levels of social well-being.

4.3 Late Twentieth Century

The later decades of the twentieth century continued to experience a measurement focus on poverty, deprivation and social indicators. There was still no consensus on how to most adequately define and measure well-being. An even wider range of physical and non-physical resources were included in the newer measures. For example, equal employment opportunities, community participation and Internet access are now perceived by some researchers as resources necessary for an adequate standard of living.

The mid-twentieth century understanding that basic needs were universal in that they were the same for all individuals regardless of gender, ethnicity, age and so on, is now widely disputed. The critiques of feminist and anti-racist movements of the late 1970s argued that men and women and different ethnic groups had different needs (Williams, 1989). Moreover, as Barreiros (1988) points out, even after decades of debate over how best to determine basic needs or fundamental needs, the problem of selecting the criteria for determining need still exists. The debate is likely to continue for some time yet.

Doyal and Gough (1991) claimed to have formulated an objective definition and measure of need. They defined needs in terms of varying levels of achievement (minimum to optimum) and distinguished between basic needs as universal (the same for all individuals regardless of cultural group) and intermediate needs as relative (varying between different cultural groups). Their framework for conceptualising need is one example of the now multiple understandings of well-being. The major developments of these understandings in the latter part of the last century are discussed below.

4.3.1 Poverty

The 1990s have seen a resurgence in poverty measurement. An increasing number of countries and international organisations utilise some method of poverty measurement, typically the poverty line method. Numerous studies have concluded that a poverty line is 50-60 percent of the average national income (see for example, Kaul and Tomaselli-Moschovitis, 1999). Poverty measures now incorporate a wider range of poverty indicators including: citizenship rights, human rights, access to welfare state provisions, leisure activities, and access to telephones. More specific poverty measures have been developed in recent years by researchers such as De Rose et al. (1998) who estimated the incidence and causes of food poverty for certain developing countries. There is still, however, a common focus on the use of income levels in the assessment of accessibility to resources.

Different organisations and researchers continue to employ and develop different conceptions and measures of poverty. However, there is agreement that poverty is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, and measures have evolved to become more capable of capturing some its different dimensions. The concept of poverty has also been advanced with the introduction of Sen's (1983; 1985) capability approach. This involves the notion of the maximum utilisation capability of a resource. For example, the capability of an item of food as a resource is the maximum benefit of the use of that item. Sen's approach introduces the issue of how resources are utilised. For example, whilst particular items of food may be available within a society, only particular groups within the total population may have access to them. Sen argues that this approach is objective and absolute.

Concept differentiation has evolved with the development of understandings of poverty. Notably, Max-Neef (1991) asserts that poverty can be any lack of an aspect of well-being. He outlines the notion of multiple poverties including subsistence poverty, protection poverty, affection poverty, and understanding poverty. This is part of a human development approach that provides a framework for measuring human needs and overall well-being.

4.3.2 Deprivation

Mack and Lansley (1985) provide an updated version of Townsend's (1979) deprivation study. In this case, social survey research methods were utilised to gain respondent's definitions of poverty and self-assessments of deprivation. The researchers aimed to provide an assessment of what resources people need for living in Britain in the 1980s and in what ways people lack access to those resources. The survey involved 1,174 people throughout Britain and included questions on resources such as food, heating, clothing, entertainment, childcare and leisure activities. Mack and Lansley (1985:182) concluded that in the 1980s, 5 million adults and 2.5 million children (1 in 7 people) were living in poverty in Britain.

4.3.3 Social Indicators

Social indicator reporting has become more prominent in recent years (Crothers, 2000). Frameworks still include indicators relating to basic needs but they also involve more components of social participation and social exclusion. For example, the United Nation's Human Development Index has been developed since 1990 and includes indicators of nutrition, health, education, and economic growth. A number of developed countries now publish annual assessments of social indicators that still follow the original OECD framework. For example, many Western European countries, as well as Canada, Australia and New Zealand, publish annual social reporting documents that cover aspects of social well-being including health, education, employment, housing, social participation, and pollution.

4.3.4 Well-being Measures

The last decade has also seen the advent of measures that aim to measure well-being in broad terms including many aspects of social well-being. These measures can employ poverty, deprivation, social indicator reporting and social exclusion measurement methods. Well-being studies can focus on a more expansive range of indicators than poverty or social exclusion measures. They can also identify a range of levels of well-being, not just low or negative levels of well-being such as poverty, social exclusion and deprivation. For example, Stewart's (2002) well-being and social exclusion study has the

aim of developing regional indicators of well-being and social exclusion for the European Union. The chosen indicators of well-being are viewed as being similar to those of social exclusion because the concepts are the inverse of one another and the 'excluded' are an important measure of the well-being of a society (Stewart, 2002:9). The five areas of well-being in this measure are material well-being, participation in productive life, education, health, and social participation.

Two other types of well-being measures are the American Genuine Progress Indicator and the Canadian Genuine Progress Index (GPI). The American indicator derives a single index number from a set of well-being indicators for comparability of Gross Domestic Product figures since the 1950s (see Cobb et al., 1995; Cobb and Rixford, 1998). The Canadian index, on the other hand, provides a framework for social indicator reporting and does not yield a single index number (see Colman, 2001). The American GPI was the formative measure and both measures include at least twenty indicators of economic, family, community, and environmental aspects of well-being that include: income, expenditure, crime, health, and pollution. The GPIs are intended to provide policy-makers and the public with a more adequate measure of the overall well-being of their respective countries over different time periods.

4.3.5 Social Policy and Political Contexts

Social well-being and its various related concepts have continued to be measured throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first primarily because of the arguments surrounding the moral justification of welfare provision. Yet there is widespread disagreement about what human needs actually are and how they should be measured, both within and across cultures (Gough and Thomas, 1994:33). A public perception of the existence of low levels of well-being has meant that, outside of the public sector, well-being measurement has become more widespread and detailed as interest groups use research findings to lobby governments for policy changes regarding social services and in particular for income maintenance levels. At the *Rio Earth Summit* in 1992, 178 countries committed themselves to developing national accounts systems in order to assess the social and environmental dimensions of their societies. Many

countries now produce annual social indicator reports. Yet the majority of measures that focus on low levels of social well-being such as poverty, deprivation and social exclusion still continue to emerge from outside of government agencies. These concepts are politically sensitive for governments and are not likely to be institutionalised until they become more politically acceptable as reliable and valid measurement tools.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has identified the major measures of social well-being that have been developed by researchers outside of New Zealand over the last century. The development of measurement began with a perception of poverty as a lack of physical resources such as food, housing, clothing and fuel for heating and cooking. Over the decades of the last century, measures have evolved to assess the perceived physical and non-physical resources necessary for an adequate standard of living as measured against the standard of living of the majority within a society. The types of resources now measured still include those of food, housing and clothing; however, there has been the addition of a wider range of indicators including employment, education, leisure and communication.

The impetus for the formulation of measures of social well-being has emerged traditionally from outside of government organisations. Researchers have sought to undertake an analysis of the extent of poverty, deprivation, social exclusion, standards of living and well-being in an effort to address a lack of information available concerning those concepts. Government agencies have not tended to implement consistent measures of low levels of social well-being such as poverty, deprivation or social exclusion for a number of reasons, most obviously because of the contentious nature of these concepts. To admit that this lack of well-being exists is to admit policy failures or a lack of policy attention in the first instance. Whilst annual social indicator reporting has become commonplace for many Western governments it does not determine what levels of social well-being exist overall for a given country and does not focus on low levels of social well-being. It is most likely that the less neutral presentations of social statistics will

occur from outside of the state and hopefully will provide, as was once done by the pioneers of poverty measurement, research findings that invoke political debate concerning some of the most urgent needs of the public.

With the advent of national statistics collection within many Western societies, measurement findings have been applied to national population groups as opposed to the earlier region specific poverty studies of Booth and Rowntree. The measurement issues that were raised at the time of this early research still exist, in particular the diversity of perceptions of social well-being and the ability of measures to capture these perceptions. These issues are likely to continue being debated for some time yet as measures are currently being developed that employ aspects of the traditional concept of poverty and the newer concepts of deprivation and social exclusion to assess levels of social well-being as a multi-dimensional concept. It is likely that the reliability of national estimations of social well-being will continue to be dominated by the most accessible data such as, national income and employment/unemployment figures and certain commodity prices such as those for housing and food. Even though concepts have been expanded to include a greater array of resources that affect social well-being, measures will only be able to validate those concepts if they include data relevant to the breadth of those resources.

5 The Development of Social Well-being Measurement in New Zealand

The major New Zealand-based measures of social well-being are described in this chapter which follows the same structural ordering as the previous discussion of overseas measures. Development of the New Zealand measures has generally followed international trends, especially since the 1970s, with poverty line and social indicator measurement methods. The types of measures identified here are those which focus upon poverty, standards of living, hardship, deprivation and social well-being. A useful guide for references on a vast range of the quantitative and qualitative New Zealand studies on poverty which are not included here can be found in Elliott, Peace and Barnes (1999).

5.1 Early Twentieth Century

During the first part of the twentieth century the assessment of social well-being in New Zealand was associated with the concept of poverty, and measurement was primarily provided through qualitative anecdotal evidence (Easton, 1997). Quantitative evidence was derived from government and non-government agency charitable aid records (see Ashton, 1994; Sutch, 1941; Tennant, 1989). More formal and structured measurement began to occur in the mid-twentieth century.

5.1.1 Standard of Living

Doig (1940) provided New Zealand's first standard of living survey. The measure focused on 526 dairy farm households in five regions of the country (North Auckland, Waikato, Taranaki, Manawatu and Southland). Data were collected on material (housing, household equipment, clothing and food) and non-material elements (leisure, leisure-time activities, family life and organisation, participation in community life, moral qualities, education, freedom and security) of human life. Overall figures of households experiencing particular standards of living were not given. However, Doig (1940:3) concluded:

...it is obvious that there are considerable differences in living conditions, house work, expenditure, consumption, and leisure-time activities among dairy farmers and their families.

5.1.2 Social Policy and Political Contexts

During the early twentieth century the debate concerning poverty and the need for government intervention to alleviate it was argued primarily on the basis of existing quantitative records of the numbers of the population receiving state and non-state provided social services (for example, medical care and income maintenance). Doig's standard of living study was part of a proposed series that did not eventuate to more than the one dairy farmers survey, due to the demise of the Social Science Research Bureau, the organisation that initially sanctioned the research. Another standard of living survey, this time of urban regions, was undertaken but the results were never published before the Bureau was disestablished. One reason for the demise of the Bureau was the controversy over the results of the Bureau's initial research projects, which provided evidence of low levels of social well-being (MacKay, 1975:60). The dairy farmers' survey revealed evidence of low standards of living and this was politically embarrassing for the Labour Government of the day. According to Robb (1987), with the possibility of further survey research revealing similar evidence of low levels of social well-being the Bureau's work was seen as potentially politically damaging for the Government and so the Bureau was disestablished in 1940, only four years after being established. Prior to the development of the Bureau the only organised social research undertaken in New Zealand was the "somewhat sporadic research activity within the universities" (MacKay, 1975:60).

5.2 Mid-Twentieth Century

The next period of measurement didn't occur until the 1970s. International trends with regard to the use of the poverty line and social indicator methods were followed in New Zealand from this time. Government initiated research projects explored the potential for these two types of well-being measures. In particular, the 1972 report of the New

Zealand Royal Commission on Social Security (NZRCSS) had a lasting influence on later poverty measurement studies with the utilisation of its notion of poverty. The introduction of government statistical databases on national income and expenditure patterns in New Zealand at this time allowed for estimates of poverty for the total population and for subgroups of that population.

5.2.1 Poverty

Poverty measurement in New Zealand today has its origins in the 1970s. The 1972 Report of the NZRCSS had an objective of establishing adequate levels of social security payments in a New Zealand context. One of its stated aims for the social security system has since been utilised as a definition of poverty for many New Zealand poverty measures. This aim was to ensure (NZRCSS, 1972:65):

> *...that everyone is able to enjoy a standard of living much like that of the rest of the community, and thus be able to feel a sense of participation in and belonging to the community.*

The NZRCSS report critically reviewed the major overseas poverty measures employed up until that time. It concluded that the measurement of poverty, and in particular the poverty line method, was problematic because of its limited ability to capture the wide range of resources related to living standards and the different resource requirements of different population groups. The use of the poverty line method was not recommended nor was an alternative measure offered. The NZRCSS report did recommend that the "basic benefit level" (set at 80 percent of the current average net wage of building and engineering labourers, with adjustments made for changes in commodity prices over time) was an adequate level of social security payment. This level was viewed as sufficient to provide an adequate standard of living as it was the approximate income earned by a significant number of New Zealand families at the time. It was hoped that this level could be further assessed for adequacy once more data became available in the future concerning consumption patterns, living costs, wages and taxation. The basic benefit level was not a formal poverty measure in itself.

The literature on New Zealand poverty line measures has been dominated by the use of two types of poverty lines; a focus group-based line and an income maintenance-based line. Cuttance (1974) presented a focus group-based poverty line derived from a survey of the expenditure patterns of 358 families (with four or more dependent children) in Hamilton and Frankton. He utilised the 'New York adjustment index' as an equivalence scale (see Appendix D) based on New York prices and national income data to derive poverty estimates for these two regions. Cuttance (1974:86) estimated that 45 percent of large families in Frankton and 15 percent in Hamilton were living in poverty.

Brian Easton developed the first income maintenance-based poverty line measure in New Zealand. He employed the above NZRCSS social security aim as a relative definition of poverty. Initially, Easton (1976) used a Pensioner Datum Level (PDL), an updated version of the NZRCSS basic benefit level, as a poverty threshold. Easton chose the PDL poverty line threshold on the basis of social survey evidence that this level of income was close to providing a standard of living above poverty (Easton, 1976, 1995). This survey evidence was not derived from research undertaken by Easton, instead it was focused on standard of living surveys such as the 1975 Department of Social Welfare *Survey of Persons Aged 65 Years and Over.*

Easton utilised Statistics New Zealand's Household Economic Survey (HES) data to relate his poverty threshold to the total population and sub-groups of that population. The HES is a regular survey of New Zealand households that collects data on income levels, expenditure patterns and consumption levels of commodities. Easton also employed the New York basic adjustment index modified for New Zealand prices as an equivalence scale (see Appendix D; Easton, 1980). Easton estimated that the proportion of the New Zealand population living in poverty was 18 percent in 1973 (Easton, 1976:138).

5.2.2 Social Indicators

The utilisation of social indicators in New Zealand in the assessment of social well-being began in the 1970s. Moody and Millthorpe (1975) undertook three surveys with a

total of 1,172 respondents (ranging from 21 to 40 years of age) from three neighbouring suburbs in Christchurch. The study aimed to assess the social well-being of the selected suburbs. Although a definition of social well-being was not provided, the survey questions primarily related to the provision of community resources (for example, community halls, churches and outdoor recreational areas) and social problems (for example, financial difficulties, a lack of community cohesion and crime). Overall findings included the identification of concerns surrounding the lack of community facilities (churches, kindergartens, social agencies and public transport) and social problems caused by "street gangs" of youths (Moody and Millthorpe, 1975:7).

Shields (1979) described the Government initiative of the time towards the implementation of a social indicator monitoring system for the measurement of progress towards social goals. A Social Indicators Unit was established within the Department of Statistics and an indicator framework was developed with a structure based on that of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1976) social indicator programme. A total of 55 indicators were proposed to cover the following general areas of well-being: employment, health, housing, education, income and expenditure, personal safety and justice, leisure and allocation of time, and social participation. Survey data was applied to a modified version of this indicator framework in a later study which is discussed further on in this chapter.

5.2.3 Hardship

The Department of Social Welfare (DSW) (1975) presented the findings of a social survey that was undertaken in order to assess the relative hardship of the aged (65 years and older) population. A financial hardship scale was employed to measure such hardship indicators as income and assets, housing, food, mobility and transport, social and leisure activities, and health. A total of 2,303 respondents were interviewed and it was estimated that 15-25 percent of this population were living in hardship (DSW, 1975: 5). It is not clear from the study why the term hardship is used instead of the similar terms of deprivation and poverty that were in use overseas at the time.

5.2.4 Social Policy and Political Contexts

During the middle of the last century, poverty and hardship measurement and social indicator reporting methods began to be utilised within New Zealand to assess the levels of social well-being amongst the total population. These types of measures emerged out of a growing dissatisfaction with the use of economic indicators to measure well-being (see Watson, 1979) and out of a public perception of an increasing number of social problems such as crime, a lack of social services and community organisations (see Moody and Millthorpe, 1975).

Robb (1987:1) argues that during the mid 1960s there was a reluctance of government agencies to undertake social research initiatives because of the unsuccessful experience of the Social Science Research Bureau and how its "legacy of distrust and apprehension about social research" was still quite strong. However, by the 1970s the Government efforts that occurred were influenced by international initiatives and trends in measuring well-being (outlined in the previous chapter). The NZRCSS (1972:6) identified that the focus of social policy was now a more general approach to improving the quality of life rather than alleviating poverty. Human needs were being redefined to account for improvements in the standard of living. An example of the development of the notion of human needs can be found in the variety of indicator areas of the Department of Statistics social indicator framework (see Shields, 1979) and the DSW hardship scale (see DSW, 1975). During the 1970s there was also a policy shift towards increasing the level of public participation in the policy development process (see for example, King, 1975; Latimer, 1975).

5.3 Late Twentieth Century

In the later part of the century an international influence remained towards developing New Zealand well-being concepts and measures along with an increase in research undertaken outside of government agencies. Poverty measurement and social indicator reporting methods continued to be utilised in the remaining decades of the twentieth century and into the next century. Methods of deprivation, standard of living and quality

of life measurement began to be developed in New Zealand at this time.

5.3.1 Poverty

Waldegrave and Coventry (1987) reported on the realities and extent of poverty with the use of both qualitative and quantitative evidence on six dimensions of poverty, such as housing, income, race, employment, health, and gender. Poverty was conceptualised as a lack of basic necessities. The research provided at least one case study for each of those six dimensions to provide qualitative examples of the characteristics of poverty. In an effort to quantify the extent of poverty in New Zealand, national data from the Department of Statistics Household Expenditure and Income Survey (HEIS) was utilised to estimate that 30 percent of the population lived in poverty, as they had income levels of 50 percent or less than the national average expenditure level (Waldegrave and Coventry, 1987:129). HEIS is the updated version of the HES.

Brashares and Aynsley (1990), under commission from the New Zealand Treasury, developed a poverty measure based on the minimum food costs of a household. The financial costs of minimum food requirements (based on the University of Otago's 'economy food plan') was utilised along with HEIS data to estimate the extent of poverty across the total population. Two poverty line thresholds were set at household expenditure rates of at least 25 and 33 percent of household income on food. In 1988/89, 4.4 percent (households spending at least 25 percent of their income on food) and 2.7 percent (households spending at least 33 percent of their income on food) of the total population were estimated to be living in poverty (Brashares, 1993:194). Larger households were identified as the specific population group that was the most at risk of experiencing poverty.

Easton (1995) updated the PDL to formulate the Benefit Datum Level (BDL) to reflect changes in commodity prices and income levels over time. Estimates of poverty for the total New Zealand population in the 1990s were: 12.9 percent in 1990 and 16.3 percent in 1992 (Easton, 1995:203). Easton identified particular population groups as being more likely to experience poverty; these were sole parent families, families with

children, Maori, Pacific Peoples, and the elderly.

The New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project (NZPMP) is a joint study involving the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS), Victoria University and Business Economic Research Limited (BERL). Along with Easton, it is one of the two major contributors to the poverty measurement literature in New Zealand. The NZPMP also uses the derived NZRCSS concept of poverty. However, it differs from Easton's method, as it is a focus group-based poverty line. Focus group research involving more than 400 low-income households was undertaken to gain monetary estimates of "an income level which will give a standard of living which provides for a minimum adequate household expenditure" (Stephens et al., 1995:88). A poverty threshold of 60 percent of the median national income was then derived from the use of the focus group estimates of minimum weekly household expenditure, the Jensen equivalence scale (see Appendix D) and HES and later HEIS data.

This method of establishing a poverty line was claimed to provide a consensus-based poverty measure as low-income households provide the central determinant for the poverty threshold by the NZPMP. The focus groups included households representing different ethnic groups, household sizes and age groups. Waldegrave et al. (1996b:6) state that the NZPMP view this poverty line as being:

> *... 'absolute' in the sense that it is set by the focus group estimates, and 'relative' in the sense that it is imposed on the macro household income data as a percentage of median income.*

The NZPMP estimated that the proportion of the New Zealand population living in poverty was: 17.8 percent in 1991/92 and 20.5 percent in 1992/1993 (Stephens et al., 1995). Like Easton (1995), the NZPMP identified sole parent families, children, Maori, and Pacific Peoples as more likely to experience poverty. For example, in the early 1990s, 33 percent of all children lived in poverty and Maori were three times more likely to live in poverty than Pakeha, whilst Pacific Peoples were four times more likely (Waldegrave et al., 1996a:1).

Kelly (1998) provides a rare New Zealand example of concept differentiation between different types of poverty. He referred to, but did not provide, measures of the incidence of a poverty of spirit, physical poverty and information poverty. However, Kelly conducted a survey of 33 schools in the electorate of Mana to measure poverty in relation to its traditional notion of basic needs. Specific poverty trends were identified, including schools paying for the health and welfare needs of students, and a growing number of low-income families unable to afford uniforms, school trips and food for their children.

5.3.2 Social Indicators

Chamberlain (1982) presented a subjective approach to measuring well-being based on the Andrews and Withey (1976) study mentioned in Chapter 4. A total of 150 people (18 years and over, randomly selected off electoral rolls) were surveyed in the city of Palmerston North to measure perceptions of well-being and to gain some information on the viability of a well-being measure in a New Zealand context. Indicator areas were the self, interpersonal relations, family, friends, health, standard of living, work, neighbourhood, leisure and politics. Chamberlain (1982:32) concluded that the standard of living indicators (such as income, material possessions and financial security) received lower levels of satisfaction than those of leisure, health, and neighbourhood.

The Department of Statistics' (1985) Social Indicators Unit presented the results from a social indicators survey carried out in 1980 and 1981 with almost 7,000 participants from various regions throughout New Zealand. Indicator areas were employment, health, housing and neighbourhood, education, income and standard of living, personal safety and justice, leisure, social participation, and family and social attachments. A number of indicators were reported on in each area, with no attempt made to identify an overall level of social well-being. Rather, the findings were designed to provide information on the quality of life, aspects of living conditions and attitudes of the total population.

The Social Monitoring Group of the New Zealand Planning Council started to release a social indicators series called *From Birth to Death* in 1985 for monitoring social well-

being trends primarily through the five yearly New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings data (see Social Monitoring Group, 1985 and 1989). After the group became defunct, its secretariat carried on with the series (see Davey, 1993; 1998; 2003). The social indicator framework presents data primarily by age groups on indicators that include housing tenure, household income, participation in education, labour force participation, domestic/caring work at home, voluntary work outside the home, smoking, alcohol, drug use, disability and hospital attendance. The most recent series incorporates data sources from government agencies including the Ministry of Social Development, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, instead of just census data. Davey (2003:195) notes in recent years there has been a fall in home ownership and an increase in participation in tertiary education and training.

Colmar Brunton Research (1990) conducted a survey of 1,000 people over the age of 60 years, in 17 regions throughout New Zealand to establish the level of well-being amongst this age group. Indicator areas included leisure activities, living arrangements, social contact, health, transport, financial situation, social services and quality of life. Overall, it was found that in general most respondents were positive about their quality of life, although there were concerns about health, safety away from the home, financial position and recreational activities (Colmar Brunton Research, 1990:14).

The NZCCSS (1994; 1995; 1996a) conducted surveys of its foodbank clients during the mid 1990s to assess the affordability of housing. Approximately 1,000 participants were involved in each survey representing the major city centres of New Zealand. Indicators of housing, food and income were utilised. Survey findings revealed that foodbank clients were mostly state housing tenants and experienced a high level of housing expenditure. For example, in 1994, 46.2 percent of clients spent over 50 percent of income on housing costs (NZCCSS, 1996a:3); by 1996 that figure had increased to 57.6 percent (NZCCSS, 1996a:3). These findings were used to provide evidence concerning the impact of changes to state housing policy and to argue for a reduction in state housing costs.

The NZCCSS (2001b; 2002a) Poverty Indicator Project defines foodbank use as an indicator of poverty. A total of approximately 2,000 foodbank clients representing seven cities were interviewed over 2000 and 2003. This is a survey-based measure with poverty indicators such as income, housing, employment, and debt. Findings identified high housing costs as the major indicator of poverty (NZCCSS, 2001b:2), further substantiating previous NZCCSS research findings.

The Ministry of Social Policy and then the Ministry of Social Development[1] (MSD) has published the Social Report for three consecutive years (see Ministry of Social Policy, 2001b; MSD, 2002c and 2003). Using data obtained from multiple sources including the HEIS and The Ministry of Health, the reports aimed to measure social well-being and contained indicator areas of: health, knowledge and skills, paid work, economic standard of living, safety and security, human rights, culture and identity, social connectedness, and the environment. A total of 38 indicators across these areas are reported on, including life expectancy, educational qualifications, unemployment, housing affordability, child abuse, general election voter turnout, participation in cultural and arts activities, membership in community-based groups and air quality. A single measure of social well-being, however, is not identified.

The Local Government Act 2002 sets out a policy obligation for local councils to measure well-being, differentiated into four concepts of community well-being such as economic, social, environmental and cultural. Because of this new legislation local councils are now undertaking social indicator reporting. For example, a needs assessment study undertaken by the Horowhenua District Council (2003) included the indicator areas of income and wealth, employment, housing, health, deprivation, education and social capital. As it was a preliminary report toward the future assessment of levels of well-being it did not provide analysis of the indicator levels. The community was to decide on what were adequate levels of these indicators after future consultation.

[1] The Department of Social Welfare (DSW) underwent major organisational changes in the last decade. The Social Policy Agency, as part of the DSW, was constituted as the Ministry of Social Policy in 1999. That ministry merged with the Department of Work and Income and became the Ministry of Social Development in October 2001.

Another example is the Auckland City Council et al. (2002 and 2003) which presented a quality of life report with a set of approximately 60 indicators in the following nine indicator areas: housing, health, education, employment and economy, safety, urban environment, community cohesion, and democracy. The report presents a picture of the quality of life in the six largest cities of New Zealand (Auckland, Manukau, North Shore, Waitakere, Wellington and Christchurch), covering approximately 40 percent of the national population. Its aim was to assess the effects of growth and urbanisation in these cities on the social well-being of its citizens. A definition of social well-being is not identified in the report and an overall level of the quality of life is not given. Both of these examples included data from a range of sources, including the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings, the Ministry of Health and Statistics New Zealand.

5.3.3 Deprivation

NZDep91, NZDep96 and NZDep2001 are deprivation indexes developed by the Department of Public Health and the Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences (see Crampton et al., 1997 and 2000; Salmond et al., 1998 and 2002). These indexes provide a measure of deprivation and socio-economic status. Deprivation is referred to in this measure as relative disadvantage and encompasses both material and social deprivation. National Census data is used and deprivation indicators are analysed geographically. Both demographic (ethnicity, age and gender) and deprivation indicators (those influenced by social policy) are measured to establish the indices. The deprivation indicators consist of income, transport, living space, home ownership, employment, qualifications and social support. A weighting is derived for each indicator that can then be associated with geographical areas. For example, mortality rates can be associated with each deprivation indicator and geographical area to establish which population groups experiencing a certain deprivation are more likely to live longer.

5.3.4 Standard of Living

Rochford (1987) conducted a survey of living standards of 1,114 beneficiaries on behalf of the DSW. This was an attempt to replicate the 1975 DSW survey with a different population group. Findings identified a high overall level of financial difficulties

amongst those surveyed. However, more than half of the survey sample was satisfied with their standard of living.

Crothers (1997) undertook a survey of 175 inner city households in Auckland to establish their standards of living. Survey respondents were questioned about their ability to afford a range of everyday needs including basic needs. The survey had a unique element in it as respondents were asked if they ever "felt poor". The majority answered "yes".

The Ministry of Social Policy (2001a) undertook an updated version of the 1975 DSW living standards survey. A 'material well-being' scale was formulated using a variety of indicators that collectively describe a picture of living standards. The scale measured five areas of well-being: ownership restrictions, social participation restrictions, economising, severe financial problems, and self-assessments. A total of 3,060 older people (65 years and over) were surveyed representing people from urban and rural regions and people of European/Pakeha, Maori and Pacific ethnicity. Research findings revealed that 5 percent of the sample experienced "marked material hardship and restrictions" (MSP, 2001a:49).

A similar survey was then undertaken by the MSD, this time focusing on the living standards of just the older Maori population. The same five areas of well-being were used and 542 people were interviewed. From the results obtained it was concluded that 15 percent of the older Maori population faced some financial difficulties, with 20 percent of that group facing severe difficulties (MSD, 2002b:6).

Developing these two living standards studies further, the MSD (2002a) formulated the Economic Living Standards Index (ELSI) based on similar social survey research. ELSI is a development of the material well-being scale employed in the other two surveys. A sample of 3,682 respondents was interviewed from the major urban and rural regions, representing the working-age population of New Zealand (18-64 years). The index includes resources such as food, household amenities, personal possessions, social and

recreational activities, and access to services. The index ranks different living standards according to participant self-assessments of affordability of resources. The population groups most likely to experience lower than average living standards were children, Maori and Pacific peoples, and those receiving income-tested benefits.

5.3.5 Social Policy and Political Contexts

The last few decades have seen a rise in the number and types of social well-being measures in New Zealand. The key theme in this later period of social well-being measurement is the development of more adequate information (concerning resource requirements that could improve levels of social well-being) to inform the social policy making process and to result in the more adequate provision of central and local government and non-government social services. The increased availability of national databases (such as the HES, HEIS and the five yearly Census) has allowed for the assessment of a variety of associated concepts of social well-being for the total New Zealand population and sub-groups of that population.

A growing concern over increasing low levels of social well-being has prompted growth in non-government initiated well-being measurement over the last two decades and especially after the large-scale reductions of benefit entitlement levels in 1992. The work of the NZCCSS and the NZPMP are direct responses to this concern (for example, see Jackman, 1993; NZCCSS, 1994; 1996b; Stephens et al., 1995). Krishnan (1995:76) explains that:

> *Changing economic fortunes have added momentum to the need to measure and monitor the existence of financial hardship in New Zealand, for the purpose of contributing to information on social deprivation, for policy development and modification.*

In the later part of the century, a social policy focus towards more transparent government expenditure and monitoring of policy outcomes has influenced the development of a number of new government-based measures such as the MSD's social reports and living standards surveys, and local government social indicator reporting.

5.4 Conclusion

The major New Zealand measures of social well-being that have emerged in the last century have been identified and described in this chapter. New Zealand social well-being measures have followed similar developmental trends to the overseas measures that have preceded them (see the previous chapter). Today's New Zealand poverty line measures still resemble the early nineteenth century examples. The national standard of living and deprivation indexes also resemble overseas examples, while the other types of measures largely follow in the vein of the original social indicator movement.

The New Zealand measures share common research conclusions, identifying the existence of some type of low level of social well-being regardless of the variation in actual figures. The same population groups are also consistently identified as being most at risk of experiencing a lack of social well-being. These groups are sole parent families, families with children, Maori, Pacific peoples and the elderly.

In recent years there has been a growth in measures at both government and non-government agency levels. This has been due to the changing political climate as interest groups have undertaken social research to obtain empirical evidence on growing levels of poverty for use in the social policy development process. Central and local government agencies have undertaken social indicator reporting initiatives in response to international influences on social monitoring and to new national legislation concerning policy evaluation and monitoring and wider consultation with the public on policy issues. The five case studies presented in the next chapter are a mixture of the major types of measures that have been utilised in New Zealand and overseas.

6 Case Studies: The Motivations or Aims and Technical Aspects of Five New Zealand Measures of Social Well-being

This chapter describes the motivations or aims and technical aspects of five New Zealand measures of social well-being, which are: the New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project's poverty line; the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services' *Poverty Indicator Project*; the Department of Public Health and Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences' *NZDep Index;* and the Ministry of Social Development's *Social Report* and *Economic Living Standards Index*. The description follows the same order in which the measures were first mentioned in Chapter 5.

The measures included here as case studies were chosen because they provide relatively recent findings and they are ongoing measures of social well-being, more so than the other major measures that have emerged within New Zealand. They also broadly cover the range of the most common measurement methods developed and employed overseas such as poverty lines, poverty and social indicator reporting, and deprivation and standard of living indexes.

6.1 The New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project - Poverty Line

The New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project (NZPMP) was developed as an effort to inform the public policy making process with robust evidence of poverty in New Zealand. This measure emerged in the early1990s, shortly after a period of significant political change in New Zealand, including large-scale income maintenance reductions. Waldegrave (interview) highlights the impetus for the NZPMP as follows:

> *Our concern was there weren't social statistics in this area and there needed to be. What we needed was a robust, logical, independent assessment and scrutiny....*

The resulting poverty line measure, based on focus group research, was chosen as the most appropriate means of estimating poverty primarily because of the transparency of the focus group budgets and the advantage of an income and expenditure termed measure to argue rationally for the inadequacy of income maintenance levels (Waldegrave interview). Waldegrave further states that "a real strength of our research is that it involves poor people, it involves their real expenditure and the focus groups really discuss this".

The NZPMP defines poverty in Waldegrave et al. (2003:198, original italics) as:

> *...a lack of access to sufficient economic and social resources that would allow a minimum adequate standard of living and participation in that society.*

Data from low income household focus groups has been collected since 1993, with focus group householders asked to provide dollar estimates of their average minimum weekly household expenditure for a range of commodities including food, housing, power/energy, telephone, appliances, furniture, medical care, transport, clothing, leisure activities, unforeseen emergencies, education, insurance and life assurance. The focus group studies include householders who in totality represent a range of ethnic groups (including European/Pakeha, Maori and Pacific Peoples), family types and sizes (including one and two-parent families), income sources, age of oldest householder, and housing tenure arrangements. Certain assumptions concerning the parameters for household income and expenditure definitions were made explicit to the focus groups to set the context of their estimates. For example, income "includes the value of all money, goods and services received by the household regardless of the source" and "the members of the household are drawing on a common pool of resources" (Waldegrave et al., 1996b:196). For a full list of the income and expenditure parameters see Appendix E. More specifically, respondents were then asked to estimate the average weekly cost of indicators of food, household operations, housing, power/heating, phone, transport, activities/recreation, insurances, life insurance/super, exceptional emergency, appliances furnishings, medical, clothing/shoes and education (Waldegrave et al., 1996b:196).

To date over 400 low income households in 11 regions of New Zealand (including Wellington, Auckland, Masterton, Carterton, Otaki, Ashurst and Marton) have been involved in the focus group research. Typically, focus groups consisted of 8-12 householders with different sample populations in each instance. The low income household criterion was a total household income of 60 percent of the national median disposable household income. This criterion was chosen based on the preliminary NZPMP research of smaller focus groups in a smaller number of regions which estimated the average weekly household expenditure to be approximate to this level of income as set out in the annual Statistics New Zealand Household Economic Survey (HES) (see Stephens et al., 1995). The larger focus group research has also estimated this same level of average weekly household expenditure (see Stephens et al., 1997; Waldegrave et al., 1997 and 1999).

The NZPMP has provided poverty estimates using the 50 and 60 percent income threshold for both mean and median levels of national income to show how the different sets of HES income data can vary the poverty estimates. The 50 percent income threshold is used as a comparative, more conservative threshold. For a complete listing of the NZPMP poverty estimates using these four sets of income data over the 1990s, see Stephens et al. (1995, 1997) and Waldegrave et al. (1997, 2003). For the NZPMP preferred poverty threshold of 60 percent of median, equivalent, disposable household income, approximately 19 percent of households were living in poverty for the period 1993 to 1998 (Waldegrave et al., 2003:190).

6.2 The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services - Poverty Indicator Project

The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) developed the Poverty Indicator Project (PIP) from the late 1990s to provide research findings on dimensions of poverty such as foodbank use and housing costs to aid in their advocacy work towards appropriate policies, services and resources to bring about their vision of a "just and compassionate society in Aotearoa New Zealand" (NZCCSS, 2000:3). Specific

motivations for the PIP included NZCCSS concerns over: the growth of foodbanks and the development of a poverty industry in New Zealand during the 1990s; having their previous research reports ignored, misused or not taken seriously by government and policy makers; the pre-dominance of economic indicators as measures of well-being in society, without mention of social indicators; a lack of good information on which to base policy; and little public monitoring of how policy changes affect those on low incomes (NZCCSS, 2000:3). According to Green (interview), a principal researcher of the measure, before the PIP measure there was a lack of ongoing assessment of poverty in New Zealand and especially a lack of poverty indicators on low income people. The NZCCSS saw an opportunity to gather this type of information on poverty from its foodbank clients as they represented low income households (Green, interview).

The PIP was two years in its initial development and was a participation-based approach to research with the involvement of participants in the research design. During this development phase the participating agencies were consulted and had to be in agreement with the benefits of the research and in particular the questionnaire design (Green, interview). The questionnaire was also aimed at identifying common factors of poverty such as income, debt (especially to Government agencies), housing and so on (Green, interview).

The NZCCSS is a collective of church-based social services around New Zealand and the PIP involves seven affiliates collecting data from interviews with foodbank clients in Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Wellington, Christchurch, Dunedin and Invercargill. The major interview question areas include household size and composition, level and type of debt, weekly housing costs, type of income source and employment status. For an example of a full interview questionnaire see Appendix F. The PIP summary reports have been released quarterly since early 2001 after subsequent pilot PIP reports in 2000. Each quarterly report approximates the total number of the foodbank clients for the participating foodbanks under study, as one of the conditions of foodbank assistance at these centres is to complete an interview. However, each

quarterly report involves mostly new foodbank clients, making the PIP a non-cohort measure.

The PIP does not identify an explicit definition of poverty, instead it continuously employs indicators of poverty such as foodbank use, low income, high housing costs, under-employment (receiving income maintenance), debt and arrears of utility payments. For a full listing of indicator data over the eight published PIP reports see NZCCSS (2001b; 2001c; 2001d; 2002a; 2002b; 2002c; 2002d and 2003). Recent PIP findings show that the approximate total foodbank use across the seven studied regions remains steady at approximately 2,000 foodbank clients at each quarter, and that only a slight decrease in overall foodbank use has occurred with an average decrease of less than 10 foodbank clients between the third and fourth quarters of 2002 (NZCCSS, 2003). Low income indicators reveal that the average weekly household income of foodbank clients for 2002 ranged from $184 to $300, compared to the national average of $810 a week (NZCCSS, 2002d:1). Over 60 percent of foodbank clients in 2002 also continued to spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing (NZCCSS, 2003:2).

6.3 The Ministry of Social Development - Social Report

The Ministry of Social Policy (MSP) and later the Ministry of Social Development (MSD) developed a social indicator framework for measuring social well-being in the form of the annual *Social Report*, published since 2001. The reports were designed to establish a "regular reporting programme to assess the social state of the nation" (MSP, 2001b:3). The Labour and Alliance Coalition Government at that time initiated this form of social indicator reporting as it would give "something concrete against which to measure the nation's progress over time on some key social goals and areas of well-being" (MSP, 2001b:3). Specifically, the reports were expected to inform Government and the public about the quality of life of New Zealanders, how different groups within the community fare, how New Zealand compares with some other OECD countries on certain measures, and our progress over time towards a better society (MSP, 2001b:4). Smith (interview), one of the principal researchers of the measure, states that one of the

key factors behind the development of the measure was that the Strategic Social Policy Group responsible for the measure had an explicitly cross-sectoral mandate and needed a policy tool that could assess the broader social sector.

Smith (interview) explains that during the 1980s and 1990s key measures of public policy were economic statistics such as the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings and the HES which resulted in the difficulty of being able to assess what "the net impact on people's well-being was of policy changes". According to Smith (interview) the goal of the Strategic Social Policy Group was to focus more on a concept of social well-being, rather than economic well-being, by putting together a measure that at a minimum "had to encompass social well-being; that's the things that the core government agencies aim at".

With regard to the social policy and political influences on the measure, there were both the influences of civil servants and the Government towards developing a set of social indicators. More specifically, Smith (interview) states:

> *Ministers had a view that these things were important to measure and weren't currently being measured and that they wanted to establish something that was on an ongoing basis. The analogy that is being made in several cases is the role of the Fiscal Responsibility Act in ensuring that basic economic and fiscal reporting goes on a regular basis. The Social Report was seen as a counterbalance to that, to put that in a broader context.*

Another key influence in developing the measure was the grounding of the social indicator framework to the evidence of the New Zealand Royal Commission on Social Security (1972), and the New Zealand Royal Commission on Social Policy (1988), concerning the public perception of the meaning of social well-being. Smith (interview) states that further to this evidence, in 2001 and 2002 the MSD carried out a review of the Social Report on a smaller scale and that confirmed that current perceptions of social well-being had not changed markedly since the 1988 commission findings.

A broad notion of social well-being is said to comprise "individual happiness, quality of life, and those aspects of community, environmental, and economic functioning that are important to a person's welfare" (MSD, 2003:11).The report does not identify an explicit definition of social well-being, instead it continuously employs nine indicator areas that are categorised as social outcomes that contribute to well-being. These nine indicator areas (with a total of 38 indicators) are health, knowledge and skills, paid work, economic standard of living, civil and political rights, cultural identity, physical environment, safety and social connectedness. According to Smith (interview), the choice of the indicators employed in the measure was shaped by the aim of each outcome domain to be unique and discrete, comprehensive, transparent and clear in meaning, internationally comparable, and based on research. For a full list of the indicators and the definitions of the social outcomes see Appendix G.

An overall level of social well-being is not identified in the measure, rather data for separate indicators is presented with comparisons to previous years if updated data is available. The indicator data have different collection sources as the MSD does not collect data specifically for the report. The data sources include Statistics New Zealand (for Census, Household Labour Force Survey and HES data), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, the Electoral Commission, Department of Internal Affairs, the Human Rights Commission, New Zealand on Air and the Ministry for the Environment. The unit of measurement that is typically employed throughout the report is the individual and the population samples are represented on national levels.

The full listing of indicator findings can be found in MSD (2002c, 2003) and MSP (2001b). A summary statement concerning overall changes in the levels of indicators for the early 2000s is that (MSD, 2003:125):

> *...the majority of them are improving. Some New Zealanders, particularly Maori, Pacific people, and the young, have poorer than average outcomes. Even within these groups, however, the picture is one of more improvements than deteriorations.*

6.4 The Department of Public Health and Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences - NZDep Index

The NZDep index was developed in the early 1990s primarily for use in resource allocation funding formulas, research in the social services sector and advocacy by community-based service providers in the public policy making process (Salmond and Crampton, 2002:12). The NZDep91, NZDep96 and NZDep2001 are deprivation indexes that employ Statistics New Zealand data from the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings to measure relative socio-economic deprivation in terms of access to material and social resources. Material deprivation concerns a lack of resources in such areas as diet, physical and mental health, clothing, housing, household facilities, environment and work (Crampton et al., 1997:187). Social deprivation refers to the lack of resources in such areas as family activities, social support and integration, recreation and education (Crampton et al., 1997:187). A lack of material resources is operationalised through eight indicators which are low income, benefit derived income, no access to a telephone in the home, unemployment, no ownership of a car, a lack of qualifications, overcrowding in the home and home ownership in the form of renting. There is only one indicator of a lack of social resources which is single parent family type. For a list of the Census question areas which relate to these variables see Appendix H.

Crampton (interview), one of the principal researchers of the measure, describes the initial influences resulting in the formulation of the index as follows:

> *In about 1995, George Salmond, who was the director of the Health Services Research Centre, and Francis Sutton, who is an economist, took the initiative to organise a meeting of various social type agencies (which included the Police and Fire services and a range of others) to discuss their needs for a resource allocation tool for directing resources to areas of highest need.*

Leading on from this Crampton (interview) explains that:

> *...Claire Salmond, Francis Sutton and myself, decided to take that idea further. Our motivations were somewhat different. Francis was*

most interested in the resource allocation issues. I was interested in that too. But the social and political context now is very different from what it was then. Jim Bolger was Prime Minister and for ten years we had had ten years of very hard economic policies and really harsh social policies. The Government didn't have an agreed language about poverty. The word poverty was officially removed from the official discourse so we could not use that word. Jim Bolger officially declared that it didn't exist in New Zealand. For me it was a personal response to that situation. I was trying to introduce at a community and a policy level tools and language that would allow some re-engagement with the issue of poverty.

The small area approach of the index was influenced by the past successes of resource allocation funding formula in the New Zealand Department of Health and in the United Kingdom (Crampton, interview). The large literature on deprivation as a theoretical construct in the United Kingdom also heavily influenced the choice of concept for the measure (Crampton, interview). The choice of indicators employed in the measure was influenced by the objectives of the measure and Crampton (interview) states that the measure had to be "easy to understand, easy to manipulate numerically, and have face validity".

The year of the index refers to the Census year in which the data was collected by Statistics New Zealand. Each index consists of geographic areas that can be disaggregated into areas as small as 100-150 people throughout New Zealand. The nine deprivation indicators can then be disaggregated for every geographical area available. For each geographical area the nine indicator levels are weighted into a single decile rating, where 1 is the least deprived and 10 is the most deprived. The index is standardised for age according to the age structure of New Zealand so that geographical areas do not show more deprivation because of marked differences in age structures. For a full listing of index findings refer to Crampton et al. (1997, 2000), Salmond and Crampton (2002) and Salmond et al. (1998).

Other variables can be applied to the indexes to assess their relationship with the deprivation decile ratings. For example, levels of mortality can be compared to regional levels of deprivation (for a demonstration of this example, see Crampton et al., 1997). The indexes yield trend data over time for the total population and/or individual geographic areas.

6.5 The Ministry of Social Development – The Economic Living Standard Index

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) began a programme for measuring living standards in the late 1990s. The current Economic Living Standards Index (ELSI) has a research aim of presenting a scale "suitable not only for capturing deprivation, but also to enable a description of living standards across the entire range" (MSD, 2002a:7). It is hoped that the ELSI will be updated over time to enable the comparative analysis of living standards trends that will "provide researchers and policy makers across sectors with a rich database to underpin future policy initiatives" (MSD, 2002a:3).

The ELSI scale is a development of the Material Well-being Scale that was applied to data collected in surveys of sample groups of the older (65 years and over) New Zealand population (see MSD, 2002b; MSP, 2001a). The ELSI uses a definition of living standards that refers to the (MSD, 2002a:7):

> *...material aspect of well-being that is reflected in a person's consumption and personal possessions – that is to say, their household durables, clothing, recreations, access to medical services, and so on.*

The scale aims to provide evidence of deprivation and descriptions of a range of high to low living standards. There is currently only one published ELSI. It employs data from a survey of a sample of 3,682 working age people (18-64 years) resident in New Zealand. The sample population also represented a range of ethnic groups (including European, Maori, Pacific Peoples and Asian), family types and sizes (one and two parent families, single person and couple only) and regions (Auckland, Wellington, other major urban

areas, minor urban areas and rural areas). An independent research company, A.C. Neilson, was contracted to select a representative sample and to administer the questionnaire in face-to-face interviews (for the interview questionnaire see Appendix I). The unit of analysis is the economic family unit which is defined as the respondent plus their partner or spouse, and any children under 18 years of age.

The index categorises indicators (examples in brackets) into resource areas such as ownership restrictions (heating in all main rooms, telephone), social participation restrictions (holiday overseas, participation in family activities), economising behaviour (put off buying new clothes, postponed/put off visits to doctor), serious financial problems (borrowed money from friend/family to meet everyday living costs), accommodation problems (draughts, dampness), and self-ratings (adequacy of income, standard of living, satisfaction with standard of living). For a full list of index indicators see Appendix I.

The ELSI has seven standard of living levels which are very restricted, restricted, somewhat restricted, fairly comfortable, comfortable, good, and very good standard of living. A set of index numbers ranges from 0 to 60, with 0 identifying the lowest standard of living. The percentage distribution of the sample population for levels 1-7 was 4, 5, 11, 16, 24, 31 and 9 percent, respectively (MSD, 2002a: 40). For the self-ratings on standards of living, the percentage distribution of the sample population (standard of living level in brackets) was 8 (high), 30.7 (fairly high), 53.5 (medium), 5.9 (fairly low), and 1.9 (low) (MSD, 2002a:47).

6.8 Conclusion

This chapter has described the technical components of five recent major New Zealand measures of social well-being. The purpose, structure and components of the measures were identified and explained. Both the NZPMP and the NZCCSS measures have an explicit aim of influencing social and economic policies to reduce the degree of poverty in New Zealand. More generally, all of the measures aim to improve social well-being

through formulating and implementing robust empirical research methods that ultimately will provide more valid and reliable research findings for use in policy development at a national level.

All of the measures employ national databases, including the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings and the HEIS, to make estimates for the total population or sub-groups such as ethnic and income level groups. This has implications for the reliability of research findings and is discussed in the following chapter. The overall findings of the five different measures are not easily comparable as they measure different aspects of social well-being through widely divergent measurement methods. For example, the level of foodbank use is not easily comparable with the figures of the ELSI. However, all of the measures identify some degree of low levels of social well-being in New Zealand that have improved only slightly in recent years. Estimates of poverty, deprivation and restricted living standards range from approximately 10 to 20 percent. These figures suggest that public policy attention in the area of social well-being continues to be required to help meet the resource needs of specific population groups. The major reliability and validity issues affecting these types of social statistics monitoring are discussed in the following chapter with the critique of the strengths and weaknesses of the five case study measures.

7 Case Studies: A Critique of Five New Zealand Measures of Social Well-being

A well-being measure is primarily structured by the concept being measured, the choice of indicators and the sources of data employed. All of these factors affect the reliability and validity of a measure. The following critique discusses the adequacy of each measure in terms of its reliability and validity to show how each measure is or is not fit for purpose; in other words – how well it measures what it aims to measure. The critique raises issues of reliability and validity in the contexts of the concepts of social well-being, the measurement methods and the limitations of the data employed in each of the five measures.

The five case study measures of well-being follow the same ordering as in the previous chapter. They are the New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project's poverty line, the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services' *Poverty Indicator Project*, the Department of Public Health and Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences' *NZDep Index* and the Ministry of Social Development's *Social Report* and *Economic Living Standards Index*.

7.1 Reliability and Validity Issues

There are three major types of reliability and validity issues used to critique the case studies. These are issues surrounding the concept under measurement, the method of measurement and the data limitations. The individual issues are described in this section and then are applied to the individual case study measures.

7.1.1 Concept

Oyen (1992) highlights the need for the assumptions made about a concept to be clearly identified within a measure. Concepts of social well-being for measurement should be explicitly defined in order to set a concise frame of reference for what is measured. This may seem an obvious statement but clear definitions of social well-being are rarely

given and this is seen in the case study measures. For a measure's findings to be understood and useful in policy development it must be clear what the aim of the measure is. For example, if poverty is defined in terms of economic and social participation then it should be measured with both economic and social indicators. The concept for measurement should also state clearly how both economic and social participation relate to poverty. The theoretical framework that has guided the definition of the concept should be discussed within the measure.

Walker (1987) identifies the importance of a socially perceived measure to utilise a socially perceived concept. If a measure aims to provide estimates of social well-being as perceived by the general public, then its concept should reflect a general public perception of the issue under investigation. This is especially important for research findings intended to inform the social policy making process. If policy initiatives are to adequately respond to the resources needs of the public, and in particular to those who experience the greatest lack of social well-being, it is important for such members of the population to directly identify their resource needs within a socially acceptable framework of what social well-being means to the New Zealand population.

7.1.2 Measurement Method

Ringen (1988:352) points out that the validity of a measure depends on the "theoretical and methodological integrity of the process through which it is produced". Crothers (2000) also argues that validity concerns the appropriateness of the choice of measure to its theoretical framework. The framework of the measure must match the definition of the concept under measurement. In doing so the measure should relate specifically to the definitional terms of the concept under measurement to enable the measure to be valid in the sense that it is fit for purpose. This may also seem an obvious statement, but many measures lack validity in this context. Patterson (2002:5) offers evidence of this in the wider social indicator literature by stating that "many compilers of indicators seem not to fully appreciate the link between theory and operational measurement when designing indicators". Given the types of indicators used in a measure, either directly or indirectly acquired, the concept should be defined to match the way it is measured. The concept

should identify to some extent, the parameters of the measure. Ringen (1988) explains this further by arguing that if the concept is defined directly then it should be measured directly and if it is defined indirectly then it should be measured indirectly.

Mencher (1967:11) argues that "the standard of living comes from many sources, both public and private; it is their total which should define the extent of wealth or poverty". It is obvious that a great number of resource needs and outcomes relate to any concept of social well-being and that any measure will not be able to capture all of these. However, for greater clarity of research findings, researchers should discuss in their publicised literature what their indicators do capture and the reasons why they were chosen over others. Watson (1979:8) discusses the validity issue of measures employing indicators which provide "good measurements of the wrong thing". This concerns the degree to which the chosen indicators capture the phenomena that they are said to measure. Even if a measure has a framework of indicators that relate adequately to the definition of its concept, it is important for the measure to explain the limitations of the individual indicators, since a single indicator will only capture specific aspects of a phenomenon. For example, Perry (1995) stresses the importance of expenditure-based measures to provide a transparent methodology to make explicit its judgments about which non-market transactions are or are not included in the measure. Estimates of income and expenditure are likely to understate certain commodity exchanges such as untaxed earnings and gifts. For example, Carter (1987) identifies the significant contribution of the "informal economy" in providing commodities to households and individuals and how these types of transactions are often unreported. Piachaud (1987) points out that income and expenditure-based measures also typically do not include indicators of home production (for example, home produced food and clothing).

The use of subjective indicators can provide evidence concerning the accessibility, satisfaction of resources and overall perceived levels of social well-being which objective indicators cannot. By way of explanation for this view, there are three main points to be made. First, subjective indicators can reveal perceptions concerning the adequacy of resources. For example, although objective indicators of housing can be

identified to show what types of housing tenure exist and how much they cost, useful subjective indicators of public satisfaction with the quality of housing can identify if certain types of housing tenure are more likely to provide consumer satisfaction that others. Kahn and Juster (2002) argue for the use of both objective and subjective well-being indicators to provide evidence of a range of aspects of social well-being. Second, subjective indicators can reveal distributional levels of resource use and outcomes where different population groups may experience different access and utilisation issues in relation to the same resources. For example, Robeyns (2003:63) states that people differ in their abilities to utilise resources due to differing personal, social and environmental influences such as traditions, social norms and public goods. Third, social well-being measures typically do not employ subjective indicators and in particular do not provide self-assessments on people's perception of their overall level of whichever concept is under measurement. Adding to this point, Dasgupta (1989) asserts that social indicators typically do not measure the accessibility of resources and therefore they cannot estimate the distribution of their availability. Finally, it is worth noting that Kahn and Juster (2002:628) cite the "unexpectedly weak relationship between objective and subjective well-being measures" as one of the major problems that have limited the progress in the conceptualisation and measurement of well-being and that more testing is required in this area to test the reliability and validity of both types of indicators.

7.1.3 Data Limitations

According to Crothers (2000:105) reliability refers to "the accuracy of the data, and the procedures through which they are collected". The standard error of a measure reflects the data collection methods, in particular the sample size of the respondent population. Measures that employ secondary types of data are prone to less reliability than measures that employ primary data as the secondary data was not collected for the explicit purpose of the measure and respondents may have provided different answers had they known how their data was to be used.

The unit of analysis used in a measure may misrepresent the nature of a population group. For example, the "family" and the "household" are commonly employed units of

analysis that may understate resource sharing between households in terms of family relationships that affect the distribution of resources within a family or household. In particular, children who receive resources from more than one household are over-represented in research findings. Using the family or household as a unit of analysis raises reliability issues concerning the reporting of the degree of resource sharing within and between the family and household units (Fleming, 1997; McPherson, 1998; Robertson, 2001; Stephens, 1988). Even if a measure attempts to ask respondents questions concerning resource sharing between families, issues arise concerning the definition of families. In particular, different ethnic groups in New Zealand have been shown to hold different perceptions of what the family unit means. For example, Fleming (1997) and Taiapa (1994) have shown that some Maori defined their family unit as consisting of more than their immediate family and therefore included a larger family unit when answering questions on family or household resource sharing.

The level of the disaggregation of data can exclude the representation of certain population groups in social well-being measures. This is because data is either not collected from or it is not disaggregated into a wide range of population groups. Typically, in New Zealand measures of social well-being, the larger population groups have primarily been focused upon such as low-income earners, adults with dependents, European/Pakeha, Maori, and Pacific peoples. Among the smaller population groups that remain under-represented in social well-being research are the disabled, other ethnic minorities, refugees, recent immigrants, students, unpaid workers, part-time workers, the homeless, single adults, the long-term hospitalised, prisoners, ex-prisoners and rural populations. It is important for social policy development to have evidence of levels of social well-being for as wide a range of population groups as possible in order for the most effectively targeted policy initiatives to identify those most in need. For example, Kamanou (2000) and Miles (1985) highlight the sometimes vast geographical differences in resource availability and price (especially between urban and rural areas) and the importance for measures to identify these differences. Jackson (1994) also highlights the demographic differences for unemployment indicators in New Zealand that are often concealed through low levels of disaggregation of the data.

In New Zealand there is a significant validity issue concerning the definition and disaggregation of ethnicity data. Chapple (2000) provides arguments for the presentation of ethnicity data as it is originally reported if respondents have indicated that they have a multiple ethnicity (they belong and/or identify with more than one ethnic group). Chapple (2000:101) states that "Maori ethnicity is often multiple rather than singular" and "averages alone are misleading in describing socio-economic outcomes and can give rise to incorrect stereotypes of ethnic groups as successes or failures". This validity issue is also an ethical one as respondents may have been under the impression that their ethnicity data would be represented as multi-ethnic when it was not. None of the case study measures reported multi-ethnic data, although some of them collected ethnicity data in ways that would have allowed for this.

The more often a measure is repeated the more valid its findings are, and if measures are longitudinal in terms of utilising cohort sample populations then the more they can reveal about the changing levels of social well-being over the life-span and across major societal developments. Kahn and Juster (2002:641) state that measures of well-being should include:

> *...the experience of major life events, especially the stressful events that are increasingly likely in old age, such as illness, bereavement, and retirement.*

The closer the periods of re-testing are for a measure the more effective research findings will be for identifying changing levels of social well-being and possible new social policy needs. The time delays between re-testing may also miss fluctuations in social well-being levels. Researchers are, of course, confined by the resource constraints of their research organisations and these should be identified within their publications to help explain the time periods of their findings.

There are a number of reliability and validity issues that impact upon all of the case study measures of social well-being. Those listed above relate to all of the five measures critiqued below and are considered to be the major issues that limit the ability of the measures to do what they aim to do. The issues are reviewed in the same order for each

of the case studies.

7.2 The New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project - Poverty Line

The New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project (NZPMP) employs a social well-being concept of poverty which is broad in nature as it refers to both economic and social resources in relation to an adequate standard of living and participation in society. This concept recognises the multi-dimensional nature of poverty although it does not identify the specific economic and social resources necessary for an adequate standard of living and participation in society. The notion of participation is also not defined. The more detailed and multi-dimensional a concept for social well-being measurement is, the greater the potential for capturing the many types of resources that contribute to the social well-being of an individual or population group. However, this measure's concept lacks specific definitions of the key terms it relates to and offers a limited frame of reference.

The poverty line concept was not defined through a method of public consultation on what poverty means to different population groups within New Zealand society. Public perceptions of social well-being and in particular of adequate standards of living and participation may differ significantly from those of researchers. Robertson (2001) argues that public perceptions of poverty are important if poverty concepts are relative to the well-being of the total population. The NZPMP's concept is said to be a relative poverty concept. When a social well-being concept is not representative of the different population groups within a society it runs the risk of being mono-cultural. Such a concept will not be inclusive of the different resource needs of the different population groups within New Zealand society. For example, different ethnic population groups can have different perceptions of well-being. In New Zealand, Maori (the indigenous ethnic group) can perceive well-being as a collective concept with the smallest measurement unit being an immediate family group. This is a departure from the European perception which typically focuses upon the measurement of individual well-being (see Kuka, 2000; Te Pumanawa, 1996). The NZPMP poverty line has validity issues in the sense

that its concept for measure requires explicit definition that is also representative of a public perception of what poverty is, especially as its measure employs a publicly defined poverty threshold. The focus group method could incorporate questions regarding the respondents' perceptions of what poverty means to them and which specific resources and level of these resources would need to be lacking in order to constitute a situation of poverty.

Having made this point, Waldegrave (interview), one of the key researchers of the NZPMP, offers an insight into the researchers' perception of poverty with regard to this measure:

> *...the public perception of poverty varies. It used to be sort of starving people in Africa or India, but of course we're talking about relative poverty in a country like New Zealand. I think we're talking about a lack of material goods the way that living standards talk about it. We're also talking about adequate financial resources to be able to purchase what you need. But we're also talking about a sense of belonging, that you can participate in society. That you're so poor that you can't do anything, that you can't leave home, then you're in poverty. There's a sense of being able to participate in the economy and that's become a form of social and economic poverty.*

It would be useful to discuss this sort of perception of poverty in the focus groups, especially if this is the view of those involved in developing and implementing the measure.

The indicator framework that the NZMPM incorporates in establishing its poverty threshold consists of a range of resource areas including food, household operations, housing, power/heating, telephone, transport, leisure activities, insurance, appliances, furnishings, medical care, clothing and education. A rationale for this list of indicators is not evident in the relevant NZPMP literature surveyed for the thesis. It is not clear which of these resource areas relate specifically to the economic and social resource aspects of the measures' poverty concept, especially as these terms are not explicitly defined. The

measurement framework does match the measure's concept to a certain extent as far as the indicators are typically employed proxies for economic resources. However, the measure should be set in a more rigorously determined theoretical framework of poverty and the terms associated with that concept here such as an adequate standard of living and participation in society need clarification. This is more of a measure of poverty in the context of basic needs, such as those formulated approximately a century ago.

The NZPMP is the only measure of the five selected for this critique where the level of social well-being under measurement is formulated by public participation. The poverty line threshold is estimated by respondents who are representative of the low income population group. This type of poverty measure has an advantage over measures with arbitrarily chosen poverty thresholds because it is founded in empirical investigation into experiences of poverty (Shannon, 1991).

One of the major criticisms of poverty measures is the way in which they exclude certain features of an indicator (see Green, 2001; Jones, 1997; Robertson, 2001; New Zealand Royal Commission on Social Security, 1972). For example, when income is measured some types of income are typically excluded; among these are untaxed earnings, employment benefits, social services in-kind, assets, savings, gifts, and assistance from other sources (family, friends). The NZPMP excludes these types of income and is therefore only relevant to poverty in the context of income gained through the labour market and through income maintenance. However, the measure has a strength in that it states some of the assumptions made about some of these resources such as those identified in Chapter 6 (for example, household production has no financial value). Waldegrave (interview) admits that there are certain problems with the poverty line method in not being able to incorporate in-kind benefits (such as state housing or the public health). To remedy this problem to some degree, in relation to undeclared income, the NZPMP removes the extreme levels of income of the self-employed from the Household Economic and Income Survey (HEIS) before it is utilised to transform the focus group weekly expenditure level into an average national income level.

The indicators in the case study measures are objective as they provide little or no information about the respondents' perception of their social well-being or, alternatively, experience of poverty. Nor do they reveal perceptions of the adequacy or satisfaction of the resources surveyed in the measure. Waldegrave (interview) acknowledges that the measure is not able to identify the degree of people's economising behaviour but it is hoped that alternative measures of living standards will identify this. Even though the respondents are asked to estimate the costs of resources needed to maintain an adequate standard of living, they are not asked to estimate a poverty level *per se*. It would be useful to know if the question was re-worded to indicate a poverty level, whether the price estimates would be similar. The focus groups are aware though, that their data will be used to advocate for social policy changes at a central government level in the hope of decreasing poverty in New Zealand. Waldegrave (interview) states that:

> *Some people argue that people will offer higher living costs if they think it's going to change a policy. But we haven't found that. We found in actual fact that the budgets they bring forward are very tight.*

There is a limited identification of the degrees of poverty, and in particular of the extremes of poverty such as malnutrition and sub-standard housing, in the NZPMP poverty line measure. The NZPMP provides estimates of the poverty gaps for certain levels of household income below the poverty threshold. However, it is simplistic to assume that a standard of living changes solely in relation to the proportion of a change in income. There is no information as to how degrees of poverty differ from one another. Evidence of what each degree of poverty equates to in terms of a standard of living should be provided to give a poverty gap an identifiable frame of reference.

The NZPMP provides information on a trend but is not a longitudinal measure in terms of an ongoing study of the same group of participants. Research has been time-static and cross-sectional, undertaken at a specific point in time for a given population and it is not known how levels of poverty have changed at different life stages of the sample population. Poverty lines have been criticised for being time-static and not being able to include the resource accumulation and/or depletion over the long term (Jones 1997;

Perry, 2002). For example, Robertson (2001:9) states that they "reflect people's current circumstances – but these provide very little information about their future circumstances". The HEIS data that is used to relate the focus group estimates to the total population has been criticised for similar reasons (Stephens, 2003). The survey uses income and expenditure units of a fortnight and this may misrepresent how average income and expenditure levels differ at different times of the year for some households. Time restrictions on the availability of the HEIS data of a few years provide a further limitation for the NZPMP measure. The time delays with the availability of the HEIS data have meant that the NZPMP research findings are two years behind the year of the focus group research. However, this measure has produced predicted findings in the changes in poverty levels relating to changes in the economy (such as an increase in some types of income maintenance coinciding with a decrease in the estimation of poverty). The initial focus group research was undertaken repeatedly within the space of a few years and Waldegrave (interview) cites this as a methodological strength in that changes in housing rental prices in the city of Auckland were identified quickly whereas other measures took more time to do so.

The measure combines primary and secondary data to derive a national poverty estimate based on the focus group population and this decreases the reliability of the measure in terms of its standard of error. The sample size of the HEIS has been criticised for being too small (3,000 people) to allow for reliable national estimations that can be useful for specific policy advice such as income maintenance levels (Survey Appraisals and Public Questions Committee, 1994). The HEIS also lacks significant disaggregation of gender data. This is important as women are generally more affected by low levels of social well-being as they earn lower rates of income, receive income maintenance and undertake unpaid employment (see Waring, 1988). This shortage of gender specific data results in an underestimation of the extent of women's lack of social well-being, in particular because an analysis of income sharing for partnered women cannot be made (Briar, 2000:20).

The NZPMP's poverty line threshold (60 percent of the median national income) is

comparable to other poverty lines in use in other Western societies, including many European Union countries. This provides an added strength of comparability in the social policy environment. Waldegrave (interview) points out that this common poverty line threshold:

> *...gave us international standards of research. It gave us a benchmark to go in and argue the topics on benefits and argue with Treasury and the Ministry of Social Development. The measure is very comparable. Since we've been using it, it has become much more standard in recent years....*

Even with the limitations of reliability and validity surrounding the NZPMP poverty line measure, it has shown itself to be a useful policy tool and has resulted in positive resource outcomes for low income New Zealanders. However, Waldegrave (interview) argues for a "robust set of measures, a range of measures" that include poverty lines, standard of living indexes and deprivation indexes - "to get a picture of poverty you've got to get a whole range of measures".

To sum up, there are obviously a number of reliability issues relating to the adequacy of the available data that the NZPMP has at its disposal. There are also validity issues concerning the definition of poverty and how the measure captures what it aims to assess. In my view, the NZPMP poverty line measures poverty in a context of basic resources and income affordability of those resources. Therefore, it is not a valid measure of the multi-dimensional range of social and economic resources needed for participation in New Zealand society. It is a valid measure of poverty in its traditional sense, relating to some of the same types of basic resources such as food, housing and clothing as the poverty measures of the early twentieth century. The measure is only representative of a sample population of low income householders' perceptions of the monetary costs of a selection of material resources. Much remains to be known about the poverty experiences of people over their life cycle and of the financial struggles of households across the range of income levels in relation to basic resources.

7.3 The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services - Poverty Indicator Project

The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services (NZCCSS) Poverty Indicator Project (PIP) does not identify a definition of poverty in its measure although it regards foodbank use as an indicator of poverty. When a social well-being measure lacks a definition of its measured concept, findings arising from its application cannot be referred back to a frame of reference for what it was intended to measure. The PIP is a valid measure in the context of foodbank use as an aspect of poverty. The notion of poverty here is not consensus-based. Little is known as to how foodbank clients define poverty and if they themselves view foodbank use as an aspect or indicator of poverty. An assumption can be made about the NZCCSS' choice of the concept of poverty based on the indicators employed within the measure (including foodbank use, low income, debt and housing). Green (interview), one of the principal researchers of the NZCCSS' PIP, relates the use of the concept to a general public knowledge of the term.

The PIP reports on a range of indicators in order to build up a demographic database of poverty indicators with the aim of showing how foodbank use levels might be changing over time. As with the NZPMP, the indicators in the measure are objective as they provide little or no information about the respondents' perception of their level of satisfaction on the number of resources they are interviewed about. The measure has an objective aim of measuring foodbank use and its indicator framework is valid in the sense that it corresponds to this aim. However, this measure is unique in that there can be positive and timely effects on the respondents regarding improved access to social services, if problems of access are identified within the interview process, and the interviewer is in a position to advocate for such change on behalf of the client (Green, interview).

The PIP has the strengths of being specific to geographic location and of focusing on a specific aspect of poverty. This allows for greater reliability of the measure as it maintains a robust interviewing structure and repetitive testing. The specificity of this measure allows the findings to focus on foodbank use as an important aspect of poverty

affecting New Zealand society. Green (interview) acknowledges that there is a specific focus on "the tip of the iceberg of poverty" (namely, foodbank clients) and so other groups of low income people are not intended to be measured and it is hoped that Government will undertake further research on poverty amongst the non-foodbank population group. It is obvious in this measure if there are significant changes in the poverty indicators over time. A potentially large database using primary data can be obtained from the range of indicators to compare with other national database estimates of income levels, type of housing tenure, family size, sources and levels of debt and so on.

Issues of disaggregation and units of analysis also exist with the PIP in much the same ways as they occur with the NZPMP poverty line. The representation of the sample population groups does not cover the entire range of demographics of New Zealand society such as a large number of ethnic groups. Green (interview) points out that the PIP clearly identifies which groups are represented more often as foodbank clients, and these are women, those in private rental accommodation and those with Government debt.

The PIP has a strength concerning reliability as the measure is re-tested every quarter of the year. However, the measure provides trend data and is not a longitudinal cohort measure as most foodbank clients do not seek assistance in more than one quarter. The PIP employs Statistics New Zealand data from the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings to provide comparisons of the demographics of its population sample to the total population. For example, comparisons are made of the foodbank client average weekly income to the national average weekly income. The foodbank average is significantly lower than the Census average. There is a drawback to such comparisons given the time delays in the publication of Census data which is taken at five yearly intervals.

Green (interview) identifies a need for more qualitative evidence to complement the quantitative evidence of the PIP including information to show descriptions of poverty.

Adding these types of subjective indicators would substantially increase the knowledge base of evidence on poverty in New Zealand, especially on some of lowest levels of social well-being. This measure is able to shed valuable light on a degree of poverty that is often not concentrated upon in New Zealand measures of social well-being. It provides irrefutable evidence on a specific population group and can therefore identify immediately those in need of a specific resource such as food. This implies that measures of poverty in their traditional context of basic needs still have relevance in modern times.

To sum up, the NZCCSS PIP provides a reliable and valid measure of poverty in New Zealand in the context of foodbank use in seven specific urban regions of the country. The PIP should define poverty in explicit terms in order to provide a more valid measure, especially as it is focused on foodbank use as a particular aspect of poverty. The major strengths of this measure lie in its specificity of an extreme aspect of poverty, a growing primary database, and the regularity and consistency of its testing.

7.4 The Ministry of Social Development - Social Report

The Ministry of Social Development (MSD) employs a broad notion of social well-being in its social indicator reporting measure. It does not identify the specific resources required to achieve and maintain social well-being, although it claims to represent a public perception of the concept through its choice of social outcome domains (indicator areas) and specific areas. This public perception was gathered through the public consultation processes of the 1972 New Zealand Royal Commission on Social Security and the 1986 New Zealand Royal Commission on Social Policy (NZRCSP). In this respect, this measure is the only case study to incorporate some degree of a consensus-based concept. However, it is not evident in the publications (see MSP, 2001b, MSD 2002c, 2003) to what extent the indicator framework represents these public forums. What was evident from the two commissions' findings was that poverty and social well-being are viewed as multi-dimensional phenomena, and in particular that both economic and social types of resources contribute to the achievement of social well-being.

Shannon (1991:62) argues that the NZRCSP failed to "develop a coherent theoretical analysis or perspective through which the enormous variety of issues and information covered could be sieved and the significant issues defined".

The three annual social reports available to date include a wide range of economic and social resource areas and also a small number of cultural and environmental resource areas, with a total of 38 indicators. In this respect the measure provides a valid expression of the concept of social well-being to the extent that it reflects a relatively large set of resource needs and outcomes that relate to social well-being. However, it is not evident as to how well these indicators represent the perceptions of different population groups within society or for that matter the majority population. Furthermore, the indicators do not categorise thresholds of well-being, or a lack of well-being. Therefore, it is not known whether any of the reported social statistics are indicative of social well-being or not as related to either public perceptions or researcher perceptions of what social well-being is. Smith (interview), one of the principal researchers of the measure, admits that the measure does not say well-being was a certain number or at a certain level last year and that makes it difficult to paint an overall picture of social well-being. There are no subjective indicators within this measure, although it is hoped that the satisfaction of needs within particular resource areas will be included at a later date (Smith, interview).

Smith (interview) states that the indicator framework is explicit and that the breadth of the measure is important because it "cuts right across the social sector" and it "does not artificially distinguish between areas of government". The measure has a social policy context and in this sense the chosen indicators do reflect a wide range of social policy areas. It also has the strength of clearly distinguishing different categories of indicators; for example, economic, environmental and social indicators are separated out within the measure as they are categorised into different domains of social well-being.

The MSD social reports suffer from the same data limitations as the previous case study measures. Whilst the report is updated annually it is another trend measure and not a

"true" longitudinal measure as it is comprised of multiple data sources which do not include cohort population samples. A range of secondary data sources are employed in the measure and this confounds the degree of error for the overall measure. The data used face the disaggregation limitations as discussed above. However, Smith (interview) points out that there are limits to the level of disaggregation because of the national and individual focus of the measure and the space constraints of the actual report. A validity issue is also raised in respect to the exclusive use of secondary data which was not collected for the specific purposes of measuring social well-being. Time delays in the availability of data for some of the indicators also limit the ability of the measure to consistently provide annual updates. For example, Smith (interview) admits that this is a weakness in the data as illustrated by the lack of annually updated figures for the "social connectedness" indicator for 2003.

The MSD's social indicator measure has shown itself as a useful social policy development tool in the way that it has influenced the indicator reporting structures of government agencies. For example, Smith (interview) points out that it has been useful in contributing to the setting of policy priorities and specifically to establishing the investment in child and youth development as a key priority. Adding to this, the measure has had an impact on other government agencies where similar indicator frameworks have been utilised to identify cross-sectoral policy issues (Smith, interview). Where there are areas of social well-being that the measure does not report on it is hoped, says Smith (interview), that these areas are "filled by other government agency reports on specific social policy areas".

To sum up, the social indicator reporting method of the MSD is valid to the extent that it involves a multi-dimensional and relatively large range of indicators that affect social well-being. However, it is difficult to assess how this range of indicators adequately reflects the social well-being policy issues of the general public. It is also problematic that an overall assessment of the level of social well-being is not made for the total population. Instead, only trends on individual indicators can be identified from year to year. The divergent data sources of the indicators further confound the comparability of

the different indicators making the measure deficient in reliability in this context. The measure provides a snapshot of a vast concept that is more applicable to specific types of government policy initiatives than to the day-to-day experiences of differing levels of social well-being in New Zealand society.

7.5 The Department of Public Health and Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences - NZDep Index

The NZDep index provides a two-tiered deprivation concept with the differentiation of material and social deprivation. It refers to a multi-dimensional array of resource areas that indicate a lack of social well-being when people do not have access to them. This measure combines the traditional deprivation indicators of income and housing with employment, qualifications, communication and transport facilities, and social participation. The definition of the concept under measurement encapsulates some of the basic material and non-material resources that underlie the nature of deprivation.

The deprivation concept is not consensus based as it was not formulated using evidence on the way different individuals or population groups within New Zealand define deprivation. Crampton (interview), one of the principal researchers, explains that the development of the measure was not participatory in the sense that there was little public participation in the definition of deprivation. However, Crampton points out that throughout the utilisation of the measure by community groups "we have been reassured that there is not much dissidence with the ideas".

The measure exclusively employs objective indicators from a secondary data source, the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings. This means that the variables are set in the context of the types of questions that are asked in the five yearly census and are not tailored specifically to the chosen indicator areas of the measure. Therefore, even though the NZDep index incorporates both material and social deprivation indicators, the nine indicators employed in the measure are valid to the concept under measurement in the sense that they represent only a small selection of the large array of resources that

relate to social well-being and the avoidance of deprivation. An important validity issue arises here with the use of this secondary data as the respondents were not aware that their data would be used in a deprivation index. Crampton (interview) does acknowledge that the measure is "not very participatory, in a methodological sense". Adding to the reliability of the measure is the fact that the theoretical framework of the index has been re-tested by the NZDep researchers three times after each of the three sets of census data were made available. Crampton (interview) states that:

> *We examine each data set for potential new variables and there have been some minor changes across the different indexes. So for example, a variable we rejected but which looked very attractive was home heating. But there was such a strong north to south gradient because of climate. There was such variance that it was of no use to us.*

As there are no subjective indicators in the measure, assumptions cannot be made as to whether or not respondents consider a lack of certain resources to be symptomatic of deprivation. For example, people without access to a car or higher qualifications may not consider these resources as needs, especially in relation to their lifestyle choices. The deprivation index has made explicit assumptions about what deprivation means to New Zealanders and there is no evidence as to what degree these assumptions reflect actual public perceptions. This issue highlights the importance for social well-being measures to be clear about the types of indicators they employ to set the context within which the findings are to be understood. Crampton (interview) states that behind the methodological complexity of the measure lies "some judgments we have made and they reflect our world views, our objectives and our politics". The NZDep researchers have attempted to be clear about these judgments and have cautioned users of the measure to interpret it with care and to avoid the negative labeling of high deprivation scoring regions (Crampton, interview).

The NZDep index was designed to be used on a small geographical area basis and so does not estimate an overall national population figure of deprivation. Instead, individual regional areas can be compared to show the variance in levels of deprivation across the

country. This level of demographic specificity has the strength of setting a focused contextual sphere for the measure. Like the NZCCSS' PIP, the index has a greater level of validity for the smaller population groups that it focuses on as compared to the measures of national levels of social well-being. Crampton (interview) states that some of the measures' strengths are:

> *...that it's nationally applicable it, can be applied to all areas and as a proxy measure to all people, with the emphasis on the word proxy. It has very strong intuitive appeal, people have found it easy to understand and easy to think about.*

Patterson (2002:92) reiterates this last point regarding the ways in which the measure's findings are presented - "the maps and bar graphs greatly enhance the communication of the results". Blakely and Pearce (2002:109) state that an advantage of the index is that it "can be assigned retrospectively and inexpensively to many data-sets using just an address".

The New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings regularly alters the wording and terminology of its survey questions making comparisons across datasets less reliable. The researchers involved with the NZDep index caution against such comparisons precisely because of changes in the units of analysis and terminology between censuses (see Salmond and Crampton, 2002). The data limitations of the previous measures concerning this census data apply here. Crampton (interview), however, identifies the routine updating of the census and its stability over a five year period as strengths of this type of data.

The NZDep index has experienced success in social policy development, in particular in the area of resource allocation for geographic areas and it is routinely applied in district health formula (Crampton, interview). The validity of this measure has been further strengthened by the fact that the "socio-economic associations which have been demonstrated consistently are very strong" (Crampton, interview). As with the other case study measures the index has helped to provide a common language for the discussion of policy issues surrounding social well-being. Patterson (2002:63) states that

the index has been "validated and compared with other data and above all appears to have high face validity".

To sum up, the deprivation index measure is valid in the sense that it relates to nine specific aspects of material and social deprivation and it is reliable in so far as the data limitations of the five yearly national Census data sets allow. In this instance, deprivation is not relative to a public perception of a lack of social well-being and the levels of deprivation that exist within New Zealand are not estimated according to direct empirical research. However, this measure does state the theoretical assumptions that underlie the findings and caution is given to the contextual limitations of the measure, notably that the index provides only a proxy for deprivation.

7.6 The Ministry of Social Development – The Economic Living Standard Index

The Ministry of Social Development's (MSD) Economic Living Standard Index (ELSI) employs a concept of material resources that impact on social well-being. This definition is not consensus based as it was formulated by the researchers. The measure itself stands apart from the other four case study measures because it focuses on a spectrum of living standard levels that reflect low to high levels of social well-being. This adds to the validity of the measure by encompassing the varying degrees of social well-being across its population sample.

The ELSI embraces an expansive array of material resources including aspects of income that are typically excluded from other measures such as gifts of money and economising behaviours. The measure utilises mostly objective indicators on a vast array of material resource needs. Subjective indicators are employed in ELSI that reveal participants' perceptions about the adequacy of their incomes and perceptions about their level of living standards. These indicators also offer valuable insights into the economising mechanisms of the respondents. These features add credibility and depth to the measure and enhance its validity.

A major strength of ELSI is the reliability of the primary data, although secondary data is used to formulate national population estimates of different economic standards of living. The results of the measure are published in a comprehensive manner with clearly set out tables and charts. One ELSI study has been undertaken and published to date, so comparisons cannot yet be made concerning the changing levels of standards of living in New Zealand. However, the measure appears robust compared to the results of similar living standards studies carried out in recent years. There is slightly greater data disaggregation in this measure than in the others, with a wider range of population demographics being reported on, including a wider range of ethnic, occupational and income groups.

In summary, the MSD's ELSI is a unique measure in New Zealand in that it specifies thresholds for a full spectrum of material standards of living and reports on a wide range of indicators. It also offers opportunities to participants to rate their satisfaction levels for certain resources and to estimate their own standard of living. This measure offers a valid method of measurement of material standards of living and as long as it is replicated over time it can provide reliable and robust research findings to inform the public policy making process concerning the resource needs of people. In particular, the needs of those experiencing the lowest levels of standards of living as perceived by themselves and/or the researchers.

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a critique of the reliability and validity of five of New Zealand's major current measures of social well-being, focusing on their measurement concept, structural components and data limitations. In general, the concepts employed in the different measures are multi-dimensional and broad in the range of resource needs that they refer to. The concepts relate to resource areas of material and non-material needs. Overall, the measures do define in some detail the concept under assessment, and to varying degrees they provide valid indicator frameworks according to what they aim

to measure, but they do not relate adequately to a public perception of the meaning of the concept concerned and to self-assessments of social well-being (less so for the MSD's ELSI because of its self-rating questions). It is important for public policy to reflect the expressed policy needs and concerns of the public, and in particular those that experience low levels of social well-being. This can aid in policy development identifying the specific and most critical areas for intervention.

All of the measures are constrained by the choice of indicators that represent the concept under measurement and the reliability of the data employed in the measure. Validity issues exist in all of the measures regarding the suitability of the indicators for the aim of the measure. Most of the measures offer acknowledgements of the theoretical developments of the similar types of measures that preceded them, and they have addressed some of the limitations of those. There is a recurring theme which is stated in all of the case studies, that is the importance of the need to understand the contexts in which the measures were set, especially if their findings are to be utilised in the public policy making process. This relates back to the reasons for the implementation of the measures and the theoretical influences upon them such as their social policy and political contexts.

It is difficult to conclusively determine the incidence of low levels of social well-being in New Zealand. What is known for certain from these measures, however, is that low levels of social well-being do exist within this society and that among some sections of the population there is a lack of access to basic resources such as food and housing. It is not known from the findings of the five measures to what extent some of the more extreme aspects of low levels of social well-being exist. Little is also known about the levels of satisfaction with the resources provided through the market place and government social services, or about the limitations people face in accessing and utilising these services, particularly factors not related specifically to income.

Comparability of the case study measures is limited because they differ significantly in their conceptual and methodological design. However, the researchers involved with the

different measures have identified the roles that a range of different social well-being measures can play by offering a diverse array of evidence concerning a broad range of resource needs and outcomes that relate to different levels and types of well-being. Although the five selected New Zealand measures are technically more advanced than their traditional counterparts from within the country and from overseas, there is still an obvious identification of a lack of basic material needs (in particular, those of food and housing).

The NZPMP's poverty line provides the most participatory form of measurement in the sense that it is the only one with measurement thresholds determined by a sample population group of low income households. The ELSI scale provides the only measure with a range of subjective indicators and this is a major departure from traditional measurement methods. There is a vast amount of scope for national databases such as the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings and HES to provide greater data disaggregation. There is also a need for longitudinal cohort measures of social well-being to help establish changes in levels of well-being over the life span, and after significant economic, social or technological changes.

8 Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this thesis was to investigate the development, reliability and validity of social well-being measures with particular reference to selected New Zealand measures. A recap of the major research findings and selected possibilities for areas of development concerning social well-being measurement within a New Zealand context are presented in this chapter. The major issues for measurement identified here are the concept definition, the range and appropriateness of the selected indicators, and public participation throughout the measurement process. Recommendations are then made in relation to those key findings which focus upon the need for a greater degree of specificity in the definition of the social well-being concept, the choice of indicators, and in the disaggregation of the published data. The thesis finishes with a discussion of the social policy implications of improving the quality of current measures of social well-being.

8.1 Key Research Findings

The systematic measurement of social well-being emerged in the early twentieth century and has steadily been developed over the last century into comparatively sophisticated measures. Initially, the focus of the early research was on the concept of poverty and direct measurement indicators related to income levels and consumption power over basic resources such as food, housing and clothing. These same resources are still focused upon today in studies of poverty, deprivation and standards of living, and the issues surrounding low levels of social well-being are still embedded in the fundamental material resource needs of families.

The development of New Zealand social well-being measurement has largely followed in the footsteps of overseas trends with occasional unique methods being developed here. Estimates in New Zealand have reported a fairly constant level of approximately 20 percent of the total population living in a state of poverty or deprivation since the 1970s. Recent New Zealand measures have followed in the international trend of social

indicator reporting and estimate only slight increases in social well-being across a range of social statistics. Standards of living studies have a long history in New Zealand, dating as far back as the 1930s. More up to date living standards studies estimate approximately 10 percent of the total population as experiencing some degree of financial or material difficulties. Whatever the choice of measurement method and concept for measurement, there is a growing body of literature that provides empirical evidence of low levels of social well-being for various groups in the New Zealand population without access to adequate levels of resources including food, housing and clothing.

There are a number of measurement issues that affect the reliability and validity of New Zealand measures of social well-being. This thesis has argued that social well-being concepts need to be defined in more detail to allow for greater validity in the operationalisation of measures. Concepts such as poverty, deprivation and standard of living might usefully relate more to the multi-dimensional aspects of social well-being and measures could provide more information concerning the relationships between measurement indicators. Greater public participation in the measurement process could also assist the definition and measurement of social well-being by making the measures more representative of the realities and components of peoples' experiences of social well-being. More detailed information is required about the extent and degree of low levels of social well-being so that the causes and effects can be identified, and appropriate solutions can be found.

8.2 Recommendations

The traditional issues of concept definition and measurement method still pervade contemporary debates on how social well-being can be most adequately estimated. The two major difficulties of measurement are the facilitation of a broad spectrum of the vast range of perceptions and resource aspects of social well-being. There are examples of well-being measurement frameworks originating from overseas (for example, the North American Genuine Progress Indicator and Index described in Chapter 4) that are more

capable than recent and/or current New Zealand measures of capturing a wider range of perceptions and aspects of social well-being. In my view the measurement of social well-being in New Zealand could be improved if the following initiatives were undertaken:

1. Social well-being concepts need to be defined in detail to allow for the more adequate operationalisation of the terms that construct them, such as participation and belonging in society, and majority standards of living.
2. Measures need to incorporate a wider range of indicators to represent the multi-dimensional nature of social well-being, especially the non-monetary aspects.
3. Greater public participation is needed in the definition and measurement of social well-being on a regular basis, including longitudinal studies involving the cohort population samples.
4. More information is required about the extent and degree of low levels of social well-being that can lead to the identification of the causes and effects of poverty and the solutions to alleviating it.

8.2.1 Concept Definition

Collectively, the case study measures examined and discussed in this thesis employ broad definitions of poverty, deprivation, material and social well-being. It is possible to differentiate such concepts into more resource specific definitions, which in turn can result in more specialised measures. For example, Max-Neef (1991) identifies a framework for measuring differentiated concepts of poverty that include subsistence poverty (lack of income, food and shelter), protection poverty (inadequate health and violence), affection poverty (oppression), understanding poverty (inadequate education), participation poverty (marginalisation and discrimination against minorities), and identity poverty (the imposition of alien values upon local and regional cultures). Goldsmith (1997) provides another example with a categorisation of five types of poverty: social poverty (an inability to participate in activities), shelter poverty (inadequate housing, high housing costs, overcrowding), health poverty (malnutrition, high medical costs, lack of access to healthcare), educational poverty, and spiritual poverty. The Australian Council of Social Service (2003:7) recommends the distinction

between "subsistence poverty (relating to the capacity for physical survival and basic comfort)" and "participation poverty (relating to the capacity to participate in social and economic life)". When poverty is conceptualised and differentiated in such ways, particular dimensions of poverty can be focused upon and that allows researchers to observe indicators individually instead of referring to a single poverty threshold that relates to multiple indicators. Measuring individual aspects of social well-being can also help to establish relationships between different indicators. The idea is to identify specific resource needs for specific population groups that relate to separate but related types of social well-being or poverties.

8.2.2 Indicator Areas and Demographic Representation

New Zealand measures of social well-being should employ a wider range of indicators for a greater number of population groups. Employing a larger set of indicators can increase the potential for understanding the components of low levels of social well-being, and will highlight the wider range of population groups (including regional, ethnic and occupational groups) most at risk of experiencing low levels of social well-being. For example, if ethnic data was disaggregated into a larger range of ethnic groups, including newer migrant groups, then measures would be able to identify their levels of social well-being. There may be a significant number of people who are not represented in the current data disaggregation. The Genuine Progress Indicator frameworks that have been employed with some success in influencing social policies in North America are examples of measures with a relatively large number of indicators covering a wide range of phenomena (see Cobb et al., 1995).

Eckersley (1999) identifies some of the key issues for establishing a more adequate framework of indicators for measuring well-being such as the inclusion of both subjective and objective realities of well-being. Subjective indicators for measurement can reveal satisfaction levels with resources that can add to the knowledge gained through objective indicators of the utilisation levels of resources. For example, Dukeov et al. (2001) present a quality of life indicator framework that assesses both the level of use and satisfaction of resource areas that include food, health, education, housing,

leisure, security, economic opportunities, culture and leisure activity. Easton (1997) suggests that poverty measures might integrate more ethnographic or qualitative research with the quantitative to help to explore the causes and consequences of poverty. More subjective and qualitative data in social well-being measures could identify the links between indicators to show how a change in one resource area influences another.

There are still many questions to be answered regarding the current levels of social well-being in New Zealand especially at the extreme degrees of a lack of social well-being. For example, there is a lack of empirical evidence regarding the number of homeless individuals and families and levels of malnutrition. Numerous questions remain regarding the quality of and access to resources. A wider selection of both objective and subjective indicators is needed in order to address these questions.

8.2.3 Participatory Research Methods

There is scope for New Zealand measures to incorporate a greater level of public participation in the development of concept definition, selection of indicators and the application of research findings. To gain a more adequate understanding of how New Zealanders perceive social well-being and how they prioritise their resource needs, measures should include greater public consultation. In particular, an assessment of public perceptions of what social well-being is and a lack of it means is needed to provide more realistic frames of reference for New Zealand measures. It is important for measures to adequately reflect the actual resource needs and perceptions of the public and for population sub-groups if social policies and programmes are to be capable of effectively delivering appropriate resources to those who need the resources the most. Obviously the greater involvement of the public in the measurement process means an added cost of money, time and other resources.

Definitions of social well-being concepts should change over time to reflect changes in technology and lifestyle that may render certain resources redundant and allow for new resource needs to be identified. For example, the fast changing communication technologies such as the Internet have meant that communication needs have developed

to make computer accessibility commonplace and this has implications for new resource needs in this area. Longitudinal studies of cohort population samples will also identify clearer correlations between indicators and might highlight the causes of some aspects of a lack of social well-being. The more indepth information that can be established about the reasons why people remain in poverty or deprivation, or alternatively remedy these situations, the more evidence will be available for policy makers that can indicate the causes of these experiences.

8.3 Social Policy Implications

The development of more reliable and valid methods of social well-being measurement has the potential to allow policy makers and social service providers to more effectively assess and respond to the resource needs of those individuals and families that experience or are at risk of experiencing low levels of social well-being. If concept differentiation, a wider range of indicators, greater public participation, longitudinal and ongoing research were to occur in the current measures of social well-being in New Zealand, a number of social policy implications would become evident.

First, a greater level of funding would need to be made available to support a significant increase in research activity and this is most likely to occur either through an expansion of direct government agency research funding to the private sector and community based researchers. Second, at a policy development level in both central and local government, there would need to be a consensus on the need for the examination of public perceptions of social well-being and the role that the public want their perceptions to play in the policy making process. It is up to the government of the day to decide if it is a worthwhile way of spending revenue to increase funding to this type of social research. However, if the government is obliged to attend to the resource needs of the public then it has an obligation to assess as adequately as possible what those resource needs are perceived to be. Clearer concepts for measurement and valid objective and subjective indicators for assessment will undoubtedly result in more reliable empirical evidence upon which to base policy decisions.

Appendix A

Interviewee Introductory Letter (on Massey University, Social Policy Department letterhead)

(Interviewee contact address)

Dear (interviewee),

I am a social policy post-graduate student at Massey University, and I am currently undertaking a Master of Arts thesis concerning the measurement of well-being (a.k.a. deprivation/hardship) in New Zealand. This project is being supervised by Associate Professor Andrew Trlin and Dr. Paul Perry who are in the School of Sociology, Social Policy and Social Work, Massey University. Beginning with an overview of international measures of well-being, this project aims to critically examine selected New Zealand measures.

As I have chosen to include the New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project's 'Poverty Line' as a case study for critique, I am interested in undertaking an interview with you or someone else in your organisation who was involved with the development and implementation of the measure. The topics I would like to discuss in the interview include the technical, developmental and outcome aspects of the measure. The interview will not include personal questions, but will pay attention to the professional interests and expertise of the researcher which are relevant to the construction and implementation of the measure.

I would greatly appreciate your help in providing me with an opportunity to meet with you or someone else in your organisation that is suitably qualified with respect to the measure. If possible, I would like to undertake the interview at a time and place convenient to you or the other person to be interviewed in late September or October. I am resident in the Wellington area and am entirely flexible in arranging a time to conduct the interview. Full details of the interview are attached in the following

information sheet. An outline of the interview discussion areas will be forwarded beforehand.

Please contact me at any of the following:
(Researcher contact details)

Yours sincerely

Karina O'Neill

Appendix B

Research Information Sheet

'Measuring Well-being'

Researcher contact details:

Karina O'Neill

Phone

Email

Research supervision contact details:

Associate Professor Andrew Trlin

Phone

Email

Dr. Paul Perry

Reasons for research:

The research project is a Master of Arts thesis that aims to provide an overview of international measures of well-being and critically examine selected New Zealand measures.

Reasons why the participant was chosen:

The five chosen New Zealand measures are: the New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project poverty line, the New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services poverty indicator project, the Ministry of Social Development social report and living standards index, and the NZDep indexes. These measures have been chosen because they each provide recent findings and are ongoing measures of well-being in the New Zealand societal context.

The nature and duration of the participant involvement:

Topic areas to be discussed will include: the technical aspects of the measure (including the structure, components and limitations of the measure), the social policy and political contexts and the future developmental issues of the measure.

The one-off interview will take up to two hours.

Permission will be asked to tape record the interview.

Each potential/actual participant has the right:

- To decline to participate;
- To refuse to answer any particular questions;
- To ask for the tape recorder to be stopped at any particular point;
- To withdraw from the interview at any time;
- To ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- To provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- To be given a summary of the findings of the study when it is concluded.

Appendix C

Interview Questions Guideline

1. What were the developmental influences on the measure?
2. What were the political and ideological influences on the development of the measure (organisation directives and researcher preference for the measure)?
3. Why the choice of concept for measurement?
4. Why the choice of measurement method?
5. What are the limitations of the measure?
6. Is there scope in the measure to provide a greater representation of population groups (ethnic groups, age groups, household type, occupation etc)?
7. What other types of indicators can be utilised?
8. What other participatory methods of research could be employed in the measure?
9. What role does the measure play in the social policy making process?
10. How can the measure provide more adequate information to inform policy?

Separate appendices – information sheet with rights of participant, then interview guide.

Appendix D

Equivalence Scales

Equivalence scales have been used in New Zealand poverty measures to relate national income and expenditure data to households of differing compositions. A scale reflects the different levels of expenditure for children and adults, and different sized households.

The Jensen 1988 scale uses equivalences that include: 0.65 for one adult, 1.00 for two adults, 0.91 for an adult and one child, 1.21 for two adults and one child, and 1.41 for two adults and two children (Perry, 1995:145). The equivalences are used to calculate the income level for individual household members, assuming that they would experience the same standard of living as one another. For example, if a household of two adults had a total weekly income of $100 that enables them to enjoy an adequate standard of living, then the weekly income that ensures two adults and two children of the same standard of living would be $141 ($100 multiplied by 1.41). The cost of the two adult household with two children is greater than the cost of the two adult household without children, by a factor of 1.41.

The New York basic adjustment index is an equivalence scale with equivalences that include: 0.64 for one adult, 1.00 for two adults, 0.85 for an adult and one child, 1.22 for two adults and one child, and 1.43 for two adults and two children (Easton, 1986:34. These values are similar to those of Jensen 1988 scale and used in the same way to calculate the income levels for households with differing compositions. To use the same example above, if a household of two adults had a total weekly income of $100 that enables them to enjoy an adequate standard of living, then the weekly income that ensures two adults and two children of the same standard of living would be $143 ($100 multiplied by 1.43). The cost of the two adult household with two children is greater than the cost of the two adult household without children, by a factor of 1.43.

Appendix E

The New Zealand Poverty Measurement Project's Focus Group Parameters

The focus groups were asked to estimate *minimum adequate household expenditure* within the following parameters (Waldegrave, 1996b:196):

- "income" includes the value of all money, goods and services received by the household regardless of the source;
- the children of the families for the notional budgets are assumed to be between 7-11 years of age (i.e. teenagers were viewed by participants as equivalent to adults in terms of household expenditure);
- there are no significant costs allowed with recurring sickness or disability;
- there are no significant costs associated with household disruption or change;
- there is a basic set of appliances, furniture and furnishings but no other significant assets;
- the financial circumstances of the household are not expected to change significantly;
- the members of the household are drawing on a common pool of resources (this can include, to some degree, people not living in the same house and exclude some who are);
- there are no costs relating to generating income;
- work carried out within the household has no financial value;
- the goods and services available, including public services, will continue to be provided at the same cost to households;
- the householder has access to good information on options that affect income and expenditure decisions and has a very good ability to manage a household budget.

Appendix F

The New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services' Poverty Indicator Project Questionnaire (NZCCSS, 2001a)

Date	Interviewer	
Client#	First Time Applicant: (ever)	Y/N
# of visits this quarter?	Any changes to details since last visit:	Y/N

Name:

Address:

Suburb: Phone

Sex: circle one 1. Female 2. Male

Number of people in your household (e.g. client & immediate family)

Adults _____ <18_____ Total

Household/

Family Type (circle one)	**Age:** (circle one)	**Ethnicity:** (circle one or more)
1 Couple	1 Under 18	1 Pacific Islands_____
2 Couple & Children	2 18-24	2 NZ Maori_____
3 Extended 'family'	3 25-39	3 Pakeha/European
4 Single	4 40-65	4 Asian
5 Sole Parent	5 Over 65	5 Other
6 Non-family household		

Community Service Card: Y/N #_____

Problem type/Background Issue:	**Referred to service by:**
1 Food	1 Self
2 Benefit/DWI	2 Relative/Friend
3 Debt/Bills	3 Department of Work and Income

4 Housing	4 Other Government_____
5 Health	5 CAB/Information Service
6 Employment	6 Community/Social Service
7 Justice/Courts	7 Health service
8 Family	8 Other
9 Other	

Housing, Income, Debt and Employment Details

How many people live at your address? _____

How many bedrooms are there? _____

Current Housing Type:	1 HNZ State Housing	6 Boarding household
(circle one)	2 Private rent/flat	7 Family/friend's home
	3 City Council	8 Emergency
	4 Boarding	9 Temporary-garage, caravan
	5 Own home	10 Homeless

How much is your household's weekly rent/housing cost: $_____

(client and immediate family) (nearest $)

Are you up-to-date with your housing payments? (e.g. rent arrears) Y/N

How many times have you moved in the past two years: _____

How much is your household's weekly net income: (nearest $) $_____

(best estimate of client and immediate family weekly total net income before deductions)

Who is the main income earner in the household?

1 Applicant

2 Partner/Other

What are all the Income Sources for the Household? (circle one or more letter)

General Income	Main Benefit	Other Benefits
a Wages, salary	f Unemployment	n Accomm. Supplement
b Self-employed	g DPB	o Disability Allowance
c Superannuation/pension	h Invalids	p Special Benefit
d Student Allowance	i ACC	q Special Needs Grant
e Other non-benefit income	j Sickness	r Family Support/Family
x No income	k Emergency	tax credit
	l Independent Youth	s Child care/OSCAR
	m Stand down	t Training incentive/work
		start grants
		u Other benefit/Unspecified

Which of the following best describes your (and your partners) work situation?

	Applicant	**Partner**
Employed (20 or more hrs per week)	1	1
Employed (less than 20 hrs per week)	2	2
Employed (but not on a weekly basis)	3	3
Unemployed (less than 6 months)	4	4
Unemployed (6 months or more)	5	5
Student/Training	6	6
None of the above	7	7

Debt Owed

1. DWI	4. Student Loan	7. Other Loan
2. Courts/Fines	5. Family Loan	8. Debt Collector
3. IRD	6. Bank Loan	9. Child Contribution

10. Other _____

How much per week is deducted from your income to repay DWI debt $_____

How much per week is deducted to repay debt to all govt sources (1-4) $_____

Are you behind (i.e. in arrears) in paying the following bills?

(circle for each: na= not applicable, CD = currently disconnected)

	Arrears	Up-to-date	NA	CD		Arrears	Up-to-date
Phone (cell)	1	2	3	4	Dr/GP Bills	1	2
Electricity	1	2	3	4	Hire Purchase	1	2
Gas	1	2	3	4	Credit Card	1	2

Action as a Result of this Interview

1. None
2. Foodparcel
3. Budgeting
4. Advocacy work
5. Referred to DWI
6. Referred within agency
7. Referred – other agency
8. Other

I ..... authorise ..... to work with me, and on my behalf, as my advocate. Note that any information you provide to this agency will be used by us to look at how to best assist you, or act as your advocate. We will share information with other organisations for statistical purposes only and as part of the PIP Project. We will not share your name, phone number and address details. You have the right to see and correct your personal information.

Signed Date

Appendix G

The Ministry of Social Development's Social Report Outcome Domain Definitions and Indicators (MSD, 2003)

Health

Definition: All people have the opportunity to enjoy long and healthy lives. Avoidable deaths, disease, and injuries are prevented. All people have the ability to function, participate, and live independently or appropriately supported in society.
Indicators: independent life expectancy, life expectancy at birth, dependent disability, suicide, prevalence of cigarette smoking, and obesity.

Knowledge and Skills

Definition: All people have the knowledge and skills they need to participate fully in society. Lifelong learning and education are valued and supported. All people have the necessary skills to participate in a knowledge society.
Indicators: participation in early childhood education, school leavers with higher qualifications, educational attainment of the adult population, adult literacy skills in English, and participation in tertiary education.

Paid Work

Definition: All people have access to meaningful, rewarding and safe employment. An appropriate balance is maintained between paid work and other aspects of life.
Indicators: unemployment, employment, proportion of employed persons working long hours, and workplace injury claims.

Economic Standard of Living

Definition: New Zealand is a prosperous society where all people have access to adequate incomes and enjoy standards of living that mean they can fully participate in society and have a choice about how to live their lives.
Indicators: market income per person, income inequality, population with low incomes, population with low living standards, housing affordability, and household crowding.

Civil and Political Rights

Definition: All people enjoy civil and political rights. The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi are recognised and incorporated into government decision-making.
Indicators: voter turnout, representation of women in government, and perceived discrimination.

Cultural Identity

Definition: New Zealanders share a strong national identity, have a sense of belonging, and value cultural diversity. Maori, European/Pakeha, Pacific people, and other groups and communities are able to pass different cultural traditions on to future generations. Maori culture is valued and protected.
Indicators: participation in cultural and arts activities, Maori language speakers, Maori and Pacific children receiving Maori medium and Pacific medium education, and local content programming on New Zealand television.

Physical Environment

Definition: The natural and built environment in which people live is clean, healthy, and beautiful. All people are able to access natural areas and public spaces.
Indicators: air quality and drinking water quality.

Safety

Definition: All people enjoy personal safety and security and are free from victimisation, abuse, violence and avoidable injury.
Indicators: child abuse and neglect, criminal victimisation, perceptions of safety, and road casualties.

Social Connectedness

Definition: People enjoy constructive relationships with others in their families, whanau, communities, iwi and workplaces. They are able to participate in society through sports, arts, and other recreational activities. Contributions to social connectedness through

unpaid work and caring are valued.

Indicators: telephone and internet access in the home, unpaid work outside the home, participation in family/Whanau activities and regular contact with family/friends, and membership of and involvement in groups.

Appendix H

The Department of Public Health and Wellington School of Medicine and Health Sciences NZDep Index Specific Census Question Framework (relating to the nine index indicators of deprivation) (Salmond and Crampton, 2002:23)

1. People living in equivalised households with income below an income threshold
2. People aged 18-59 receiving a means tested benefit
3. People with no access to a telephone
4. People aged 18-59 unemployed
5. People with no access to a car
6. People aged 18-59 without any qualifications
7. People living in equivalised households below a bedroom occupancy threshold
8. People not living in own home
9. People aged less than 60 living in a single parent family

Appendix I

The Ministry of Social Development's Economic Living Standard Index Questionnaire (MSD, 2002a, abridged)

1. Can you please tell me the first name of all people aged from 18 to 64 who usually live here?

2. What month and year was (name) born, or how old are they now?

3. And is (name) male or female?

4. What relationship is (name) to you?

5 and 6. The core economic unit of the households is then established as the respondent plus partner/spouse (if has one) plus children under 18 years of age (if any) unless the children have their own partner or children in the household. Children 18 or over are another core economic unit. There can be a maximum of two people in a parent role, other adults are another core economic unit.

Questions 7 and 8 are for members of the core economic unit.

7. What is (name's) ethnic group? You may choose more than one group.

8. Is (name) employed full time (30 or more hours/week), employed part time (less than 30 hours/week), unemployed and seeking employment, not in the paid labour force or don't know?

9a. Which of these items do you have? Telephone, secure locks, microwave, washing machine, clothes drier, waste disposal unit, dishwasher, food processor, heating available in all main rooms, a good bed, warm bedding in winter, a warm winter coat, a good pair of shoes, a best outfit for special occasions, pay television (e.g., sky), video player, stereo, personal computer, access to the internet, home contents insurance, boat, car, holiday home, bach or crib, television, a pet, an inside lavatory or toilet, running water in the house, mains electricity (not supplied from an on-site battery or generator), hot running water.

9b. For each of these items that you don't have, can you tell me if you would like to have one?

9c. Is the reason you don't have that item because of the cost, or some other reason?

10a. *If the economic unit includes children.*

Which of these items do you have? Suitable wet weather clothing for each child, a pair of shoes in good condition for each child, a child's bike, a Playstation.

10b. For each of these items that you don't have, can you tell me if you would like to have one?

10c. Is the reason you don't have that item because of the cost, or some other reason?

11a. Sort the item you don't have (from question 9a) into three piles (the items are written on cards), indicating how important each item is to you: not at all important, fairly important or very important.

11b. Sort the items you have (from question 9a) into three piles indicating how important each item is to you: not at all important, fairly important or very important.

12a. *If the economic unit includes children.*

Sort the items you don't have (from question 10a) into three piles, indicating how important each item is to you: not at all important, fairly important or very important.

12b. Sort the items you have (from question 10a) into three piles indicating how important each item is to you: not at all important, fairly important or very important.

13a. Which of these things do you do? Participate in family (whanau) activities, give presents to family or friends on birthdays, Christmas or other special occasions, visit the hairdresser once every three months, have holidays away from home every year, have a holiday overseas at least once every 3 years, have a night out at least once a fortnight, have family or friends over for a meal at least once a month, have a special meal at home at least once a week, have enough room for family to stay the night, pay someone to help with housework, you or your partner contribute regularly to a retirement scheme.

13b. For each of these things that you don't do, can you tell me if you would like to do them?

13c. Is the reason you don't do this thing because of the cost, or some other reason?

14a. *If the economic unit includes children.*

Which of these things do you do? Pay for childcare services, have children's friends over for a meal, have enough room for children's friends to stay the night, have children's friends to a birthday party, taken from and abridged.

14b. For each of these things that you don't do, can you tell me if you would like to do them?

14c. Is the reason you don't do this thing because of the cost, or some other reason?
15a. Sort the things you don't do (from question 13a) into three piles, indicating how important each item is to you: not at all important, fairly important or very important.
15b. Sort the things you do (from question 13a) into three piles, indicating how important each item is to you: not at all important, fairly important or very important.
16a. Sort the things you don't do (from question 14a) into three piles, indicating how important each item is to you: not at all important, fairly important or very important.
16b. Sort the things you do (from question 14a) into three piles, indicating how important each item is to you: not at all important, fairly important or very important.
17. In the last 12 months, have you done any of these things not at all, a little, or a lot? Bought cheaper cuts of meat or less meat than you would like to buy to help keep down costs? Gone without fresh fruit and vegetables to help keep down costs? Bought secondhand clothing instead of new to help keep down costs? Continued wearing clothing that was worn out because you couldn't afford replacement? Put off buying clothing for as long as possible to help keep down costs? Relied on gifts of clothing to help keep down costs? Continued wearing shoes that were worn out because you couldn't afford replacements? Put up with feeling cold to save heating costs? Stayed in bed longer to save heating costs? Postponed or put off visits to the doctor to help keep down costs? Postponed or put off visits to the dentist to help keep down costs? Gone without glasses you needed because you couldn't afford them? Not picked up a prescription to help keep down costs? Cut back or cancelled an insurance policy to help keep down costs? Gone without or cut back on visits to family or friends to help keep down costs? Done without or cut back on trips to the shops or other local places to help keep down costs? Spent less time on hobbies than you would like to help keep down costs? Not gone to a funeral (tangi) you would like to have gone to because of the cost? Decided not to do training or further education because of the cost? Made do with not enough bedrooms because of the cost?
18. *If the economic unit includes children.*
In the last 12 months, have you done any of these things not at all, a little, or a lot? Been unable to pay for your child to go on a school outing because of the cost? Not bought school books or school supplies because of the cost? Not bought children's

books for reading at home because of the cost? Postponed child's visits to the doctor? Postponed child's visits to the dentist? Child went without prescription glasses (or contact lenses) when they were needed? Child went without music, dance, art or other cultural lessons because of the cost? Had to limit your child's involvement in sport because of the cost?

Child wore clothes or shoes too small or too large because of the cost? Children share a bed because of the cost? Made do with very limited space for the children to study or play because of cost?

19. In the last 12 months, have any of these happened to (you) or (you and your partner): You couldn't keep up with payments for electricity, gas or water? You couldn't keep up with payments for mortgage or rent? You couldn't keep up with payments for such things as hire-purchase, credit cards or store cards? You borrowed money from family or friends to meet everyday living costs? You received help in the form of food, clothes or money from a community organisation such as a church? You pawned or sold something to meet everyday living costs?

20. Thinking about your situation over the last 12 months, which of these statements best describes (your) or (you and your partner's) financial situation: You spent less money than you received most months, you just broke even most months, you spent more money than you received most months?

21. Thinking of your level of savings now compared to 12 months ago, which of these statements best describes (your) or (you and your partner's combined) situation? Not enough, just enough, enough, more than enough.

22. How well does (your) or (you and your partner's combined) total income meet your everyday needs for such things as accommodation, food, clothing and other necessities? Would you say you have not enough money, just enough money, enough money, or more than enough money?

23. Sometimes people find they need a sum of money as large as $1500 at short notice because of an emergency. If all of a sudden you had to get $1500 at short notice for something, could you get the money within a week?

24. Could you get $5000 within a week if an emergency came up?

25. In your current accommodation, are there problems with any of these: problems with

draughts, problems with dampness, industrial pollution or other smells, noise from traffic, trains or aircraft, problems with plumbing, wiring, interior paintwork, windows, doors, the roof, problems with the piles or foundations, exterior paintwork, fencing, paving, any other problems?

26. *If respondent has partner*, interviewer to code whether questions 9 to 25 were answered by the respondent: on their own, with some consultation or jointly.

27. Generally, how would you rate your standard of living? High, fairly high, medium, fairly low, low, don't know.

28. Generally, how satisfied are you with your current standard of living? Very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied, don't know.

29a. How many couples live in this household (apart from you and your partner)?

29b. How many bedrooms there are in this house?

30. Who owns this house/flat? You (and/or your partner) own this house/flat, you (and/or your partner) jointly own this house/flat with other people, a family trust owns this house/flat, parents or other family members own this house/flat, a private landlord who is not related to you owns this house/flat, a local authority or city council owns this house/flat, Housing New Zealand owns this house/ flat, other.

31. How much is the total debt owing on this house/flat? Nil, $50,000 or less, $50,001 - $100,000, $100,001 - $150,000, $150,001 - $200,000, $200,001 - $250,000, $250,001 - $300,000, $300,001 - $400,000, More than $400,000, don't know.

32. Which of these best describes the latest government valuation of your property? $25,000 or less, $25,001 - $50,000, $50,001 - $100,000, $100,001 - $150,000, $150,001 - $200,000, $200,001 - $250,000, $250,001 - $300,000, $300,001 - $350,000, $350,001 - $400,000, 400,001 or more, don't know.

33. Which of these do (you) or (you or your partner) pay? Mortgage for this house/flat, rent for this house/flat, board for this house/flat, none of the above.

34. How many mortgages do you have for this house or flat?

35a. What was your last mortgage payment (for each mortgage)?

35b. What period did that payment cover (for each mortgage)?

36a. How much rent do (you) or (you or your partner between you) pay? *DON'T count any share paid by others living in the house/flat*

36b. What period did that payment cover?

37a. How much was the last amount of board that (you) or (you or your partner between you) paid?

37b. How much of that amount is for accommodation?

37c. What period did that payment cover?

38. In the last 12 months, have (you) or (your partner) earnt any income from wages or salaries? Please include any ACC or private income insurance payments.

Questions 39 and 40 are for those who answered yes to question 38.

39. In the last 12 months, how many paid jobs have (you) or (your partner) had?

40. Can you tell me which of these apply for your (and your partners') total earnings for all of these jobs? Please tell me your earnings BEFORE tax. Please include income only from wages or salaries, or from any ACC or private income insurance payouts. Do not include self-employment or any government benefits or support payments. $1 - $5,000, $5,001 - $10,000, $10,001 - $15,000, $15,001 - $20,000, $20,001 - $25,000, $25,001 - $30,000, $30,001 - $35,000, $35,001 - $40,000, $40,001 - $50,000, $50,001 - $60,000, $60,001 - $70,000, $70,001 - $80,000, $80,001 - $90,000, $90,001 - $100,000, $100,001 - $110,000, $110,001 - $120,000, more than $120,000, don't know.

41. In the last 12 months, have (you) or (your partner) earnt any income from self - employment, including making a loss? Include any income from hobbies or royalties.

Question 42 is for those who answer yes to question 41.

42. Please *tell me (your) or (you and your partner's) income from all your self-employment in the past 12 months, with expenses deducted and BEFORE personal income tax was taken out.* Loss, zero income, $1 - $5,000, $5,001 - $7,500, $7,501 - $10,000, $10,001 - $12,500, $12,501 - $15,000, $15,001 - $17,500, $17,501 -$20,000, $20,001 - $25,000, $25,001 - $30,000, $30,001 - $40,000, $40,001 - $50,000, $50,001 - $70,000, $70,001 - $100,000, $100,001 or more, don't know.

43. In the last 12 months have you (or your partner) received any of the following from the Government? Community Wage (Unemployment, Sickness or Training Benefit), Emergency Benefit, Student Allowance, Domestic Purposes Benefit, Widows Benefit, Invalids Benefit, Transitional Retirement Benefit, New Zealand Superannuation or Veterans Pension, Family Support, Accommodation Supplement, Disability Allowance,

Special Benefit, Child Care Subsidy, Training Incentive Allowance, Unsupported Child Benefit, Other regular payment, none of these, don't know.

44. How much did (you) or (you and your partner between you) receive in total from these benefits and support payments in the last 12 months? Please tell me the amount after tax.

45. Do (you) or (you or your partner) have a Community Services Card?

46. In the last 12 months, did you (or your partner)get income from any of these? Interest from banks, finance companies, building societies, solicitor's nominee companies, government stock, etc, dividends from shares, returns from unit trusts, interest from mortgages or loans, rents received (net of expenses), income from a family trust, overseas income, income from Maori land or from other leased land, income from a partnership as a non-working shareholder, child maintenance payments, reparation or similar payments, none of these.

47. Thinking about the income you (and your partner) got from all of these sources you identified, which of these applies? Loss, zero income, $1 - $2,500, $2,501 - $5,000, $5,001 - $7,500, $7,501 - $10,000, $10,001 - $12,500, $12,501 - $15,000, $15,001 - $17,500, $17,501 -$20,000, $20,001 - $25,000, $25,001 - $30,000, $30,001 - $40,000, $40,001 - $50,000, $50,001 - $70,000, $70,001 or more, don't know.

48. Is that amount before tax or after tax?

49. Now thinking about your (and your partner's) TOTAL overall income from wages, salaries, self-employment, government benefits and support payments and any other income, for the last 12 months, which of these applies? Please tell me the amount BEFORE tax. Loss, zero income, $1 - $5,000, $5,001 - $10,000, $10,001 - $15,000, $15,001 - $20,000, $20,001 - $25,000, $25,001 - $30,000, $30,001 - $35,000, $35,001 - $40,000, $40,001 - $50,000, $50,001 - $60,000, $60,001 - $70,000, $70,001 - $80,000, $80,001 - $90,000, $90,001 - $100,000, $100,001 - $110,000, $110,001 - $120,000, more than $120,000, don't know.

50. And now including (names at question 5) as well as you (and your partner), which of these applies for the TOTAL overall income from all sources? Again, please tell me the amount BEFORE tax. Loss, zero income, $1 - $5,000, $5,001 - $10,000, $10,001 - $15,000, $15,001 - $20,000, $20,001 - $25,000, $25,001 - $30,000, $30,001 - $35,000,

$35,001 - $40,000, $40,001 - $50,000, $50,001 - $60,000, $60,001 - $70,000, $70,001 - $80,000, $80,001 - $90,000, $90,001 - $100,000, $100,001 - $110,000, $110,001 - $120,000, more than $120,000, don't know.

51. Now thinking about your assets rather than your income. (Apart from this property), do (you) or (you or your partner) have any of these assets? Money deposited with banks, eg savings, cheque accounts, term deposits, other investments, eg shares, unit trusts bonus bonds, debentures, credit unions, endowment life insurance policies, money or investments in a family trust, money owed to you, residential property, eg holiday home, rented-out residential property, land, etc, investment in commercial property, business ownership or investment eg in farming, forestry or any other business, any other assets, eg art, antiques, collectables. Do NOT count household effects, motor vehicles recreation, leisure or hobby equipment.

52. (NOT counting this property), which of these applies for the total value of the assets you have identified? $1 - $1,000, $1,001 - $5,000, $5,001 - $10,000, $10,001 - $15,000, $15,001 - $25,000, $25,001 - $50,000, $50,001 - $100,000, $100,001 - $150,000, $150,001 - $200,000, $200,001 - $250,000, $250,001 - $300,000, $300,001 - $350,000, $350,001 - $400,000, $400,001 - $500,000, $500,001 - $750,000, $750,001 or more, don't know.

53. Interviewer to code if the respondent has a partner, whether questions 29 to 52 were answered by the respondent, on their own, with some consultation or jointly.

54. In general, how happy would you say you are? Very happy, happy, neither happy nor unhappy, unhappy, very unhappy, don't know.

55. Now taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your life these days? Very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied, don't know.

56a. What is your highest school qualification? None, primary proficiency examination, School Certificate in one or more subjects, Sixth Form Certificate, University Entrance in one or more subjects, Higher School Certificate, Higher Leaving Certificate, University Bursary, Scholarship, Overseas school qualification, other school qualification (specify).

56b. How old were you when you left school?

57. Have you obtained either of these since leaving school? Occupational certificate or diploma obtained since leaving school taking at least 3 months full time (or equivalent) to get, Bachelors Degree or higher, neither of these.

58. Are you currently a full-time tertiary student?

59a. Are you the main income earner of (names ticked at question 5)?

59b. Are you/is the Main Income Earner currently in a full time job?

59c. Have you/has the Main Income Earner ever had a full time job?

59d. What kind of work (do/does/did) you/the Main Income Earner do in your/their (last) full-time job?

Questions 60-67 for those respondents who chose "Maori" as their ethnicity in question 7.

60. Do you identify as Maori?

61. If you had to choose ONE of these options that best describes you, which would you choose? A Kiwi, a New Zealander, Maori/Pakeha, part Maori, a Polynesian, a Maori, other (please describe).

62. How many generations of your Maori ancestry can you name? Note: (i.e. actually knows at this point in time, does not have to refer elsewhere).

63a. Have you ever been to a marae?

63b. How often over the past 12 months?

64. In terms of YOUR involvement with your whanau, would you say that YOUR whanau plays: a very large part in your life, a large part in your life, a small part in your life, a very small part/no part in your life.

65. Do you have a financial interest in Maori land, that is as an owner, part or potential owner or beneficiary?

66. This question considers your contacts with people. Thinking about work, sport, church, school, socially and at home, in general would you say that your contacts are with: mainly Maori, some Maori, few Maori, no Maori.

67. Now I would like to ask you a question about you and Maori language. How would you rate your overall ability with Maori language? Excellent, very good, good, fair, poor.

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