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Teacher appraisal - its relationship to motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change in an early childhood context in Aotearoa New Zealand

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Tanya Shorter



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ABSTRACT

A continuing challenge for organisations, management and teachers in early childhood centres in Aotearoa New Zealand is the development, implementation, and sustainability of teacher appraisal systems as mechanisms for supporting learning opportunities for all participants.

The Ministry of Education (1998) states that “an effective appraisal system is a positive means of improving the performance of a service’s management and educators and, ultimately, the quality of the service itself” (p. 76). This raises an important question for early childhood leaders to contemplate: What characteristics of appraisal systems support learning opportunities for both teachers and children within an early childhood context in Aotearoa New Zealand?

The research project presented in this thesis examines two different systems of teacher appraisal and their relationship to teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change in an early childhood context in Aotearoa New Zealand. This qualitative inquiry was conducted within a socio constructionist framework, and used an interview approach to explore teachers’ experiences of two differing teacher appraisal systems. Data included interviews from four head teachers and five teachers, and their appraisal data over several years.

The literature reviewed highlighted that bureaucratic systems of teacher appraisal are likely to have been contrived from a political era where government reform significantly shaped an era of distrust. Approaches to appraisal systems tend to be defined as either ‘professional’ or ‘bureaucratic’ depending on their philosophical differences, and the way in which summative and formative evaluation are used within them. A range of signposts were identified which suggest, that when combined, they contribute to effective appraisal systems.

The findings indicate that appraisal systems can have a significant impact on the personal and professional lives of teachers. The ways in which teachers are positioned and valued in relation to their capacity to make professional judgements and evaluate their own teaching can generate negative or positive attitudes to teacher appraisal systems, creating high or low levels of motivation. A system of appraisal using predominantly summative assessment to measure teachers' competency contributed to the deterioration of collegial relationships, feelings of mistrust, fear, nervousness, and tension around 'periods' of appraisal. A system with an emphasis on teacher development, rather than judgement, supported a culture of teacher collaboration, professional dialogue, interpersonal security, and trust. Analysis identified a series of themes and factors within a responsive system of appraisal which contributed to teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change.

This study offers stimulus for reflection and dialogue amongst early childhood leaders who aim to improve the performance of teachers, and the service itself. This study does, however, indicate that further investigation into teacher appraisal systems within a range of early childhood organisations and centres is required in order to provide a more extensive examination of ways in which teacher appraisal can be utilized as a means of inspiring teacher professional growth.

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CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

Background

The purpose of teacher appraisal is ultimately to optimize learning opportunities for both teachers and children, whilst improving the quality of teaching. The unambiguous and explicit expectation from the Ministry of Education is that personnel policies, including staff appraisal, be implemented in order to promote quality practices (Ministry of Education, 1998). A problem, however, is that compliance obligations appear to have distorted, rather than complemented the design of some teacher appraisal systems. This tension and dilemma provides a rationale for this study.

Many writers (Cummins, 2011; Duncan, 1999; Edwards, 1992; Jones, 2000; Kedian, 2006; Lacey, 1996; Mielke & Frontier, 2012; New Zealand Educational Institute:Te Riu Roa, 2003; Piggot-Irvine & Cardno, 2005) argue that opportunities which contribute to teachers' professional learning can be achieved through the process of teacher appraisal. This study analyses teachers experiences of two different systems of appraisal used in an early childhood context. It explores characteristics of these systems and ways in which they influence teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change.

This study was undertaken within Whero Kindergarten Association --an umbrella organisation of moderate size (responsible for 15-25 state kindergartens)¹. The Association started to make a number of organisational changes over the period 2007 to 2010 in response to a) personnel difficulties resulting from a dual management structure, and b) New Zealand's early childhood policy environment. These changes included the reorganisation of the senior leadership team, a shift from 'sessional' to 'all day' licences for many kindergartens in the Association, and a focus on 'marketing kindergartens' as attractive early childhood

¹ In order to protect anonymity, the exact size of the Association has not been given.

provisions--in response to increased competitiveness particularly from the 'for-profit' early childhood sector. The for-profit, and in some cases corporate world, according to Mitchell and Davison (2010) "...constructs early childhood services as places of commercial exchange, where the first duty of directors is to shareholders who expect a financial return on their investment, and where parents are positioned as consumers purchasing a product" (p. 18). Significantly for this study was the way in which teacher appraisal was carried out and brought under review.

In 2009 an appraisal working party consisting of the Association principal, two senior teachers, the home-based care network organiser, one teacher and four head teachers--including myself, was established in order to review the then current appraisal systems effectiveness in achieving its desired outcomes, and make any changes to the system considered necessary. D. Giles (personal communication, January 20, 2010) cautions those who use the term 'effective' about over generalisation, when he states: "...we are very flippant about the word effective". I agree with Giles and when using the word effective, I have done so with Piggot-Irvine's (2002) definition in mind "... effectiveness occurs when appraisal interactions are non-controlling, non-defensive, supportive, educative (in terms of improved learning...) and open (where problems are confronted rather than avoided)" (p. 1).

A 360° system of teacher appraisal had been used from 2002 up until the end of 2008. This system used a combination of assessment and appraisal methodologies. It measured, graded, and compared teachers against the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions (Teacher Registration Board, 1997) and association expectations. In 2004, National Professional Standards (Ministry of Education, 2004) were integrated into the appraisal system, replacing the Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions; appraisal outcomes determined salary progression.

The appraisal working party found the systems emphasis on accountability potentially less useful to pedagogical change than a system which placed

a greater emphasis of professional learning. A new appraisal system titled “What-spins-your-wheels?” was developed.

This thinking is in line with (Grootenboer, 2000; Kedian, 2006; Mielke & Frontier, 2012), and contrary to Piggot and Irvine (2005), who believe that accountability is no less important than professional growth. This provided a unique opportunity to carry out an in depth investigation of teachers experiences and perceptions of two systems of teacher appraisal.

Researcher background

I won a head teaching position with Whero Kindergarten Association in April 2004. My first appraisal meeting, with my then, senior teacher was November 2004. “Success lies in the individual, not in the job” was featured on the cover page of the since revised appraisal system booklet (Whero Kindergarten Association, 2005a). Although I agree with this statement--my interpretation being that a teacher’s passion and pedagogy have more to offer children than a technician approach to teaching--I was then, and remain today, unsure that this system of appraisal (in operation over the subsequent four years) provided opportunities for either me, or fellow teaching colleagues to find this vision of success.

My concerns regarding a number of features of this appraisal system are mirrored in the literature. In particular: the use of professional standards also referred to as ‘generic standards’ by Thrupp (2006) as a tool for assisting the process of critical self reflection; the value of a ‘judgemental approach’ to evaluation (Grootenboer, 2000, p. 2); the benefits of a 360° system where peer evaluation of colleagues performance is potentially clouded by personality; and the effects of this process on teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change.

I was interested to hear the thoughts of my colleagues. As an early childhood leader I believe I have a responsibility to guide and respond to the teaching and learning needs of both teachers and children. Leading an effective teacher appraisal process forms part of this responsibility. There is currently no research and literature available which examines the

association of teacher appraisal with teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical practice in early childhood settings. Interestingly Grootenboer (2000) puts forward a challenge; “Perhaps there is an imperative that some research be conducted into the effects of teacher appraisal on the quality of education” (p. 17).

I believe that this study will make a contribution towards meeting this challenge, and together with my responsibilities as a leader, provides another rationale for research.

Research questions and aims

The research questions were:

1. How do teachers experience two differing teacher appraisal systems?
2. What factors within these appraisal systems do teachers identify as contributing to teacher motivation, collegial relationships and pedagogical change?
3. What principles underpin effective appraisal systems in early childhood settings?

The research aimed to explore teachers’ experience and perceptions of two different systems of appraisal. It examined factors within these appraisal systems which teachers identified as contributing to teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change. The introduction of change and how this contributed to teacher buy-in was also explored. This study aimed to contribute to an understanding of principles which underpin responsive appraisal systems in early childhood settings.

Research design

The study used a qualitative inquiry research methodology positioned within a social constructionist framework. Semi-structured teacher interviews were utilized in order to explore teachers’ experiences of two different appraisal systems. The process of thematic analysis was used to

understand and compare these experiences. An analysis of appraisal documentation enabled further investigation of the links between teacher appraisal, and teaching and learning.

Contribution of thesis

It is hoped that this research will contribute to an understanding of how teachers experience appraisal and their perceptions of its impact on their teaching practice. This study analyses teacher experiences and views and suggests a range of signposts within teacher appraisal frameworks and processes which promote positive teaching dispositions and skills. The study makes visible appraisal principles which are both useful and innovative within an early childhood context in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Outline of the thesis

The thesis is organised into six chapters:

Chapter one provides an explanation of my interest and a rationale for researching the topic. It positions me as the researcher and provides further background to the study.

Chapter two explores each system of appraisal and reviews a range of both national and international literature in order to provide a theoretical basis for the study.

Chapter three outlines the design and process of the research. It introduces the theoretical framework, methodology, methods, data collection, and process of analysis. It also considers methodological issues such as ethics, bias, and limitations.

Chapters four and five present the research findings in relation to two of the research questions, and the literature.

Chapter six summarizes the findings in relation to the third research question. Limitations of the study are further identified in this chapter together with recommendations that emerged from the research.

CHAPTER TWO - LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The contribution that teacher appraisal may make to enhancing learning opportunities for teachers and children is worthy of investigation. Also of interest is the impact that systems of appraisal may have on teacher morale, dignity, and self-efficacy. Therefore, this review of literature explores signposts within teacher appraisal systems and processes that support or hinder positive outcomes for teaching and learning.

The literature review begins with an overview of teacher appraisal: exploring the background to its introduction in New Zealand, defining its purpose, clarifying some misconceptions in regards to terminology, and examining a range of approaches. Literature internationally, and within New Zealand is investigated. Motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change are defined, explored in relation to their contribution to teaching and learning, and examined in relation to the effects that systems of teacher appraisal, may have on them. An analysis of the literature indicating signposts which contribute to effective teacher appraisal systems are then examined. The chapter concludes with a description of two systems of appraisal used within Whero Kindergarten Association, evaluated against the identified signposts.

A context for teacher appraisal

The Neo-liberal policy mechanisms of marketisation, managerialism, and performativity according to several writers (Ball, 2003; Barblett & Loudon, 2001; Codd, 2005; Fitzgerald, 2008; May, 2009; Mitchell & Davison, 2010; O'Neill, 1997; Sanger, 1995; Thrupp, 2006) have had a marked effect on educational reform and the relationship between teachers and the state. According to Ball (2003) when combined these mechanisms provide "...a politically attractive alternative to the state-centred, public welfare tradition

of educational provision” (p. 216). The alternative is a market approach based on private sector principles of efficiency and effectiveness which, when applied to policy-making decisions, replaces the public good ideology with private gain in an attempt to improve responsiveness to consumers.

Extensive economic and educational reforms took place in New Zealand during the latter half of the 1980s with the election of a Labour government in 1984. Centralised bureaucracy and its place in education and the economy were questioned, and later replaced with an ethos of devolution and deregulation. Ball (2003), however, argues that deregulation was in fact re-regulation, where new forms of control with less visible regulation were established. Neo-liberalism was seen by this, and successive New Zealand governments as an answer to deteriorating economic conditions.

In 1988, the Department (later Ministry) of Education, released *Tomorrow Schools* (Lange, 1988b) in response to the report of the Picot taskforce-- *Administering For Excellence*, (Taskforce to Review Education Administration, 1988) and *Before Five* (Lange, 1988a) in response to *Education to be More*—also known as the *Meade Report (Early Childhood Care and Education Working Group, 1988)* respectively. This was done in order to “...draw back from [the government’s] educational management ... of [state education] in favour of ... [self management]” (May, 2009, p. 6). Despite government promises and increased funding in the early childhood sector, in the late 1990s a newly elected National Government “...immediately embarked on a program of cost-cutting and restraint...” (Mitchell, 2005, p.180). This according to May (2002) was due to “...a lack of political courage and a philosophical shift in the role of government...” (p. 7). Children’s learning according to May (2009) “...became a focus for governmental audit” (p. 204).

This market or neo liberal approach created a) competition between education providers which according to Mitchell and Davison (2010) has, over time, created ‘gaps’ and ‘duplications’ in service provision with “...massive expansion in the privately-owned ECCE [early childhood and

care education] sector...” and ‘sluggish’ or declining growth in the community-based sector (p. 18); b) consumer choice for parents which according to Mitchell and Davison (2010) resulted in “... inequities in access [to early childhood and care services] particularly for low income, ethnically diverse and rural families” (p.12); and c) compliance and performance mechanisms in order to ensure that teachers acted in ways which supported agendas of reform. These were hallmarks of neo-liberal policies where public education is strongly influenced by economic policy. Teachers’ became the *providers* of education and parents the *consumers*. One may question where the “child as citizen within a social community” (Mitchell, 2010, p. 339) is placed within this equation in terms of their rights and agency in relation to education and care.

The restructuring and reforms saw teachers come under “...intense public scrutiny...” in terms of their performance and professionalism (Fitzgerald, 2008, p. 113). Blackmore (1998) suggests that teachers’ professionalism was put into jeopardy as reforms led teachers to be treated in highly controlling ways. Public accountability replaced professional accountability and autonomy resulting in a loss of public trust in teachers, their professional knowledge, and expertise. This era of government together with successive governments over the 20th century became “...preoccupied, if not obsessed, with the notion of ‘quality’ [which in turn became]... a powerful metaphor for ...managerial control” (Codd, 1999, p. 47).

Managerialism is the neo-liberal mechanism which sees increased control over performance. According to Ball (2003) it is a mechanism for measuring individual or organisational productivity or quality. Codd (1999) argues that a *culture of distrust* between teachers and the state resulted from policies which pursued greater accountability (p. 45). Up until this time, according to Codd (2005) teachers had exercised “...a degree of professional autonomy in determining what and how to teach” (p.193). They had also, up until the early 1980’s, enjoyed a responsive and reciprocal relationship with the state in terms of their contribution to

education policy-making. Professional responsibility and trust had formed the base and spirit of teachers' working conditions (Sullivan, 1997).

The context and purposes of public education in New Zealand had changed. According to Codd (2005) neo-liberalism transformed New Zealand's public education system from a focus on citizenship, collective responsibility, cooperation, social democracy, justice, and trust to an ethos based on self-management, local governance, and strong centralised forms of control and accountability. Education became a commodity, an economic "investment in human capital" for the purpose of the nation's economic growth. Teachers' core values in terms of education were no longer those of the state.

Teacher compliance was critical in ensuring the delivery of educational reform (Fitzgerald, 2008). One way of controlling the teaching profession and teachers' work was via performance management policies and processes which exemplified and standardised what ought to occur at organisational, centre, and pedagogical levels. Surveillance in the form of performance management and appraisal systems designed to monitor and maximise performance became a feature of reporting systems, which measured levels of teacher performance or performativity (O'Neill, 1997).

The drive for teacher performance appraisal and quality evaluation began in New Zealand's early childhood sector with the publication of the *Statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices*. This was revised and incorporated in a further publication *Quality in Action Te Mahi Whai Hua* (Ministry of Education, 1998). The revised Objectives and Practices were guided by two principles concerned with the role of management and educators, and aspirations for children in early childhood education settings through curriculum. Twelve statements addressed requirements in each of 3 areas: Learning and Development, Communication and Consultation, and Operation and Administration. One of the statements, 11a) sets out a requirement for personnel policies to include staff appraisal:

“Management should implement: personnel policies which promote quality practices including [the] appointment of competent staff, staff appraisal and professional development for both management and educators” (Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 74).

Teacher appraisal is a process, according to several writers (Bailey, 1997; Cummins, 2011; Grootenboer, 2000; Gunter, 2001; Jones, 2000; Kedian, 2006; Mielke & Frontier, 2012; Monyatsi, Steyn, & Kamper, 2006; Peel & Inkson, 1993; Piggot-Irvine & Cardno, 2005; Sinnema, 2005) entirely capable of empowering teachers and supporting pathways to expertise. However, the systems developed in New Zealand were likely to have been modelled on modernistic philosophy, where hierarchical procedures (where a person in higher authority appraises the teacher) and a focus on measureable outcomes were used to encourage individual accountability. The neo-liberal mechanism of managerialism underpins such educational thought. This approach in effect led to the de-professionalization of teaching: as teachers were no longer seen to be leaders in their professional field (Duncan, 1999). It is likely that bureaucratic systems of teacher appraisal have been contrived from this political era where political reform significantly shaped an era of distrust.

The purpose and definition of teacher appraisal

According to Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) “performance management is part of the wider framework of personnel management” (p. 20). It is designed to “...make teachers accountable...” (Piggot-Irvine & Cardno, 2005, p. 26), aligning organisational goals with centre and teacher goals. Teacher appraisal is the mechanism which links these together in order to improve the educational experiences of children.

Understanding teacher appraisal

Mistrust, anxiety, and confusion in regards to teacher appraisal are likely to have resulted from the rhetoric used within both official documentation, and the literature. Terms such as performance, professional and peer

review, teacher evaluation, appraisal and management systems, efficiency audit, formative and summative evaluation, and assessment and supervision are used interchangeably but often have contradictory meanings (Edwards, 1992; Jones, 2000; McLelland & Ramsey, 1993; O'Neill, 1997; Philpott, 2007; Sinnema, 2005).

Evaluation is a term used to describe the judgements made about performance or activity of teachers in terms of quality. The evaluation process according to Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) varies, but the conclusion is inherently summative (a determination of value). When evaluation leads to development and improvement, its role is formative. Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) argue that formative and summative aspects of evaluation afford them different roles but are not different types of evaluation. Grootenboer (2000) and O'Neill (1997) suggest that summative and formative evaluation represent two opposing perspectives on how educational quality can be promoted, which has resulted in opposing systems of appraisal being developed.

Kedian (2006) makes a distinction between evaluation and appraisal, and expresses doubts about whether evaluation results in any professional learning at all. Kedian (2006) goes on to define appraisal "...as a distinctly different activity [from evaluation which he believes] has enormous potential for professional growth" (p. 12). Kedian (personal communication, January 21, 2013) sees evaluation as serving a summative function and appraisal as serving a formative role. This somewhat artificial distinction is perhaps addressed by Mielke and Frontier (2012) when they propose that "...teachers need to be actively involved ...in the formative use of the tools that will be the basis for their own summative evaluation" (p. 12). This highlights the positive role of summative evaluation in a self reflective context—a critical aspect of professional growth.

Assessment and appraisal, although often used synonymously, are quite different (Piggot-Irvine & Cardno, 2005). Assessment implies inspection, measurement, testing, and /or grading. Appraisal on the other hand, is an

evaluative activity linked to qualitative performance, judgements, and development--teacher competency has already been established. Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) argue that it is assessment that is used to attest teacher competency against the Ministry of Education's National Teaching Standards (Ministry of Education, 2004) for accountability and salary progression purposes, and that this should be a separate process to appraisal. This is somewhat confusing considering the Ministry of Education's requirement to "...integrate the professional standards into "...current performance management systems" (Ministry of Education, July, 2004, p. 2)--where the mechanism for supporting teacher development is teacher appraisal. The fact that some appraisal systems combine assessment and evaluation methodologies and methods is likely to confuse the purpose and place of appraisal for as long as this practice continues.

Approaches to teacher appraisal

A range of approaches are taken when designing systems of teacher appraisal, which in turn, affect the role and tasks of both appraiser and appraisee. These approaches include teachers' perspectives of their own achievements and challenges, assessment of teaching against selected criteria such as professional standards, and teaching in relation to analysis of student achievement. Appraisals may be carried out with individuals or collectively with a group. How these approaches are applied and disseminated to those using the systems will influence teachers' responsiveness, authentic involvement, sense of ownership, and the usefulness and outcome of the system per se.

Sinnema (2005) advocates the importance of data-based inquiry as a core focus for teacher appraisal. Gathering data on children's learning should, according to Sinnema (2005) be "...at the heart of inquiry during teacher appraisal" (p.12). Children's achievement and learning is what needs to be examined, which means exploring beyond teaching techniques and approaches. Sinnema (2005) suggests that evidence-based reflection

enables the quality of teaching, and the impact that this teaching has on children's learning to be examined.

Teacher appraisal systems commonly used in New Zealand's early childhood sector, require self and/or collegial assessment against national Professional Teaching Standards (Ministry of Education, 2004) and/or Registered Teacher Criteria (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2010) (Central North Island Kindergarten Association, 2005; Waikato Kindergarten Association, 2011; Whero Kindergarten Association, 2005b). The *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions*, (Teacher Registration Board, 1997) developed by the Teacher Registration Board in 1997 were in use until 2011 when the Registered Teacher Criteria (RTC) became mandatory as the standards for full registration. They set a benchmark for those who are qualified and can "...legally become and remain a teacher in a New Zealand school or early childhood service (i.e. free kindergarten at that stage)" (Shaw, Lind, & Thomas, 2006, p. 2). Professional Teaching Standards, on the other hand, were developed by the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, 2004) as a requirement "...for teachers [in the state sector] to be attested to move up the salary scale" (Shaw et al., 2006, p. 2). Some systems do and others do not require evidence-based reflection on either children's or teachers' learning. According to the Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA) Executive (cited in Thrupp, 2006, p. 8) '...there is no evidence that writing standards for teachers has ever of itself improved the quality of teaching' (p. 8). One might question the value or purpose of repeatedly measuring teaching practice against these standards year after year other than as a tool for external accountability. Goodfellow (2002) poses an interesting question: "...to what extent do standards imposed from outside, facilitate a sense of professional standing from the inside?" (p. 13).

Organisational philosophies and objectives will guide the development of a teacher appraisal's framework. An appraisal system designed to evaluate teaching performance for compliance purposes will tend to emphasise performance standards that are externally determined. This may look quite different from a system designed to enhance individual and team

professional aspirations which will focus on the teachers' own values and professional understanding. A system designed to combine both objectives will try to incorporate external competency prescriptions with teacher aspirations. Whether it is possible to reach objectives that are fundamentally different when these are combined is questionable.

Grootenboer (2000) examines these two approaches to teacher appraisal, referring to one as a judgemental approach which uses summative evaluation to meet the bureaucratic requirements of measuring teacher competencies against standardised criteria. This approach, according to Grootenboer (2000), narrowly defines the role of teaching as "a form of labour" (p. 4). It perceives teaching "...as measureable and quantifiable..." and uses learning theories of behaviourism to observe the product of teaching and learning (p. 7). The second approach is a professional perspective which encourages a formative, collegial, and self reflective approach to the process of teacher appraisal within an environment of respect and trust. Similarities can be seen here with what I refer to as deficit and innovative systems of appraisal respectively. Some writers (Bailey, 1997; Grootenboer, 2000; Jones, 2000; Mielke & Frontier, 2012; Peel & Inkson, 1993; Snook, 1997) also refer to, or explain systems of appraisal in relation to summative or formative processes.

Summative appraisal

Lacey (1996) points out that in a system of appraisal designed for accountability the appraiser controls both the process and outcomes. Appraisal systems which use an exclusively summative approach to evaluation are often hierarchical. They produce results which are often associated with high stake rewards or punishments, such as financially incentivised salary progression, or dismissal. Gunter (2001) purports that teachers should be researching teacher pedagogy in education environments not "...collecting data for management decisions..." (p. 246). Quality assurance, accountability, compliance, individualism, and procedures are terms often associated with summative appraisal. Such a system has been strongly criticised for positioning teachers as technicians responding to external demands, rather than professionals acting

autonomously according to their own expert knowledge. According to Mielke and Frontier (2012) the process can place "...teachers in a passive role as recipients of external judgement" (p. 10).

Summative practices do not, according to several writers (Edwards, 1992; Grootenboer, 2000; Jones, 2000; Kedian, 2006; Mielke & Frontier, 2012; Peel & Inkson, 1993; Sinnema, 2005; Snook, 1997) support the development of teacher professional growth. Even when followed by formative appraisal approaches the feedback is already tainted by judgement. Negative judgement is unlikely to support teacher motivation as self-esteem and/or self-efficacy are likely to have been damaged (Duncan, 1999). Mielke and Frontier (2012) promote personal reflection and improvement as a way of establishing "...a habit of mind that guides teachers' instructional decisions..." (p.13). They claim that by empowering learners to objectively analyze and understand their own practice teachers are intrinsically motivated towards expertise.

Goodfellow (2002) contends that a narrow and technical view of teaching assumes that professional knowledge, skills, and capacities are readily measurable. Gibbs (2006) points out that by merely learning "...the skills and knowledge of teaching, we would teach like technicians". He goes on to say that "if we learn to teach through being the person we are, then we teach from our heart and, as a result, our teaching will have heart." (p. 4).

Several writers (Goodfellow, 2002; Grootenboer, 2000; Stewart, 1997) comment on the complexity of teaching, with Goodfellow (2002) referring to the hidden dimensions or invisible elements of teaching practice which she refers to as a process of "complex professional judgement" and "decision making" that occurs inside the heads of teachers, and are often difficult to identify and measure (pp. 4-6). Lee (2010) suggests that effective professional learning for early childhood teachers takes place when "positivity, passion and participation..." are present (p.2). These are unlikely to be stimulated by summative forms of evaluation that simply judge teaching proficiency.

Formative appraisal

Formative appraisal informs teaching practice. Key elements advocated by many writers (Fitzgerald, Youngs, & Grootenboer, 2003; Grootenboer, 2000; Jones, 2000; Mielke & Frontier, 2012) of this approach are honesty, authenticity, collaboration, knowledge sharing, collegiality, and critical self reflection. Formative appraisal is what Grootenboer (2000) refers to as the professional perspective. He argues that with this approach the principles of a profession are upheld where teaching practice is based on a body of knowledge, client wellbeing is of utmost concern, and professional standards are the responsibility of the profession (p. 4).

Formative appraisal can afford multiple benefits to the appraisee. It can enhance collegial relationships as teachers work to support each other in achieving professional learning goals which aim to improve pedagogical practice. Cooper (1997) however, stresses that if conditions of collectivity, shared purpose and collegial culture are not already part of the work place, appraisal will not create them. Edward (1992) eloquently sums up the benefits of an appraisal system which aims to support collegial collectivism with a whakatauki: “Ehara taku toa, i te toa takitahi engari he toa takitini. My strength is not from myself alone, but from the strength of the group” (p. 8).

Combining summative and formative appraisal

There continues to be strong debate about the desirability of combining summative and formative systems of appraisal. When summative appraisal is used by itself, or in combination with a formative approach, many teachers according to Grootenboer (2000) become suspicious of its value and contribution to their work. Jones (2000) contends that appraisal systems aimed at enhancing teacher professional development are undermined if promotion is also part of the process. Several writers (Edwards, 1992; Kedian, 2006; Peel & Inkson, 1993) also support this notion and advise against the temptation to combine the formative process of appraisal with the summative process of performance review. Jones (2000) refers to the process as being hazardous and “fraught with difficulty” due to the conflict between selling oneself for performance

review purposes and the need to be reflective and honest about goal setting for the developmental processes of appraisal (p.35). Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) disagree, advocating the necessity of both formative and summative dimensions in order for appraisal to be both balanced and effective. They argue that organisations which choose a formative approach at the expense of a summative approach do so in order to avoid the difficulties associated with addressing both organisational and relationship needs (p.70).

Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) suggest that teacher development is no more important than accountability and that the distinction between formative and summative methods of evaluation are partly due to an “oversimplification” of their definition. Formative assessment being described as informal, calm, and a less aggressive process, than summative assessment, which is seen as serving the needs of accountability, management, and the organisation. Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) argue that “...all evaluation is primarily summative [and] if evaluation does have the potential to play a formative role as well, then this is ‘the icing on the cake’” (p. 14).

Several authors (Edwards, 1992; Jones, 2000; McLelland & Ramsey, 1993) suggest that very little teacher development takes place when teachers have their professional leader as an inspector; further suggesting that judgement (summative evaluation) shuts down the transparency needed to move towards development. Edwards (1992) advocates what could be considered a compromise to the debate when he suggests that if the agenda of both formative discussions for professional growth, and summative discussions for promotion and/or salary setting are kept separate--although carried out by the same professional leader--the process can be successful. This could also ease the tension between what McLellan and Ramsey (1993) term the “...assess/assist dilemma” (p.16) where assessment involves judgement and assistance involves mentoring. Judgement is likely to negatively affect motivation due to factors relating to loss of control, power, or empowerment, whereas mentoring is likely to support motivation as power and control are more

evenly distributed between those offering, and those receiving support and guidance.

Teacher motivation

In an article related to National Standards and their potential effect on children's learning, Fraser (2010, July) states that "too much emphasis on reaching an externally imposed goal can have the effect of undermining intrinsic motivation. This is because people strive hardest for the goals they create" (para 6). This, I believe, is as relevant to the context of children's learning as it is for teachers and their learning, within an appraisal context. According to O'Connor (1998):

Motivation is the energy that comes from opening the gap between where you are and where you want to be. You can't measure it, touch it, see it, hear it, smell it or taste it, but you can sense it in people who know what they want and are prepared to go for it. It shows in their voices, you see it in their eyes (p. 71).

Motivation can directly influence the individual performance of teachers, and therefore, ultimately influence the success of an organization (Muller, Allata, & Benninghoff, 2009, p. 577). Intrinsic motivation, like inspiration, comes from within. It is stimulated by an interest and often because it is enjoyable. Intrinsic motivation is also linked to an inherent tendency to seek out what is novel and challenging in order to extend and explore one's ability to learn. Extrinsic motivation--on the other hand--comes from a point of necessity. It requires action because without it there would be negative consequences or repercussions. It requires action in order to lead to an outcome. In relation to teaching performance or more importantly teaching excellence, is intrinsic motivation more likely to support this outcome, or is extrinsic motivation enough? Can extrinsic motivation lead to intrinsic motivation? Piggot-Irvine (2002) suggests that a combination of both is required in terms of a commitment to improvement.

Maslow (1987) contends that as an ascending series of human needs are progressively met, motivation is attained. He presents five sets of human

needs: physiological, safety, belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization. The highest need of self-actualization—the process of striving towards a goal which best fits the nature of the person pursuing it—rests upon all lower needs having been partially met or satisfied. Freedom, considered a precondition of basic needs, if restricted, threatens all basic needs. “Secrecy, censorship, dishonesty, and blocking of communication...are considered threats to freedom” (p. 23). This is interesting in light of some appraisal systems that create scenarios for teachers as a result of these threats, often in an attempt to provide appraisee confidentiality. This will be further explored in chapter four. It appears that extrinsic motivation can lead to intrinsic motivation, which is reassuring in light of Gibbs (2006) statement “ [intrinsic] motivation is central to effective teaching and learning...” (p. 53).

Although unrelated to teacher appraisal, Blundell (2012) writes an interesting article about New Zealand’s Trade Aid co-founders Vi and Richard Cottrell. Vi Cottrell makes a simple but telling point: “...there is dignity in having control over what you are doing, and any kind of intervention that doesn’t give people that control is not worth doing” (p. 16). I found this statement quite profound, not particularly in relation to the context of the article but in relation to the role of intervention, its association with control, and their effects on teacher dignity and motivation within the process of teacher appraisal and professional growth. In this context, the combination of control and dignity is synonymous with that of empowerment and active involvement—all of which stimulate motivation as a driving force for achieving professional learning goals.

Several paragraphs later, Cottrell went on to say that “...the most significant signs of success are the hardest to evaluate...[and that] such achievements...are not measured against the prevailing development standards of the day but against criteria set by Trade Aid’s trading partners themselves” (pp.17-18). This led me to reflect on a) the processes of evaluating teaching practice in order to benefit teaching and learning, b) the contribution that externally set professional standards

make towards this process, and c) again the place of teacher motivation within this process.

Both Grootenboer (2000) and Sinnema (2005) see appraisal accountability from a professional rather than bureaucratic perspective. Addressing the complexities of teaching rather than measuring teaching competency against quantifiable criteria is one way of focusing teachers' energy towards the essential, rather than the superficial (Duncan, 1999). Accountability for the appraisee lies in the ability to apply the skills, attitudes, and dispositions to make links between children's learning and past and future teaching practice. For the appraiser, accountability lies in promoting the process of inquiry (Sinnema, 2005, p. 23).

In Aotearoa New Zealand's early childhood sector, children's portfolios often contain a collection of narrative assessment data on children's learning in relation to knowledge, skills, attitudes, and dispositions for learning. These narratives of children's learning can provide significant opportunities for teachers to test and challenge their assumptions about teaching practice. Teachers' journals or appraisal folders may also provide examples and accounts of children's learning, including documented teaching techniques, strategies, and informative feedback from teaching colleagues, which focus on children's learning and teaching practice. Data based inquiry which focuses on the impact of teaching on children's learning could certainly add a fundamental depth of inquiry, which is lacking in some appraisal systems. Teachers who are motivated by their sense of self-efficacy (a belief in the capability to make a difference to children's learning) are likely to find the process of data-based inquiry a challenging, stimulating, and professionally rewarding appraisal process. But, where might the place of collegial relationships fit within the process of teacher appraisal?

Collegial relationships

A relationship is a state of connectivity between two or more people. Gibbs (2006) maintains that "teaching is about relationships"; that teaching involves understanding the whole person—both that of yourself as a

teacher, your colleagues, and the children you work with (p. 2). Trust and respect form the foundation of positive relationships, and according to Gibbs (2006) in order for relationships to be effective, “teachers need to know who they are both in terms of their identities as teachers, and as individuals” (p.13). Our ability to understand and accept our own uniqueness, affords us the ability to accept and celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of others. In this way authentic relationships enable the nurturing and connectedness required of teaching, as well as the necessary knowledge and skills.

The essence of collegial relationships lies in an ability to be both responsive and reciprocal. Responsiveness involves a reaction which is both prompt and sensitive to the interests and experiences of another. Reciprocity involves “...mutual, complementary reactions and responses between two parties” (Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 88).

A unique relationship culture exists within New Zealand’s kindergarten sector. Head teachers and their teaching teams work with the same group of children within a stable team of teaching colleagues each day. The diversification of kindergartens’ operating hours--where ‘school-day’ or ‘full-day’ hours rather than ‘sessional’ hours now require an extra teacher--qualified or unqualified, depending on the kindergarten association to cover lunch breaks--has led to only slight changes to this long standing tradition. This can be quite different from teaching teams in other early childhood centres where leaders or managers spend varying amounts of time engaged in administration tasks, and both children and educators are more fluid--depending on the days and times that children attend the centre, and the hours or shifts worked by educators. The solitary style of teachers working with children in the primary and secondary sector highlights the unique culture of the early childhood sector when considering a system of appraisal.

The roles that teachers are required to perform within systems of appraisal can impact on collegial relationships in both positive and negative ways (Grootenboer, 2000; Kedian, 2006; Philpott, 2007; Snook, 1997). A

system which requires colleagues to judge each others' performance or competency for accountability purposes can result in hostility, tension, and a lack of trust, as power and control between colleagues is disproportionately distributed. This may be particularly problematic in the kindergarten sector where teachers are working collaboratively in a team teaching context. Even though Edwards (1992) maintains that all appraisal systems "...constitute a form of control over teachers even when they are designed to empower" (p. 7) some are more controlling than others.

An appraisal system which encourages self and collegial evaluation towards individual, and team professional learning goals may contribute to the development of a democratic and professional learning community, where reflective practice, collective decision making, dialogue, planning and a shared vision are valued as responsible and accountable ways of promoting positive teaching and learning. Although, collegiality, as Lunn (2006) reminds us: "must go further than just working and sharing together ... the focus must be on the core business of improving student learning..." (p. 9).

Terms such as communities of critical inquirers, communities of practice, communities of professional colleagues and learners are highlighted by several writers (Copland & Knapp, 2006; Edwards, 1992; Gibbs, 2006; Grootenboer, 2000; Hedges, 2007; New Zealand Educational Institute, 1997b; Robertson, 2006; Rodd, 2006; Sinnema, 2005; Wing Lai, Pratt, Anderson, & Stigter, 2006) as being powerful environments for teachers' and children's learning. These communities are a collection of people who share an interest in a subject or issue, and collectively make sense and meaning in order to build upon this knowledge (Wing Lai et al., 2006, p. 13). In an early childhood context the metaphors position teachers, children, and their families as equal contributors to an inquiry approach to learning. Dispositions such as curiosity, enthusiasm, perseverance, conscientiousness, and self-confidence are fostered in order to improve working theories—a collection of ideas that when challenged are modified, become richer and connected. For communities such as these, it is likely

that a strong and positive organisational culture is also in place, where a climate of persistence, innovation, and celebration is valued by leaders, and structures such as peer support, professional risk-taking, and authentic appraisal processes are valued as mechanisms to support pedagogical change (Lacey, 1996; Lee, 2010).

Appraisal signposts towards pedagogical change

Pedagogy, often described as ‘the art and science of teaching’ (Nuttall & Edwards, 2005, p. 34) can also be described as the culmination and application of knowledge, skills, and attitudes derived from theory and values to the practice of teaching (Ministry of Education, 1998, p. 87). Teachers need to continuously strengthen their teaching and relationship pedagogies in order to improve the learning opportunities they provide for children.

My analysis of literature identified a range of signposts within teacher appraisal systems which, when brought together within a framework, illustrate positive impacts on pedagogical change. Teachers appear to be motivated and energized to participate in teacher appraisal when a credit rather than deficit approach is used to set professional development goals (Grootenboer, 2000; Lacey, 1996; Lee, 2010). This means that focusing on strengths rather than on weaknesses forms a positive and effective basis for professional goal setting (New Zealand Educational Institute, 1997a). This requires that appraisal has a formative focus and is not predominantly summative (Grootenboer, 2000). Appraisal systems which measure teacher competency against externally prescribed standards and use weakness as a starting point for teacher development, are not strength based frameworks for teacher appraisal.

Organizational and centre cultures which recognize, embrace, and support improvement provide resources in order to enhance and sustain professional learning plans (Bayes, 1997; Gunter, 2001; Lunn, 2006; Mielke & Frontier, 2012; Piggot-Irvine, 2003). The purpose, process, and rhetoric of teacher appraisal are transparent and clearly understood by both appraisee and appraiser (Cummins, 2011; Grootenboer, 2000;

Gunter, 2001, 2002; Jones, 2000; Kedian, 2006; Lacey, 1996; McLelland & Ramsey, 1993; Piggot-Irvine, 2003). Teachers participate in the design and operation of appraisal systems, and training forms part of this process. Systems of appraisal are not linked to disciplinary or pay processes (Jones, 2000; Monyatsi et al., 2006; Philpott, 2007; Piggot-Irvine, 2003).

Self and team appraisal goals that use an action research approach and data-based methods of inquiry, may contribute to a deeper and more sustainable level of pedagogical change than an approach which focuses on a quick-fix solution (Piggot-Irvine, 2002; Sinnema, 2005). The appraisee leads or drives the appraisal process, but the role of leader, coach, or appraiser is vital (Edwards, 1992; Tuytens & Geert, 2012), so vital that an appraisees failure to improve performance can, according to Edwards (1992) and Grootenboer (2000) be attributed to a leaders influence on the appraisal process. Meaningful feedback is required by the appraisee from a leader who is respected and trusted (Gunter, 2002). In return, an appraisee who feels appreciated, trusted, respected, is recognized for their efforts, and believes that others who are important to them have confidence in them will enjoy working conditions conducive to professional growth (Cummins, 2011; Duncan, 1999).

A number of these signposts identified in the literature are recognisable within the two appraisal systems developed by Whero Kindergarten Association. Analyzing these systems and locating them within the literature provides a context for teachers' experiences of them.

Whero Kindergarten's appraisal systems

Model 1 - (360° appraisal system)

For seven years Whero Kindergarten Association used a system of appraisal loosely based on Chris Bayes 360° review structure (Bayes, 1997). Developed by a working party in 2002, the 40 page appraisal document required teachers and head teachers to use a process of assessment which measured themselves and their colleagues against the

Satisfactory Teacher dimensions--developed by the then Teacher Registration Board (Teacher Registration Board, 1997). The system was redeveloped by another working party in 2004 with the introduction of National Teaching Standards--developed by the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, 2004). This 48 page appraisal document included general information about the systems framework, appraisal guidelines, definitions of terminology, and a variety of forms to be filled out by the appraisee for supporting performance information: professional development plans, reviews, and finally a form for attestation. This system's dual functions were aimed at supporting teacher professional development and ensuring teacher accountability--a strategy advocated by Piggot-Irvine (2002, 2003) and Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005).

Information on teachers was collated using a variety of sources relevant to a teachers' job description. For example, because a teachers responsibilities involved the wellbeing of both team members and parents, team members and a parent from the kindergarten community were sources of information for appraisal purposes. The rationale for including a range of information sources was to avoid some of the issues associated with self or top down approaches to appraisal. These issues, according to model 1-(360° appraisal system) guidelines (Whero Kindergarten Association, 2005b), could potentially result in either an over estimation of achievements, or an overly critical judgement. (One might ask what this say's about the appraisee in terms of how they are positioned as capable and competent professionals.)

It was thought that either a self or top down approach to appraisal provided limited information for teacher development. A top down approach meant that one person became responsible for reviewing the performance of the teacher—either the senior or head teacher. This person may a) lack knowledge of teachers practice, or b) be over critical or biased about that teacher, and/or c) result in personal and/or relationship damage by having to deal with the difficult issues (Philpott, 2007). This potentially created a scenario "...that the person doing the appraisal is both judge and jury" (Whero Kindergarten Association, 2005a, p. 6), or as

McLellan and Ramsey (1993) suggest, creates an assess/assist dilemma where the coach or mentor also becomes a judge.

The purpose of the 360° appraisal model was to measure the performance of teachers against professional teaching standards, dimensions, and association expectations, whilst supporting teacher inspiration and motivation. Teacher appraisal outcomes determined salary progression. Teachers were appraised at their attested level of performance. For example, a *developing* or *beginning* teacher--not yet fully registered—was expected as a minimum requirement to display behaviours that demonstrated some proficiency in the indicated areas. The *competent* or fully registered teacher was acknowledged as having taught for a minimum of two years. They were expected to consistently display behaviours that demonstrated full competency in the indicated areas. A *role model* or *experienced* teacher was to consistently display behaviours that demonstrated exceptional skill and mastery. The indicators most closely describing the level of teacher performance were ticked along a continuum of *developing* to *competent* teacher. (Your attested level of performance may not necessarily resemble where your colleague placed you.)

By 2004, Model 1-(360° appraisal system) had 14 pages of indicators linked to national teaching standards such as: “can articulate and discuss theoretical underpinning of Te Whāriki and how this relates to practice” (Whero Kindergarten Association, 2005a, p. 18), two pages of association expectations such as: “uses others strengths to extend/enrich [the] programme” (p. 31), four pages of head teachers performance dimensions such as: “contributes to professional debates within the association” (p. 33) and a page of dispositions for work such as: “shows enthusiasm for the work” (2005a, p. 38).

Dispositions for work were scaled along a continuum from ‘*sporadic*’, ‘*mostly*’ to ‘*consistently*’. Dispositions, believed to “... have more to do with attitude than knowledge or skills” were valued as part of appraisal due to their understood ability to “...taint the skills and knowledge that an

individual brings to any given situation...” (Whero Kindergarten Association, 2005a, p. 15). It was thought that one way of changing attitudes was to identify to appraisees how they were perceived by others and then to allow time for their reflection.

The teaching service manager (TSM) or senior teacher (ST) conducted the appraisal meetings of all teachers and head teachers using information previously gathered from the range of sources. The TSM or ST also completed the 48 page appraisal document using their knowledge of the appraisee. This, it was thought, allowed a fairer picture of a teachers’ performance than a single, self or top down system.

Appraisal meetings aimed to provide an opportunity for the TSM or ST and appraisee to review past performance and make plans for future growth. The first annual meeting or discussion was designed to establish an overview of performance of the past year, from the view point of the appraisee, TSM/ST, teachers’ colleagues, and a member of the kindergarten community. This meeting also aimed to set the direction of growth and development for the ensuing 12 month period, any issues that were present in a teacher’s performance were also outlined formally, and the progression of salary was to be discussed. Second and third meetings were centered on reviewing the appraisee’s action plan and discussing progress.

Model 1-(360° appraisal system) strove to maintain the self esteem and confidentiality of all parties involved, whilst remaining focused, specific, fair, and equitable. It aimed to value each teacher as an individual, be flexible to the changes and needs of teachers, whilst encouraging self awareness. This system was created to provide a positive experience and pathway for open communication. Sharing the aggregated information--between appraisee and TSM or ST--instigated a process for an appraisees increased level of skill (Whero Kindergarten Association, 2005a).

Model 1-(360° appraisal system) is in line with what Grootenboer (2000) refers to as a summative form of appraisal; hierarchical and driven by the

need to judge proficiency in meeting teacher competencies; where the purpose of appraisal is to test teachers to see if they meet the required, externally set, performance standards.

This systems intent was to measure, and then strengthen identified deficiencies in teaching practice, whilst simultaneously addressing Ministry of Education requirements. Feeding this information back to appraisees was thought to improve future performance. Whether a teacher would feel--as was hoped--advantaged and genuinely assisted, appreciated and positive about their teaching role, motivated to do well whilst having gained a sense of professional growth at the end of an appraisal cycle (Whero Kindergarten Association, 2005a, p. 8) is questionable.

Whether insufficient knowledge of the appraisee, possibly by the TSM, ST and/or teaching colleagues who were often unfamiliar with newly employed teachers or relief teachers, and the 'halo effect'--the general 'like-ability' or opposite of an appraisee (Whero Kindergarten Association, 2005a, p. 6) were avoided as anticipated or magnified--with the number of participants gathering data for an appraisal meeting, remains equally questionable.

Anecdotally, and from my experience, one of the areas of most concern with this appraisal systems effort to achieve these outcomes was the covert way in which data was gathered. Teachers were *marked* by their colleagues on their performance for a two week period before their appraisal meeting, and completed appraisal forms were sent directly to the TSM and ST without collegial communication. This provided an environment of distrust in an otherwise high trust working environment. In earlier years, at appraisal meetings, an appraisee was shown where ticks from her colleagues lay on a continuum from 'beginning', 'model or fully competent' teacher, on the partially aggregated appraisal document one would sit looking at the ticks and wonder which colleague had placed you in which position! As years passed and the means of displaying data was revised and computerized the fully aggregated score (a single tick)

became all that was visible to the appraisee. These ticks were your marked appraisal.

Over the period 2007 to 2010 the Association began to make a number of organisational changes which led to another review of the teacher appraisal system. Model 2-("What spins your wheels?") a 20 page document was developed.

Model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system)

Model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) shares identifiable similarities with what Grootenboer (2000) refers to as formative appraisal system for professional growth.

An appraisal working party engaged in action research in order to review the current system of teacher appraisal. The appraisal working party met approximately each term over a period of two years. It aimed to develop a "high trust" appraisal system which supported both individual and team aspirations, leading to teachers' ongoing professional learning. An effort to avoid the mechanistic compliance processes of the past model was a key instigator in the development of this new model. It was agreed that the attainment of excellence in teaching most readily occurred when there was a high level of professional learning which related to both individual, and team aspirations that teachers were passionate about, in terms of children's learning (Whero Kindergarten Association, 2012, p. 3). This is in line with Lee (2010) who suggests that nurturing teacher passions in an environment which values holistic teaching and learning is a key component of successful professional development.

Principles guiding this process consisted of an overriding understanding that effective appraisal was not about determining teacher competency. This was in complete contrast to Model 1-(360° appraisal system). The writers of model 2- ("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) accepted that after a two year guided registration process, the registered teacher had reached full teacher registration status and therefore competency. Teachers were deemed competent for annual salary progressions and teacher registration signoff, unless the teacher's professional leader had

identified an issue or issues of incompetency. A formal process was in place to address teacher competency covered under the collective agreement (New Zealand Educational Institute:Te Riu Roa, 2013). Where no issue/s had been identified, the professional leader would sign off teacher registration and provide a simple memo of attestation to payroll for salary progression purposes. This process had no connection with the teacher appraisal process. Ethical conduct, transparency, honesty, whole team conversation, consultation, collaboration, and self-reflection were agreed to be important features for a new system of teacher appraisal.

With the establishment of a new appraisal system head teachers (who were to become professional leaders for teacher appraisees) needed an opportunity to become informed and familiar with the system and its process in order to disseminate and operate the system with their teaching teams. The senior leadership team ran a training session with head teachers. Part of this process involved explaining the importance of what Edward (1992) refers to as “climate setting” (p. 7). Informed and appropriate preparation before appraisal meetings was considered an important process in regards to putting the appraisee at ease and setting the climate for improved plans for teaching and learning quality.

Model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) offered appraisees the opportunity to evaluate their own performance without the imposition of colleagues or kindergarten community judgement. Using a set of focus questions teachers were asked to reflect on their achievements over the past 12 months. They were asked to consider their strengths, passions, and aspirations for themselves, their team, and their kindergarten. Challenges to achieving aspirations, and how these challenges might be overcome were questioned. Making connections between professional learning goals, literature on the topic of interest, and the Registered Teacher Criteria (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2010) also formed part of this process. Teachers were asked to develop no more than three individual development goals for the coming year. Regular, individual and team appraisal meetings were thought to enhance sustained interest and

enthusiasm in appraisal goals, whilst strengthening communities of inquiry and practice.

The second step involved individual meetings between appraisees and their professional leaders in order to discuss these reflections and appraisal goals. Step three (approximately 6 months into the year) involved a formal half year evaluation of progress, whereby a similar set of reflective questions were asked of appraisees in order to support them to assess their progress. Kindergarten teaching teams used the same process to formulate and reflect on team goals. Senior teachers assisted this process during step 2 in order to support teams to make links between Association-wide strategic plans and goals (Individual goals could be linked to team goals but there was no requirement to do so).

The accumulation of documentation throughout this process was considered an important part of evidencing pedagogical change, supporting reflective conversations with professional leaders, and meeting external professional requirements (accountability). The role of appraiser was of mentor: supporting and guiding the appraisee to overcome obstacles and celebrate achievements in order to achieve professional learning goals (Edwards, 1992; Tuytens & Geert, 2012).

Teachers no longer had regular contact with their senior teachers now that head teachers were appraising them, (senior teachers remained the professional leaders for head teachers). Issue-raising, which had become a regular feature of appraisal meetings using model 1-(360° appraisal system) was no longer part of the appraisal process. This and professional support was available for teachers and head teachers during scheduled senior teacher visits to centres or at other times by request.

Model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) required appraisees to focus on their strengths and passions in order to identify ways in which these could be further explored and strengthened. This as an entry point for reflection and goal setting had the potential to empower appraisees with a sense of motivation for future growth (Lee, 2010).

It was unlikely that self appraisal would result in an over estimation of achievements because an appraisee's professional leader was his/her head teacher. This was a close working relationship where achievement or lack of it was unavoidably noticed, (an overly critical judgement was more likely). The role of the professional leader was therefore, to support the appraisee in identifying professional progress, or in instances where little has been achieved identifying the challenges. While an over estimation of achievements was possible between a head teacher and her professional leader, it was unlikely.

Deficiencies in teaching practice are no longer a focus of teacher appraisal. It is thought that improvements to practice are more likely to be addressed with purpose and authenticity when teachers view themselves as competent and capable in their practice.

Summary

This literature review has placed the implementation of New Zealand's performance management and teacher appraisal systems within an historical and political climate and context. Formative and summative approaches to teacher appraisal systems, which can also be described as bureaucratic or professional, have been found in the literature to impact upon teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change. The integrity, morale, dignity, and self-efficacy of teachers can also be linked to these approaches. Through my analysis of the literature I have pinpointed signposts which appear to contribute to effective teacher appraisal systems. These signposts are:

- 1) A credit rather than deficit approach to evaluation is established before setting professional learning goals.
- 2) Organizational and centre cultures place value on pedagogical change and provide sufficient resources to support professional learning.
- 3) The purpose of appraisal is transparent and understood by all parties.

- 4) Teachers are empowered and valued as professionals who are in control of their own learning.
- 5) Appraisal uses methodologies such as action research and data-based methods of inquiry to inquire into practice and implement appraisal goals.
- 6) Appraisers elicit and impart respect, trust, and confidence.

The chapter concluded with a description of two systems of appraisal used within Whero Kindergarten Association, evaluated against the identified signposts. These systems will be further explored within this thesis in relation to teachers' lived experiences.

The following chapter explains the methodology, data gathering, analysis processes, and ethical considerations for this study.

CHAPTER THREE - METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Many educational theorists and practitioners who engage in research do so in order to make a positive difference to the lives of others. Mutch (2006) suggests that educational researchers could therefore be classed as optimists and activists. In a similar vein, Clough and Nutbrown (2012) argue that “research which changes nothing-not even the researcher-is not research at all” (p. 14). The overarching objective of this study was to find out features of effective appraisal systems and processes, which support learning opportunities for teachers and children whilst improving the quality of teaching within an early childhood context in Aotearoa New Zealand. In line with Mutch’s thoughts, this research is both an act of optimism and activism.

The research is based on a social constructionist framework. The study used a qualitative inquiry research methodology. Teachers’ views and experiences of appraisal were studied through analysis of semi-structured teacher interviews in which two different appraisal systems were compared. Appraisal documentation was analysed for examples of connections between appraisal, and teaching and learning.

This chapter sets out the research questions and introduces readers to social constructionism, the theoretical framework used in this study. It then presents the methodology—qualitative inquiry. Methods and processes for gathering and analyzing the data are then described including the selection process. Finally, methodological issues, including myself as researcher, my relationship to participants, ethical matters, and limitations are discussed.

Research questions

The three research questions were:

1. How do teachers experience two differing teacher appraisal systems?
2. What factors within these appraisal systems do teachers identify as contributing to teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change?
3. What principles underpin effective appraisal systems in early childhood settings?

Social constructionism as a theoretical framework

Theoretical frameworks are linked to methods, they provide reasons for using particular research approaches (Briggs, Coleman, & Morrison, 2012; Clough & Nutbrown, 2012; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007; Mutch, 2005; Walliman, 2001).

My interest in exploring how teachers have experienced two systems of appraisal has led me to a deeper understanding; that there is no one truth or reality in the voice of participants, simply a variety and collection of beliefs (Burton & Bartlett, 2005). This research is grounded in social constructionist theory which recognizes the critical role that language, social interactions, experience, and culture take in influencing the construction of knowledge (Burr, 2003).

Social constructionism: derived from the constructivist epistemology or theory of knowledge, is both relevant and appropriate to this study considering my personal biography--that of an early childhood researcher whose understanding of knowledge construction is in line with the sociocultural framework of *Te Whāriki*, New Zealand's early childhood curriculum (Ministry of Education, 1996). Establishing a relationship between historical events, social action, culture, and power (Burr, 2003, p. 18) is relevant to this research as a foreground and rationale to the development of teacher appraisal systems, and how processes and

events within appraisal systems impact on teachers both personally and professionally.

Social constructionist research contextualises the experience and accounts of participants, thereby making claims of 'universalistic truth' incompatible (Burr, 2003, p. 150) with this study. Democratisation of the research relationship (a relationship of shared power and respect) between researcher and participant acknowledges that each participant's account of their experiences are valid and in need of no alternative interpretation by the researcher.

Participants in this study were asked to identify problems with appraisal systems and find solutions. In this way the study was potentially empowering in that it involved "...participant-led ways of improving specific problematic social situations" (Burr, 2003, p. 155); human agency was both endorsed and preserved.

Reflexivity, a term used often in the writing of social constructionist researchers refers to the identification of "...personal and political values and perspectives..." which inform the research (Burr, 2003, p. 157). As a researcher, it refers to "...how one's history and position influence current decisions" (Mutch, 2005, p. 224), and the equal status and importance given to each participant during the process of analysis. According to Burr (2003), and Edwards (2001), it also refers to the flexibility of the research design.

Having identified and reflected upon my personal and political values and perspectives, I was interested in the views of my colleagues. I decided not to share my own views with them in fear that it would influence the responses of participants, and therefore reduce the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings. Participants in this study were colleagues who understood my intention to identify characteristics of appraisal systems which both hindered and contributed to teaching and learning, and teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change. It is hoped that this rapport I held with colleagues, and the

transparency of my purpose would contribute towards responsive and reciprocal relationships between the researched and researcher.

There are similarities between the social constructionist theoretical framework of this research and the socio cultural framework of New Zealand's early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki*; where guiding principles recognize the importance of relationships, holism, empowerment, and the involvement of family and community for children's learning and development. It is my view as a researcher and teacher that in the same way that "children learn through responsive and reciprocal relationships with people, places, and things" (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 14), so too do adults. This informed my thinking about frameworks for responsive systems of teacher appraisal and how teachers understand these to support the process of their professional learning. These frameworks are explored in chapter four and five, and in the conclusion chapter.

Qualitative inquiry as a methodological approach

Denzin and Lincoln (2008) claim that "qualitative research is a field of inquiry in its own right" (p. 3), but note that difficulty in defining it is due to it having "...no theory or paradigm that is distinctly its own" (p. 8).

Qualitative research designs, according to Mutch (2005) are generally cyclical. They use inductive logic, where key ideas emerge from the data and theory is generated. Theory, as Cohen et al. (2007) suggests, therefore follows rather than precedes the data collected. Inductive logic has a starting point, which according to Davidson and Tolich (1999) "...may begin with a strong personal interest in some topic" (p. 19).

As a head teacher who engaged in both summative and formative approaches to teacher appraisal within the same kindergarten Association, my personal interest in exploring the experiences of other teachers and head teachers--who have also engaged in both approaches--was a motivation for this study. Was it just me who experienced sudden episodes of de-motivation, difficult collegial relationships, and a period of stagnant pedagogical growth as a result of teacher appraisal, or did a

proportion of my colleagues also have this experience? I wanted to hear teachers' stories in order to challenge and look beyond my current hypothesis (Clough & Nutbrown, 2012, p. 26).

According to Edwards (2001), in a chapter subtitled "Soft research for soft topics?" qualitative research "...is not the easy option" (p. 117); nor is it as Denzin and Lincoln (2003) dispute a "soft science" (p. 5). Qualitative research is relevant to my study because I am interested in the "...lived experiences, behaviours, emotions, [perceptions] and feelings..." (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 11) of teachers as a result of their engagement with systems of teacher appraisal. My aim to acquire an inside understanding and definition of a situation also acknowledges "...what others are doing and saying always depends upon some background or context of other meanings, beliefs, values [and] practices..." (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 312).

The relationship between teacher appraisal, motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change are the central foci of this study. My interest in how teachers identify and conceptualize factors and issues contributing to responsive appraisal systems, supports a qualitative approach to inquiry that enables understanding in both detail and meaning of what lies behind participants' 'voices'.

The importance of understanding the social setting, and context in which teacher appraisal takes place, acknowledges the value of relationships in research. This contrasts with a quantitative approach, where methods such as surveys need not involve face-to-face communication with participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000) .

Qualitative research however, is not without its flaws due to its inability to generalize or replicate findings. Interviews are contextually bound. The process is active, and the exchange of asking questions and answering them is certainly not neutral (Fontana & Frey, 2008, p. 116). These characteristics can be seen as a weakness or as a unique strength, due to the full and detailed account of the phenomenon being explored.

Although this small scale study involved only nine teachers, the findings present these teachers' perceptions of two appraisal systems, and how they impacted on their professional practice, and at times their personal lives. They are interpreted in relation to a body of literature to add to a broader picture of effective appraisal systems.

Methods of data collection

The mixed methods of interviewing and document analysis fit well within a qualitative approach to inquiry, as they enable the exploration of existing hypotheses and the generation of new theory. These were the two methods used in this thesis.

Interviews

Various types of interviews are available, and they are used widely in qualitative research. Kvale (1996) refers to the interview as "...a construction site of knowledge" (p. 2). Furthermore, he states that the postmodern movement has changed the emphasis of interviewing "...from knowledge as corresponding to an objective reality to knowledge as a social construction of reality ..." where the emphasis has shifted from "...an observation of, to a conversation and interaction with, a social world" (p. 268). Cannold (2001) refers to these conversations as being the most commonly used by researchers where the subjective view of participants is elicited by the researcher on a topic chosen by the researcher (p. 179).

Careful consideration needs to be given to how interviews are approached. The gathering of information must not be considered more important than those gifting it. Researchers might ask themselves "...are we privileging ourselves over others" (D. Giles, personal communication, 20th January 2010) when we engage in research methods that subject participants to expose, and commit their voice for the benefit of the researcher's motives.

Trust and integrity are important components of respect in the relationship between participant and researcher; placing the participant at ease involves trust. It contributes to, and enables the process of, eliciting

understanding from the participant in order to gain a sense of 'positionality'--an understanding of what lies behind the speaker's words and social framework (Clough & Nutbrown, 2012, p. 27) on which to base potential hypothesis. Precision in description and accuracy of meaning are the aims of the qualitative interviewer (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

A key benefit of the semi structured interview is its flexibility. The interviewer is able to explore ideas further by probing and investigating participant responses, their motives, and feelings by questioning further and paying attention to facial expressions, language, hesitations, etc. Perhaps these are some of the reasons that interviewing has become such a popular and extensively used method of data gathering for those engaged in research (Bell, 2010; Burns, 2000; Burton & Bartlett, 2005; Cohen et al., 2007; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Semi-structured interviews

In the study I used semi-structured interviews. A semi-structured interview approach allows for greater flexibility than a structured format, whilst also ensuring that a degree of control over the interview is held by the participant, rather than the researcher (contributing to participant empowerment). The need for well-phrased, open-ended questions as Jenkins (1999) suggests, is aimed at putting the participant at ease and encouraging responses that are carefully thought out and have depth.

This interview method is a way of locating and giving a prominent 'voice' to participants in order to capture the *holism* (or whole story) that contributes pragmatically to educational research. Using prepared questions to guide discussion as it evolves (as an 'explanatory device') has helped me "... identify variables and relationships" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 351) between appraisal systems, teacher motivation, collegial relationship, and pedagogical change.

The selection process

Before approaching my colleagues in regards to their participation in this study, permission from the principal of the kindergarten Association--in possession of these two appraisal systems--needed to be gained. The

pseudonym: Whero Kindergarten Association is used to protect the identity of the Association in this study. I set up a formal meeting time with the principal to discuss the possibility of doing this. A letter outlining the purpose, process, and ethical responsibilities of the research project (see Appendix A) was prepared, including all documentation available for participants i.e., the Introduction and Introduction/Information sheet for teachers (see Appendix B), Registration of Interest (see Appendix C), Consent form (see Appendix D), and Semi Structured Interview question sheets (see Appendix E). Although several attempts to meet with the principal were made, approval to talk to teachers about the project was eventually gained via a telephone conversation, by which time documentation personally delivered to the principal had been available for reading.

The Association hosted a conference in which teacher participation was compulsory. This provided me with a 10 minute time slot to introduce and outline the study's purpose and process to my colleagues, and ask for voluntary participation. During the morning tea break I provided the Introduction/Information sheet which explained the study and the interview process. I was available to provide any clarification needed and respond to queries. Registration of Interest forms were available for those teachers who wished to volunteer. These forms gathered background information from potential participants about their age band, ethnicity, gender, teaching experience, qualifications, and service within the Association. The rationale behind finding out about participants' backgrounds was to seek participant diversity so that a broad range of experiences, responses, perspectives, and perceptions might be drawn upon, rather than a narrow or restricted range--if participants were all of similar background. Mutch (2005) refers to this as a purposive or well rounded sample, as the sample aimed to provide a well-rounded example of the phenomenon I wished to study. The research questions also "...influence[d] the sample size and the breadth of the study" (Clough & Nutbrown, 2012, p. 188), in that participants needed to have experienced both systems of appraisal.

I was seeking a variety of age bands, levels of qualifications, years of experience, ethnicities, and teachers that had experience of at least two cycles of model 1-(360° system of appraisal) and one cycle of appraisal model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system). I outlined to each potential participant the process of selection that would be used if more teachers wished to participate than I could manage.

Five teachers and five head teachers were selected using this criteria, although one teacher had only experienced one cycle of model 1-(360° system of appraisal)--due to the appraisal process being placed on hold in 2009 until the development of model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) was complete--and one head teacher withdrew her consent after examining her interview transcript.

Diversity in respect to ethnicity and gender was limited by the demographic profile of teachers in the Association. Most participants were female and of New Zealand and European ethnicity. All were registered early childhood education (ECE) teachers with at least a diploma of teaching; one held a postgraduate degree, and one teacher had a Master's degree. All were experienced teachers, with years of experience--ranging from 9 to 36 years. The teachers had been with the Association for a minimum of 3 years.

Table 1: Characteristics of participants

Gender	Age (years)	Ethnicity	Qualifications	Teaching experience (years)	Teaching experience with the Association (years)
Male	30-39	Māori/French Gilbertese	DipTchg (ECE)	18	7
Female	50-59	European	DipTchg (ECE)	22	6
Female	50-59	British	BTchg (ECE)	36	6
Female	40-49	New Zealand/ European	MTchg (ECE)	9	6
Female	50-59	European	DipTchg (ECE)	20	10
Female	60-69	European	DipTchg (ECE)	12	10
Female	30-39	New Zealander	BTchg (ECE)	11	7
Female	30-39	New Zealand/ European	BchTchg (ECE) PgDip (special education)	10	7
Female	40-49	European	BTchg (early years)	17	3

Telephone calls were made to confirm participant selection, and interview dates were established based on the participants' and researcher's availability. Participants were then e-mailed consent forms to read before the interview, asking for their informed consent. Information had been given to participants in the introduction/information letter. Participants were asked to bring these documents and their supporting appraisal documentation to the interview, which they at times referred to during the discussion. This documentation was later analysed and used in order to inform and support hypotheses.

Interview dates were scheduled to coincide with participants' completion of model 2-(“What spins your wheels”? appraisal system)s annual cycle. This allowed time for the process of appraisee self reflections and their meetings with professional leaders to take place. The reflection process is a mechanism for appraisees to think about the challenges faced, progress made, and benefits to their practice and to children’s learning in regards to appraisal goals. Appraisee reflections and tentative new appraisal goals for the following year are discussed with professional leaders.

Participants were offered a choice of venue--their own or my kindergarten, as long as it was quiet. One interview was carried out at the participant’s kindergarten, eight at my kindergarten, and one at my home. The location, chosen by participants, also related to participant convenience—in terms of where they lived, and the location of shops and cafés, frequented either before or after the interview.

The number of five head teachers and five teachers was thought to be:

- a) A fair representation of the 13 head teachers and 20 teachers eligible in terms of their experience of at least two cycles of appraisal model 1-(the 360° system of appraisal) and one cycle of appraisal model 2-(“what spins your wheels?” appraisal system).
- b) Manageable in terms of the researcher’s ability to complete the study within a two and a half year timeframe whilst engaged in a range of other professional commitments.

Interview questions were divided into four categories; background, teacher motivation, pedagogical change, and collegial relationships. A final open question asked for other comments. The interview questions are attached in Appendix E.

Documentary research

Documentary research is used extensively within educational research. It can be used as an approach to research in its own right, or as a method to supplement other research methods in order to support aspects of validity (Burton & Bartlett, 2005; Duffy, 2010; Prior, 2008; Sharp, 2012). In this

study, primary sources (those which have come into existence during the period of the study), and historical appraisal documents have been used as a supplementary source of data (Duffy, 2010, p. 128). They provided a mechanism through which to compare appraisal systems, whilst further exploring the challenges and achievements faced by appraisees in relationship to teaching and learning. Document research also provided an insight into the possible usefulness of appraisal documents in supporting teacher learning and practice. For example, in what ways did the 48 page document of model 1- (360° appraisal system) in comparison to the five reflective questions in model 2-("What spins your wheels?") provoke the depth of thinking required to make changes to teachers' practice?

Documents used in this study consisted of appraisal guidelines and participant appraisals from model 1-(360° appraisal system) and model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system). Participants, at times, referred to these documents during the interview process in order to make their point visible. In this way, documents in this study did not act as merely "...containers of content, but as active agents in episodes of interaction and schemes of social organization" (Prior, 2008, p. 824).

These documents according to Duffy (2010) are "inadvertent sources" as they were produced for reasons other than this study (p. 129). They provided a source of "witting evidence"--information that appraisees wanted to impart--and "unwitting evidence"--all other information learned from the document (p. 131). Examining them carefully, whilst remaining critical, according to Burton and Bartlett (2005), can give important insight in regards to what is valued in their construction. This process was particularly important to this study because of the relationship between appraisal objectives and how the language and layout used in the documents promoted these objectives.

Appraisal documents used by appraisees in Model 1-(360° appraisal system) were designed as a form of self and peer reflection and evaluation of teaching competencies using professional standards. In addition, the

appraisee needed to produce “...the best possible impression...” (Duffy, 2010, p. 131) because outcomes were linked to remuneration increments. They were also produced in order to meet employer and Ministry of Education accountability requirements. According to Duffy (2010) and Sharp (2012), this raises the question of what can be taken at face value when using these documents for research. During the interview process, two participants identified their need *to produce the best possible impression* when recording their progress using this appraisal system. This became an important factor worth exploring in terms of the systems influence and contribution to teaching and learning.

Appraisal documents used by appraisees in Model 2- (“What spins your wheels?”) were not linked to remuneration increments. Teachers and head teachers may still have felt the need to inflate their teaching and learning progress, but because professional leaders were either their head or senior teachers--who were either well, or partially aware of their progress because of close or relatively close working relationships--and appraisees were also asked to reflect on what challenges they faced throughout the appraisal cycle, reflection on appraisal achievements were likely to be less threatening to the appraisee. Therefore, during the process of critical analysis this system had a potential to lead to a balanced account of the challenges and highlights of authentic professional growth.

Triangulation and credibility

In qualitative research, the reader needs assurance that the study is both credible and trustworthy. According to Mutch (2005) validity and reliability are terms used within a quantitative research design.

Several authors (Bell, 2010; Cohen et al., 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Mutch, 2005) advocate the use of more than one method of data collection--defined as triangulation--as a way of ensuring a less vulnerable set of research findings. Less vulnerable in the sense that a singular data source is potentially less reliable, and therefore potentially less trustworthy than a combination, which aims to compare and contrast, confirm or

challenge one set of findings with another in order to produce a study that is balanced.

Triangulation is one way of reassuring the reader that a qualitative research design is both trustworthy and credible. According to Flick (2002) “triangulation, . . . the combination of different methods . . . is less a strategy for validating results . . . than an alternative to validation which increases scope, depth and consistency (p. 227). I sought to achieve a degree of rigor, complexity, and richness in the study, which I doubted I would achieve by using only one method of data collection.

Patton (2002) noted that “one way of testing analyst-constructed typologies is to present them to people whose world is being analysed to find out if the constructions make sense to them” (p. 460). In line with Patton’s recommendation it was at times necessary to test my findings—an interpretation of evidence from interview and appraisal data—in order to confirm that my understanding was in line with participants’ thinking. I did this by documenting my thoughts and either emailing it to participants, or meeting with them to discuss them; in this way the validity of findings were strengthened. This process can be illustrated by placing the methods of data collection and participant clarification at each point of a triangle. The double headed arrows illustrate the process of connectivity.

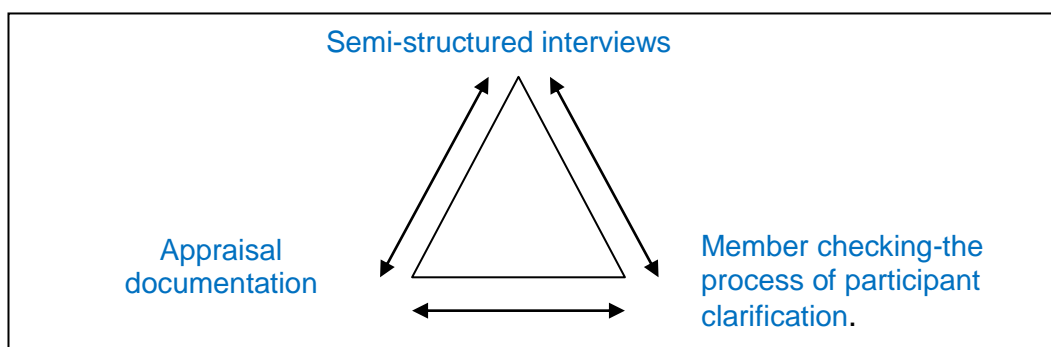


Figure 1: Triangulation and member checking to strengthen credibility

Adapted from Ford (2010, p. 57)

By using contrasting methods, which produce an array of perspectives yet result in consistent findings, and by asking participants to clarify and check my interpretations, a level of confidence to the researcher as well as the

reader is achieved. Appraisal documentation and interview data was used to draw out principles, which underpin effective appraisal systems and draw conclusions “...by gathering data from a number of informants and a number of sources and subsequently comparing and contrasting one account with another... to produce as full and balanced a study as possible” (Bell, 1999, p. 102).

Data analysis

The method of thematic analysis was used in this study to explore and report on repeated emerging patterns (themes) as rich data was collected by both interviewing teachers, and analysing appraisal documents. A significant feature of the study was that analysis began early on in the process of data collection so that new insights could be gained; a research approach touted by Strauss and Corbin (1998) as “... [seeing] beyond the ordinary and ... arriv[ing] at new understandings...” (p. 8). This interpretative process, which goes beyond the less complex process of simple description, is termed a *latent* approach to analysis. This latent approach works well with social constructionism, which guides and informs how meaning is theorized in this study. Seeking to understand situations through the eyes of participants acknowledges that reality is socially constructed and that the process of analysis involves making meaning in a social context (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 28). This approach involved the repeated and *active* reading of data in the search for meaning. Being familiar with, and understanding the complexity and scope of the content means being *immersed* in the data.

According to Strauss and Corbin (1998) “...reacting to and working with data” is both a science and art (p. 58). It is scientific in that the process requires a degree of rigor, whilst questions, comparisons, and raw data are organized. It is an art in regards to the interplay between researcher and data, and between innovation and integration in sensitively recognizing “...the properties and dimensions of emergent concepts”; this involves researcher knowledge and experience (p. 59).

According to Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis is a useful and flexible approach to analysing qualitative data. The process involves careful thinking, coding, defining and refining themes, in order to report on patterns that enable the reader to evaluate, synthesize, and compare research with other studies on that subject. They go on to say that analysis is an *active rather than a passive* activity, where researchers select and identify patterns and themes that capture something interesting, relevant, and important about the data in relation to the research question or questions (pp. 80-82).

Interview analysis

Clough and Nutbrown (2012) caution that "...the interpretative and critical means through which 'voice' is captured" depends on the researchers ability to apply an active listening approach, as opposed to simply hearing (p. 63). With this in mind, I was careful during the interview process to use active listening strategies in order to clarify my understanding of what participants had said, in order to ensure what I had heard was what the participants meant. The interview, as Kvale (2007) reports, "...is a conversation and a negotiation of meaning between the researcher and his or her subjects" (p. 121).

The process of taping interviews--using a dictaphone allowed me to return several times to a participants voice in order to carefully consider the emotion behind what was said, as well as the language used, thereby retaining complexity, and avoiding distortion in the transcription and analysis process. I was well aware of the inevitable loss of data between the oral interview and its written transcription (Kvale, 2007), and aimed to reduce this as much as practicable by considering facial expressions and body language during the process of analysis, and by referring to notes made during interviewing.

Although interview questions were organized under the headings: background, motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change, the process of analysis did not involve fitting the data into predetermined coding frames. An inductive approach was used, where the process of

analysis was “data driven” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 83). This process began as I transcribed the interviews and returned to them over and over again in order to familiarize myself with emerging themes. Participants checked the transcripts for accuracy, and I recorded my impressions and highlighted sections of the transcripts that went together, and those that contrasted; I then related these to the research questions. Re-occurring patterns emerged from teachers’ experiences of two appraisal systems creating themes. Further patterns occurred, which created factors of responsive appraisal systems. Both themes and factors were presented to those on the appraisal working party for model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) in order to inform its development. Comments from two working party members indicated that this was a useful contribution to appraisal development.

Document analysis

Qualitative text analysis complements interview analysis, which is positioned at the heart of this study. For this reason Denzin and Lincoln (2008) suggest an informal approach to be the best choice as a method when focusing on written texts. Examining participant interview data alongside their appraisal data, however, required a degree of *systematic comparison* in order to become sensitized to what Strauss and Corbin (1998) refer to as “...properties and dimensions in the data that might have [otherwise] been overlooked...” (p. 95). Making comparisons between the data provided an opportunity to make evident what participants had said through the interview process, with what was illustrated in their appraisal documentation. Of considerable interest were the systems’ underpinning values and how processes influenced teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change. How and what questions were asked in appraisal documents also provided insight into the depth of thinking required to make decisions about future learning plans, and their benefits to pedagogical change and children’s learning.

Analysing the language, layout, and content of appraisal guidelines with an emphasis on the documents intent was also of interest. For example, if the document aimed to motivate appraisee participation in the appraisal

process, in what ways would language such as; *compliance* and *competency*, fit with this intent? Would the documents contractual appearance contradict the models inspirational intent? Prior (2008), however, argues that this cannot be determined by an analysis of content because the text and its meaning changes from reader to reader (p. 824). Comments made throughout interviews on the documents did however support a level of analysis, although this could be said to have raised more questions than provided answers.

Methodological issues

Ethical issues

A complete and balanced representation of research findings involves a researcher's commitment to ethical responsibilities of research practice. This means respecting the multiple realities, rights, and integrity of research participants. Cohen et al. (2007) advises that "at all times, the welfare of subjects should be kept in mind, even if it involves compromising the impact of the research." (p. 59).

This became the guiding principle underpinning this research project, and was challenged during the first interview. An ethical dilemma occurred whereby the participant was clearly upset as she relived her experience as an appraisee whilst engaged in the appraisal process of model 1-(360° appraisal system). As a first time researcher of this scale, I had underestimated both participant and researcher safety in this instance. My desire to obtain information was at once compromised with my wish to end my colleague's discomfort. The conflict occurred between the benefits of conducting this study and the rights of the participant to emotional safety and dignity. Although the participant rejected my many attempts to end the discussion, and I allowed the interview to continue, I was acutely aware of the notion defined by Cohen et al. (2007) as 'costs/benefits ratio', the tension between the "pursuit of truth and... subjects' rights and values..." (p. 51). I was also aware that I had treated this "...participant with consideration, fairness and respect..." I had acted

ethically (Mutch, 2005, p. 78). After the interview the participant and I continued to talk for approximately two hours about a range of other topics on both a professional and personal level, until the participant left appearing relaxed and positive. I found, however, that transcribing this interview, and in fact a number of other interviews, evoked a range of emotional challenges for me. The challenge lay in my inability to discuss my anxiety--due to participant confidentiality--surrounding several participants' anger, confusion, disappointment, and grief in their treatment as appraisees during their engagement with model 1-(360° appraisal system).

Acceptable researcher behaviours have been defined and established by codes of practice, ethical guidelines, principles, and policies. The purpose is to protect not only research participants, but researchers themselves and the research community per se. As a researcher, an awareness of procedural ethical responsibilities became evident during the planning phase of this study. An application for ethical approval from The University of Waikato Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee required an assurance that I would take every step to ensure ethical issues were the first and foremost concern in every aspect of the study. There needed to be justification for researching the topic, procedures for recruiting participants, obtaining their informed consent and their involvement in the study. Informed consent, the key to ethical research according to Coady (2001), "...is based on the ethical view that all humans have the right to autonomy, that is, the right to determine what is in their own best interests" (p. 65). Participant and kindergarten association confidentiality meant safe guarding identities with the use of pseudonyms, and addressing issues of responsible care by minimizing potential harm. This would be achieved by making a commitment to accurately reflect in writing, the thoughts of those who participated in the study. Participants' right to decline participation and to withdraw were assured and followed. Procedures for handling and securely storing information and materials produced in the course of the research, and arrangements for participants to receive information were addressed. Participants needed to know that

the information they gave, or was to be taken, would be safe and that information would be used in a way that was agreed upon. Any conflicts of interest around my relationship with participants were considered, along with any issues that may arise in relation to cultural and social diversity, in regards to my background as a researcher.

Procedural ethics are, however, not enough. According to Coady (2001), "...the history of research is littered with examples of harm caused by researchers to their subjects" (p. 64). For this reason, ethical obligations including responsible care permeated this research in its entirety. Bell (2010) highlights the importance of responsible care and relationship integrity between participant and researcher.

According to Mutch (2006) "an equal and relevant relationship must be developed between the researcher and the researched before the start of the project" (p. 53). Although I was confident, as Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) suggest, that I had developed good relationships, and a sense of rapport with each participant in order to establish and maintain feelings of confidence and trust, one participant withdrew her consent after reading her interview transcript. This head teacher had a range of difficulties occurring within her team at the time and was not convinced of her anonymity as a participant. She judged the risk of being identified and linked to information given too great in terms of the damage this may pose to the relationships with her teaching team. Although the hours invested in interviewing and transcribing were unable to contribute to research findings and the benefit of others, such is the obligation and commitment of ethical and responsible care. Wilkinson (2001) sums this commitment up nicely when he states that "...one cannot justify imposing burdens on subjects simply by appealing either to gains to others or to the service of some abstract goal, like the promotion of knowledge (p.14). Responsible care is the obligation I took to ensure best practice.

All possible steps were taken "...to protect the interests, status, values and beliefs of all participants and ...[the kindergarten association]" from personal and professional harm (Sharp, 2012, p. 22). The research

design, methods, and analysis process was designed with 'fitness-for-purpose' in mind, and the dissemination of findings reflect sensitivity, honesty, openness, and accuracy (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 59). Acting ethically, according to Mutch (2005), is one way of protecting "...the researched, the researcher and the credibility of the research" (p. 88).

Trustworthiness and authenticity

Researchers who provide a clear understanding of the methodological approach to readers of qualitative research offer a level of confidence, clarity, and rigor to the process in regards to the relationship between research questions, those asked of participants, and the process for action (Clough & Nutbrown, 2012, p. 37). Likewise, confidence is increased with sound theory construction, which is best attained by "...the triangulation of method, investigator, theory and data..." (Flick, 2002, p. 227).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2003) *trustworthiness* and *authenticity* are more suitable terms than *validity* for qualitative researchers using a constructionist paradigm (p. 247). Similarly, the certainty required of quantitative research is replaced with the *confidence* needed in qualitative research. Research credibility and reader confidence are important factors for all those engaging in research. If a research study is deemed invalid it is worthless (Cohen et al., 2007).

Confidence and research credibility is greatly enhanced through the moral integrity of the researcher (Mutch, 2006). In this study "...the importance of the researcher as a person is magnified because the [researcher as] interviewer is the main instrument for obtaining knowledge" (Kvale, 2007, p. 29). One way of enhancing moral integrity is through honesty and authenticity. I addressed this by ensuring research participants were fully aware of what the research was about, including them in conversations as findings emerged throughout the study, and engaging them in the process of member checking. Transcripts were returned to participants for them to check for accuracy, and add or subtract information. On occasion, when making a broad statement during the process of writing up the findings, I

also checked this statement with participants in order to ensure that I had captured their meaning and intention. I was aware of the necessity to do this in order to ensure that participants would not be left feeling unheard, misinterpreted, wronged, confused, frustrated, angry, deflated, and/or unvalued if the analysis of data collected, was in their opinion inaccurate. I understood the importance of participant validation.

Semi-structured interview questions were carefully constructed and open ended. The first two interviewees were so overwhelmingly opposed to model 1- (360° appraisal system), I became concerned that those participants who had made themselves available for interviewing may only be those who oppose the system. I found this concerning because I saw this as a possible breach of research credibility that I had not anticipated. Participants motives for engaging in the research became questionable. As interviewing continued however, participants' stories varied and my fears subsided. Asking the same questions of each participant, requesting clarification, and probing for in-depth responses and thick description ensured that generalisations, comparability, and transferability could, at times, be made during the process of writing up the findings.

Generalizability, according to Cohen et al. (2007) can be useful in the generation of theory in that it "...may be useful in understanding other similar situations" (p. 135).

"Validity refers to 'truth' and the accurate representation of information" (Cozby, 2001, p. 72). In order to believe there is truth, there must be trust. The inadvertent endorsing, or condemnation of participant responses was easily avoided because, in order to gain a fresh and sophisticated understanding of teachers experiences I was able to suspend my own opinions, attitudes, and perspectives during the interview process. Siraj-Blatchford and Siraj-Blatchford (2001), contend that "given the need to obtain the world views of those we study, it is important the we should hold back our own interpretations of what is happening to hear the explanations given by those most closely involved in the action" (p. 200).

The study sought to understand teachers' experiences and their interpretations of responsive appraisal systems. I believe the study is successful in achieving this. Even so, questions such as "who are the silenced voices, who is missing"? (Giles, personal communication, 20th January 2010) are useful questions to consider in terms of data trustworthiness with small studies such as this.

Declaring bias

Both participant and researcher opinions, perspectives and attitudes create the subjective nature and degrees of bias common to qualitative research. Any gaze, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2008), "...is always filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity" (p. 29). This again highlights the necessity for continuous researcher reflexivity.

Clough & Nutbrown (2012), declare "...critical account[s] of anything [which] seek to be rational,... cannot fail to reflect the values and beliefs of its author" (p. 29). It is for this reason that (Mutch, 2005) suggests that qualitative researchers position not only their participants, but themselves within the context of their study because, of the influence that "...values, beliefs, and assumptions...." have on the research design, theoretical framework, and the methods used to collect and analyse data (p. 63). Unlike Walliman (2001), who believes that the author's biography "...reduces the feasibility of attaining reliability, as personal perceptions cannot be reliably shared" (p. 16), it is my understanding that by declaring ones position as researcher trustworthiness can be enhanced.

Potential reliability problems which cannot be entirely eliminated in this study are due to my collegial relationships with participants. I have been a head teacher for almost nine years within the Association in which teacher's in this study are participants. During this time I have formed a range of both professional and personal relationships with both head teachers and teachers. Cozby (2001) highlights situations such as this as a potential problem in that this may create a possible 'response set' or 'social desirability response', a problem otherwise known as 'faking good',

where participants respond to questions in a way that reflects most favourably on them, rather than offering a more accurate account of information (p. 105). Cozby, however, goes on to suggest that a trusting relationship between participant and researcher reduces the likelihood that possible misrepresentation will occur. Interview bias was another potential problem which I took care to minimize by ensuring that I did not project my own experiences on participants as stated earlier. Although my own experiences with teacher appraisal systems within this Association provided me with the motivation to further explore the topic as a mechanism for enhancing teacher practice, it was the experiences of my colleagues that became of far greater interest once the study began.

Limitations

From a social constructionist's viewpoint, "no human being can step outside of their humanity and view the world from no position at all, which is what the idea of objectivity suggests..." (Burr, 2003, p. 152). Therefore, the "impossibility" of objectivity could be deemed a limitation of the research.

The inexperience of the researcher together with the relatively small size and scale of the study could also be viewed as limitations to the study. The research was carried out from August 2010 to February 2013. The data collection phase was carried out between August and October 2010, although historical documents collected from model 1-(360° appraisal system) date back to March 2002.

Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodology and the social constructionist framework that guided this research. Semi-structured interviews, alongside of appraisal documentation provided an intensive examination of teachers and head teachers' experiences with two systems of teacher appraisal. Data analysis and member checking contributed to this process, which supported the depth and richness of reporting, trustworthiness, and authenticity required for reader confidence. A review

of the study's limitations in contrast to its contributions gives a balanced perspective to the research findings, which were developed through thematic analysis of the interview data and appraisal documentation.

Findings are presented in the next three chapters and have been grouped to address the research questions. Chapter four examines themes which have emerged from the analysis of teachers experiences of two differing teacher appraisal systems. Chapter five explores factors within appraisal systems which contribute to teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change. Chapter six, (the Conclusion), synthesises the findings to put forward principles that underpin responsive systems of appraisal.

CHAPTER FOUR - TEACHERS EXPERIENCES OF TWO DIFFERING TEACHER APPRAISAL SYSTEMS

Introduction

In this chapter teachers' interview data is analysed in order to address one of the research questions: "How do teachers experience two differing teacher appraisal systems"?

Four main themes about appraisal systems emerged from the analysis of data:

1. The positioning of teachers in relation to their capacity to make professional judgements, evaluate their own teaching, and influence future professional learning goals
2. The extent to which the appraisal system contributed to self esteem and self concept
3. The extent to which appraisal systems encouraged teachers to work collaboratively and pool their funds of knowledge
4. The extent to which the appraisal system contributed to teaching and learning (pedagogical change).

In this chapter interview data from teachers and head teachers is used to explore each of these themes in relation to the two different appraisal systems. Each theme is then systematically examined, comparisons are made between the two systems, and implications are discussed.

Model 1 - 360° appraisal system.

Model 1- (360° appraisal system) measured the performance of teachers against both Association expectations and teaching standards. It was designed to support the professional growth of teachers by establishing their professional development needs. The system also aimed to support teacher inspiration and motivation, whilst also determining salary

progression. Model 1- (360° appraisal system) used a combination of “self” review, “peer” review and “top down” appraisal methods to evaluate teacher performance (Whero Kindergarten Association, 2005a, p. 16).

The teaching service manager (TSM) or senior teacher (ST) used aggregated data from the teacher’s self review, colleagues’ peer reviews, and a member of the kindergarten community’s evaluation of the teacher’s dispositions to conduct the appraisal of all teachers. This, it was thought, allowed a 360° view of a teachers’ practice; a fairer and more comprehensive picture of teachers’ performance across the competency dimensions and association dispositions than either a self or top down approach.

Deficit positioning

It was not uncommon for teachers to view themselves as lacking in skills and competence when appraised under model 1- (360° appraisal system). Indeed, two teachers and a head teacher explicitly used the word “deficit” when referring to this system. Kasey, a teacher, said that the framework created a “negative mindset” for teachers, and Boston referred to the system as “dangerous” in regards to the significant influence that colleagues had over appraisal outcomes. Insufficient knowledge of the appraisee’s practice and appraiser prejudice against the appraisee were dangers, which two teachers also referred to as an “unfair system”. These teachers focused on the way in which model 1-(360° appraisal system) created a negative platform that inhibited them from being able to develop professionally. Although teachers were given the capacity to make their own judgements about their teaching practice, teachers were not necessarily given the same capacity to choose professional learning goals for the next cycle of appraisal based on these judgements. The influence of where an appraiser placed you could have a far greater influence on a teacher’s professional journey, therefore limiting appraisee influence and control of the appraisal process significantly. Marcia, a teacher said

...it [model 1-360° appraisal system] was negative. They [the senior teachers] pulled all...the ones [indicators of standards] you hadn’t

achieved... then they gave you a list, or you had to write a list of all the ones you hadn't achieved and they would say "Well you need to do ... this one and this one and this one ..."

Marcia's list of five performance objectives (chosen for her) meant that she needed to "treat other team members with respect", "use communication strategies in a variety of situations...", "demonstrate skills in the areas of conflict resolution...", be "...aware of and actively involved in the maintenance of most functions at the kindergarten and its operation" and "ensure that presentation of work is appropriate and professional".

O'Connor (1998) suggests that "aversion" is a likely reaction towards externally imposed goals, and that the likelihood of high rewards or very unpleasant punishment as a means of motivation is needed to overcome this aversion. In Marcia's case her newly won role as acting head teacher was one motivation to address the list of performance objectives.

Model 1- (360° appraisal system) relied on appraisers having developed a) a shared understanding of the terminology and process of appraisal with the appraisee, b) an opportunity to form positive relationships with the appraisee, and c) a good understanding of the appraisee's professional practice and personal dispositions. A number of teachers disputed that their appraisers had developed the above criteria, which they believe contributed to their negative appraisal outcomes. Some teachers regarded underdeveloped or negatively biased relationships between themselves and their appraisers as a problem, which led them to being unfairly labelled as "underperforming" in terms of their teaching practice.

Marcia also highlighted the possibility of "... [appraisal] variations... from one year to the next. Why would you suddenly be up here [a good appraisal result] and teaching like that then suddenly everyone's decided no you're not doing that?" Marcia believed that these variations were dependant on which colleagues were appraising you from one year to the next. Marcia then alluded to the benefits of portraying herself in a highly favourable light in terms of self evaluation and how this could positively affect her appraisal results, but then wondered "...is that honest"? Ball

(2003) suggests this “fabrication of performance” is due to the pressure to perform and further highlights its effect on teacher authenticity, motivation, and morale .

One head teacher commented that there was no point in selecting new professional learning goals before the appraisal meeting because the perception of where your colleagues placed your practice within the continuum of competency was the deciding factor in relation to what you were expected to work on. This meant that teachers may have needed to work on an area of professional practice which they felt they were already competent in. Boston, a teacher, said that teachers were seen as numbers due to the “number crunching” involved in the aggregation process and presentation of subsequent appraisal outcomes.

Although the framework aimed to obtain a 360° view of teachers’ practice in order to ascertain which teaching standards had been met, it was the identification of teachers’ weaknesses that was the starting point for discussing professional growth strategies--for those teachers that hadn’t achieved all indicators of standards. According to O’Connor (1998) a good way to demotivate people is to ignore their achievements, take good work for granted, and comment on a drop in standards. O’Connor declares that “...you can create aversion and inertia much more easily than willingness and enthusiasm” . This in affect is the way in which many appraisees viewed model 1- (360° appraisal system).

There were inconsistencies between Education Review Office (ERO) ratings, and ratings from appraisals that could not always be explained by senior teachers. Two teachers reflected on feedback from their senior teachers when their appraisal meetings resulted in negative outcomes.

... I found it dishonest because all I could do was sit there and say... Look...ERO gave us a great report...now you’re saying that I’m not teaching... no one had the answers ... Well no honest answers, I mean to me, you know to me, honesty would have been well maybe there is personalities...something must be wrong... if you got ERO reports [that are positive about my teaching] and then all of a

sudden this appraisal is like this, there has to be something.
(Marcia, teacher)

Teachers expressed feeling pessimistic about the system:

...the 360° model made you reflect on your practice if there was something technically wrong...it would make you look at the negative and not the positive of your appraisal because you may have passed all the standards and then see one tiny little standard that was black and it would make you feel “Oh damn it” and it gave you that “Oh, oh no” [feeling] and you were made to feel “Oh no”, you know? (Kasey, teacher)

This system also gave teachers an opportunity to affect their colleagues' salary and career opportunities using appraisal as a tool, without being identified. This was of concern to one head teacher and three teachers.

Moving from one kindergarten Association to another Association, Kasey described her first encounter with model 1- 360° appraisal system like this:

...initially um, when I first came to the Association it was a little bit negative um, because I didn't understand the model ... I think initially none of us [the teaching team] understood how that model really worked ...so I think my first 360° I was just like “Oh my god, I'm useless. (Teacher)

Teacher self-esteem and self-concept

Model 1- (360° appraisal system) was not compatible with the strength based model of assessment in New Zealand's early childhood curriculum *Te Whāriki (Ministry of Education, 1996)*. One head teacher and two teachers commented on these conflicting theoretical frameworks when evaluating children's and teachers' competencies. Gisela, a head teacher said “...I felt also that as teachers we don't do summative assessment on children, we do formative assessment and it [the method of assessment] didn't match with our theories and thinking around assessing children and adults”. Another teacher had this to say:

You...shouldn't keep telling kids that they can't do or what they're not doing...we tell kids positive things don't we, so why are we doing it to adults? ...celebrate the positives not the negatives. I think negatives pull every one down. It doesn't make people happy.
(Marcia, teacher)

Te Whāriki advocates that “feedback to children on their learning and development should enhance their sense of themselves as capable people and competent learners” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 30). It is therefore, contradictory that an appraisal system designed to support the professional growth of teachers, whilst also aiming to “inspire” and “motivate” teachers (Whero Kindergarten Association, 2005a, p. 5) should use a method of assessment which resulted in such overwhelming feelings of disempowerment for some teachers.

Teachers spoke of feeling stressed and anxious about appraisal meetings. Three of the nine teachers interviewed associated the outcomes of their appraisal meetings with their senior teacher as having a damaging impact on their self esteem and self-concept (the accumulated perceptions of oneself). Ball (2003) believes that there are a range of teacher responses to performance information, some inciting “...individual feelings of pride, guilt, shame and envy” . Marcia described the process of the 360° appraisal system as: “...very daunting, very scary, I hated it. Really hated it...”

[It] made me feel like I didn't know what I was talking about and that I'm not really a teacher... It really undermined my confidence... I got so stressed... and I was in such a mess I had to have some days off [work]...coz I was so stressed about how I went down [in meeting the teacher standards]. I wasn't very happy,...quite angry and of course stressed as I say, I had to have those days off...then always sort of worrying that you're not teaching right,...you know, coz people have said that you're not teaching right so always worried...well you know, what am I doing wrong?...I'd go home very angry and upset or stressed...and then reflect...[on] the worst ones

[unachieved teacher standards]. Am I doing the right thing, am I in the job that I should be in? People obviously maybe don't think I am a teacher...and yet, you know you've passed your [teacher] registration (Teacher).

As results of appraisal meetings revealed themselves collegial mistrust, confusion about the appraisal process, despondency, and emotional exhaustion were experienced by three teachers. Kasey felt professionally incompetent and inadequate when underperformance was highlighted in her appraisal results. Marcia's experience is mirrored in what Gibbs (2006) describes as the relationship between assessment and support given by "significant others" and teacher self-esteem, emotional exhaustion, and burn out .

Boston, a teacher, lost his *fully registered teacher* status after his first appraisal meeting using the 360° appraisal model. He believed the efforts he took to regain his full registration resulted in the separation of himself and his partner. "Work commitments had to be over family and ... I had to fight [for] what I believed in and I put me first...my family suffered".

On the other hand, an appraisal meeting which illustrated a positive result for teachers enabled an increase in self esteem and confidence in teaching ability. Marcia, a teacher, said "... that last real good one [appraisal result]... certainly made me feel like I was... absolute[ly] knowing what I was doing, that I was a teacher". Appraisal meetings were a rollercoaster ride to the unknown depending largely on what your colleagues thought of you personally, and professionally. Teachers were at the mercy of their colleagues' perception of their practice and were reliant on their senior teacher to accurately collate and present their aggregated data. In this way, model 1-(360° appraisal system) had the capacity to play havoc with teachers self esteem, self concept, and collegial relationships.

Relationships with colleagues

Teacher participation in model 1- (360° appraisal system) seemed to generate a deterioration of relationships between some teachers, and

between some teachers and senior teachers, alongside feelings of mistrust. Interestingly, a similar hypothesis was put forward by Fitzgerald, Youngs, and Grootenboer (2003) in relation to performance management systems introduced into New Zealand schools in the late 1990's. They suggest professional partnerships between teachers were eroded due to the continued pressure to implement appraisal systems which had dual conflicting purposes. These systems of appraisal needed to satisfy necessary accountability requirements, whilst continuing to recognize the developmental aspects of teacher appraisal. Teachers on one hand were working in a collaborative, collegial, and supportive way with each other then, on the other hand adopting a hierarchical relationship between appraisee and appraiser as middle management teachers took on the role of appraising their colleagues.

The early childhood sector, due to the filtering down affect from the compulsory sector became similarly positioned in terms of the need to satisfy bureaucratic accountability in regards to teacher performance. Kasey, a teacher, said appraisal meetings were "secretive" which created what Codd (2005) refers to as a "culture of distrust" between teachers . A head teacher mentioned her nervousness before attending appraisal meetings which highlights what Ball (2003) refers to "the terrors of performativity" :

...it created angst within the team-huge angst. It was always a fearful time because you never knew until that meeting where you were sitting in front of your senior teacher, what you, the outcomes of the appraisal process was going to be and so you were nervous, you didn't sleep the night before, you felt sick hoping that you were going to have met the standards and that [laugh] everyone else felt, everyone felt that you had... It was, it made it an uncomfortable process and the reality is I guess it should never have been that way because if you were not meeting the standards you would like to think that someone would have said to you that you weren't rather than leaving it up to this moment in time where "oh sorry you're not now" or "you are", yeah. (Gisela, head teacher)

Existing relationships with colleagues played a part in the tone of appraisals. Teachers' were not always honest when documenting their assessment of colleagues for fear of harming relationships. Wendy, a head teacher said "... we were inclined to be ticking the boxes because you didn't want any repercussions..." This team found ways to minimize potential harm to collegial relationships, whilst following the process of this appraisal system, which meant appraisal results for colleagues were not always a true reflection of their teaching practice, but a harmonious working relationship, and environment was deemed more important than honesty in this case.

Just over half of the teachers and head teachers interviewed talked about appraisal results relying heavily on colleagues' subjective or biased interpretation of their teaching performance, and the impact this process had on both their professional and personal relationships. Kasey, a teacher said "...if you didn't get along with one of your work colleagues that showed in the data..." Marcia, a teacher, believed that an appraisee's relationship with her appraisers had an overriding affect on the outcome of appraisal results. A positive relationship with colleagues was more likely to mean a positive appraisal result, and a negative relationship was likely to result in a negative appraisal outcome. Collegial relationships could be further negatively affected when the appraisee believed there were discrepancies between the way in which they viewed their performance, and what the outcome of their appraisal revealed.

Although it was never the intent of model 1- (360° appraisal system), the opportunity to silently target colleagues about their practice without them knowing who felt that way was available. This appraisal system could be used as a mechanism for retaliation against a colleague for whatever reason, even though results from a single appraiser were not supposed to stand out in the appraisal outcome. A formula allegedly applied by senior teachers prevented this from occurring by reflecting only the 'majority voice' of appraisers in appraisal results. Initially the collated data would position the appraisee's practice on a continuum of *beginning* to *experienced* teacher, and in later years it simply addressed which

professional standards had been met and which hadn't. Gisela, head teacher, gives one explanation as to why she believes some teachers used the appraisal process in the first instance to address perceived performance deficiencies, rather than offering their colleague an opportunity to discuss their practice before it became an appraisal issue:

...you'd like to think that teachers would bring things up with other teachers but ... sometimes teachers don't have the confidence given the dynamics within the team. With different personalities people often felt threatened by other people and weren't comfortable to do that (Gisela, head teacher).

One of my teachers was told by my senior [teacher] at the time that if she didn't want to bring something up to another teacher or myself that it could be done through this [appraisal] process. That at the time it was a confidential process, I had a teacher question another teacher regarding whether or why she had put, ticked or not ticked what she had and I said to her [the teacher doing the questioning--who had just been appraised] that at all times I must be present [if the appraisee was going to address this issue] and that teacher went behind my back which created a threatening sense for another colleague or a teacher of mine, that they were, and they felt extremely uncomfortable... As a leader, it felt [like] a cop out for some people to not own up to how they felt, that they could put it in the appraisal... In the end it divided my team on one occasion, oh on several and, that's various teams (Gisela, head teacher).

Two head teachers commented on the tension created between team members around appraisal time. Gisela commented that more than one scenario could be created for the head teacher at the same time if one teacher's appraisal didn't meet his/her expectations and how eventually teams became divided. Teachers and head teachers were constantly faced with the dilemma of "...conflict between individual needs and organisational demands" (Piggot-Irvine & Cardno, 2005, p. 65).

Another factor contributing to possible tension between colleagues was highlighted by three teachers and two head teachers who at times found it confusing and problematic when perceived inconsistencies relating to the collation of their data by senior teachers in model 1-(360° appraisal system) led to areas of underperformance. Wendy, a head teacher, believed inconsistencies:

...depended quite a lot on the senior teachers' ability to collate the information and that often...they'd missed out information... I'm sure in previous appraisals too there's been things that have been um that technical glitch where the senior teacher either hasn't collated it properly or hasn't got the information.

Inaccurate and negative outcomes had a high possibility of impacting on collegial relationships when the teacher returned to her team after the appraisal meeting with the senior teacher. One head teacher's colleagues had not ticked a series of indicators ranging from "demonstrates skills in active listening" and "maintains confidentiality..., respect and trust" (Whero Kindergarten Association, 2005a, p. 27). Wendy said:

I'm pretty sure that in the interview [appraisal meeting] the senior teacher said to me "but I know that's true [that you do achieve these indicators] so that's okay". That's great, but it still says on my appraisal [that I don't]. If I wanted to send this in for a job what would I do? Oh yeah I want a job but I'm no good at listening!

Positive collegial relationships within a teaching team were not only identified by teachers as being a contributing factor to receiving an optimistic appraisal outcome, but also recognized as reducing incidences of difficulties with colleagues after the appraisal meeting if there was confusion with an appraisal outcome. Wendy said:

...I was able to go back [to my teaching colleagues who had contributed to the appraisal data] and say..."um, guys, this is not ticked" and they went "well that's not what we think anyway", so that got clarified really quickly. So I mean I suppose it does, you know

provide opportunities if you've got a good relationship in your team, provide good opportunities for further discussion.

Contribution to teaching and learning

The system tended to limit or dampen teachers' aspirations rather than lift them. Gisela, head teacher, observed that "just" meeting the standards was deemed adequate under this system of appraisal. There was no need for teachers to excel in any area of their practice. There was no need to reach higher levels of teaching achievement for those teachers that met all the standards, because meeting the standards was all that was required.

...it's okay if we're all just competent here 'coz that's all that's required, that's all its saying. It doesn't say you have to, you know excel, it just says you know, you just had to meet the standard". It wasn't aspirational. You know, it wasn't reaching for the stars, yup you've achieved that standard but actually you could have been functioning at a much higher level than that and that was never recognised within the system. It made it [the process of appraisal] almost, I don't want to say un-meaningful but in a way un-meaningful (Gisela, head teacher).

Teachers who had met all the teaching standards had no inspiration for taking new directions.

I actually would sit there with my senior teacher after reading through my appraisal and think oh my god now I've got to come up with some goals because there's none written down here and what are they going to be because I was completely uninspired as to what I wanted to work on and I was thinking more of things to work on that I wasn't so good at more than things that I was necessarily passionate about. I wasn't necessarily thinking I'm good at this but I could be really good at this, I was just thinking oh what, what area of need should I look on now and which one shall I pick. And I just, I felt uninspired because it's pretty much an uninspiring document.

I find that we were working from, as I said, there's nothing aspirational about it, it's just competencies... (Gisela, head teacher)

Ginny's experience was similar in terms of her having met all teaching standards but her encounter with goal setting differed to Gisela's:

I was achieving all those indicators so it didn't give me any pathway on where I could improve or what direction to work in and so I didn't feel it was very valuable...I never really had any goals... I didn't feel goals were set and so there weren't really goals to achieve. (Ginny, head teacher)

Two head teachers commented on model 1- (360° appraisal system) as being "quite logical" and a "well structured" document, which made the process easy to follow. Ashleigh, a head teacher said "I knew exactly what they [senior teachers] were wanting from me and I could work through and very quickly assess where I was in terms of that teaching standard". These teachers liked the reflection tool of grading their level of performance from *beginning teacher*, through to *experienced* and *role model*. Even a *beginning* or registering *teacher* could be a *role model* for some of the indicators of teaching standards.

Wendy, a head teacher stated:

I think those indicators [in model 1- 360° appraisal system] were good prompts to reflect on lots of aspects of my practice rather than model 2-["What spins your wheels?" appraisal system]) where you're only reflecting on one aspect, oh depending on how many goals you've got I guess; you'd be silly to have more than one.

Examples of the ways in which teachers were addressing children's learning appeared insignificant under model 1- (360° appraisal system). Gisela, head teacher said that there was no need to delve into the specifics of how the indicators were met, and what benefits there were for children because there was no requirement for teachers to do so. This framework therefore limited teacher appraisal as a tool for in-depth self reflection and pedagogical growth.

...there were so many things to tick, so you had to kind of be rather methodical about it and at the end of the day it [the task] was to complete the form and hand it in. It wasn't to go and delve too in-depth into what you had done...what was the point of reflecting too much because no one really gave a shit to be honest. They [senior teachers] just wanted to know whether you'd ticked the box or not; the end... (Gisela, head teacher)

Both Ginny and Wendy, head teacher's, held similar views regarding the lack of depth needed when self reflecting on professional practice:

"...actually I do think it was really time consuming, really time consuming, but you could just tick the boxes and not actually think about it" (Wendy).

I think the only time you reflected [on your level of competency] was when you got the highlighter in your hand and you were unsure whether to highlight indicators. You then thought what would be an example of this in practice-but I think that was the only reflection that took place and it was very shallow. (Ginny)

Ashleigh, a head teacher also commented on the infrequency of returning to the document "... It feels as though model 1 [360° appraisal system] for me, only encouraged me to reflect on my practice once a year when this [appraisal document] was in front of me". It is unlikely that a once a year reflection on teaching practice would have much to contribute to the development of teaching pedagogy.

The focus on performance and repercussions from failing standards led some teachers to construct superficial evidence of meeting indicators. Ginny, a head teacher, when referring to the reflective process of model 1- (360° appraisal system) believed that not only did it not lead to improved performance, it led teachers to "cover their tracks" resulting in a rush to provide evidence of indicators being met before colleagues/appraisers filled in appraisal data:

... you might find an area you didn't think you were achieving so you'd go all out in those couple of weeks to make sure you were

achieving that so you could cover it up [laugh]. But I don't think it actually helped my teaching and learning as a teacher or from the children's perspective at all.

Similarly, Jones (2000) states that "...the need to be reflective and honest for one purpose...[conflicts] with the requirement to sell oneself ..." (p. 35).

The quantity of documentation to be completed before the appraisal meetings, and the repetition of indicators to be addressed was of concern for two head teachers and four teachers, because it contributed to teachers feeling overloaded with work commitments without a sense of purpose towards meaningful professional growth. This in turn, resulted in a lack of motivation to become engaged with the appraisal process.

Marcia referred to the workload as "overwhelming... all that paper work...and also time factors... god it used to take ages". Ashleigh, a head teacher talked about its "weightiness", and one teacher, said it was "huge".

When teachers and head teachers were asked about model 1- (360° appraisal systems) contribution to pedagogical change, each teacher's response was similar to Ashleigh's "... Tanya I can't see that it did [contribute to pedagogical change]... I don't recall really making many changes to my practice..."

Summary

Deficit positioning of teachers using model 1- (360° appraisal system) created a negative mindset towards appraisal in addition to low levels of motivation. Teachers' capacity to make professional judgements, evaluate their own teaching, and influence future professional learning goals depended on appraisers' contribution to the appraisal process, and the aggregated placement of their appraisal score by senior teachers. A good appraisal result positioned the appraisee with a greater capacity to make professional judgements, than an appraisee with poor appraisal results. The extent to which a teachers practice was seen as lacking, determined the degree of limitations for teachers to influence the direction of new learning.

Weaknesses in teachers practice determined the direction of professional learning. Unexplained and inconsistent appraisal outcomes, the length and time needed to complete the document, and the influence that colleagues had on career, and salary opportunities were all matters of concern for teachers.

It would appear that at best model 1- (360° appraisal system) enabled some teachers to feel encouraged that their colleagues felt their practice was, in some aspects more advanced than they themselves felt. At its worst, the model contributed to teacher stress, anxiety, despondency, and depression.

Model 1- (360° appraisal system) significantly contributed to a loss of self esteem and self concept for some teachers when appraisal results illustrated professional incompetence and inadequacies. For others, it had a “feel good” affect when colleagues “marked” teacher’s performance on a par or better than teachers had themselves. Conflicting theoretical frameworks between assessing children’s and teachers practice meant that appraisal feedback did not always enhance teachers sense of themselves as capable professionals and adept learners, which at times resulted in collegial mistrust, stress, anxiety, and confusion.

Model 1- (360° appraisal system) did not encourage teachers to work collaboratively and pool their funds of knowledge. Teachers gathered information on their colleagues individually and some teachers viewed the appraisal process as secretive. This contributed to a deterioration of relationships between some teachers, and between some teachers and senior teachers. Feelings of mistrust, fear, angst, and nervousness, were not uncommon before appraisal meetings, nor was team member tension after appraisal meetings.

Dishonesty for fear of harming collegial relationships was a tool used by some teachers when ranking their colleagues teaching practice. The type of relationship an appraisee had with her appraisers was believed to have an overriding affect on the outcome of appraisal results, heavily influencing the subjective or biased interpretation of teaching performance.

Although model 1- (360° appraisal system) was regarded as being well structured, and the many indicators could act as prompts for teachers to think about their practice, this reflection lacked the necessary depth needed to instigate pedagogical change. It was considered by some to be a “had to do” rather than a “want to do” task. The system tended to reduce or immobilize teachers’ desires to improve practice, rather than elevate them. Taking a new direction seldom occurred to teachers because simply achieving the professional standards was considered sufficient. Therefore, the appraisal framework could be argued to restrict teachers’ pedagogical growth, rather than encouraging it. It could also be argued that not only did it not lead to improved performance, it led teachers to “cover their tracks” for fear of not meeting the standards. Teachers did not recall making many changes to their practice.

Model 2 “What spins your wheels?”

Model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) aimed to support both individual and teaching team aspirations and philosophies, whilst encouraging collegial collaboration in order to enhance teaching and learning.

The system involved a three step process of 1) self reflection using a set of focus questions, 2) meeting with the professional leader to reflect on the past years progress and discuss professional learning goals for the coming year (head teachers are professional leaders for teachers, and senior teachers are professional leaders for head teachers), and 3) a formal half year review of progress. These steps are repeated for team appraisals (the only difference being the senior teacher involvement with the initial meeting with the team appraisal goal.) The process repeats itself for the following appraisal cycle.

Model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) had been designed as a “high trust” system of appraisal. High trust in this context refers to teachers being viewed as active participants and agents of their own learning. The appraisal working party designed the system having acknowledged that “...the attainment of excellence in teaching most readily

occurs when there is a high level of professional learning related to individual and team needs about which teachers are passionate” (Whero Kindergarten Association, 2012, p. 3). The system had also been designed in order to avoid the mechanistic compliance processes of model 1-(360° appraisal system).

Under model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system), matters of teacher competency are handled separately to the task of supporting teacher professional growth. Professional leaders simply attest teachers’ competency for salary purposes, unless there are competency issues to address. In which case guidelines stated under the Kindergarten Teachers Collective Agreement (New Zealand Educational Institute:Te Riu Roa, 2013) are used for this process. Attestation for salary purposes is no longer part of the appraisal process. By separating the summative judgement of teacher performance for salary purposes from the formative evaluation for professional growth, it is hoped that appraisal can act as a tool for assisting authentic professional growth opportunities.

Positioning as competent professionals

Teachers commonly viewed themselves as competent and capable in their practice when appraised under model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system). The “negative mindset” of teachers, created by their deficit positioning under model 1- (360° appraisal system) has been replaced with a positive attitude towards professional growth. This system of appraisal supported teachers to reflect on their practice with a positive view to achieving new professional goals. All teachers considered themselves in a positive position in regards to their capacity to make professional judgements and evaluate their own teaching. Most teachers considered themselves in a positive position in regards to their capacity to influence their professional learning goals.

Three teachers and three head teachers explicitly used the word “positive” when referring to model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system). These teachers focused on the way in which this appraisal system enabled them to make their own judgements about their teaching

capabilities, and the direction in which their practice could be further improved. In this way, similarities can be seen between the way in which teachers assess children's learning and support them to achieve their goals, and the way in which teachers assess their own learning and set their own professional learning goals. Model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) complements the strength based model of assessment embraced by New Zealand's early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki*.

Teachers, like children, are motivated to learn when they are intrinsically interested in something which inspires them to know more. Rodd (2006) reports a reduction in frustration for adult learners when they are intrinsically motivated to master new knowledge and skills.

Kasey, who felt "useless" after her first appraisal under the 360° appraisal model, said that model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) is:

... good because you're not coming from a negative mind set when trying to set a goal...you're already classed as experienced and registered so therefore it's about what your interests are or where you want to develop and I feel that if a teacher is interested and it's where they feel that they should develop that that's where the work will get done and it's like children with their interests, if they're passionate about something then they're going to go for it and they're going to learn. If you're trying to get them to do something they don't want to do then that learning may not be so positive for that person, so I think the 'what spins your wheels' model is more positive for teachers and where they see they need to develop and then have that support and guidance alongside them.

Teachers now have "...the opportunity to build on existing skills..." with the freedom of "...self direction and decision-making", one of several principles which Rodd (2006) purports as supporting adults as learners .

Two head teachers were not so positive about their capacity to influence their professional learning goals. Ashleigh raised the matter of processes

not being followed by her senior teacher and highlighted a disingenuous “feel” to the appraisal system itself:

... it was really nice to be able to set your own goals... for me I had some goals set for me by...[the senior teacher] which I wasn't really sure...was part of the process. I think it was a little misleading about what “spins-your-wheels”. The teacher only day at the beginning of last year seemed to suggest that there was going to be lots of room for you to make decisions on what you wanted to do, and so I was a little surprised when...I had some more goals put there for me by... [the senior teacher] and I don't think I actually needed those goals...

Wendy had a similar experience. She said:

I chose my goals and then they were changed by my senior teacher anyway so I kind of didn't see the point in that... so this time I chose those goals that I knew she'd agree with you know? So actually that's not really about what I want to do.

For both head teachers the actions of their professional leader led to confusion and a level of de-motivation, which raises the important issue of mentors having the necessary skills to coach effectively (Edwards, 1992, p. 6).

Although model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) aims to empower teachers' and head teachers to select new professional learning goals based on self reflection, this is unlikely to occur if senior teachers override the preferred choice and direction of professional learning without reaching an agreed understanding and consensus with head teachers in regards to the benefits of a change of goal direction.

The context from which teachers are positioned, their capacity to make professional judgements, evaluate their own teaching, and influence their professional learning goals has a close association with the way in which teachers view themselves.

Teacher self-esteem and self-concept

Teachers' feel valued in their position as registered teachers, no longer needing to prove their teacher registration worthiness before identifying areas of professional growth. Teachers are no longer at the mercy of their colleagues and senior teacher in terms of appraisal results, as was the case with model 1-(360° appraisal system). The positioning of teachers under model 2-(“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) has had a positive effect on teachers' self-esteem and self-concept.

Boston, a teacher, who believed his efforts to retrieve his full registration status cost him his relationship with his partner under model 1- (360° appraisal system), said with the first cycle of model 2-(“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) “...there was no deficit, there was no negativity...no vendetta [from colleagues] ... I think that was a definite plus...” He continues:

...the second model [“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system] it's just positivity right round. I think that gives you time to...focus on your strengths...it's all positive connotations compared to a negative...you were just on a high note, like wow this is me, this is where I'm at, this is what I've done...that's the big step that I see going forward.

Marcia, a teacher, saw model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) as “...a lot more friendly [in comparison to model 1- 360° appraisal system], a lot nicer... and it's not threatening to you... It's more personal actually.”

Marcia, a teacher who took stress leave in order to emotionally deal with an appraisal outcome under model 1- (360° appraisal system) stated:

...this new model [model 2-(“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system)]... it's all positive, no one's allowed to now say you're not [achieving professionally]... Suggestions [such as]...have you thought about? or why don't you do it this way?...[are now offered]

I'm bouncing now...all my confidence has come back... Reaching the goals is so much [more] achievable.

There are striking similarities between Boston and Marcia's experiences of both appraisal systems and the personal, and professional impact that these experiences have had on them.

The way in which an appraisal framework positions teachers affects the way in which professional leaders view teachers' practice, which in turn influences the way that teachers view themselves. Professional leaders now look for ways in which their colleagues implement new knowledge into the programme in order to give positive feedback and encouragement. The lens from which teachers view each other's practice is no longer negative, but positive.

Leaders who make the workplace fun, challenging, and pleasant to work in are supporting two intrinsic reasons for working; enjoyment and job satisfaction (O'Connor, 1998). Styles of leadership and collegial relationships within the team also have an impact on teacher self esteem, self concept, and how supported teachers feel about discussing their individual appraisal progress. Kasey, a teacher, spent time teaching within two teams whilst engaged in the first cycle of model 2- ("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system). Kasey said:

...I've... had some difficulties within the team that I'd worked in and I lost a little bit of my confidence in myself as a teacher and I think that that didn't help the situation [in terms of discussing individual appraisal progress] so at times I possibly felt I couldn't discuss my thoughts surrounding my appraisal because it wouldn't have been accepted by the team. Um, whereas in the second team environment, the team was accepting and they, because of how the structure was, you had to listen, you know?

The positive reinforcement of teachers' strengths appears to be an effective strategy in assisting the process of motivation, which according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, may well support the development of the

fourth of five levels of human needs; that of self-respect and respect from others (Rodd, 2006). Wendy, a head teacher, said: "...the best way to drive teachers to enhance their practice is through using their strengths". Similarly, Edwards (1992) equates the role of appraiser to that of a "coach" and advocates "... the need for plenty of praise and encouragement..." stressing the word "praise" in apPRAISal" (p. 6). Kasey, a teacher, says "... I think that the team that you work with and the leader you work with needs to be able to um, guide you as a teacher and work with you and encourage you and you need to encourage them too..." As leaders accentuate achievement, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris, and Hopkins (2006) assert that teachers are advantaged in terms of "self-efficacy", "aspirations", and "self satisfaction" .

Relationships with colleagues

Teacher participation in model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) appears to enrich relationships between teachers as similar interests in new professional goals emerge. Incidences of collaboration and encouragement have increased as teachers gather information and support each others' progress. Rachel, a teacher, said:

...I'm finding at the moment that there might be two of us that have a similar interest and so actually then...we decide well actually we do think that that's something that [we] would be really interested in learning more about and so we work...together and that way you can encourage each other and find more information and it's just a bit more collaborative than previously [with model 1- 360° appraisal system].

Head teachers are using this appraisal system as a mechanism to collectively support teachers' professional growth, and nurture professional relationships with colleagues. The relationship between teacher and head teacher is strengthened now that a head teacher's focus is no longer on measuring teacher performance for the purpose of salary increments. Ginny, a head teacher, says:

...certainly for my teachers, each term I give them some written feedback... and I ask them for some reflections on their goal...my teachers have said they really look forward to having that time with me to discuss their teaching and for me the feedback I get from my teachers when I discuss mine [appraisal goals] with them...

Authentic leadership is made visible when there is a strong relationship between a leader's actions and values. It is this "value-action consistency" highlighted by (Leithwood et al., 2006, p. 83), which supports collaborative learning opportunities amongst teachers, and strengthens collegial relationships within teaching teams.

All teachers interviewed commented on the benefits of having their head teacher as their professional leader, rather than their senior teacher. This is interesting because one of the rationale behind model 1-(360° appraisal system), according to one of the senior teachers (personal communication, December 17, 2012) was that teachers did not want their head teachers as their professional teachers. Teachers stated that head teachers have a greater understanding of teachers' needs, strengths and interests due to their day-to-day working relationship. Rachel, a teacher, said:

...it's more significant for the head teacher to be part of ...our professional development rather than the senior teacher because actually...it's that whole sharing process, [being] part of the kindergarten session or day ... so much more understanding and more interest than [a senior teacher].

Marcia, a teacher, said:

I think it's better [model 2-"What spins your wheels?" appraisal system is better than model 1- 360° appraisal system]... I think there's more understanding of where I'm at... where I'm working from...[my head teacher is able to] understand me more... well the whole team [is]... I think it's because it's not threatening...you want to, you know, you do improve.

Teachers were asked if there were aspects of model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) which led them to feel discouraged. Not reaching targeted goals was identified by one head teacher and one teacher. Pat, a teacher, responded “...with model 2 [“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system] I get a little bit discouraged [at] the monthly meeting... [when] I don’t feel like I’ve done anything”. The benefit of self evaluation is that shortfalls in achievement are generally identified by the appraisee, leaving the professional leader in a position of coach or mentor, and not as judge. Shifting the position of power from the appraiser to the appraisee encourages the appraisee to take responsibility for his/her own learning, and reduces the risk of friction and turbulence in the appraisee/appraiser relationship.

Trust and transparency--prerequisites to positive relationships--have become familiar features of appraisal discussions under model 2-(“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system). Marcia, a teacher, believes model 2-(“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) is “more truthful” than model 1- (360° appraisal system) which she believes was “false”. Marcia is pleased that “It’s only you and the head teacher that are answering to each other. You’re not having those team mates who you don’t know just how truthful they are [having an input into the outcome of your appraisal]”.

Rachel, a teacher, also indentified the importance of close and positive working relationships within teaching teams:

... as a team we all get on really well so there really isn’t any significant issues or problems at all. But if you were not a team that actually connected well then I guess there could be...[difficulties] if...you didn’t get on with your head teacher and there was that kind of friction between you...

The tension created between team members around appraisal time using model 1- (360° appraisal system) no longer exists. Teachers now:

...reflect on the past year including what you’d achieved so it... gives you an opportunity to actually celebrate what you did well and

gives you a chance to show others and your senior teacher and your head teacher, you know what you've achieved and what things you found challenging throughout the year. (Gisela, head teacher)

This positive lens from which appraisal is now viewed no longer creates a range of scenarios for the head teacher to deal with including the division of teams.

Gisela, a head teacher, believes that:

... this model [model 2-“What spins your wheels?”] it's definitely impacted on relationships in a positive way... [as a head teacher] having the meetings with my team...we get to celebrate, and I get to give them positive feedback about all the great things that they've been doing in their appraisals and so that then makes them feel encouraged and recognized. And it's not often that you get to spend that one on one time, that individual [appraisal meeting] time with each of your team and I think it's really special.

Teaching and learning

Appraisal outcomes are no longer littered with inconsistencies resulting from relationship bias and a multiplicity of appraisers. Data is no longer collated by a third party (the senior teacher). Appraisal outcomes using model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) are the result of a collaborative approach to learning where praise, encouragement, and regular feedback from colleagues and professional leaders are both valued, and part of the process.

According to Southworth (2000) an emphasis on professional culture and teacher development practices, encourages teacher collaboration, professional dialogue, interpersonal security, and trust. Southworth (2000) claims these to be contributing factors to an education centres “...capacity to grow and improve” . Rachel, a teacher, reflects upon the collaborative approach to learning with model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system). “...I think it's just the team approach and the fact that... it [the research and learning] is shared in the group; that is actually what makes

the difference” [between the two appraisal systems]. Ginny, a head teacher says “ ...because we have a team goal, we have a common...thread that we can all pull in to and work on and I think it’s aided communication within the team quite considerably”.

Model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) aims to explore and contribute to children’s learning by encouraging teachers to engage in regular periods of reflection, dialogue, and documentation with the support of colleagues and their professional leaders. As teachers document their individual, and team professional learning journey, an authentic record of accountability is accumulated and collated. Documentation, in the form of children’s learning stories, feedback from colleagues, and self reflection is utilized as a tool for further discussion, reflection, and analysis:

... We’ve got quite a lot of documentation and we can discuss what we’ve written...looking at your actual practice rather than just sort of saying well you’ve done this or you’ve done that. You’re actually looking quite closely at your practice and you have evidence to back that practice... (Ginny, head teacher)

Teachers no longer need to ‘cover their tracks’ by constructing overstated evidence in order to prove that they are meeting professional standard indicators. Gisela, a head teacher, reflects on the genuine benefits that this model of appraisal offers her colleagues, kindergarten children, and herself:

I’ve felt quite excited about my own goals and the goals that my team have chosen and sometimes the goals have been similar, sometimes they’ve all been quite different and I’ve been quite excited watching other team members work on their goals and just watch their growth and... the benefits to the kindergarten [has been] really amazing within the programme and [the] confidence within teachers as they’ve taken on leadership roles within certain areas.

Three head teachers and two teachers talked about the role of accountability and its place within appraisal. Rachel, a teacher,

emphasizes the difference between the two appraisal systems in terms of this accountability:

[With model 1- 360° appraisal system]...it probably wasn't that I didn't need to meet them [the goals] it was just that I didn't actually...feel like I needed even to probably have written evidence or photographic evidence... it was really just... an oral kind of chat with... [the senior teacher], just to tell her how... things were going and what I was getting from them really. But actually I think this [model 2- "What spins your wheels?" appraisal system] is a far more in depth way of doing it and far more ...accountable. With these ones [goals] we actually have them written up on our kindergarten...notice board, so that everyone knows all the time what it is that we're actually working at and then we have these folders that we have...with our team goal and the others add to that as well...

Wendy, a head teacher, sees the level of accountability quite differently from Rachel. Wendy says that with model 2- ("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) "...you can choose to do whatever you want, so actually you can choose to just do nothing-so that to me is fairly loose". Both Wendy and Ashleigh, head teachers, believe the framework of this appraisal model to be weak. Wendy refers to it as "loose" and Ashleigh as "floppy" with a lack of guidelines for professional leaders to follow. Wendy, new to her head teacher role, had not been party to all discussions regarding model 2- ("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system). Wendy's understanding of the system is that because "...there's no guidelines for it it's kind of up to you what you do. It's not wrong 'till you get it wrong". Wendy goes on to say that "...the "what spins your wheels?" [appraisal system] will only be as good as the teacher's effort to reflect, choose a topic and strengthen their practice". The professional leaders' role and contribution to supporting teachers' practice is perhaps worthy of consideration here. That head teachers are deeming the models framework to be "loose" and "floppy" indicates a degree of work still needing to be done to improve the supporting documentation which

provides clarity of process. Further clarification of the professional leaders' role is also in likely need of addressing.

When teachers and head teachers were asked about model 2- ("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system)'s contribution to pedagogical change, responses were varied but positive. Ashleigh said "... both of the topics [professional learning goals] that I've chosen, I think will have a direct impact on children's learning and a direct impact upon my teaching". Wendy's response provided some cause for concern:

You know to be honest I'm doing my appraisal. I set my goals and then I forget about them and then just before, this is awful [laugh] but just before they come up for um you know time, you kind of look at them and go "oh yeah, this is how I have or haven't done that" and then you write about it and then you have a meeting...

Summary

Teachers commonly view themselves as qualified and proficient in their practice when appraised using model 2- ("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system). Teachers have the capacity to make professional judgements and evaluate their own teaching and learning, although senior teachers need to be mindful of dominating head teachers preferred professional learning choices.

An effective way of measuring the extent to which model 2- ("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) contributed to teacher self esteem and self concept is by noting comments from teachers about model 1- (360° appraisal system), and comparing them with comments about model 2- ("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system). Comments such as "[It] made me feel like I didn't know what I was talking about..." and "I'm useless" refer to ways in which model 1- (360° appraisal system) affected teacher self-esteem. In contrast to this, comments such as "... all my confidence has come back" and "...there was no negativity", "...no deficit..." "no vendetta [from colleagues]..." were comments referring to model 2- ("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system). This would suggest that

the extent to which model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) contributed to teacher self esteem and self concept has been considerable.

The implementation of professional learning goals, discussion, and collaborative research have replaced the isolated, and individualized style of achieving appraisal goals that model 1- (360° appraisal system) created. The secrecy of model 1- (360° appraisal system) has been replaced with trust and transparency between teachers under model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system).

Teachers within the early childhood sector “team teach” in small to large groups of teachers throughout each day, constantly communicating with each other in order to ensure optimal functioning of the learning environment. It is therefore, appropriate that an appraisal system used to promote the professional growth of teachers is philosophically in line with this team culture.

The extent to which model 2-(“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) contributed to teaching and learning varies. Teachers have expressed feeling “excited” about their own goals and those of their colleagues, whilst others have not felt this way. Identifying her own and colleague’s professional growth, one head teacher has also enjoyed watching members of her team take on leadership roles within certain areas in the kindergarten.

The main philosophical difference between the two systems of appraisal is that teachers undergoing review using model 1- (360° appraisal system) were placed in a position of initially needing to prove their professional competence before looking towards professional development, whereas teachers engaged in the appraisal process of model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) are already deemed competent and capable teachers. Competency, having already been established with the completion of the teacher registration process, leaves the system of appraisal available to excite and inspire teachers to reach new heights in their teaching and learning journey.

This chapter identifies emerging patterns and themes through the voice and construct of knowledge between teacher and researcher. Teachers' experiences and interpretations of events are explained and inform findings. In the following chapter factors within appraisal systems contributing to teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change are explored.

CHAPTER FIVE - WHAT FACTORS WITHIN THESE APPRAISAL SYSTEMS CONTRIBUTE TO TEACHER MOTIVATION, COLLEGIAL RELATIONSHIPS AND PEDAGOGICAL CHANGE?

Introduction

Not only does Goodfellow (2002) advocate that "...being a teacher is much more than doing teaching" (p. 6) but also that "...standards of excellence are more likely to be achieved where there is greater acknowledgment of the person-in-the-process" (p.13). Teacher appraisal, a mechanism designed to improve standards of teaching practice, is more likely to succeed in achieving this outcome when value is placed on teachers' current wisdom, and their ability to make sound judgements in collaboration with the appraiser when addressing future professional learning opportunities.

In this chapter I have synthesised findings from literature, documentation from participants' appraisals, and participant interview data in order to address the second research question, "What factors within these appraisal systems contribute to teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change?"

Four main factors have emerged:

- 1) Teacher *buy-in* is necessary (teachers believe the process of appraisal is a worthwhile investment enriching both teaching and learning)
- 2) The appraisal framework and process is transparent and understood by both appraisee and appraiser
- 3) Teachers are viewed as capable and competent teachers and learners at the onset of, and during the appraisal process; their passions are nurtured and they are treated fairly, with dignity and respect

- 4) The cyclical process of self and team reflection, regular dialogue, goal setting, and investigation are free from competency and salary issues, and professional learning goals are well resourced.

Each factor is introduced, and then fully explored in order to authenticate its contribution to teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change. The process of triangulation (where relevant), adds a richness and depth to the conceptualisation of factors.

Factor 1 - Teacher *buy-in*

Teachers, at times, feel overwhelmed with a perceived lack of available time in which to carry out the varying array of tasks needing to be performed as part of their work. It is, therefore essential that compliance requirements such as teacher appraisal achieve the necessary buy-in from teachers, ensuring that outcomes benefiting both teachers and children are achieved.

Teacher buy-in is a somewhat complex process that occurs in a multiplicity of ways. Buy-in provides opportunities for motivation and engagement. In the context of appraisal, it occurs when:

- Teachers value and view the concept of appraisal as worthwhile- teachers have ownership of the process.

All teachers interviewed understood the purpose of appraisal and viewed it as a way of continuing "... to inspire and up-skill ... [their] teaching practice..." (Rachel, teacher). Wendy, a head teacher, believed it to be "...a formal opportunity for people to actually reflect on their year and to create a new goal for the coming year, so to have something to aspire to".

Teachers need to believe that their participation in the process will make a positive difference to both their teaching, and children's learning.

According to Mangieri et al. (1994), "...motivated learning over extensive periods of time can lead to extraordinary levels of performance" (p. 33), which in turn "...ultimately influence[s] the success of an organization"

(Muller et al., 2009, p. 577). Fenstermacher and Richardson (2000), however, stress that the equation of quality teaching leading to improved student learning, is too simplistic and does not take into account the impact of contextual factors such as poverty, resources, and cultural differences such as student backgrounds.

Although I agree with Fenstermacher and Richardson, improved learning opportunities for both children and parents have occurred in one kindergarten as a result of teachers' team goal setting and professional development. In this kindergarten, teachers have transformed the way in which they write and present observations they make of children's learning---now printing a hard copy of the e-version they continue to create. Teachers now write to the child rather than the parent, envisaging that the child is being read the information as a bed time story. According to teachers, via interview and appraisal documentation, children and their parents now access the printed information more readily and regularly. Children are reflecting on their own learning. Parents are now asked and are responding to feedback questions at the end of children's observations, such as "What do you think Mum?" This is creating increased discussion between kindergarten and home about children's experiences, which teachers are using to support learning opportunities for children. Children's increased exposure to their profile books is providing greater opportunities for a "familiarity with print..." (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 78), and greater opportunities for children to set their own learning goals as they build on familiar and shared experiences with both their teachers and families.

Appraisal has the potential to deliver both personal and professional benefits to teachers; personal benefits such as an increased sense of self-esteem, and professional benefits such as an increased sense of direction and self-efficacy. A teacher's self esteem is a self evaluation of personal and professional worth and value. A teacher's self-efficacy on the other hand is the personal belief regarding one's capability of successfully achieving a desired outcome in relation to aspects of teaching. Gibbs

(2006) purports the benefits of high levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy for teacher motivation.

Marcia, who reacted with aversion and absolute disengagement when her appraisal goals were imposed on her by her senior teacher using model 1- (360° system of appraisal) did not value the system's process, and said she was unable to reap either personal or professional benefits as a result. In contrast, when asked about model 2-("what spins your wheels?") appraisal system, Marcia said "...you want to, you know, you do improve". A comparison of Marcia's attitude from one system of appraisal to the next indicates her degree of buy-in. This is clearly a factor in each system's effectiveness in relationship to teacher motivation and pedagogical change.

- Teachers are involved in the ongoing development of the appraisal system.

The importance of teacher involvement which was thought by Rachel to have enhanced the effectiveness of implementing appraisal model 2 – ("What spins your wheels?") is also advocated by other writers (Fitzgerald et al., 2003; Jones, 2000; Kanter, 1985; Murdoch, 2000) to be a useful tool in generating an undertaking to change.

... I think we're really lucky and...fortunate really ... that the association ... have been prepared to actually acknowledge that perhaps model 1 [360° appraisal system] was not the best option and they have actually used...members from teaching teams to help put this ["What spins your wheels?" appraisal] model together...because we [teachers] are actually the ones that ... are going to be dealing with it and working with it, so I think it's great that...they've taken the time to get our voice and perhaps that's what's making it feel so much more successful. (Rachel, teacher)

Although teachers were active participants in the ongoing development of model 1-(360° appraisal system) this process did nothing to nurture teachers' passions.

...it [model 1-360° appraisal system] just felt a bit like it was something that we had to do...it had to be seen to be being done and actually that was almost like it was just going through the motions sometimes...It was more of a compliance model basically...it didn't inspire me... It was really more a... 'had to do' rather than a 'want to do'. (Rachel, teacher)

Buy-in, a prerequisite to collaborative change, is therefore unlikely to be sustainable without a shared vision.

- Teachers share in the vision and culture of the organization.

"Building a shared vision" (Senge, 1990, p. 156) from within an organization involves "managing the human side of change" (Kanter, 1985, p. 52). Building reciprocal and responsive relationships within an organization helps teachers to reject the notion of a "them-and-us" (management and workers) mentality or culture--so easily created with a top down organizational structure and/or approach to change. Duncan (1999) refers to the importance of collegiality declaring that "...professional improvement will only occur and thrive in an atmosphere of collegiality where all staff, including managers recognise themselves as learners" (p.38).

Appraisal systems which help teachers to "...expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together" (Senge, 1990, p. 150), would appear to be worthwhile reasons to engage teachers in the process of buy-in.

Wendy, however, new to the role of head teacher, believed that model 2- ("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) is just another document

that she holds responsibility for, and must lead her team through. She reported feeling overloaded and overwhelmed with work in her new position. She was unsure what support was available to her in terms of her own appraisal journey, and felt that she had not been given a thorough induction in the new model. Wendy stated “...there’s no guidelines to follow ...or very few guidelines...” Wendy was unmotivated and had not developed a shared vision of this appraisal system. A shared vision, a prerequisite to sustainable change, is unlikely to occur without transparency and mutual understanding. In addition, Wendy’s comments indicate the importance of adequate resourcing for both system and pedagogical change.

Factor 2 - The appraisal framework

Understanding an appraisal systems framework and processes are a factor which impacts on a teacher’s ability to feel motivated and inspired about developing, and implementing a professional development plan in order to improve practice. In Wendy’s case, her attitude towards Model 2- (“What-spins-your-wheels?” appraisal system), in a head teaching capacity, has the potential to impact not only on her own, but her team’s attitude to learning and pedagogical shifts.

One way to enable the appraisal design to be understood is through a thorough induction process. Jones (2000) advocates that “...teacher appraisal is a potential minefield for the uninitiated”(p. 34). An induction process is a means of providing clarity to those not yet conversant, it enables the appraisal system to be explored and explained.

Inducting, or introducing new teachers to model 1- (360° appraisal system) relied heavily upon established teaching teams disseminating information- with the assistance of a set of appraisal guidelines. This method appeared to be highly ineffective gauging by the level of dissatisfaction from participants, which I will explore in more detail.

Although the appraisal guidelines reflected the *essence* or *spirit* of model 1-(360° system of appraisal), the document’s failure lay in its lack of attention to detail and clarity. This was a strong theme throughout most

interviews. Teachers' descriptions of appraisal processes using this system highlighted the confusion that occurred when the process was not understood. Ambiguity surrounding what teaching standards looked like in practice, and what *un-ticked boxes* actually meant, created situations for appraisees-which they should never have experienced. This issue of clarity, in regards to New Zealand Teaching Standards was not limited to the early childhood sector. A similar situation was identified by Duncan (1999) and Fitzgerald et al. (2003); the need to identify which standard applied to which situation for teachers in the compulsory (primary and secondary education) sector.

All participants except one highlighted a thorough induction process as being an important component in achieving positive appraisal results. Unambiguous terminology and a transparent process enables a fair and equitable platform from which appraisee's work can be enhanced, valued and affirmed. A lack of clarity can lead to a range of inconsistencies and confusion for both appraisees and appraisers. When aspects of the process are open to interpretation situations of inequity are possible. Inequity can impact on appraisal outcomes.

...if you didn't necessarily sit down as a team with the 360° model and discuss what things meant... sometimes people would fail something because um, a teacher may not have identified seeing them do that and so therefore they would think negatively on that, so if I was doing someone's appraisal I would say, "Okay I haven't seen, I'm not sure when you're doing this, can you tell me about that?" And they would then explain it to me and I would feel where I would be able to tick them then. But not all people do that and I think that can then show up negatively within that system (Kasey, teacher).

...they [the teaching team] hadn't really unpacked what those indicators and standards were and meant, like what should someone be doing at the beginning level, what should someone be doing at a competent teacher level and what should someone be

doing at the role model level-they hadn't unpacked that and obviously discussed that and that's what I made sure that [I did] with every team. Every year we went through everything because everyone's understandings impacted on how they were answering the appraisals or how they were appraising their peers. (Gisela, head teacher)

The biggest difficulty was faced by appraisees who: a) felt they lacked a thorough induction into model 1-(360° appraisal system) and were, therefore unsure how the system worked, and b) believed their colleagues had not yet had the opportunity to form a collegial relationship with them. These appraisees felt that their appraisal had a greater potential to lead to a negative outcome than those appraisees who knew how the system worked, and had formed positive and trusting relationships with their colleagues (and for the purpose of this appraisal system) – their appraisers.

... I wasn't given an induction and I was thrown in the deep end of a model which I didn't know...I lost my full registration. Going through the process with a head teacher which was new to me and a staff member and a model I had no idea about...I was then demoted to 'subject-to-confirmation' and spent eighteen months to regain my full registration...So not a nice um journey for myself. I lost self esteem, um I literally had to start again and try to rebuild my self esteem as a teacher and my practice and I spent eighteen months to have to prove that to a head teacher...probably two terms later I was then given an induction on the process of the appraisal which was too little too late...if you are inducted on a system then at least you can understand and work with it not work against it... (Boston, teacher)

...for me the disadvantages in that [360°] model was ... I didn't know how the model worked and I didn't have any um instructions or mentorship on how the model worked...I never really got told how the 360° appraisal model was supposed to work and it was three

years in before I found out that I hadn't been doing it right... (Ginny, head teacher)

These comments throughout interview data depict a strong desire by participants to understand what is expected of them when engaged in teacher appraisal. Several writers (Jones, 2000; Lacey, 1996; McLelland & Ramsey, 1993) also advocate for clarity of purpose and process to be available for appraisees.

The anonymity of appraisers' summative findings using model 1-(360° appraisal) lacked transparency for the appraisee. The appraisee never knew what each appraiser (his/her teaching colleagues) thought of his/her practice. At times, perceived as secretive, censored, dishonest, and a barrier to communication, the system appeared to reek of betrayal. This contributed, if not created the collegial problems discussed earlier in chapter four, and the threats to freedom identified by Maslow (1987) discussed in chapter two.

Clarity and cohesion of both framework and process, offers teachers a clear pathway in which to proceed. It minimises, isolates, or eliminates the risk of confusion, frustration and de-motivation, all of which potentially undermine the very outcomes that the mechanism of teacher appraisal aims to create.

...some people, myself included like to have some boundaries around things. Even if you don't like them it can feel quite safe to know exactly what's expected of you and otherwise you're kind of stuck in that space that I mentioned before where it's not wrong until you get it wrong. (Wendy, head teacher)

Appraisal induction meetings with teachers and head teachers provide opportunities for information sharing and teacher buy-in.

...we were given some professional development through the association that gave us an indication of how it ["model 2-(“What spins your wheels?”) appraisal system] was going to be and I think we were all well versed in how it was going to look before it actually

arrived; so we all had our heads around what it was going to entail which I think is important because it's useful to be given the same information so we're all being, we're all doing it the same way. Whereas if it's interpretation from just head teachers to teachers then yeah, I'm not so sure that that would actually happen, that's been quite successful. (Rachel, teacher)

Although meetings are a useful tool for disseminating information to groups of people, on their own they may not provide the clarity needed for all teachers. Without a clear documented explanation of the systems framework and process (appraisal guidelines), teachers and professional leaders can be left feeling somewhat frustrated and sceptical of the system's ability to achieve predicted objectives.

... I don't believe that head teachers have been given enough professional development to guide their own teams through the process [of model 2-(“What spins your wheels?”) appraisal system]...I don't think we've been given enough professional development to help us if there was difficulty within the team...I don't for instance, when I'm meeting with my teachers know whether I'm doing it, doing it right and I'm not sure, I'm doing for instance, I'm really just copying what [the senior teacher] does for me and I'm not really sure if that's what's supposed to occur-just have a talk about how things are in general, maybe pinpoint a few, yeah it seems to feel like it's a climatic gauge of how things are at the kindergarten for me when I meet with [the senior teacher] and I'm also probably doing the same for my teachers because I don't know any different ...we need some more professional development full stop. Not just head teachers but teachers as well... I guess it's a few more guidelines [that are needed]. (Ashleigh, head teacher)

Clear and cohesive guidelines provide transparency. The appraisal guidelines for model 2-(“What spins your wheels?”) resemble a *contractual type* document. The contradiction here is that this appraisal system, designed to motivate and inspire teachers to reach their professional

potential by purposefully separating *appraisal for professional growth* from *appraisal for performance review*, (a strategy advocated by Edwards (1992) and Jones (2000), has a set of guidelines whereby the *format* appears to align with *appraisal for performance review*. My concern is that a disjointed partnership between philosophy and supporting documentation may generate levels of confusion and mistrust amongst teachers; a situation already experienced with model 1-(360° system of appraisal), and add to the already “disingenuous” feel of model 2-(“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) experienced by two head teachers who believed their direction or goal-setting had been sabotaged by their senior teacher.

Factor 3 - Teachers are viewed as capable and competent

Gibbs (2006) explains that “teachers with high teacher self-efficacy are more likely to be competent” (p. 42). This research supports the notion that when teachers view themselves and are viewed by others as capable and competent teachers and learners, their self-efficacy, esteem and concept--a set of self-perceptions formed through interpretation and experience of the environment, and significantly influenced by the reinforcements and evaluation by significant others’-- (Gibbs, 2006, p. 262), is further enhanced. This cycle of self confidence and competency is instrumental in the formation of what Bandura (2000) terms *human agency*. Bandura purports that:

Among the mechanisms of human agency, none is more focal or pervading than the belief of personal efficacy. This core belief is the foundation of human agency. Unless people believe that they can produce desired effects and forestall undesired ones by their actions, they have little incentive to act. (p. 75)

Teacher motivation for goal setting and learning is enhanced when teachers have a positive sense of their own human agency.

Teachers talk about feeling positive whilst engaged in model 2- (“What spins your wheels?”) appraisal system. Marcia says “I’m bouncing now [feeling happy] all my confidence has come back... reaching the goals is

so much [more] achievable". According to Goleman (2004, pp. 6,7), the emotion of *happiness* also leads to enthusiasm and a readiness for goal-setting due to increased activity in the brain and an increase in available energy. Marcia's statement exemplifies this sequence of happiness, readiness, and motivation with goal attainment.

An appraisal system designed to recognize the person in the process (Goodfellow, 2002, p. 6), and the complexity of teachers work is more likely to strengthen teacher self-efficacy, esteem and concept, and in turn teacher competency, than a system that does not. Barblett and Loudon (2001) claim that "the most valuable things we do [as teachers] are often the most difficult to monitor" (p. 7), and Muller et al. (2009) remind us that a system which places demands on teachers to behave in a specific manner, creates teachers who are less self-motivated towards their work. Model 2- ("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) has been designed to empower teachers to set their own professional learning direction and nurture teachers' passions, whilst simultaneously supporting teachers' to further develop intrapersonal qualities such as feelings, attitudes, beliefs and values in order to influence pedagogical shifts.

Duncan (1999) maintains that "teaching staff must feel valued and respected and remain motivated to develop professionally throughout their careers" , whilst Lacey (1996) advocates "effective appraisal for improvement is about identifying and building on strengths and seeking individual improvement..."(p. 4). Teachers said: "[that the formative appraisal system of model 2- ("What spins your wheels?")]"...makes the appraisal more of a celebration and a goal setting time than an anxious time"(Gisela), "...more friendly, a lot nicer... not threatening to you... its more personal actually...a fairer system..." (Marcia), and "...it's just positivity right round... you can focus on your strengths and the extensions" (Boston).

Comments from these teachers suggest that model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) is in line with: a) Duncan's (1999) thoughts regarding the development of professional motivation, b) Lacey's (1996)

thoughts regarding an effective appraisal system, and c) positive shifts in attitude towards appraisal and the benefits that it may offer teachers both personally and professionally. Teachers who had lost their self-confidence under model 1- (360° appraisal system) experienced a return of confidence under model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system). The appraisee is now the centre of the process not a matrix system of boxes by which the appraisee is judged or "marked" against. Using a formative approach to evaluating teaching development within this process enables teachers to be treated fairly, with respect and dignity.

The emotive appraisal title "What spins your wheels?" is designed to acknowledge teacher competency and stimulate teachers' professional passions. Teachers understand that "...you're already classed as experienced and registered so therefore it's about what your interests are or where you want to develop..." (Kasey). This is further highlighted in one of the guiding principles of this appraisal system which states: "...experience and professional judgement guides action plans..." (Where Kindergarten Association, 2012, p. 3).

When asked to describe appraisal model 2-("What spins your wheels?") teacher's commented on the "... self management and motivation[al]" aspects of the system and how that worked best for them (Boston), and how the system supported "...what you're interested in focusing on...where your passion is or where you would like to develop yourself..." (Kasey). These responses suggest that model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) is supporting teachers to see themselves as agents of their own learning, exercising control over their own professional direction, in order for them to feel effective and capable in their teaching performance.

Degrees of pedagogical shifts in teachers thinking and practice were evident throughout teachers' appraisal data often as a result of increased confidence. One head teacher, whose goal was "to continue to develop in the areas of giving effective feedback and critique to the team" discovered this to be an unidentified strength, revealed through the process of

reflection using model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system). The reflection process involved the appraisee gathering, then reviewing a collection of evidence accumulated over a period of one year. Evidence ranged from journal notes, colleagues and parents' feedback, children's learning stories and photographs et cetera. This was then discussed with her professional leader, together with the new set of professional learning goals for the following year. Not only did this goal support this head teacher's colleagues in achieving their own professional learning goals, but their supportive feedback to her led to her increased confidence and competence in leadership skill. It was, as Ginny identified, "...a win-win situation" which also resulted in benefits for children as teachers confidence in their practice grew.

Factor 4 - The cyclical process

It is beneficial for self reflection to be grounded in honesty and for resources to be available to support the professional requirements of appraisees, if the process of appraisal is to achieve the outcomes it sets out to accomplish. If salary increments and job security are at stake teachers are unlikely to expose and address areas of weakness with appraisers. Enthusiasm can replace apprehension when the appraisee is free from this pressure "...I much prefer having the competency process as separate to appraisal, it makes it much more clear um, fair in a way. It makes the appraisal more of a celebration and a goal setting time than an anxious time" (Gisela).

Reflection, involves stopping to think, making sense of these thoughts, learning from this in order to change practice, and using this learning to affect future actions (Osman, 2005). Thinking critically, involves the technique of deconstruction; identifying different parts, factors or events, and examining them for meaning. The process of reconstruction-placing the parts, factors or events back together, leads to understanding and new meaning (Bowell & Kemp, 2002; O'Connor & Diggins, 2002). Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) remind us that "one of the most effective developmental practices is self-evaluating one's performance" (p. 34). This research suggests that peer and team reflection also have an

important part to play in goal setting and investigation, where the role of a collaborative process involving conversation and encouragement and its relationship to teacher motivation and outcomes for children is significant.

Gibbs (2006) states that teachers who exhibit dispositions such as motivation, persistence, innovation, and resilience are in a greater position to support children's learning. It is useful to remember, however, as Fenstermacher & Richardson (2000) suggest that enhancing the quality of teaching is only a part of the equation of improving the quality of what the learner learns. Devising a method which enables the appraisee to critically reflect upon and evaluate progress made towards appraisal objectives involves a committed approach to improved learning, with outcomes for children being the optimal goal.

Model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) goes some way towards achieving a process which encourages the appraisee to reflect, evaluate, set new appraisal goals, then engage in the investigative process of a collaborative learning cycle. It does not, however, support teachers to reflect to any real depth on their learning, or the impact of this learning on their practice or children's learning. Nor does it require a starting point, where appraisees reflect upon what they already know about their chosen area of development, thereby making the process of evaluating progress potentially less meaningful. This is interesting because finding out what children already know about a topic before exploring it further is a technique used by teachers in order to measure the extent of children's learning. Model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) strengthens teachers' motivation for professional learning, and reinforces a culture of collegial learners. It lacks however, clear guidelines for an action research approach, which would potentially enrich the critical enquiry needed to sustain a professional culture of change and improvement.

The depth of self and team reflection evident in participant appraisal data varies, but appears to be superficial. Apparent also, in the majority of data is a lack of evidence to support claims of appraisal goal outcomes. When

responding to the reflective question: “Describe how learning for children has been enhanced as a result of work on last year’s goals” one head teacher, whose goal had been “to become more proficient at documenting children’s assessment, planning, and evaluation” wrote, “Children have more pride and ownership of the documentation, in particular, the paper portfolios which they refer to often” Pride and ownership of documented learning could be considered factors in stimulating children’s enthusiasm for literacy experiences and new learning opportunities “...and as a tool that nurtures...well-being and [a] sense of belonging (Carr & Lee, 2012, p. 11), due to encouraging comments by teachers in children’s learning stories. However, it is difficult to ascertain whether these outcomes were achieved as there was no documentation to support this, unless evidence was recorded as learning stories in children’s portfolios. In which case, it would be useful to have copies of these included with appraisal documentation as evidence as children’s learning.

Another head teacher chose “giving regular feedback to the team” as one of her goals and when describing how learning for children had been enhanced as a result of work on this goal, she wrote “...for the children it ensures each day runs smoothly and that the team is there for them to support them in their learning as they the team themselves are supported and encouraged in their roles”. I remain unconvinced that a “smooth running day” or “children’s supported learning” are the result of in-depth self reflection, or are significant outcomes for children. If “evaluation is the task at the heart of effective decision-making” as Cardno (2003, p. 34) suggests, how might a lack, or shallow attempt at it, affect decision-making for children’s learning and for further goal setting and investigation?

Surface and deep levels of learning are explored by Biggs (1987) and Atherton (2011) in relationship to *attitudes* to learning. *Surface learning* is associated with struggle, and *deep learning* associated with enthusiasm. Although (model 2-“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) is not associated with teachers’ struggled learning, nor does it elicit the depth of reflection and possibly learning, required for substantial pedagogy shifts. There is, however, evidence of teacher excitement and motivation for

learning. One teacher said that "...appraisal goal[s] that we've set for ourselves...have really sort of set us alight and continue to do so..." (Rachel). This implies that if appraisees were required to actively critique their learning, its impact on their teaching, and children's learning at several intervals throughout the annual cycle, the enthusiasm to do so may well be there. Unfortunately, prompts devised to stimulate reflection, require appraisees only to comment on their "success on goals over the past 6 months" and "challenges presented" (Where Kindergarten Association, 2012, p. 15). Using a series of questions or prompts to stimulate deeper thinking and reflection may support teachers to re-examine and change their values, by moving from what Argris and Schon (1996) refer to as a single loop learning cycle, which applies a closed approach to examining beliefs, to a double loop, where the belief system of the teacher is questioned and challenged before further action is taken.

Piggot-Irvine & Cardno (2005) give an excellent example of two school principals setting their appraisal goals. One principal engages in a quick fix or single loop method (the most typical approach according to Piggot-Irvine & Cardno), which involves selecting a one day course to attend, thereby addressing the professional learning needs of the appraisal objective. The second principal plans a deep learning or double loop method, which begins with a questionnaire to colleagues in order to assess his/her current professional positioning from the viewpoint of colleagues, and is followed by a series of learning opportunities, reflection, observation, and feedback sessions from colleagues. This method involves a careful process of documentation.

Although the professional learning plans of participants in this study do not resemble this double loop learning cycle, the appraisal guidelines for model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system) do provide examples which share similarities. If a) the appraisal guidelines stressed the importance of the double loop learning cycle, which encompasses an in-built mechanism of self reflection to guide thinking throughout the appraisal cycle, and b) professional leaders were informed during the process of induction of the need for appraisees to use this method, I

believe the depth of reflection which supports pedagogical shifts would be evident throughout appraisees' documentation. This again highlights the importance of a cohesive appraisal framework and processes, and the need for adequate training given to professional leaders (Jones, 2000).

Grootenboer (2000) believes "...it is impossible to mandate notions of collaboration and reflection without destroying their fundamental qualities, for by their very nature they are voluntary" (p. 18), and is adamant that legislation from government is not the answer. This research suggests that it is professional leaders within teaching teams who have built working relationships and gained the trust of their colleagues, who have a significant part to play in supporting teacher development through the process of collaboration and reflection.

Regular, formal and informal dialogue and discussion between the appraisee, colleagues, and the professional leader is an expectation of model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system). It appears to strengthen collegial relationships between teachers, which according to Lunn (2006) leads to trust and growing teacher confidence.

For me just having responsibility for doing my teachers appraisals has worked really well for me and I think um, has strengthened us as a team ... I think the fact that we set a team goal is also...probably one of the best things because it helps everybody focus on the vision for your whole kindergarten rather than be individualised. (Ginny)

It is difficult to say whether this focus or vision for the "whole kindergarten" rather than an individual focus, would satisfy Lunn, who goes on to say that "collegiality must go further than just working and sharing together and the focus must be on the core business of improving student learning" (p. 9). It is however, loosely in line with what McLelland and Ramsey (1993) term the "quality circle" (p. 20), where teachers work collaboratively on a professional development project, thereby progressing collectively through a professional learning opportunity. Hall (2001) highlights the possibility of teachers becoming re-professionalised through the process

of whole centre development, as new skills are learnt through this collaborative process-an exciting and achievable prospect for those teachers who are part of an appraisal system which aims to contribute to teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change.

Summary

This chapter synthesised findings from the research in order to establish factors which contribute to teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change. Participant interviews highlighted the four factors of: teacher *buy-in*; a clearly understood cyclical framework and process; teachers as capable and competent professionals; and a system free from competency pay related issues, as being essential to an effective and useful appraisal system. The analysis of participant appraisal data contributed to the process of triangulation, and exposed the need for ways in which to strengthen model 2-("What spins your wheels?" appraisal systems) approach to encouraging critical reflection. Theories generated from both interviews and appraisal data are generally consistent with the literature.

The next chapter explores the principles which underpin effective appraisal systems in early childhood settings, and how this might contribute to improving the quality of teaching within an early childhood context in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

CHAPTER SIX - CONCLUSION

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore teachers' experiences and perceptions of two different systems of appraisal. By examining factors within these appraisal systems that teachers identified as contributing to teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change, the study aimed to provide an understanding of principles which underpinned responsive appraisal systems, in order to support learning opportunities for both teachers and children within an early childhood context in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Summary of key findings

There have been significant changes made to Whero Kindergarten Association's appraisal system since 2010. The deficit positioning of teachers using model 1- (360° system of appraisal), which contributed to the deterioration of collegial relationships and motivation for some teachers, has been replaced with Model 2- ("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system); a high trust system of appraisal situating teachers as active participants and agents of their own learning. For all but one head teacher, this has enhanced motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change.

Some teachers identified the conflicting paradigms of *Te Whāriki: The Early Childhood Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 1996), which supports constructionist teaching practices, with behaviourist learning expectations within model 1- (360° system of appraisal). By recognising teachers' competencies and their ability to determine their own goals, the introduction of Model 2- ("What spins your wheels?" appraisal system), has aligned teacher appraisal with the early childhood curriculum; an empowering and holistic approach to learning.

This alignment of frameworks has also led to an alignment of principles between curriculum and appraisal system: principles, which form the foundation of *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996): holism, empowerment, relationships and community. These principles are also identifiable within the *themes* emerging from teachers' experiences of both appraisal systems, *factors* within these systems, and *signposts* within the literature.

It makes perfect sense that principles underpinning children's learning are the same for teachers. There is no reason why a curriculum for children's learning which emphasises "...the critical role of socially and culturally mediated learning and... reciprocal and responsive relationships for children..." (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 9), would not apply the same pedagogical orientation to an appraisal system which aims to support teachers learning.

With Lee (2010) having already aligned these principles within effective professional development strategies, and Bayes (1997) having already recommended that effective appraisal--responsible for professional development--is based on the early childhood curriculum, it is timely that a teacher appraisal system which aligns the early childhood curriculum theoretical framework, principles, and evaluation practices has been developed; where "...pedagogy, positivity, passion and participation..." are part of a 'credit' rather than 'deficit' approach to learning (Lee, 2010, p. 2).

Limitations

The limitations of this study are related to the size and formation of the sample. The experiences of five teachers and four head teachers, and two appraisal systems (within one kindergarten Association), have enabled an in-depth but limited number of teacher experiences and systems of appraisal. A larger number of participants—including senior teachers and managers--and appraisal systems from a wider range of early childhood centres may provide greater insight into the ways in which leaders support teachers to build their capacity for learning, and how this

may support intrinsic motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change. The gender imbalance--one male participant and eight female participants—is limiting, but reflective of the small number of male teachers within the sector, which continues to predominately attract and employ female teachers; although numbers of male teachers are increasing.

Despite the limitations of this research, the study has provided an insight into the development and implementation of an appraisal system that is contributing positively to learning opportunities for teachers and children. While it is not possible to generalise the findings of this study, interested readers have the opportunity to reflect on participants' stories from their own viewpoint and context. It is hoped that the identification of patterns and trends from this study will prompt teachers and other leaders to ask questions within their own teams in order to inform the development of their appraisal system.

Suggestions for appraisal development

There are a number of advantages in having a teacher appraisal system which aligns its theoretical framework, principles, and evaluation practices with its curriculum framework. One way of illustrating these advantages is by considering the themes, factors, and signposts, which have emerged from this research, with the principles and assessment practices within *Te Whāriki*. In doing so, made evident, is their contribution to teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change.

Holism

Teachers, like children, learn when their passions are nurtured. This is more likely to occur when teachers are positioned in relation to their ability to make professional judgements, evaluate their own teaching, and influence their future professional learning goals. A professional rather than bureaucratic system of appraisal is designed to "...encompass all dimensions of... [teachers] learning and development and should see...

teacher[s] as a whole” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 30). When an innovative, unambiguous, transparent, and cohesive appraisal framework and process is in place--and understood by both appraisee and appraiser--“attributes... [of] respect, curiosity, trust, reflection, a sense of belonging, confidence, independence, and responsibility [are made possible]” (p. 30). These, are essential elements of an effective appraisal system which contribute towards teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change. The teacher appraisal system reflects the holistic way that teacher’s learn.

Empowerment

When teachers are viewed as capable and competent learners at the onset of, and during the appraisal process, they are empowered; self esteem, efficacy and concept are enhanced. When teachers are given the opportunity to ‘buy in’ to the purpose and process of appraisal, they are more likely to believe that appraisal is a worthwhile investment of their time—and therefore feel motivated. They are more likely to feel empowered and motivated than if an appraisal system is handed down to them. An effective appraisal system “...empowers ... [teachers] to learn and grow” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 14). Self assessment, action research and data-based inquiry provide “...useful information for ... [teachers] to improve the ways... [in which their teaching meets] children’s needs”; in this way teaching pedagogy is further developed (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 30). “Feedback to...[teachers] on their learning and development should enhance their sense of...[‘self’] as capable people and competent learners” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 30).

Relationships

When teachers are encouraged to work collaboratively and pool their funds of knowledge they feel motivated to learn, and opportunities for enriched relationships between teachers are created as similar interests in new professional learning goals emerge. Teachers are treated fairly, with dignity, and respect.

With the support of skilled leaders, the cyclical process of self and team reflection, regular dialogue, goal setting, and investigation are couched in an environment free from performance, competency, or pay issues. The centre culture is a community of learners. Teachers, like “children, learn through responsive and reciprocal relationships with people, places and things” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 14).

Family and Community

When “...the nation’s beliefs and values..” (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 19) about both children’s and teachers’ learning are aligned, government policy--in regards to funding early childhood centres—enables the process of teacher appraisal to be well supported and resourced. This level or layer of the learning community is what Bronfenbrenner (1986) refers to as the *macrosystem*. This system of learning environments, developed by Bronfenbrenner (1986), are described as the chronosystem, macrosystem, exosystem, mesosystem, and microsystem (p. 723). They illustrate the learning environments external layering and complexity and its influence on the learner (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 19).

When leaders at organisational level support teachers’ “...capacity to care [for] and educate” children they ensure that resources are available to support appraisees’ professional learning goals. This environmental level reflects the *mesosystem* (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 19). The local community is also an integral part of an appraisal system. This *exosystem* provides useful professional learning and networking opportunities.

Although the comparison between the communities influence on teacher’s learning and Bronfenbrenner’s (1986) theory is not in complete alignment, it does illustrate the environmental influences on teacher appraisal systems. The diagram below exemplifies this framework:

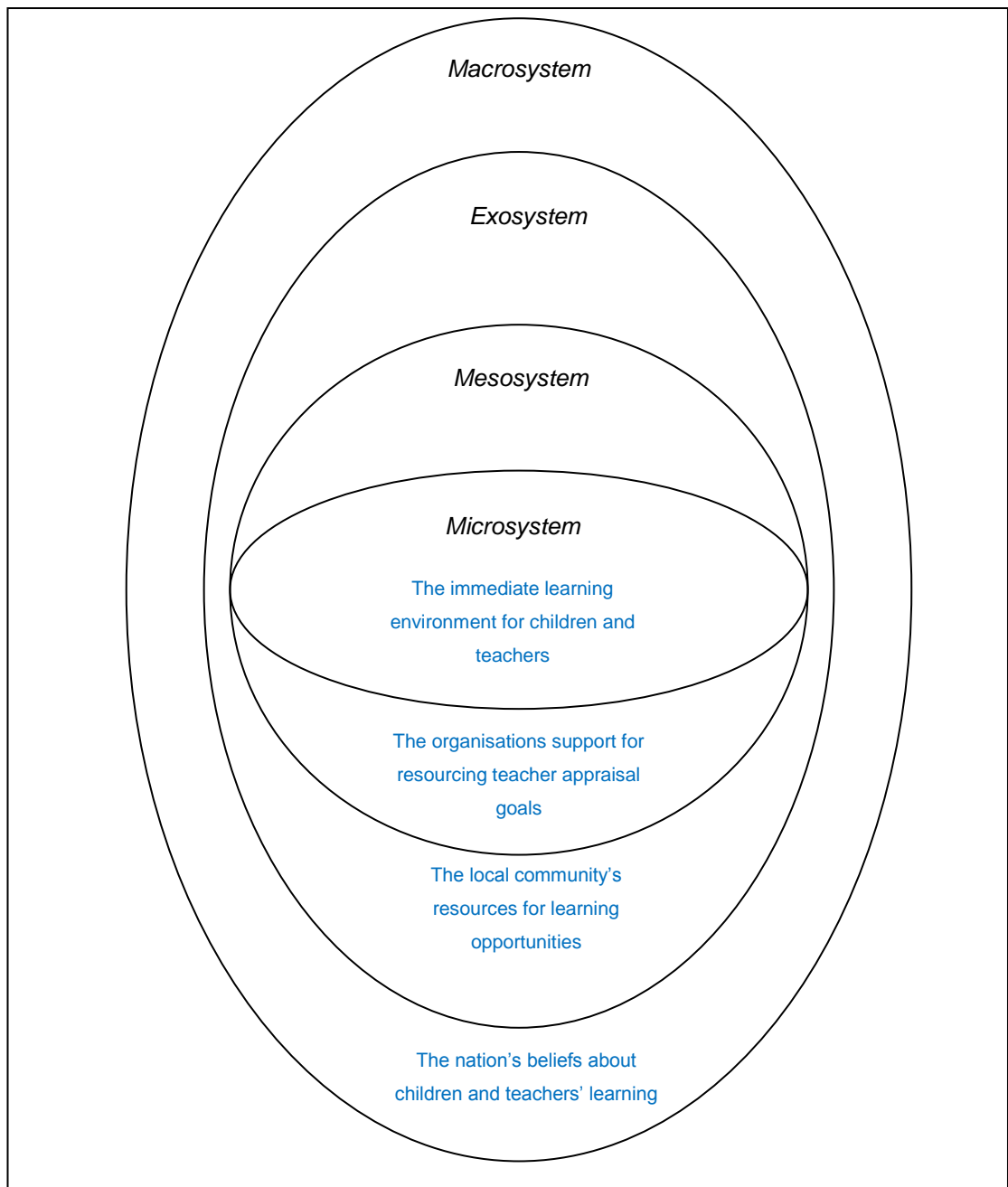


Figure 2: Model of environmental influences on teacher appraisal systems

Relationships between effective appraisal systems and shared principles of *Te Whāriki* can also be tabled in a way that makes their association apparent--although, motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change are at times difficult to confine to a particular principle. Like *Te*

Whāriki, they are ‘interconnected’, ‘woven’ and ‘flexible’ (Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 28), with one often leading to the other.

Table 2: Relationships between principles of Te Whāriki, characteristics of effective appraisal systems and processes within appraisal systems

Principles of Te Whāriki	Holistic Development	Empowerment	Relationships	Family and Community
Characteristics of effective appraisal systems	Pedagogical focus	Motivating	Embedded in collegial relationships	Supported by external values and resources
Processes within appraisal systems	<p>Teachers’ passions are nurtured using a credit rather than deficit approach to appraisal. <i>This will impact on the positioning of teachers in relation to their capacity to make professional judgements, evaluate their own teaching and influence future professional learning goals.</i></p> <p>An unambiguous, transparent and cohesive appraisal framework and process is in place and understood by both appraisee and appraiser. (Action research and data based inquiry is used.)</p>	<p>Teacher’s have <i>buy-in</i> to appraisal processes. That way they are more likely to <i>believe the process of appraisal is a worthwhile investment enriching both teaching and learning.</i></p> <p>Teachers are viewed as capable and competent teachers and learners at the onset of and during the appraisal process. <i>This will impact on the extent to which the appraisal system will contribute to self esteem and self concept.</i></p>	<p>Teachers are treated fairly, with dignity and respect.</p> <p>The cyclical process of self and team reflection, regular dialogue, goal setting and investigation--with the support of skilled leaders who give useful feedback--are free from performance, competency or pay issues. <i>This will impact on the extent to which the appraisal system will encourage teachers to work collaboratively and pool their funds of knowledge.</i></p>	<p>The process of teacher appraisal is well supported and resourced at Government, organisational and community levels. This will support networking opportunities within the local and wider community.</p>

The extent to which the characteristics of effective appraisal systems are supported by coherent processes will determine their capacity to positively influence teaching and learning.

Further study

Whilst this account of two differing appraisal systems may present a beneficial framework for educational leaders to consider when designing their own appraisal systems, it is impractical to propose that Model 2- (“What spins your wheels?” appraisal system) represents the ultimate system of appraisal; in its infancy, there is still much improvement to be made.

Additional research is required to investigate a wider range of appraisal systems and education and care centres, both within and outside the state sector. Such research could provide a wider and more inclusive depiction of where leadership sits within an appraisal framework, and ways in which leaders introduce, maintain, and sustain effective appraisal systems. Examining and evaluating an appraisal system in one centre--over several years, may also result in greater insight into the effects of appraisal on motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change.

Conclusion

Before embarking on this research I ardently sort to establish a ‘one-system-fits-all’ approach to teacher appraisal that had the potential to benefit all sectors of education, from early childhood through to tertiary—both nationally and internationally. As an inexperienced researcher wanting to make a positive difference to the lives of others, I took Mutch’s (2006) thoughts—that research is both an act of optimism and activism—very seriously!

The literature very early on in the research warned me of this implausible notion. Already understanding that each sector of education is unique, I realised that teacher appraisal systems which may prove useful in the compulsory sector, are unlikely to ‘fit’ the teaching and relationship pedagogies of the early childhood sector, and vice versa.

Although this study was relatively small in scale, the fieldwork and literature search has revealed findings which demonstrate the close relationship between a credit, rather than deficit approach to teacher appraisal, and teacher motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change. Appraisal, a mechanism entirely capable of supporting professional learning opportunities for teachers, must be carefully designed. All teachers require working conditions which embrace equity and fairness in an environment which supports them to provide optimum learning opportunities for children.

A challenge for the early childhood sector will be the development of teacher appraisal systems that reflect the innovation and central principles of *Te Whāriki: the Early Childhood Curriculum*, where teaching and learning for children and teachers are philosophically aligned; learning for teachers is nurtured within an environment and framework as it is for children.

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² Whero Kindergarten Association is a pseudonym used to maintain confidentiality.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A-Introduction and information sheet to principal

Tena koe,

As you know I am currently engaged in a research study in order to complete a Masters of Education thesis at the University of Waikato. My thesis supervisor is Associate Professor Linda Mitchell. Her contact details are: email lindamit@waikato.ac.nz, ph (07) 838-4500 ext 7734.

My research is on teacher appraisal - its relationship to motivation, collegial relationships and pedagogical change in an early childhood context in Aotearoa, New Zealand. The shift to a new appraisal system within our Association has provided a unique opportunity to compare teacher's experiences of two different systems.

The research questions are:

1. How do teachers experience two differing teacher appraisal systems?
2. What factors within these appraisal systems do teachers identify as contributing to teacher motivation, collegial relationships and pedagogical change?
3. What principles underpin effective appraisal systems in early childhood settings?

I wish to seek your permission to talk to teachers about this study at the next full teacher staff meeting as I would like to invite five teachers and five head teachers to participate. Volunteer participants would be required to:

- Fill in a short questionnaire about their age band, gender, ethnicity, qualifications, current study, teaching experience, years teaching as part of Tauranga Region Kindergartens and the number of model 1 appraisal cycles experienced.
- Participate in an interview in order to discuss their views and experiences of two appraisal models.

- Provide documentation from both appraisal models and bring this to the interview in order to use them as reference points during the discussion. Exploration of these documents will add depth to our discussion. I would also ask their permission to retain this documentation for my analysis.

Five teachers and five head teachers would be selected from the pool of volunteers on the basis that they represent diversity on background variables. It is hoped that by selecting participants who exhibit variations in background a broad range of experiences, responses, perspectives and perceptions might be drawn upon. The background of participants will also offer a context for the findings.

When talking to teachers I plan to give:

- i. Details in regards to the purpose of the study
- ii. Options in regards to the process of informal interviews
- iii. Information in regards to the option to participate and withdraw from participation
- iv. The contact details of both me and my supervisor

I have included an 'Information Sheet' with this introductory letter so that you have a clear understanding of what is involved.

Interviews will vary in length and will take an hour, to an hour and a half. They would be held at the teacher's kindergarten and outside of sessions hours or another venue of the teacher's choosing.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this opportunity. I very much appreciate that you may be willing to assist me with this research.

This project has ethical approval from the University of Waikato's Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee.

Hei kona mai (Goodbye for now)

Tanya Shorter

e-mail: shorter5@xtra.co.nz

Work phone: (07) 575-5340

Home phone: (07) 574-9354

APPENDIX B-Introduction and information sheet for teachers

Tena koe,

My name is Tanya Shorter and I am currently engaged in a research study in order to complete a Masters of Education thesis at the University of Waikato. My thesis supervisor is Associate Professor Linda Mitchell. Her contact details are: email lindamit@waikato.ac.nz, phone (07) 838-4500 ext 7734.

My research is on teacher appraisal - its relationship to motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change in an early childhood context in Aotearoa New Zealand.

As part of this study I am carrying out a number of interviews and would like to invite your participation. I have included an 'expression of interest' form for you to fill out. I am available to answer any questions that you may have in order to help clarify any issues.

The purpose of the study is to find out about teachers' experiences and understandings of two systems of appraisal used within Whero Kindergarten Association. A 360° model of performance appraisal, referred to as Model 1 and a "what spins your wheels?" system, referred to as Model 2.

The data gathered will support my overarching objective, to examine features of effective appraisal systems and processes which support learning opportunities for teachers.

What participation would mean. If you agree to take part in the study, I would ask you to:

- Fill in a short questionnaire about your age band, gender, ethnicity, qualifications, current study, teaching experience, years teaching as part of Whero Kindergarten Association and the number of model 1 appraisal cycles you have experienced.

- Participate in an interview in order to discuss your views and experiences of two appraisal models.
- Provide documentation from both appraisal models and bring this to the interview in order to use them as reference points during the discussion. Exploration of these documents will add depth to our discussion. I would also ask your permission to retain this documentation for my analysis.

The interview will take between one hour, and an hour and a half and will be held at your kindergarten or another location of your choice. I would like to record the interview so that I can capture accurately what you share. I will send you a transcript of your interview for you to check.

A master copy of the recording will be kept by me during the project's duration and a copy made for you, thereby giving you the opportunity to check the transcript for accuracy.

All recordings and written excerpts and quotes will be stored in a secure cabinet at my home when I am not using them. No-one apart from my supervisor and me will have access to them. This method of storage will remain for the duration of research, and after five years they will be destroyed.

The following rights belong to you, if you take part in this interview:

- a) You may refuse to answer any question and end the interview at any time
- b) During the interview or at any other time during the research project, you are welcome to ask further questions
- c) You will remain anonymous, pseudonyms will be used and anything that may identify you will be excluded from research findings, conference papers and academic articles.

The data collected for this research project will be used as part of research for my Masters in Education thesis. It may also be used in academic publications and presentations.

A thesis will be written from this study and will be available in electronic form on the University of Waikato's digital repository-Research Commons.

Please contact either my supervisor or me should you have any queries.

Researcher: Tanya Shorter

e-mail: shorter5@xtra.co.nz

Work phone: (07) 575-5340

Home phone: (07) 574-935

Thesis supervisor: Associate Professor Linda Mitchell

e-mail: lindamit@waikato.ac.nz

Work phone: (07) 838-4500 ext 7734

APPENDIX C-Registration of interest

Teacher appraisal-its relationship to motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change in an early childhood context in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Background Information

I would like to gather some background information about you as a potential participant. Having this information will:

- a) Support the participant selection process. I would like to include participants who come from different backgrounds so that the interviews canvas a broad range of experiences, responses, perspectives and perceptions.
- b) Provide a context to some of the findings for this research.

Who will see this information?

The information that you provide is CONFIDENTIAL to my supervisor and me. Results from the interview will be described in the research report, but your name will not be used.

Your name:

.....

Age band: 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69

(Circle one)

Gender: Female Male

(Please tick)

Ethnicity: (Please describe)

.....
.....

Qualifications:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Current study being undertaken:

(Please describe)

.....
.....
.....
.....

Teaching experience:

.....
.....
.....
.....

Years teaching as part of Whero Kindergarten Association:

.....

Number of model 1 appraisal cycles experienced:

.....

Number of model 2 appraisal cycles experienced:

.....

Contact numbers:

.....

What will happen to this information if I am not selected as a participant?

You will be contacted and given the option to have the Information returned or destroyed.

Thank you for your time 😊

APPENDIX D-Consent form (for participants)

Please sign this form in order to protect your privacy and interests

Name of the Project: Teacher appraisal - its relationship to motivation, collegial relationships, and pedagogical change in an early childhood context in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Researcher contact details:

Tanya Shorter

Work phone: (07) 575-5340

Home phone: (07) 574-9354

e-mail: shorter5@xtra.co.nz

Your name (Please print clearly) -----

-

1. I have read the covering letter/ attached information sheet. I have been given an opportunity to ask the researcher questions and understand what I am agreeing to as a participant.
2. I understand that all information will be strictly confidential and that any presentations or publications from the study will not contain any identifying details.
3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from this project at any time up until the interview recording has been reviewed by me and any changes incorporated.
4. I agree to provide my teacher appraisal documentation from both models for analysis.
5. I consent to a recorded interview and understand that I will have the opportunity to review my interview transcript and to request changes to it.

6. I agree that the recording of my interview and accompanying material may be quoted or presented in part or full in published work.
7. I understand that the interview recording and accompanying material will be held in a locked filing cabinet at the home of the interviewer, Tanya Shorter for the duration of the research project when not in use.
8. I understand that ethical approval for this research has been received from the University of Waikato, Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee.
9. I understand that should I require a support person to be present at the interview this would be welcomed.
10. I understand that if I have any concerns regarding this research project which I would prefer not to discuss with the researcher, I can contact:

Associate Professor Linda Mitchell

Professional Studies in Education

School of Education

University of Waikato

e-mail lindamit@waikato.ac.nz

Phone: (07) 838-4500 ext 7734

I agree to take part in this research study.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX E-Semi structured interview questions

Background

1. Please describe the appraisal processes of model 1 and 2 for you.

Probe: How often did you meet?

Probe: What did you talk about?

Teacher Motivation

2. Can you describe aspects of each appraisal model which worked best for you?

Probe: Why was this?

Probe: What was it that you found supportive as a teacher?

3. Can you describe a time when these appraisal models didn't work so well for you?

Probe: What was it that did not work so well?

Probe: Why was that?

4. Were there aspects of these appraisal models which led to you feel inspired?

Probe: If yes, what were they?

Probe: Why was this?

5. Were there aspects of these appraisal models which led to you to feel discouraged?

Probe: If yes, what were they?

Probe: Why was this?

Pedagogical Change

6. In what ways, if any, did each of these models lead you to reflect on your practice?

7. In what ways, if any did, each of these models lead you to investigate making changes to your practice?

Probe: Why, why not?

Probe: If yes, what were these changes?

Probe: How about professional development opportunities?

Collegial Relationships:

8. Did each of these models of appraisal have any impact on the relationships you had with your colleagues?

Probe: What was the nature of this impact?

Probe: How did this come about?

9. What are your views in regards to any advantages or disadvantages in having your head teacher as your professional leader and appraiser in model 2 in comparison with your senior teacher in model 1?

Probe: Why was this?

Probe: What about the level of support you received from your professional leader?

Probe: What about issues such as the close working conditions/relationship you have with your head teacher on a day-to-day basis?

10. What do you believe the purposes of appraisal are?

Probe: Anything else?

Probe: What about teaching and learning?

Probe: What about your performance as a teacher?

11. In what ways, if any, could each model of appraisal be improved?

Probe: What about implementation?

Probe: Was the process followed?

Probe: Did model 2 meet your expectations?

Probe: Why/why not?

12. Have you experienced other systems of appraisal?

Probe: What aspects of them did you find useful?

13. Any other comments?