

STEPPING-STONES AND GLASS CEILINGS: THE MOTIVATIONS AND CHALLENGES OF ASPIRANT LEADERS

By

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Abstract

New Zealand secondary schools could face a shortage of aspirant leaders, both in terms of quantity and quality. The shortage of aspirant leaders may be due to a possible ‘retirement boom’ as well as an environment of work intensification, which can act as a deterrent to attract potential aspirants to pursue leadership positions. This may result in crucial leadership roles not being adequately filled. This research project aims to identify the motivations and challenges of aspirant leaders whilst examining succession planning and leadership development within New Zealand secondary schools. Three central North Island secondary schools participated in this research and a qualitative methodology was used. An on-line questionnaire was conducted to gain baseline data and this was followed by six semi-structured interviews. One key finding from the research suggested that aspirant leaders were reluctant to pursue leadership roles due to the challenges they faced. Challenges were identified as being an increased workload, negative perceptions of the roles and a lack of professional development for leadership capabilities. A blockage on the ‘leadership ladder’ was also identified, acting as a further challenge for aspirant leaders. This research argues that adequate provision of leadership development would provide motivational support to aspirant leaders, as would a planned approach to succession planning within New Zealand’s decentralised schooling system. This would ensure that leadership roles were adequately filled within New Zealand secondary schools.

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Table of Contents

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
Introduction.....	1
The New Zealand Context.....	2
Rationale	4
Research Aims and Questions.....	7
CHAPTER TWO	10
LITERATURE REVIEW	10
Introduction.....	10
Concerns about school leadership succession	10
Motivating aspiring leaders.....	14
Leadership development – the concept.....	16
Effective leadership development.....	19
Conclusion	27
CHAPTER THREE.....	29
METHODOLOGY AND METHODS.....	29
Introduction.....	29
Methodology	29
Research design.....	30
Data Analysis	34
Validity and reliability	36
Ethical Issues	38

CHAPTER FOUR	41
FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS.....	41
INTRODUCTION	41
On-line Questionnaire	41
Perceptions of the leadership environment.....	46
The role of leader	48
Motivations and challenges	51
Semi-structured Interviews.....	57
Conclusion	74
CHAPTER FIVE	75
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS.....	75
Introduction.....	75
Stepping-stones and glass ceilings	75
Skills for climbing the leadership ladder or swimming in the 'pool' of aspirants	84
Focusing on the core purpose as a motivator.....	87
Conclusion	89
CHAPTER SIX.....	90
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	90
Introduction.....	90
Recommendations	95
Recommendations for further research.....	97
Limitations of this research.....	98
Concluding comments	99
References	100

Appendices	108
 Appendix A: On-line Questionnaire	108
 Appendix B: Semi-structured interview questions	115
 Appendix C: Information sheet and consent form	116

LIST OF TABLES

<i>Table 4.2: Number and length of management units held</i>	43
<i>Table 4.3: Length of proposed service.....</i>	44
<i>Table 4.4: Participant aspirations.....</i>	45
<i>Table 4.5: Perceptions of the leadership environment.....</i>	48
<i>Table 4.6: The role of leader – leadership development.....</i>	49
<i>Table 4.7: The role of leader – classroom impact</i>	50
<i>Table 4.8: The role of leader – workloads.....</i>	51
<i>Table 4.9: Motivations and challenges – length of service.....</i>	52
<i>Table 4.10: Motivations and challenges – Aspirations.....</i>	53
<i>Table 4.11: Motivations and challenges – leadership opportunities.....</i>	54
<i>Table 4.12: Motivators.....</i>	55
<i>Table 4.13: Challenges</i>	55
<i>Table 4.14: Triangulated themes</i>	74

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Leadership development is a phenomenon that continues to grow in importance within education sectors across many developed countries. This is driven by research stressing the importance of leadership development for both school effectiveness and student achievement (Bush, 2008; Huber, 2003; Leithwood & Mascall, 2008; Pont, Nusche, & Moorman, 2008). In my experience in pursuing my own leadership roles, leadership development within New Zealand secondary schools appears to have a low priority for many schools. Individuals have either been ‘shoulder tapped’ or ‘coerced’ into taking on extra-responsibilities or aspirant leaders are de-motivated by a lack of support. As Macpherson (2010) suggests, New Zealand educational leaders are behind other international educational leaders with regard to leadership development needs. This has potentially led to an environment within schools where the perception of leadership roles are clouded by negativity and the importance of leadership development in the improvement of schools and student outcomes can tend to get lost. Bush (2008) states that “good leadership is an essential requirement for successful schools and this is too important to be left to chance” (p. 70), which begs the question, is there enough importance being placed on leadership development within New Zealand secondary schools? This thesis endeavours to explore the state of leadership development within three Central North Island secondary schools and examines the motivations and challenges faced by possible aspirant leaders.

In this opening chapter, I summarise relevant New Zealand policies as well as both global and local trends that impact on leadership and leadership development within the New Zealand secondary school context. The retirement ‘boom’ is also outlined which provides an overview on why leadership development is continuing to be a growing concern for many countries. The rationale for this research is then outlined as well as the accompanying key questions and aims.

The New Zealand Context

The changing face of education

The role of the principal within schools has become increasingly complex (Gunter, 2002; Harris, 2008) and this growing trend can be attributed to the decentralisation of the New Zealand education system headed by the Labour-led Government of the 1980’s (Brundett, Fitzgerald, & Sommefeldt, 2006; Dimmock, 2012; Gronn, 2010a). Openshaw (2009) critiques the reform of New Zealand’s education system and highlights the changes that the publication of ‘Tomorrow’s Schools’ (Lange, 1988) induced. Changes to the system saw previously centralised schools move to decentralised schools. The establishment of Boards of Trustees saw the decision making move down from central Government control, into the school level in order to improve the school community involvement and address perceived issues regarding quality in education. ‘Self-managing schools’ were created with the devolution of accountability and a high emphasis on performance outcomes. Consequently, the principal was designated as the ‘Chief Executive Officer’ heading the education organisation and given the task of ensuring that performance outcomes were met (Lange, 1988; Openshaw, 2009; Wylie,

2013b). Just over 20 years later, Wylie (2013b) argues in her review of the New Zealand education system, that the reforms have resulted in a culture of mistrust and a dilution of shared knowledge between schools. Therefore, schools have become reliant on knowledge being built within and for the benefit of the single organisation. Cardno (2005) and Bush (2008) argue that this knowledge building should include not only that of curriculum knowledge, but also that of leading and managing schools. Although principals are required to carry out an array of tasks, many receive little support in how to execute their tasks and role effectively.

Support for principals has been somewhat addressed by the Government with programmes such as the ‘National Aspiring Principals Programme’ which allows aspiring principals the opportunity to develop their skills as a leader in education and to learn how to manage demanding workloads (Piggot-Irvine & Youngs, 2011). New principals are mentored and developed through the First-time Principals programme where the professional development on how to lead and manage a school is believed to improve the learning environments for raising student outcomes (Robinson, Earl Irving, Eddy, & Le Fevre, 2008). However, the same cannot be said for principal development beyond this induction programme, where the Ministry of Education has not gone on to implement its pilot Experienced Principals Development programme (Youngs & Cardno, 2012), nor develop any programme specifically targeted at leadership development for middle leaders. Leadership development at the principal level is seemingly common with research and programmes offered globally focused mainly on this role (Beatty, 2008; Bush, 2008; Huber, 2003).

Rationale

The national and school-wide initiatives to improve student achievement has led to school structures becoming complex, as well as an increase in leadership roles (Reid, Brain, & Boyes, 2004). The trickle down of tasks from the principal to other roles such as senior leaders and particularly middle leaders be they curriculum, pastoral or both is a way of meeting the expectations of improving student achievement for schools. However, expansion of such roles has also seen a dilution of remuneration with a number of roles being offered with little time or money attached to compensate for the increased workload. This in itself could explain why few teachers are willingly stepping up into leadership roles and why the perceptions of leadership roles are that of increased workloads with little support (Gronn, 2003; Gunter, 2005; Ingvarson et al., 2005; Reid et al., 2004). This awareness of increased workload is parallel to a lack of direction from the Government in providing leadership development opportunities, particularly for middle leaders.

The New Zealand Government has in the past had some direction of leadership development with the publication of the 'Professional Leadership Plan (PLP) 2009-2010' (Ministry of Education, 2009) which had the goal of building "strong educational leadership in every school" by attracting, developing and retaining educational leaders. However, due to fiscal cuts, the PLP was removed from the Governments strategic planning and leadership development continues to be wanting in the current Statement of Intent 2012-2017 (Ministry of Education, 2012a; Youngs & Cardno, 2012). With the

growing importance attributed to leadership development internationally (Bush, 2008; Crow, Lumby, & Pashiardis, 2008; Gronn, 2003), it would be of benefit for New Zealand secondary schools to understand what is required to attract and retain aspirant leaders.

The leadership crisis

It is widely documented that there is likely to be a leadership crisis within the educational sector due to the retirement of baby boomers (Bush, 2008; Catalfarmo, 2009; Rhodes & Brundett, 2005) and New Zealand is no exception with many principals and senior leaders nearing retirement (Ministry of Education, 2012b; Wylie, 2013a; Youngs & Cardno, 2012). This retirement boom is coinciding with a lack of interest in teachers wanting to take on leadership roles, both at middle and senior level, which is possibly being driven by a negative perception of the leadership roles such as unmanageable workloads (Bush, 2008; Gronn, 2003; Gunter, 2005; Rhodes & Brundett, 2009).

There is the potential for New Zealand secondary schools to see a significant leadership gap if succession planning is not addressed. Currently, succession planning within New Zealand is reliant on the individual to self-nominate and this could potentially lead to a “crisis in leadership succession” as individuals are reluctant to step up (Beatty, 2008, p. 137; Bush, 2008; Macpherson, 2010; Wylie, 2013b). A planned approach for succession planning within New Zealand secondary schools by providing leadership development opportunities, could be a way of ensuring that growing numbers of leadership

roles are filled. Therefore, by identifying the motivations and challenges of aspirant leaders, succession planning could be targeted to meet the needs of individuals.

Leadership roles can be seen to be unattractive positions where the focus is either largely administrative or, where the lack of perceived support has created seemingly unmanageable workloads. This has potentially led to a climate where teachers' perceptions of leadership roles are of overly demanding workloads, little remuneration and lacking in professional development to support them in these roles. As an educational leader I have worked as a Head of Department in one New Zealand secondary school before moving into my current Deputy Principal role at another. From my own experiences and conversations with other leaders, those who do take up the opportunity are usually 'thrown in the deep end' with little to no support in developing them in their new role as leader and individuals are left to learn on-the-job. This strengthens the negative perceptions as on-lookers see a new leader struggle to make sense of their new position and can be seemingly put off by the demands and lack of support.

This climate of negativity could potentially see New Zealand follow global trends where leadership roles are becoming increasingly harder to fill, thus creating a leadership crisis (Gunter, 2005; Hallinger, 2003b; Huber, 2003). By conducting research into what teachers perceive as motivations and challenges for pursuing leadership roles, educational leadership could be redeveloped into a strategic and desirable pathway in New Zealand secondary schools thus, helping avert a likely leadership supply crisis.

Research Aims and Questions

Given the importance of leadership development for the purpose of succession planning, the main aim of this research was to identify the motivations and challenges faced by aspirant leaders who could be encouraged to take on, or pursue further, formal leadership roles. For the purposes of this study, aspirant leaders were identified as a teacher with a fulltime teaching load in a New Zealand secondary school and had yet to become part of the Senior Leadership Team where the teaching load is somewhat more minimal. By identifying the perceptions of these teachers with regards to formal leadership roles, a more targeted approach could be used to ensure quality aspirants fill these formal leadership roles.

The research aims used to guide this research were:

To examine the relevance of leadership development for aspirant leaders in New Zealand secondary schools.

To analyse the need for succession planning in New Zealand secondary schools.

To investigate the motivations and challenges of aspirant leaders in New Zealand secondary schools.

The research questions used to guide this research were:

Why is succession planning an important consideration in New Zealand secondary schools?

What motivations and challenges are there for aspirant leaders in New Zealand secondary schools?

How can leadership development support aspirant leaders in New Zealand secondary schools?

Thesis Organisation

The thesis is set out in six chapters. Following this chapter:

Chapter two

The literature review chapter defines leadership development within the wider context of both professional development and human resource management. Motivational theories are identified and issues regarding succession planning are examined. Lastly, the nature of current leadership development practices in New Zealand secondary schools are discussed.

Chapter three

The methodological framework and data collecting methods are outlined in this chapter. This is then followed by an outline of the validity, reliability and ethical considerations for the thesis.

Chapter four

This chapter summarises the findings from the two data collecting tools; the on-line questionnaire and six semi-structured interviews. Perceptions of leaders and the leadership environment are outlined along with the identification of motivations and challenges.

Chapter five

This chapter brings the questionnaire and interview findings together into three broad themes; Stepping-stones and glass ceilings, climbing the

leadership ladder and the core purpose of education. Each theme was critically analysed using the literature previously discussed in chapter two. Insight gained from this chapter led to the recommendations made in chapter six.

Chapter six

This final chapter finishes off the research with recommendations and suggestions for further research. It highlights the need for a systematic approach to succession planning including the provision of leadership development.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Chapter two provides a review of the literature to support this research project. The concerns around succession planning are examined as well as theories of motivation are explored. Concepts and types of leadership development are also discussed.

Concerns about school leadership succession

An expanding complex role

The role of principal continues to expand and this is especially so within the New Zealand context of self-managing schools. Secondary school principals are now asked to lead and manage a range of portfolios, which includes raising student achievement (Gronn, 2008; Harris, 2008; Robinson, 2008). Reports by Wylie (2013a) and Ingvarson et al. (2005) have found that whilst principals have increasing workloads, so do the teachers. This is resulting in school structures changing with an increase in the range of leadership roles that sit beneath and alongside that of traditional hierarchical structures and more teachers are involved in some form of leadership role over and above their classroom duties (Reid et al., 2004; Wylie, 2013b). Therefore, with the expansion of school leadership within schools, leadership development should now be seen as a priority for policy makers.

With little prescription to adhere to and with the autonomy of self-managing schools, the New Zealand policy environment espouses to create

opportunities for leadership development, however, the reality is that leadership development in secondary schools is also voluntary and therefore seemingly left for chance (Pont et al., 2008; Wylie, 2011). Furthermore, with the discontinuation of policy documents such as the Professional Leadership Plan (PLP) (Ministry of Education, 2009) which focused on the identification, recruitment and retaining of leaders, it appears that New Zealand policy makers are continuing their chances with an ad hoc approach to succession planning and leadership development in secondary schools.

The need for leadership development

It is increasingly acknowledged that there is likely to be a leadership crisis across the education sector due to the imminent retirement of baby boomers, combined with a lack of succession planning and a genuine focus on leadership development (Beatty, 2008; Bush, 2008; Cardno, 2012; Harris, 2008; Rhodes & Brundett, 2009). To avoid a possible leadership shortage in New Zealand there is a need to provide leadership development for individuals within New Zealand secondary schools. By providing leadership development opportunities, individuals may be more likely to maintain motivation towards progressing their career (Dimmock, 2012; Middlewood & Lumby, 1998; Rhodes & Brundett, 2009).

Ribbins (2008) states, however, that there is a lack of understanding regarding how individuals become school leaders and "...in educational contexts we are comparatively ignorant about who becomes leaders and why and how prospective leaders prepare for leadership" (p. 61). Whilst there may

be little known about who becomes leaders and why, there has been significant interest in developing generic career stages and phases (Anderson, Kleinhenz, Mulford, & Gurr, 2008; Barnett & O'Mahony, 2008; Dimmock, 2003; Rhodes & Brundett, 2009; Ribbins, 2008). These phases can allow individuals to acknowledge and develop which stage they are in or working towards.

Career development phases such as *making*, *becoming*, *being* and *moving out/on* (Barnett & O'Mahony, 2008; Ribbins, 2008, p. 64) are examples of successive phases that are said to support how an individual moves into and maintains a leadership role, with most literature focusing on that of the principal. Barnett and O'Mahony (2008) state "because school administration has become so complex, principals need constant development throughout their careers" (pp. 233-234) thus highlighting why theorists believe career stages are so important to identify. However, a lot of the career development stages are focused solely on the role of principal with researchers focused on leadership development at the top end of an individuals' ladder within secondary schools. This has been somewhat addressed in England with the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services (NCLSCS) where leadership development is offered further down the ladder where individuals' are more likely positioning themselves for leadership (Coleman, 2005; Gunter, 2012). Aspirant leaders are more likely to be positioning and testing themselves well before headship is considered. As Gronn and Lacey (2004) explain, the positioning is likely to occur when

aspirant leaders have access to some type of leadership where they can trial different approaches.

Although career development stages and phases are being acknowledged in other countries, they have yet to further progress into New Zealand secondary schools. Providing leadership development opportunities at all stages of a teachers' career can ensure that individuals remain motivated towards progressing their careers within education (Anderson et al., 2008; Huber, 2003; Oldroyd, 2005). Leadership opportunities act as stepping stones for which aspirant leaders can begin their accession towards leadership roles (Gronn & Lacey, 2004).

Succession planning and leader identification

There is a need to provide avenues in which succession planning can be strategically developed in order to ensure pathways for aspirant leaders. Gronn and Lacey (2004) identify that a lack of aspirant leaders is contributed to disenchantment by the prospects of pursuing leadership roles further. This is due to perceived constraints such as work/life balance, poor remuneration, stress and general feelings of vulnerability. Succession planning is vital in order to counter this disenchantment (Bush, 2011; Dorman & D'Arbon, 2003; Gronn & Lacey, 2004; Hargreaves, 2005).

Succession planning faces an extra challenge within a decentralised system, such as New Zealand secondary schools where a planned approach is much harder to implement. According to Schleicher (2012) and Bush (2011)

individuals will nominate themselves, or not, as potential leaders. This may mean that individuals who are not the best qualified are pursuing leadership roles or may be the most motivated.

Motivating aspiring leaders

In order to identify what aspirant leaders could need to pursue leadership roles it is important to understand their motivations. Begley (2008) states that understanding motivations of individuals within an organisation is key for educational leaders.

Motivation is described by Beatty (2008) and Owens (2004) as being either extrinsic or intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation is an individual stimulated by external sources such as remuneration and time allocation for tasks. On the other hand, intrinsic motivation is where individuals are driven by their own needs and, as suggested by Begley (2008), may indicate a more ethical and moral sense of purpose. Razik and Swanson (2001) and Bolman and Deal (2008) caution however, extrinsic motivations being used as the sole motivators for employees. This is because use of extrinsic motivators, as these authors explain, may merely be a way of keeping employees from being dissatisfied in their work as opposed to acting as motivators to pursue goals. This is further supported by Owens (2004) who, in referring the work of Herzberg on motivational theories, identifies working conditions such as salary and benefits as maintenance factors and describes advancement, recognition, possibility of growth and achievement as the more driving motivators. Despite these clear distinctions in motivation, Owens (2004) cautions against using the distinctions as a 'one or the other' approach but rather they should be viewed

as complex and intertwined. Owens (2004) and Beatty (2008) both refer to a motivational hierarchy. Basic maintenance needs such as remuneration need to be catered for, in the first instance, allowing for an individual to feel secure in pursuing more motivating factors such as enrichment, feedback and learning as described by Bolman and Deal (2008).

Cranston (2009), in a study on middle-leader aspirations in Australia and New Zealand, identified motivations driving aspirant leaders toward principalship. Such motivators were having the capacity and the influence to improve the student-learning environments. This reflects Owens (2004) with such motivators seen as at the top of the hierarchy of motivation such as “self-actualisation and autonomy” (p. 372). However, when participants in the study by Cranston (2009) were asked what incentives they would need to pursue principalship, maintenance or ‘hygiene’ factors (Bolman & Deal, 2008; Owens, 2004) were highlighted such as remuneration and work/life balance. Such incentives or motivators are on the lower end of motivation hierarchy and create a sense of safety and security for employees (Beatty, 2008; Owens, 2004).

The understanding of motivators acting for individuals when pursuing leadership roles will allow for leadership development and succession planning being somewhat addressed with more focus and intent. The understanding of the term leadership development and the surrounding concepts need to also be outlined.

Leadership development – the concept

Perspectives of leadership development

Whilst leadership and management are terms that are often used interchangeably to describe the same practices, they can also be defined as separate entities. Management can refer to practices that involve administrative tasks such as working through systems and policies whilst leadership, on the other hand, can be defined as being able to have a vision and an influence on others to achieve outcomes (Bush, 2003; Coleman, 2005; Dimmock, 2012; Spillane & Coldren, 2011). In practice however, leadership and management are often used interchangeably. For this research study, leadership will be the preferred term used however this will also encompass management activities.

Leadership development is described by Day and Antonakis (2012) as a complex construct that “inherently involves change” (p. 108). The notion of who exactly needs to do the changing needs further examining when discussing the broadly termed ‘leadership development’. Leader development has predominately focused on a range of aptitudes and capabilities that a singular leader needs to encompass when enacting a multitude of tasks, thus enabling the leader to develop skills to cope with the growing complexities of their role (Day & Antonakis, 2012; Hallinger, 2003a; Harris, 2008; Huber, 2003; Kaagan, 1998). Leader development is reflected in development programmes both in New Zealand with the ‘National Aspiring Principals Programme’ and in England with the development of leaders embedded into the National College for Leadership of Schools and Children’s Services

programmes (Bush, 2008; Gunter, 2012; Huber, 2008; Moller & Schratz, 2008).

However, there is now a shift from leader development towards leadership development that can act as a vehicle for overall school improvement. This shift can be attributed to growing trends in collective leadership whereby multiple participants in an organisation can take on leadership roles where the common purpose is the improvement of teaching and learning (Bush, 2008; Bush, Bell, & Middlewood, 2010; Camburn, 2009; Dimmock, 2012; Pont et al., 2008; Schleicher, 2012; Van Velsor & McCauley, 2004). Although collective forms of leadership empower schools as effective learning organisations, the role of individual leaders and their influence should also not be forgotten (Bush, 2008; Day & Antonakis, 2012; Gronn, 2010b). The combination of leader development within a distributed leadership framework, that is 'Hybrid Leadership', is fast becoming seen as a powerful combination in which there is an ability for many individuals within an organisation to influence teaching and learning outcomes (Anderson et al., 2008; Cardno, 2005; Dimmock, 2012; Gronn, 2010b; Van Velsor & McCauley, 2004).

Leadership development as a 'hybrid' model is the preferred definition of leadership development for this thesis. It is a powerful notion that many individuals are able to change, influence and drive a learning organisation towards better outcomes for students.

Locating leadership development within human resource management

One of the outcomes of the decentralisation of New Zealand secondary schools in the 1980's was performance management. Performance management was yet another aspect of accountability devolved to principals in order to ensure that expected outcomes were being met (Brundett et al., 2006; Openshaw, 2009). Performance management occurring at school level changed how schools managed their staff and concepts of Human Resource Management (HRM) began to emerge with teachers soon seen as a resource to be developed (Gunter, 2002; Oldroyd, 2005).

Developing people as a resource can be said to build capacity for organisations whereby individuals who are motivated to continue to up-skill will have a positive effect on outcomes for the organisation (Mercer, Barker, & Bird, 2010). The concept of developing people as capital, in order to increase performance outcomes, is also of economic interest to Governments as high performance outcomes is a means of increasing economic growth for a country. The strategic use of HRM within organisations, including New Zealand secondary schools, is a way of developing staff to increase social capital and therefore enhance performance outcomes (Mercer et al., 2010; Rudman, 2002). Middlewood and Lumby (1998) state that effective use of HRM is the “key to the provision of high quality educational experiences” (p. 5).

Broadly defined, Human Resource Management (HRM) is the strategic use of policies and practices in order to manage and develop people and can be further broken down into two areas of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ HRM (Macky & Johnson, 2000; Middlewood & Lumby, 1998; Oldroyd, 2005; Rudman, 2002). ‘Hard’ HRM is the area of performance management that involves the development of structures, policies and processes in order to ensure that staff perform to their best. ‘Soft’ HRM on the other hand emphasises the development of staff through professional development, succession planning and promotion, mentoring and a focus on maintaining employee motivation and commitment (Gunter, 2002; Macky & Johnson, 2000; Middlewood & Lumby, 1998; Oldroyd, 2005).

Effective leadership development

Professional and leadership development

Using professional development to continue to develop staff is said to be an effective ways of improving the performance of an organisation (Bolam, 2002; Oldroyd, 2005). Professional development acts as a means of aligning both school and individual goals. Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, and Fung (2007) outline this notion in their Best Evidence Synthesis about teacher learning and professional development. They outline that through the continual provision of professional development teachers can have a significant impact on the improvement of student outcomes.

Professional development can occur through a series of planned activities such as at staff meetings or it can be selected one-off professional

development courses that may occur off site. Professional development opportunities through planned and structured activities are one way of developing teachers towards improved teaching and learning. However, professional development can also occur through more informal, natural occurring means, such as sharing of good practice and informal mentoring (Mercer et al., 2010; Oldroyd, 2005).

Whichever way professional development occurs, it is important that it is personalised to each individual and acknowledges the different learning journeys that each staff member is on (Mercer et al., 2010). Cardno (2012) furthers this personalisation of professional development by providing four areas that professional development should cover. Those being; school-wide, curriculum based, personal development and management development. The latter, management development, is where leadership development is found. Leadership and management development is said to be one of the least recognised aspects of professional development however it is one that is said to be of continued importance (Cardno, 2012; Oldroyd, 2005).

Providing leadership and management opportunities to all staff could enable new and aspirant leaders with the professional development that they need to carry out their roles effectively and may also motivate future leaders (Dimmock, 2012; Mercer et al., 2010; Oldroyd, 2005; Rhodes & Brundett, 2009). However, providing time for leadership development within professional development opportunities can be seen as frivolous due to the fact that the outcomes are not as measureable as those outcomes based

purely on student achievement and therefore, it can be viewed as a wasting of resources. As explained by Gunter (2012) in her research on leadership and educational reform, the lack of economic viability may have meant that some Governments are disregarding leadership development as a priority focus. However, this is not the case in England where policies and investment in leadership development has been a major focus for its Government. Arguably, this investment is said to act as yet another avenue in which a Government can inflict their agenda (Dimmock, 2012; Gunter, 2012; Mercer et al., 2010).

The importance of leadership development in schools

Leadership development within schools is becoming a pivotal aspect for organisational improvement. One argument for leadership development is due to the amount of leadership tasks delegated to staff within schools indicating that a number of teachers are effectively carrying out some form of leadership but may not have the skills and capabilities to carry these roles out effectively. As well as, leadership has been shown to have an effect on lifting student outcomes. Consequently, leadership development in schools is a necessary consideration.

Cardno (2012) states “every task related to leadership and management” should be about moving individuals and schools “towards goal achievement, which improves teaching and, ultimately, improves student outcomes” (p. 18) and with increasing evidence that this should be the soul focus of educational leaders, leadership development is a way of further supporting this process (Pont et al., 2008; Wylie, 2011).

There is much literature supporting the notion that effective leadership has an impact on student outcomes (Cardno, 2012; Crow et al., 2008; Pont et al., 2008; Schleicher, 2012), both indirectly and directly. Robinson, Hohepa, and Lloyd (2009), in their Best Evidence Synthesis on effective school leadership, identify aspects of leadership that can make a difference to student outcomes and have articulated a series of leadership dimensions. These leadership dimensions such as ‘solving complex problems’ allows a leader to prioritise these dimensions in a secondary school organisation in order to lift student achievement, albeit indirectly (Cardno, 2012; Pont et al., 2008; Robinson et al., 2009; Wylie, 2011).

Practices of leadership development in education

Currently there are a number of different avenues in which leadership development is manifesting itself within the educational context. This includes the offering of formal training, development through on-the-job experiences and mentoring and coaching.

Formal training and programmes

Internationally, countries have all approached leadership development with diverse approaches. Leadership development programmes across many international countries range in delivery, such as whether they are centrally-organised, privately run and whether or not they are compulsory (Brundett & Crawford, 2008; Dimmock, 2012; Huber, 2003). Formal leadership development programmes where there is national recognition can be found in

some international examples such as the qualifications provided by England's National College for Leadership of Schools and Children's Services (NCLSCS), which offers qualifications for both middle and senior leaders, and Scotland's Scottish Qualification for Headship (SQH), which is based solely around principal preparation. However, both of these programmes are said to be relatively prescriptive due to having centralised guidelines and can be seen to be part of a wider system in rolling out Government educational policies and have little flexibility (Brundett, 2008; Cowie, 2008; Dimmock, 2012; Gunter, 2012; Huber, 2003). Other forms of formal qualifications for leadership development is through that of tertiary providers for which individuals can choose to undertake post-graduate study. There is a range of tertiary providers offering a range of programmes and because they are not linked to a centralized system, they do not have a prescribed set of standards to administer. In some countries, such as North America and Canada, a tertiary course is mandatory for those wanting to step into a principal role. However, these programmes can have limitations with not everyone being able to access as a carefully designed selection process sees candidates selected. Involvement in an internship within a school is also increasingly becoming the norm (Brundett & Crawford, 2008; Dimmock, 2012; Huber, 2003; Young & Grogan, 2008).

Similar to Australia, New Zealand has no expectation of formal requirements for school leaders and is instead reliant on an apprenticeship model where leaders learn on-the-job (Anderson et al., 2008; Macpherson, 2010). As identified by Macpherson (2010) in his research on the professionalisation of

educational leaders, New Zealand does have a number of competing tertiary providers offering a range of post-graduate qualifications with the intention of making the individual more employable and individuals are left to choose which provider they think is best (Anderson et al., 2008; Huber, 2003). One programme offered through the University of Waikato and currently funded by the Ministry of Education, is the National Aspiring Principals Programme (NAPP). NAPP is an eighteen-month programme for those that aspire to the role of principal and involves coaching, shadowing and course work. However, there is an application process and only a certain number of aspiring leaders are chosen each year and once again the focus is solely on the role of principal (Piggot-Irvine & Youngs, 2011; Robinson et al., 2008).

Developing through experience

Leadership development acting as a vehicle to motivate individuals can be delivered through a combination of formal and informal opportunities whereby individuals can learn the expectations of a particular role by ‘learning the ropes’ or on-the-job training (Beatty, 2008; Day & Antonakis, 2012; Heck, 2003). The combination of informal and formal training opportunities is often referred to as ‘socialisation’ and can be broken down into ‘professional’ and ‘organisational’ (Dimmock, 2012; Heck, 2003; Huber, 2008).

Professional socialisation is where an individual receives training toward becoming a member of their profession by participating in formal training opportunities such as tertiary courses. By participating in formal training opportunities individuals are able to learn the skills and capabilities needed for

a leadership role, which can then be transferred to various contexts. Organisational socialisation, on the other hand, is where an individual receives more informal training through on-the-job type experiences and is catered to meet the requirements of the individual organisation (Cardno, 2012; Dimmock, 2012; Heck, 2003). Both professional and organisational socialisation can have their pitfalls however. Formal training can be provided by a vast amount of providers and, with no agreed leadership standards on what skills and capabilities are required, there can be a multitude of different skills being taught. Whereas informal training, without appropriate guidance, may create leaders with ill-conceived ideas of good practice as they can inherit a long line of poorly developed leadership skills. There is an assumption that on-the-job training is the best option for leadership development, which can lead to individuals experiencing failure in their new jobs (Dimmock, 2012; Huber, 2008). Day and Antonakis (2012) and Bush (2008) indicate that relying on on-the-job, informal training is either developing successful leaders or it is not and such an ad hoc approach should be a cause for concern considering that “good leadership is an essential requirement for successful schools and is too important to be left to chance” (p. 70). Effective leadership development through socialisation should include aspects of both informal and formal opportunities (Dimmock, 2012; Hallinger, 2003b; Heck, 2003).

Leadership development through on-the-job training is a practical reality in most New Zealand secondary schools and individuals wanting to further progress their careers are reliant on leadership being distributed in order for

them to be able to ‘learn the ropes’ and gain developmental experience prior to assuming a new leadership position. Day and Antonakis (2012) suggest that structures “that identify and link experiences, competencies, relationships, and learning capabilities” are needed to be developed in order to maximise learning (p. 128).

Mentoring and Coaching

Mentoring and coaching is another form of leadership development being provided within schools and can act as a vehicle for succession planning (Cardno, 2005; Dimmock, 2012). Providing leadership development opportunities within individual contexts needs to be supported by individuals with the experience and who are able to guide the individual through different aspects of leadership development (Kaagan, 1998). This can also act as a vehicle for maintaining motivation towards both individual and organisational goals (Barnett & O'Mahony, 2008; Bush, 2008; Hallinger, 2003b; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000; Heck, 2003; Simkins, Coldwell, Caillau, Finlayson, & Morgan, 2006).

Mentoring and coaching, although often used interchangeably, are in actual fact two very different skill sets. Coaching can be viewed as a way of teaching and developing a particular set of skills attached to a prescribed job description and can be aligned with ‘hard’ HRM where a person is guided in ensuring they meet prescribed standards (Barnett & O'Mahony, 2008; Bush, 2008; Oldroyd, 2005; Robertson, 2008; Simkins et al., 2006). Robertson (2008) defines coaching as a “reciprocal relationship between two people who

work together to set professional goals *and* achieve them" (p. 4) and within an agreed timeframe.

Mentoring, on the other hand, is a "complex interactive process" where there is a combination of both formal and informal leadership development opportunities that occur over a long time frame and is aligned with 'soft' HRM where the motivations for performance are identified (Barnett & O'Mahony, 2008; Huber, 2008, p. 173; Oldroyd, 2005). Ideally, the mentoring process is where the learning is reciprocal, rather than being a one-sided transferring of skills and, at its best, mentoring can be used to re-culture not only individuals but also whole organisations. Being able to move whole school systems and structures away from being hierarchical towards a more collaborative environment where a learning organisation is able to develop (Barnett & O'Mahony, 2008; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000; Huber, 2003).

However, mentoring and coaching can be used as a way for an individual to transfer preconceived views and affect hidden agendas that can result in poorly developed leadership skills. Mentoring and coaching also needs to remain flexible enough to meet the demands of individuals as overly prescribed requirements can lead to failure (Barnett & O'Mahony, 2008; Bush, 2008; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2000).

Conclusion

Leadership development embedded in the day-to-day practice of a school can be a difficult task. Often, individuals may be immersed in some form of

leadership development and therefore unaware of the skills and capabilities required. Furthermore, aspirant leaders on their way towards formal leadership roles may face a number of challenges and motivations. Identifying these motivations and challenges may enable further understanding of leadership development practice in schools and provide some direction in how leadership development can be improved for aspirant leaders. The focus of the next chapter is to outline the research methodology for this study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Introduction

This chapter will outline the reasoning as to why qualitative methodology was used to examine the motivations and challenges of aspirant leaders. The selection of participant schools and individuals will be outlined as well as decisions made regarding the use of a base-line questionnaire (Appendix A) and semi-structured interviews (Appendix B). The process of data analysis, maintaining validity and reliability as well as highlighting ethical considerations will be explored.

Methodology

The epistemological framework used to research this problem was that of interpretivism. As explained by Bryman (2008), the interpretative position was used as an opposing epistemological framework to that of the more scientific position of positivism. Where positivism is used to explain how the world works through very scientific and objective methods, interpretivism or post-positivism works within an epistemological framework that acknowledges the role that society and its individuals have in helping to shape the world that they live in (Bryman, 2008; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007).

Using an interpretative epistemology allowed for this problem to be viewed from a variety of perspectives as well as being able to lend itself to a pragmatic paradigm in which there was scope to provide answers through addressing and resolving the problem using a number of methods (Bryman,

2008; Creswell, 2002; Youngs & Piggot-Irvine, 2012). The methodology for this research problem was a qualitative design however some quantifying aspects were used in a base-line questionnaire, which enabled some methodological triangulation of data. Creswell (2002) and Denzin and Lincoln (2005) support the use of multiple methodological practices as a way to strengthen the validity and reliability of the research.

Research design

The research design used for this research enabled an interpretive approach whereby the nature of the problem was made visible through a number of lenses. As Denzin and Lincoln (2005) state, qualitative research “involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world” (p. 3) and was therefore most suited to this research.

Sampling frame

New Zealand secondary schools cover a vast geographic area across both the North and South Island; therefore, cluster sampling was used to select secondary schools accessible to me. Having been appointed as deputy principal in a central North Island secondary school, I was able to join the National Association of Secondary Deputy and Assistant Principals (NASDAP). The NASDAP association also included a ‘Central North Island DAPA (Deputy and Assistant Principals Association) Group’, which allowed access to the database of both deputy and assistant principals working within 62 central North Island secondary schools across both the Bay of Plenty and Waikato regions. An email inviting participants to include their school in this research was sent out to all contacts on the database, thus incorporating

random sampling and ensuring that no bias in the selection process occurred (Bryman, 2008). Only two exclusions were made in this process; that being my current and previous positions of employment due to both being central North Island secondary schools.

Of the 60 schools that were emailed the invitation, four responded to say that they would be interested, three in the Bay of Plenty and one in the Waikato. After negotiation of organisational consent, only three schools remained as part of the research with the deputy principals of each school being the main point of contact. All three schools that participated in the research were relatively similar with all three being co-educational, state schools. The decile ratings were either five or six which indicated the funding they received from the Government based on the communities' socio-economic needs. Two of the schools were situated in provincial communities and one school was an urban city school.

Once organisational consent was granted from each school, the deputy principals' were asked to send out an email to the whole staff inviting them to participate in an on-line questionnaire. All respondents to the on-line questionnaire were also asked if they would be interested in participating in a focus group set up in their region, however, with no responses to this I then asked the deputy principals' if they were able to ask staff who they felt would be interested in an interview. This is deemed purposive sampling and is a strategic method ensuring a good match between research questions and participants (Bryman, 2008). Six interviews were conducted across the three schools; three in the Waikato region and three in the Bay of Plenty region. Of

the six interviewees four were female and two were male with five of the six interviewees having held a middle management position. The sixth interview was established after the other five interviews had occurred. This was to include another male in the research as well as to include a participant who was yet to be in a formal leadership role as these were two areas that were felt to be lacking.

Data collecting tools

Two data-collecting tools were used to gather the data. The tools were used within a semi-pseudo sequential design (Creswell, 2002); the base-line questionnaire was sent out first with the interviews conducted towards the end of the questionnaire being completed.

Base-line questionnaire

The choice of using a base-line questionnaire (see Appendix A) was because it was a quick and cost effective tool that enabled data to be collected over a large geographical area. With three participating schools covering two central North Island regions, a questionnaire was an effective way of quickly gathering perceptions. Although Bell (2007) cautions users of questionnaires against thinking “any fool can devise one”, the questionnaire did allow for the collection of complex-free data that led to broad generalisations being made (Bell, 2007, p. 224; Bryman, 2008; Hinds, 2000).

In order to determine demographic information, the questionnaire used closed questions in the first section. The demographic information asked for

information such as length of service, age, aspirations and management units held. A management unit is an allocation of remuneration for a particular role and is to be accompanied by time allocation also. Three sections followed the demographic section and asked respondents their perceptions of the leadership environment, the role of leader, and the motivations and challenges they were facing. Statements were used alongside a six-point Likert scale, from strongly disagree to strongly agree. 38 respondents from all three schools responded to the online questionnaire tool using 'SurveyMonkey'.

Semi-structured interviews

The second data-collecting tool was semi-structured interviews (Appendix B). These occurred alongside the questionnaire and were used to gain a deeper insight into the motivations and challenges of aspirant leaders. Interviews have a long-standing association with research as they are able to develop more detailed accounts of points of view and experiences, thus developing rich qualitative data (Bryman, 2008; Fontana & Frey, 2005; Hinds, 2000).

The interview guide was developed with a baseline of five questions and a further nine possible follow up questions. Being semi-structured in nature allowed for the interviews to be flexible enabling more opportunities for rich insight into the research questions and allowed for scaffolding to be created during the interview process (Bryman, 2008; Hinds, 2000). Five of the six interviews were conducted face-to-face with one interview done over the telephone. All participants were asked all fourteen questions with additional

follow up questions being used to clarify motivations and challenges that were specific to the participants' individual context.

Data Analysis

Once the data-collecting tools were completed, analysis of the data was able to occur. The process of analysing data was not one that should be taken lightly and, with analysis being a distinct stage in the process, it was important for me to plan ahead for the type of analysis required as this process can influence the execution of the data-collecting tools (Bryman, 2008; Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2006). This involved careful consideration of how each section of the questionnaire was to be analysed both as separate entities but also holistically using statistical analysis. The interviews relied on more qualitative data and, due to the semi-structured nature of the interviews, required data analysis that could identify a number of recurring themes. As Bryman (2008) and Lofland et al. (2006) discuss, although data analysis required a different approach for each data-collecting tool both required processes that moved raw data into comprehensible results and findings.

Base-line questionnaire

The analysis of the questionnaire began at design stage with careful consideration of the types of questions that were to be asked. To begin, there was a mixture of closed questions used to determine factual information. Following on from this were statements using a Likert scale that were used to determine perspectives and points of view. In the past, before a questionnaire was distributed, each question would need to be pre-coded. This would allow for practice analysis to occur when the questionnaire was piloted (Bell, 2007;

Bryman, 2008; Hinds, 2000). However, as both Bryman (2008) and Lofland et al. (2006) examine, the improvement of data analysis of quantitative data-collecting tools with the advancements of computer software, has seen the coding predetermined by on-line software programming such as SurveyMonkey. Subscribing to this programme enabled the analysis of data to occur with ease as the results were automatically coded as respondents were sending them in from each of the three schools.

Although the use of computer software has made the use of data-collecting tools more user friendly, it was important to not under-estimate the time needed to design, distribute and collect back the questionnaire in order to ensure that the data collected would answer the research questions and in a timely fashion (Bryman, 2008). After a number of emails prompting further respondents to participate in the survey, it was decided to close the on-line account and begin analysis. The data collected on-line was then transferred onto an excel spreadsheet where mean responses and correlation coefficients were calculated and analysis could begin. For each section of the questionnaire the mean responses were analysed and individual responses were colour-coded according to levels of perceptions. Perceptions that were generally negative were colour-coded shades of blue and green and favourable perceptions were colour-coded shades of orange and red. From there, the mean responses were ranked according to age. This enabled me to track the perceptions of the questionnaire according to the age range of participants' allowing for more detailed analysis to occur.

Semi-structured interviews

Once the interviews had been transcribed, each interview was post-coded a number of times in order to categorise the findings into broad thematic areas. Firstly, each interview was coded separately on each individual transcript. Once the initial coding was completed, focused coding was then used to fine-tune the categories into more specific themes (Bryman, 2008; Lofland et al., 2006). This was done by listening to each interview and mind-mapping each point of discussion. The themes were then cross-referenced with the individual transcripts with main themes separated out further into sub-themes. Coding in this qualitative research was a process of constant revision and refinement to which changes and decisions were often hard to keep track. A notebook detailing the themes and sub themes was kept. This was so a holistic view of the themes was always in view and enabled the refinement of the coding to take place more succinctly. Having a systematic process for tracking not only the coding decisions, but also the procedural and theoretical decisions leading to the conclusions of the research problem, enables replication. Replicating the process ensures reliability of the research as discussed by Bryman (2008) and Lofland et al. (2006). All documents from the data analysis process have been kept which would allow the decision making process to be replicated.

Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are aspects of research design that are concerned with assessing the quality of the research being conducted. Whilst reliability is often more associated with quantitative research methods and validity with

qualitative methods, both are essential in ensuring the research being carried out is viewed as having research rigour (Bryman, 2008; Davidson & Tolich, 2003).

To ensure reliability was established with the questionnaire the questions were piloted with a number of trusted colleagues from my own school before distribution. This ensured that the questions were not ambiguous for the participants. Within the interview process, reliability and dependability was established through preparedness for the interviews. Participants were also asked to check their transcripts before coding and analyses were started (Bryman, 2008; Cohen et al., 2007; Lofland et al., 2006). Careful analysis, coding and crosschecking of processes limited any bias that could occur validating the research by ensuring that the process could be repeated (Cohen et al., 2007; Davidson & Tolich, 2003).

Validity is a key characteristic of educational research and is concerned with the integrity of the research conclusions. This integrity requires the research to have a balance of perspectives, to contribute to the field of study and to have the ability to make possible changes to the research area (Bryman, 2008; Cohen et al., 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 2005). In the first instance, validity was established across both data-collecting tools by ensuring that bias was kept to a minimum by piloting the methods. This way any bias was minimised and therefore, validity was established (Cohen et al., 2007; Davidson & Tolich, 2003). Pseudo-sequential triangulation across data-gathering tools was also used to further test the validity of the research (Creswell, 2002;

Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Creswell (2002) explains that sequential triangulation is the use of one data collecting method before another is used. This, as Bryman (2008) identifies, is a way of ensuring validity and credibility of research. The initial findings of the questionnaire were used to inform the questions asked before the interviews were conducted. Therefore, use of the pseudo-sequential triangulation was used to gain a deeper and more holistic understanding of the research problem as using more than one research method and collecting data concurrently, helped to show the complexities of the research problem (Bryman, 2008; Cohen et al., 2007; Lincoln & Guba, 2005). One such complexity identified in the questionnaire that informed the interviews was that of the age of participants. Using pseudo-sequential triangulation allowed for the issues with regards to the age of teachers and leaders within these three schools to be addressed and identified.

Ethical Issues

The consideration of ethical issues, along with that of validity and reliability, was another way of ensuring that the research design would be of quality. Research can be said to be of quality when all ethical issues have been considered and approval for the research has been granted by the research ethics board attached to the institution where the research is being conducted (Bryman, 2008). Research can be influential in that it can make discoveries that can benefit large groups of people. However, it can simultaneously be harmful and can place substantial amounts of burden onto the researchers' participants (Bryman, 2008; Wilkinson, 2001). Understanding the scale to which harm can be caused is the job of the researcher to consider when designing their research. Wilkinson (2001) states that ethical research is

based around the central idea that “in research, benefits to some do not justify burdens on others” (p. 15).

Informed consent was a way of minimising the potential of harm to participants. Wilkinson (2001) describes informed consent as being voluntary, lacking coercion and having transparency, where the participant is informed of all aspects of the research. In order to obtain ethical approval, informed consent was obtained from each of the three schools. Once organisational consent was granted, participants who participated in the on-line questionnaire were informed that the completion of the questionnaire was considered consent. This was outlined on the introduction page to the questionnaire. Furthermore, the participants who were interviewed were given an information page with an accompanying consent form which outlined the research problem and they were also given time to withdraw from the research if they wished (Appendix C).

When ensuring that the participants were willing to take part in the research, confidentiality and anonymity was essential in minimising harm. Remaining transparent about the process and ensuring invasion of privacy will not occur was established (Bryman, 2008; Wilkinson, 2001). This was recognised in the research process through such things as the questionnaire; by ensuring that the returns remain anonymous, even to the researcher, as well as changing identifiable aspects of the interview such as names of individuals and schools.

The ethical considerations required for the interview are addressed through the quality aspects of validity and reliability. Limiting any bias and remaining

impartial can reduce potential deceitfulness through the manipulating of the data. One bias that I needed to be cautious of was ensuring I remained impartial throughout the process and to not translate my own experiences onto the data collected as this may have seen the data manipulated. As part of the process for limiting harm to individuals through the interview process, all participants were shown the transcript in its raw form prior to the transcripts being used for analysis (Bryman, 2008; Fontana & Frey, 2005; Hinds, 2000).

Similarly with the questionnaire, many of the implications for potential harm were addressed through the quality aspects of validity and reliability. With the questionnaire conducted on-line it was important to acknowledge the use of on-line data entry and the ramifications this might have for individuals. Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity is also an important ethical consideration of questionnaires and respondents were informed of the process that SurveyMonkey uses to ensure that when data is being collected it is not attached to them as an individual via IP addresses (Bell, 2007; Bryman, 2008; Hinds, 2000).

Working in the New Zealand context also required a consideration of those participants who may have been of Maori heritage. A discussion was held with a Maori Dean at my school about the needs of Maori and the expectations they would have in an interview situation. The main concern was to ensure that their cultural background was honoured and to ensure a respectful and trustworthy environment was established for the interviews to take place (Bryman, 2008).

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a breakdown of the data gathered throughout the research project. The data is presented in the order in which they were collected, that being an on-line questionnaire followed by semi-structured interviews. Both the on-line questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were conducted within three Central North Island secondary schools.

On-line Questionnaire

The questionnaire was used to gain an understanding of perceptions based on the research questions regarding motivations and challenges for aspirant leaders. The questionnaire was conducted using the online tool Survey Monkey and was divided into four sections: general information; perceptions of the leadership environment; the role of leader; and motivations and challenges. The number of respondents to the questionnaire was 38, out of a possible 220 respondents across the three schools.

General Information

The general information section was used to gain an understanding of the respondents' age, length of service, current remuneration to show involvement in a form of leadership, and current aspirations. The purpose of obtaining the age range data across the three schools was to allow for an understanding of what age range might signal as being aspirant leaders as

well as highlighting trends such as a possible ‘retirement boom’ or a ‘time serving career’. Table 4.1 shows the age range of the respondents.

Table 4.1: Age range of participants

Age range of participants	Number of respondents (%)
20-29	4 (10.5)
30-39	6 (15.7)
40-49	8 (21)
50-59	16 (42.1)
60+	4 (10.5)

This data shows that 25% of teachers who responded were within the age brackets of twenty to thirty-nine and over 73% of the participants are in the age range of forty and over. With a bottleneck of teachers occurring in the older age brackets, including over 50% of teachers in the fifty plus age range, there was an indication of an aging population of teachers who chose to participate from the three invited Central North Island secondary schools. This does reflect concerns about the possibility of a retirement boom however with 42% in the fifty to fifty-nine age bracket.

Management Units

Questionnaire participants were asked to state whether they were in a position of holding any management units. Holding management units is indicative of respondents being in a position of responsibility and therefore involved in some form of leadership. The number of respondents who held management units was 29 (76.3%) with only 9 (23.7%) respondents not holding management units.

Of those who stated that they did not hold any management units, the majority of these respondents fell within the age bracket of twenty to twenty-nine and, when asked if they had held management units in the past, 88% stated that they had not. This indicated that the respondents without management units are likely to be new teachers and early to the teaching profession. This data however did fail to identify those respondents who may have held some form of leadership position but were not receiving remuneration for this work. The respondents who did identify with holding management units were then asked to state the number of management units held and how long they had been in possession of them, as shown by Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Number and length of management units held

Length of Management Units held	Number of respondents (%)	Number of Management Units held	Number of respondents (%)
2 yrs or less	6 (20.6)	1	15 (51.7)
3-4 years	5 (17.2)	2	3 (10.3)
5 + years	15 (51.7)	3	4 (13.7)
		4 or more	1 (3.4)

The majority of respondents (51.7%) had held their management units for over five years and the same (51.7%) were in possession of only one management unit. This indicated that a vast number of respondents were in a position of responsibility and given remuneration for this work. The respondents who were in possession of two or more units indicated that they were more likely to hold formal middle or senior leadership positions such as pastoral dean, head of department or deputy principal as these positions were

generally associated with multiple management units. The management units given out also appeared to be held for a number of years by individuals and indicated that participants tended to stay in their leadership positions for a length of time. However, there were a number of respondents (20.6%) who had only recently received management units, which indicated they were possibly new to their position of leadership and therefore learning new leadership and management skills related to their position. What the data did not indicate is what positions the respondents held and, whether or not they also received any time allocation away from classroom contact time.

Length of proposed service

Length of service was another area in which participants were asked to indicate how long they were planning to continue working in secondary school education (Table 4.3). This information can be used to clarify concerns about teachers leaving the profession due to lack of opportunities as well as indicating whether secondary school teaching can be viewed as a ‘time-serving’ profession.

Table 4.3: Length of proposed service

Length of proposed service	Number of respondents (%)
Last year	2 (5.2)
1-2 years	5 (13.1)
3-6 years	11 (28.9)
7-10 years	7 (18.4)
11 + years	4 (10.5)
Until retirement	19 (50)

This data showed the majority of participants (50%) planned to remain in secondary school teaching until their retirement with only a small minority indicating to leave from teaching within the next year or so. This does indicate a general trend toward teaching being a ‘time-serving’ career where individuals were likely to stay in their job for a number of years. What was lacking from this data however was whether or not respondents were likely to shift between schools.

Aspirations

Part of the information gathering section of the questionnaire participants were asked to indicate what formal leadership positions they were aspiring towards (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4: Participant aspirations

Leadership role aspired to:	Number of respondents (%)
Pastoral Dean	11 (28.9)
Head of Department	12 (31.5)
Specialist Classroom Teacher	4 (10.5)
Director of Art/Sport	2 (5.2)
Guidance	3 (7.8)
Academic Dean	2 (5.2)
Teacher in Charge (subject)	5 (13.1)
Assistant Principal	1 (2.6)
Deputy Principal	5 (13.1)
Associate Principal	1 (2.6)
Principal	2 (5.2)
None of the above	7 (18.4)

It was clear from this data that there was a large pool of potential aspirant leaders with over 80% of participants aspiring towards a leadership role. Middle leadership roles were the most aspired to with pastoral dean and head of department attracting the majority of aspirants. The senior leadership positions were the least attractive to aspirant leaders. However, of those who did select these positions, deputy principal was the most attractive. Of the thirty-eight participants, nine made multiple entries indicating that they would be interested in a number of leadership roles. The majority of those nine respondents (70%) were in the age brackets of twenty to thirty-nine thus indicating that the younger teachers were generally more open to pursuing a number of leadership roles. The respondents who were not interested in pursuing any leadership roles were generally spread out across the age ranges. One respondent clarified further that they were already a teacher in charge of a subject area but did not currently receive any management units; for them the aspiration was to receive a management unit for their leadership position. Another stated that they would like to pursue a Career Advisor position.

Perceptions of the leadership environment

This section of the questionnaire was designed to gain an understanding of the perceptions of the leadership environment held by the participants (Table 4.5). The participants were required to rate their perceptions on a six-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree; 6-strongly agree) to which a mean response across all respondents was calculated per statement. The statements asked participants to consider their perceptions of leadership development within

New Zealand secondary schools including whether secondary schools had the capacity and knowledge to lead such development as well as the importance of their own career development. The more positive perceptions indicated participants saw their career development in secondary schools as important and were in favour of leadership development being integrated strategically into schools in order to support aspirant leaders. This signaled that more focus on career and succession planning in secondary schools would be welcomed. Most agreed that there was a general trend toward a shortage of aspirant leaders despite over 80% of respondents aspiring towards some form of leadership role themselves. This raises questions about how teachers view aspirant leaders and whether or not individuals would self-nominate as an aspirant leader. The least favorable perception was that of secondary schools being able to provide the leadership development for aspirant leaders both in terms of capacity and knowledge. There was a positive correlation coefficient between the capacity and knowledge statements ($r=0.72$, $\alpha=0.05$ level of significance). This showed that respondents believed that some form of outside expertise might be required in order to support secondary schools in providing leadership development.

Perceptions of the leadership environment were also analysed according to age. A mean was calculated across all of the perception statements for each individual. From there, the means were ranked according to age range. The least favourable perceptions of the leadership environment generally fell into the age brackets of twenty to twenty-nine and age 60+. A negative perception of the leadership environment for the younger teachers may indicate an environment where their needs for development are not being appropriately

catered for or there may be a perception that they have not been teaching for long. For the 60+ age range this may be an indication that, because they are nearing retirement, these issues are no longer important to them.

Table 4.5: Perceptions of the leadership environment

Perceptions of the leadership environment in New Zealand secondary schools	Mean response (1-6 scale)
Developing my own teaching profession as a career path within secondary schools is important to me	4.8
Secondary schools should have leadership development as a strategic focus	4.7
Developing my career in leadership with appropriate leadership development secondary schools is important to me	4.1
Secondary schools are facing a shortage of aspirant leaders	4.2
Secondary schools have the capacity to deliver and support their own leadership development programme for aspirant leaders	3.3
Secondary schools have the relevant knowledge and experience to deliver and support their own leadership development programme for aspirant leaders	3.2

Whilst this section of the questionnaire reinforced the notion that leadership development would be welcomed for schools, it did suggest that participants would lack confidence in schools having the capacity or knowledge to be able to deliver this development just by themselves.

The role of leader

Another aspect of this thesis was to gain an understanding into how those in secondary schools viewed the role of a leader including which particular roles should receive leadership development, what the connections were between a leader and student outcomes and whether or not the roles had manageable workloads.

Table 4.6 shows, the majority of respondents believed it was essential those in formal leadership roles as well as those aspiring towards those roles receive leadership development. Principal and deputy principal roles were seen as the most essential followed very closely by heads and aspirant heads of department as well as deans and aspirant deans. Classroom teachers and beginning teachers were deemed as less essential for receiving leadership development compared to the more formal roles, however, the result still indicates that leadership development is also essential for this group.

Table 4.6: The role of leader – leadership development

It is essential for the following to be provided with leadership development. Those who are:	Mean response (1-6 scale)
Principals	5.7
Deputy/Assistant principals	5.7
Aspirant principals	5.6
Aspirant Deputy/Assistant principals	5.6
Heads of Department	5.5
Aspirant Heads of Department	5.3
Deans/Pastoral	5.3
Aspirant Deans/Pastoral	5.1
Experienced teachers	4.8
Beginning teachers	4.6

In terms of the respondents' perceptions of the role a leader has in affecting the classroom environment, it was the general view that the role of the head of department was the most effective in this area (Table 4.7). The head of department is viewed as needing to be the most effective in the classroom as

well as having one of the highest direct impacts on student outcomes. However, in terms of direct impact on student outcomes, the classroom teacher was viewed as having the most impact. This could be an indication as to why teachers may choose to stay in the classroom as this is where they feel they have the most agency and impact with students. Whilst the other roles had a slightly smaller mean response, the overall perception indicated that school leaders needed to have a positive effect on student outcomes. If the general perception of respondents was that school leaders do make a difference in the classroom then there was an indication that leadership development would continue to improve the impact on student outcomes.

Table 4.7: The role of leader – classroom impact

It is essential for the following to have a reputation of being an effective teacher. Those who are:	Mean response (1-6 scale)	The following have a direct impact on student outcomes:	Mean response (1-6 scale)
Principals	5.1	Principals	5.2
Deputy/Assistant principals	5.3	Deputy/Assistant principals	5.2
Heads of Department	5.7	Heads of Department	5.6
Deans/Pastoral	5.4	Deans/Pastoral	5.3
		Classroom teachers	5.9

With regards to workload, the general perception was that all roles within secondary schools had unmanageable workloads (Table 4.8) with the mean response being 5.1 for all roles except that of principal. The role of principal was perceived to have a slightly more manageable workload than the other

roles with a mean of 4.9. This may be because, in general, secondary school principals do not have a teaching load and therefore the perception may be that their workload is more manageable because of this. However, this does highlight an interesting perception of what work principals do carry out and how much of it goes unseen by staff.

Table 4.8: The role of leader – workloads

The following have unmanageable workloads:	Mean response (1-6 scale)
Principals	4.9
Deputy/Assistant principals	5.1
Heads of Department	5.1
Deans/Pastoral	5.1
Classroom teachers	5.1

This section has highlighted further the importance of leadership roles with the improvement on school and school outcomes. Therefore leadership development was seen as crucial for these roles though there was a perception that workloads were unmanageable.

Motivations and challenges

Discovering the underlying motivations and challenges for aspirant leaders was a way of identifying possible avenues in which leadership development and succession planning could be considered for the secondary school context. One of the concerns for succession planning was the concern that teachers viewed leadership positions as a ‘term serving’ role where someone had to have been teaching for a number of years in order to be considered for

a leadership position. The respondents were asked whether they had not been teaching long enough to personally consider a formal leadership role (Table 4.9). Overall, the mean response was 2.2, which indicated that the majority of respondents disagreed with this statement and felt as though they had been teaching long enough. However, when this data were broken down further into age brackets, a pattern emerged. The results showed that respondents in the age bracket twenty to twenty nine were most likely to agree with the statement, that they had not been teaching long enough. This contrasted with the data with aspirations where this age bracket were the most open to pursuing a number of leadership roles. From the age of thirty and above, the mean response dropped quickly, particularly in the age brackets of fifty to fifty-nine and 60+. This showed that the younger teachers felt that they did not yet have the experience, however, they did show interest. This may indicate that this was an age bracket who could be a potential source of aspirant leaders. What the data did not show was if these perceptions changed depending on the specific leadership role.

Table 4.9: Motivations and challenges – length of service

I have not been teaching long enough to consider taking on a formal leadership role	Mean response (1-6)
Overall	2.2
20-29	4.7
30-39	2.3
40-49	2.3
50-59	1.6
60+	1.0

In terms of aspiring towards specific roles, once again respondents were asked which leadership roles they were motivated towards. However, this time it was narrowed further into senior and middle leadership roles. When looking at the overall mean response (Table 4.10), it appeared that senior leadership roles such as principal and deputy principal were the least aspired to roles with middle management being more favorable. However, once again the data altered when broken down into age brackets with respondents in the lower age brackets of twenty to twenty nine and thirty to thirty nine being more favourable of pursuing a senior leadership role. Those over fifty were the least in favour of pursuing any leadership role; however, the role of head of department was the most aspired to. The highest mean score was for the role of dean by respondents aged between forty and forty-nine.

Table 4.10: Motivations and challenges – Aspirations

I aspire towards the following leadership roles:	Principal	Deputy/Assistant Principal	Dean/Pastoral Care	Head of Department
Overall Mean	1.6	2.2	3.1	3.5
20-29	2.5	2.7	3.5	4.0
30-39	3.1	4.0	3.1	4.0
40-49	1.1	2.0	4.4	3.4
50-59	1.2	1.7	2.9	3.4
60+	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.6

A similar trend with regards to the age of respondents was also reflected with the interest in leadership development (Table 4.11). In general, all respondents would be interested in leadership development, however there was a slightly stronger interest for those aged between twenty and thirty-nine. Interest appeared to drop off sharply for those 60 and over.

Table 4.11: Motivations and challenges – leadership opportunities

I would be interested in leadership development opportunities	Within my school	Within my department	From a tertiary provider i.e. a qualification	Through professional development
Overall Mean	4.3	4.1	4.0	4.4
20-29	4.5	4.7	4.7	4.5
30-39	4.8	4.1	4.6	4.8
40-49	4.3	4.1	4.1	4.3
50-59	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.5
60+	3.2	2.7	1.5	3.2

Finally respondents were asked to identify possible motivators (Table 4.12) and challenges (Table 4.13) when, or if, aspiring towards a leadership role.

The motivators that received the most favourable response were time (5.3), personal achievement (4.9), mentoring (4.7) and on-the-job training (4.7). Some form of remuneration including management units (4.2) and middle management allowance (4.4) were also highlighted as being motivators towards these roles, however, they were not top of the list. There was a positive correlation coefficient between mentoring and on the job training ($r=0.71$, $\alpha=0.05$). This indicated that some formal aspects of leadership development within secondary schools would be welcomed. There was also a positive correlation coefficient of $r=0.85$ ($\alpha=0.05$) between management units and middle management allowances. This highlighted that respondents viewed both of these relatively equally with regards to receiving some form of remuneration. Career planning and encouragement from home were the least favoured motivators.

Table 4.12: Motivators

The following would motivate me towards a leadership role:	Mean response (1-6)
Time	5.3
Personal achievement	4.9
On the job training	4.7
Mentoring	4.7
Middle management allowances	4.4
Professional development courses	4.4
Management Units	4.2
TEACH NZ study award/grant	4.2
Gaining a relevant qualification	4.2
Encouragement from peers	4.2
Scholarship	4.0
Encouragement from home	3.9
Career pathway planning	3.9

With regard to challenges that may act as a deterrent, the affordability of postgraduate programmes was highlighted as one of the main challenges (4.8) followed closely by an increased workload (4.6). The least challenging for respondents was the idea of having increased accountability (3.6). Some respondents specifically stated that they would like time for postgraduate study. Others stated that the challenge for them were the ongoing initiatives in their school.

Table 4.13: Challenges

The following might act as a challenge for me aspiring towards a leadership role:	Mean response (1-6)
Affording postgraduate programmes	4.8
Increased workload	4.6
Not enough incentives	4.4
Less classroom contact	4.3
Family/home circumstances	4.0
Increased accountability	3.6

Over and above the aforementioned motivators and challenges, the data gathered identified a number of motivators and challenges that possible aspirant leaders faced.

Motivators:

- Allocation of management units and middle management units indicating distribution of tasks;
- Dedication to the profession;
- Interest in middle leadership roles;
- Range of ages for possible aspirant leaders;
- Positive impact on student outcomes; and,
- Professional development: Mentoring and on-the-job training.

Challenges:

- Blockage - length of service and lack of movement;
- Lack of interest in senior leadership roles;
- Lack of career and succession planning;
- Lack of leadership development in schools (available to all);
- Secondary schools lacking the capacity to deliver leadership development “in-house”;
- Shortage of aspirants;
- Workload concerns; work/life balance;
- Shortage of time for delegated tasks; and,
- Money, remuneration concerns and affordability of further training such as tertiary studies.

Further to the information collected from the questionnaire, the interviews conducted also contributed to developing an understanding of the motivators and challenges faced by aspirant leaders.

Semi-structured Interviews

The interview schedule was structured into five main questions that asked participants about their perceptions of aspirant leaders, motivations, challenges and their view on leadership development. Following on from this were nine follow up questions ranging from participants' perceptions of the senior leadership roles and whether leaving the classroom was a concern. All of the interviews were able to cover all of the questions and due to being a semi-structured interview, further questions of each participant were asked in order to clarify individual contexts. The following were some of the major themes identified from the interview data.

Perceptions of leaders

Aspirant Leaders

When asked about who was motivated to further their careers in New Zealand secondary schools, most participants viewed aspirant leaders as those who were passionate about teaching and viewed leadership as a way to make a difference to both the students and the wider school.

It's that, it's that desire to help and to feel as though you are making a contribution in some way. (Int 3)

In particular, ways of making a difference was discussed as being able to work with the systems of the school and to make systems more efficient for the improvement of teaching and learning. Aspirant leaders were seen to want to question the way things worked and to have some sense of agency with making changes.

And the other thing is that I think, if things aren't working the way you think things should work, you can't grizzle about it unless you are prepared to do something about it. So that's what motivates me, wanting to make things better for myself or for my department, for my students. (Int 2)

When participants did discuss aspirant leaders as themselves, the tone and information provided was mostly positive and the mood of the conversation genuinely reflected them wanting to make a difference. However, this changed when participants discussed others as aspirant leaders where the feeling was that there were few 'up and coming' aspirant leaders and those who were interested in pursuing these roles were doing it for the wrong reasons.

Well, I actually think that it is set up for people who, honestly, who don't necessarily have the best understanding of how learning works but who actually see themselves in high up roles. There are people who just come in and they believe that they should be in high up roles - "I should be in charge of people". Kind of not what it should be about I don't think. (Int 1)

The sense of moral purpose for aspirant leaders was strong with a number of participants with some indicating concern if certain teachers within their

school decided that pursuing leadership was for them. This pointed towards a possible preconceived notion about what attributes or motivators a leader should be deemed to have. The interviewees implied a negative perception for aspirant leaders who were seen to be motivated to pursue leadership roles for reasons of self-interest.

See personally, I would be horrified if there were certain people who started taking leadership positions around the place. (Int 5)

With regard to the perception of age, this was not seen as a barrier towards individuals pursuing leadership roles. However, two participants did refer to age specifically with motivation. One indicated that aspirant leaders appeared to be the new and young teachers coming through whilst the other believed younger teachers were not motivated. This was a possible reflection of both the expectations and culture created by the principals in each of the schools.

From my experience in the school that I am coming from I think that the teachers that are coming in now, the newer PRT's and teachers who maybe haven't been teaching for a very long time, seem to be the most eager to take up those opportunities which is really interesting. (Int 4)

It's interesting I don't think there are a lot of young teachers coming through who are interested in, from what I've experienced with young teachers, who are really keen to jump in moving into different leadership positions. (Int 5)

Contrasting perceptions of aspirant leaders may indicate a lack of clarity about leadership roles and the capabilities required of them. Furthermore, the notion of self-selection and identification of aspirant leaders appears to remain ambiguous.

Leadership roles

Participants were also asked for their perceptions of senior and middle leadership roles. Across the board, all participants held strong views about these roles with the majority viewing these leadership roles through a negative lens, particularly with regard to the senior leadership roles of deputy principal and principal. This negativity was associated with these roles for a number of reasons. Firstly, workload and insufficient time was a major concern with nearly all participants discussing how these roles appeared to involve commitment over and above a normal job description.

It's massive. I see the hours they do. They are normally first here, last to leave. Weekends even. Yeah, so it's a massive commitment. (Int 6)

Lots of stress. I definitely don't want to go there. (Int 4)

Secondly, senior leadership roles, particularly deputy principal, were generally viewed as lacking in agency. One participant named this lack of agency as the reason she had preferred to remain in middle leadership. Due to a lack of agency, most participants viewed the role of deputy principal as being heavily administrative focused with not much ability to lead and change aspects within the school.

I think, and this will be fairly blunt, that in many ways it is a bit of a bullshit role because you go into it wanting to do this, that and the other and there are lots of reasons why that can't happen come up and I reckon that must be enormously frustrating. (Int 1)

The discourse of teachers when discussing senior leadership roles certainly reflected another negative perception with all participants referring to those in senior leadership roles as having to 'deal' with students, staff and parents. Every participant referred to those on the senior leadership team has having to solve complex problems on a daily basis with all participants viewing this as an undesirable aspect of the job.

My perception is that a lot of it is dealing with the bad stuff. Dealing with the discipline issues and that kind of thing. (Int 2)

Overall, the general feeling for these roles was reasonably negative. However, most participants discussed the actual individuals working in these roles at their school as being very hard working people, including that of the principal. There was a high level of admiration for the work these leaders did on behalf of their schools, staff and students.

I can only hold my hand up and praise principals who step back and see the bigger picture because it's very easy to get absorbed into the day to day but there's always a bigger picture and a bigger vision which is where the principal drives it towards and I think it takes, I don't think everybody sees how hard this principal works. I know he is the first into school and he probably only has about 10 days holiday a year. Who'd want to do that? I certainly wouldn't. (Int 3)

The need for leaders in middle or senior roles to see the bigger picture and to have a vision for the direction of both school and department was another common theme amongst participants. It was commented that leaders in schools who were doing a good job showed an ability to do this already whilst other participants discussed this more in terms of what they thought leaders

should be doing in the job. It was clear that all participants felt this was an important aspect of a leadership role.

When I first starting teaching it was the senior managers, you know, and now their senior leaders and I think that there has been a shift, across a lot of schools. (Int 4)

Well our HOD's at our school and in my department they have to be involved in a lot more of the organisation and planning. Where are we going to go to next, where's our department looking at going to, what do we need, a lot of organisation and looking into the future a bit more. (Int 6)

The perception that the participants had of leaders work showed that there was a sense of 'heroic' leadership occurring within these three secondary schools. The principals were seen to carry much of the burden on behalf of the school and this was a de-motivating factor for those interviewed. In contrast, access to professional development was viewed as a source of motivation.

Professional development

All participants interviewed were involved in some sort of professional development whether it was provided 'in-house' or externally sourced. The majority of the professional development accessed 'in-house' focused on curriculum development or classroom teaching practices and was run by staff at whole school staff meetings.

Our staff meetings have become very PD based. So we don't do a lot of admin in those staff meetings anymore. And I think one of them was

three of our HOD's got up and went through the journey we are going through to go into this curriculum level reporting. (Int 5)

Externally sourced professional development also focused mainly on curriculum content with a number of participants only accessing professional development for their particular subject area. However, one participant had been to a professional development course where the focus was for the leaders of the subject area and some of the course agenda was spent on developing the skills as a leader.

So on Wednesday I went to a professional development day based around Arts leaders and that was really fantastic. (Int 4)

One participant who was new to the role of middle leader did feel that a lot of the professional development provided for the heads of department was very focused on school wide goals, curriculum and literacy and that more time was needed on developing skills in leading departments.

So there's been a lot of that but there probably hasn't been enough of the, now that I am suddenly in a large department, how do I deal with people who maybe don't want to ... maybe don't want me to be their leader but are resistant to some of things that I am maybe suggesting or just different ways of dealing with setting goals and things like that kind of stuff. (Int 4)

The need to develop skills as a middle leader was reflected by a number of participants with many feeling that they had received no professional development related to their role as middle leader and the skills required to lead a department.

Yep it's been eye-opening cause I know when I became HOD it was basically 'ok you're HOD now, off you go'. (Int 5)

We get constant PD. In terms of PD for being a dean, I recall being given the opportunity to go on something once and I didn't because I didn't feel as though I needed to, it was a behavioural thing. As far as head of department goes, no. (Int 3)

Access to professional development for schools and individuals appeared to remain aligned mostly with curriculum–driven initiatives with individuals appearing to have little to no professional development for their role as a middle or aspirant leader.

Leadership development

Having provision of some form of leadership development was favoured by all of the participants both for themselves and as part of a school's strategic focus for aspirant leaders. All participants viewed this form of professional development as an essential part of growing and developing as a leader and being able to perform to their best.

Yip. I do. And I don't think I would be the only person who wanted it. I think there would be some people, just ordinary staff, who didn't have these roles but who maybe aspire to them, who would come along to that sort of thing. (Int 1)

I think it is essential otherwise you get behind, things are changing faster than what we can possibly dream of changing and if you don't stay up with the play then you are not doing your students a good service at all. So I think it's really important for leaders to be

progressive, to listen and to learn all the time because that's what it is about. (Int 2)

A number of participants had different thoughts about how this could be provided with one preferring it be kept separate from the school, while another seeing it as a tiered structure involving some form of mentoring.

I think, you could have tiers of it. Young teachers who do really want to go far in their career I think that could be a senior manager that runs that so they can see the realities of what that would be like. If there's people who want to become HOD, then maybe that's something that as HOD's we could do little PD's on that. So I think maybe a tiered approach to that would be really appropriate. (Int 5)

One particular skill of leadership, those participants already in leadership roles wanted, was professional development in how to have difficult conversations with other staff. Those in middle leadership roles all found that having to manage and lead change within departments was made harder because they did not have the skill of solving complex problems with regards to staff members.

I really want to have some development on having hard conversations because I think one of things that I need to learn, is how to have, and actually to teach my people to have as well, to have conversations that are not about you as a person. (Int 1)

It was also noted that there would be a number of staff already in leadership positions who were quite resistant to leadership development. This perception

was mainly viewed as being older staff that felt they already knew enough to carry out their role.

I think some of the Leaders for Learning would think that they were 'plenty developed thank you very much, I have been doing this for x number of years'. But, it doesn't matter how long you have been doing this for. It's about whether you're good at it. (Int 1)

Leadership development was clearly indicated as a motivator for aspirant leaders. The challenge being, however, that there was limited access to such development.

Motivations and challenges

The majority of the participants were currently in some form of middle leadership role, mainly that of head of department, with only one participant a fairly new teacher to the profession. When asked to explain why they were motivated to pursue these roles, or if still motivated to go further, the common theme from all participants was the notion of being passionate about teaching and learning.

Because I am mega passionate about it. (Int 5)

Yip it's a combination probably and some, you know in a lot of cases, there is no time or units but people do it because they are passionate about it. (Int 2)

The general trend for pursuing leadership roles was inherently altruistic with extrinsic motivators such as being given more time for task completion away

from the classroom and money acting as secondary incentives. This may reflect the sense of moral purpose that these teachers had as educators, as well as, the time given for task completion and money allocated could possibly not be seen as a substantial compensation for the work that leaders did. One particular motivation seemed to also be the sense of agency in being able to make a difference.

And then once that seeds sort of planted you can't really back track because your always 'well I'd do it this way'... I don't think money is motivating in that sense. (Int 3)

However, one of the challenges that a number of participants faced was the lack of money and time they received for their current role of middle leader. Many stated that they did not have enough time to do their job as middle leader and this was a challenge for them. In one school, the middle leadership roles were restructured with the creation of new roles designed to be solely focused on improving pedagogy and were intentionally advertised to staff minus 'managerial tasks' such as budgeting. However, with new individuals occupying these new roles, the roles began changing into leading and managing departments. This move essentially made the old head of department role and its occupant redundant even though technically they still existed and still held the management units. Therefore, neither of the new middle leaders interviewed received adequate time or money for their roles.

I'm not given any more time. So basically I'm doing quite a big job in a normal teaching role. (Int 4)

I have no units. I've got half an MMA for the new role that I am in because it's in a transition phase. (Int 1)

Another participant at another school also felt that the expectations of workload and pressure were overwhelming and agreed that this was a possible explanation for a lack of aspirant leaders.

Oh gosh yes I mean why would you put yourself under that much pressure unless you were mega passionate about it? (Int 5)

A number of participants were also motivated to further their aspirations through involvement in formal training such as mentoring and tertiary education. One participant expressed an interest for receiving mentoring to further their career and an ex-principal was organised to act as a mentor for them by the school principal.

I just sent back saying I'd be really keen to do some senior management stuff at some stage and he organised some mentoring for me within a few months and yeah. (Int 5)

Three other participants were also interested in further tertiary study with one participant also referring to other aspirant leaders in their school seeing this as the now accepted way for aspiring towards senior leadership roles.

Yeah I think now, looking across, talking to other deputy principals, and people who have got roles and positions maybe over the last couple of years, it seems like you need to have started some kind of Masters of Education. (Int 4)

However, a challenge for the participants was finding the time to fit the extra studying in.

I honestly thought, yep, I could do that and then looked at my life and went when? I have four children, I run a business, I teach full time, I am a Leader of Learning and I'm like, when am I going to do that? (Int 1)

Working with students was one area that did raise contrasting views from the participants. All of the participants were motivated to do well in their teaching career, including pursuing further leadership roles because of their altruistic tendencies. All participants talked fondly of students and enjoyed their day-to-day interactions with them. However, when asked if leaving the classroom was a concern, all of the participants were reluctant to leave the role of classroom teacher. Many participants stated that being further away from students in the classroom was a reason why they had chosen not to extend their aspirations further.

You sort of evolve into those middle management things and I just don't think I'm evolved yet. I'm quite happy to say ok, 'I'm head of department' but Art and Music and Drama is the thing. (Int 3)

Issues of succession

Overall, the most common challenge and certainly the most concerning for all teachers interviewed was the aging population of middle leaders. According to the participants, the aging population of middle leaders was causing issues for both schools and aspirant leaders. With regard to schools, it was perceived that older staff members in middle leadership positions were the most

resistant to change and were seen to be comfortable just keeping departments ticking over.

I just think they are getting tired and comfortable and so they just leave things the same and don't want to change. (Int 2)

According to the participants, this caused concerns for schools in general as new approaches to teaching and learning may not be reinforced at the department level. Further to this, the aging population of middle leaders was, according to them, also acting as a blockage for aspirant leaders as these leadership positions could be held onto for a number of years. One participant stated that she herself would have been in her role as head of department for nearly twenty years. This lack of movement in the role of head of department seemed to be creating a blockage for aspirants wanting to move into these roles.

You know for a lot of teachers this will be the last school that they teach at and therefore the positions of responsibility, they're not particularly going to relinquish that, so I think it is hard for a young dynamic person in a school like this to become...because they just don't come up very often. And that's a shame because sometimes a young dynamic head of department is a brilliant thing but I wouldn't say the opportunity comes up that often here. (Int 3)

This blockage was also noted at a regional Post-Primary Teachers Association (PPTA) meeting where a young teacher also expressed their frustration at the lack of movement.

Yeah I remember someone at our last regional PPTA meeting, we had officers' training, someone said 'I just can't get into any leadership positions in this city, no-one will go anywhere'. And he was a young man, he was obviously really keen to, he would have been in his mid-to late 20's. And he's right. People stay here until they die. (Int 5)

At one of the schools, the principal had tried to address the issue of long standing heads of department by restructuring the middle leadership curriculum teams. This had seen heads of departments shifted into new positions of 'Leaders of Learning'. However, this caused further concerns with regard to remuneration with new Leaders of Learning doing the jobs of the heads of department but unable to receive any management units until there was movement through heads of departments stepping down.

I think, yeah it's interesting, the units that people hold as HOD's, they cannot be removed from those people until they leave their job basically or if they are willing to give them up. (Int 1)

This issue of blockage did appear to be mainly an issue with the head of department role with seemingly more movement occurring at middle leadership for pastoral dean roles. Participants noted that pastoral dean roles appear to have younger aspirant leaders who were encouraged to take on these positions due to these roles changing regularly and often. This was because deans were usually attached to student cohorts and followed the students through from year nine to year thirteen meaning that most deans referred to by participants were in these roles for around five years at a time.

...there are teachers who have come in, they've come straight out of teachers college into a couple of years of teaching and have taken up

quite large roles in the school whether it be, we've got head of house, which is actually kind of like more of a deaning type of role and they tend to be taken up by really young members of staff. (Int 4)

The role of dean also appeared to be viewed as a starting place for aspirant leaders wanting to further their career in leadership. This may also indicate that the role of dean could be viewed as on-the-job leadership development training as a way of providing an avenue of succession planning for schools.

Um... at this stage I wouldn't want to jump straight into HOD so yeah I guess deaning would be a good stepping stone. (Int 6)

However, this middle leadership role also comes attached with issues as the perception and reality of the job can act as a barrier for teachers and can leave the positions being filled by people who are coerced into the role. This may also explain why younger people are encouraged to take the roles on as their naivety and keenness to do well are taken advantage of. One participant discussed the process of being 'shoulder tapped' at the end of each year because no one was applying for the dean roles. When asked why:

It's a pretty tough job. Last year we had two at each year level and this year we dropped it back to one so for some year groups it's a lot of work. That can be pretty daunting, I mean you get time and hours for it but it comes nowhere near close to what you would need. A lot of it's in your own time. (Int 6)

Therefore, there appeared to be an issue with schools' ability to plan for succession with an aging population of middle leaders combined with a lack of keenness for middle and senior leadership positions. Throughout the

interviews conducted a number of motivations and challenges have been identified.

Motivators:

- Altruistic values;
- Agency over systems and processes;
- Access to leadership development; internal/external;
- Professional development; mentoring; and,
- Stepping stones for succession.

Challenges:

- Blockage - lack of movement, schools restructuring to accommodate;
- Perception of suitable aspirants; non-altruistic motivations;
- Selection and identification of aspirant leaders: lack of clarity;
- Perception of workload; work/life balance, commitment of time to job;
- Heroic perception of principals;
- Perception of leadership roles – continual focus on solving complex and ‘wicked’ problems; Discourse: “dealing with”;
- Professional development; difficult conversations, tertiary studies;
- Resistance to leadership development;
- Money – appropriate remuneration for roles; affordability of further studies such as tertiary;
- Time allocation for delegated tasks; leadership roles; further studies; and,
- Leaving the classroom.

Conclusion

A number of themes have emerged from the identified motivations and challenges highlighted by participants. Themes from both the questionnaire and the interviews have been extrapolated and triangulated in order to discover the overarching themes from across both sets of data. This is expressed in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Triangulated themes

Triangulated themes	Questionnaire	Interviews
Stepping stones and glass ceilings		Negative perceptions
	Identification of suitable aspirants: self-selection	Identification of suitable aspirants: self-selection
	The leadership ladder	The leadership ladder
	Lack of movement	Lack of movement
Skills for climbing	Secondary schools lacking in capacity: leadership development	
	Professional development: Mentoring, on-the-job training	Professional development: difficult to have conversations, mentoring, solving complex problems, tertiary
	Access to leadership development	Access to leadership development
Core purpose	Dedication to the profession	Dedication to the profession
		Leaving the classroom
	Impact of leadership on student outcomes	

These themes will now be discussed with reference to the literature.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

Three themes were identified from the triangulated data. Firstly, the metaphors of stepping-stones and glass ceilings have been used in reference to the literature on succession planning and the pathways for aspirant leaders climbing the ‘leadership ladder’ in New Zealand secondary school. Secondly, the skills needed for climbing the ‘leadership ladder’ are discussed with regards to the provision of professional development. Lastly, the backbone of educational work is addressed, that being the core purpose. The notion of raising student achievement, the core purpose of educational leaders, will be critiqued within the context of leadership development.

Stepping-stones and glass ceilings

Stepping-stones have been identified as a major theme because of the reality of aspirant leaders who participated in this study. Aspirant leaders appear to have identified their own version of stones and pathways as they worked their way toward and up the ‘leadership ladder’ in order to obtain formal leadership roles. However, as aspirants made their way up the ladder, a ‘glass ceiling’ has also appeared to limit or block further movement.

The notion of stepping-stones implies a certain progression or pathway throughout a person’s career whilst working towards particular roles. In some professions stepping-stones are formally identified. However Rhodes and Brundett (2005) and Hargreaves (2005) both suggest that stepping-stones

within educational settings are seemingly identified through more informal and ad hoc means and that more thoughtful consideration is required.

The leadership ladder

The data collected from across the questionnaire and the interviews indicated a natural ‘leadership ladder’ occurring in secondary schools with leadership roles positioned into hierarchical steps on a career progressive ladder. This reflects the work by Gronn (1999) on the making of educational leaders where he provides a model on the process of shaping leaders. Middle leadership roles such as head of department and dean were identified as being the most obtainable roles on the ladder. However, within the middle leadership stage of the ladder, further hierarchical separation occurred with the role of dean identified as a stepping-stone towards head of department. This hierarchical separation within the middle leadership roles could be a reflection of the perceived direct impact of the head of department role on student outcomes as seen within the questionnaire responses. The role of head of department was perceived to have a higher impact on student outcomes with a mean response of 5.6, compared with the roles of dean and senior leadership roles that had slightly lower mean responses of 5.2 and 5.3 respectively. The senior leadership roles of deputy principal and principal were seen at the top of the ladder and appeared to be the least aspired to.

Progression up the ‘leadership ladder’ within New Zealand’s decentralised schooling system appears to be left to the individual to step from stone to stone in order to create their own pathway. Aspirant leaders can be left to their own devices until the final step towards principalship is taken. Much of

the literature on succession is focused on those who have found their way at the top of the ladder. An example of this is in Ribbins (2008) study on making and becoming a principal. This relatively sole focus on principalship is also reflected in the support offered by the Ministry of Education such as the First-time Principals Programme. With recent publications such as the OECD New Zealand based report on ‘Preparing Teachers and Developing School Leaders for the 21st Century’ (Schleicher, 2012) the need to support leadership development further down the ‘leadership ladder’ is a growing theme. Gronn and Lacey (2004) address this when referring to a stage of ‘accession’ or ‘positioning’ oneself for leadership. This accession stage is where aspirant leaders are experimenting with opportunities and making decisions about which stone next to step on. It is this stage of support that may need further attention down the ladder in what can be described as the pool of aspirants.

The ‘pool’ of aspirants

Sitting at bottom of the formal ‘leadership ladder’ was what can be described as a pool of aspirants. ‘Swimming’ within this pool are possible aspirant leaders who have had numerous tasks and opportunities spread out amongst them. This is reflected in the questionnaire where over 70% (29 out of 38) of respondents were holding management units. This indicates that over 70% were in a position of responsibility were therefore in a position of leadership beyond that of a formally recognised leadership role.

Essentially, this sharing of tasks has lead to a pool of leadership occurring underneath the formal ‘leadership ladder’. Creating an environment of collective leadership through acts of distribution can act as a vehicle for leadership development opportunities and Hargreaves (2005) acknowledges that this can be a systematic response to succession planning. This was evident with interviewee six who viewed his role as teacher in charge of a year level within a subject area as a stepping-stone towards further leadership roles. Gronn (2008) and Bush (2011) caution against this as the answer to succession as it leaves much to chance. With little leadership development support for aspirant leaders within the ‘pool’, individuals are left to learn leadership capabilities through informal means. Aspirant leaders working within the ‘pool’ are, as Gronn and Lacey (2004) explain, testing and positioning themselves for future leadership roles. Failure to provide appropriate leadership development opportunities within the ‘pool’ is, as Cardno (2012) suggests, meaningless. This is further supported by Dimmock (2012) who states that the reliance on informal on-the-job training can result in individuals experiencing failure. Continued support in developing leadership practices is still required in order for aspirant leader to feel confident enough to nominate themselves to move onto the next stepping-stone.

Identification of aspirants

Results from the questionnaire identified conflicting information with regards to who exactly were identifying themselves as aspirant leaders. Over 80% (31 out of 38) of respondents were interested in pursuing further leadership roles indicating that essentially many of them were essentially an aspirant leader.

However, when asked about their perceptions of the leadership environment within New Zealand secondary schools, there was an indication that there was a shortage of aspirant leaders. Additionally, the interview findings suggested a lack of clarity around the identification and selection of aspirant leaders. Interview findings indicated a possible lack of support for some other self-professed aspirants in participants' schools who were pursuing leadership roles due to a lack of leadership capabilities and altruistic motivations. Furthermore, interview findings were split between those who discussed themselves in the context of being aspirant versus those who had faced enough challenges to be disenchanted by the pursuit of further roles.

Self-selection

Hargreaves (2005) suggests that issues with succession are not an issue for individual schools to battle with but an ongoing systematic concern. Both Bush (2011) and Huber and Pashiardis (2008) agree that succession planning within a decentralised system is lacking a planned approach with the reliance of succession falling squarely on the up and coming aspirants ability to successfully master the art of 'ladder climbing'. Huber and Pashiardis (2008) and Cardno (2012) suggest that one way to support aspirant leaders is to provide an overview of the competencies required for leadership.

Furthermore, with the need to self-select, aspirants opened themselves up to scrutiny, as a number of individuals interviewed were open to scrutinising others as they watched an attempt towards career progression. The open scrutiny of aspirant leaders created issues of vulnerability and confidence. As

the interview findings suggest, the scrutiny of other aspirant leaders may be due to a perceived lack of effective leadership capabilities. However, with little evidence of support for aspirant leaders in knowing what the leadership capabilities were and whether they were working effectively towards them, a lack in confidence has possibly developed leading to feelings of uncertainty and therefore vulnerability. This may lend a different perspective to the often discussed ‘leadership shortage’ with some literature suggesting that any perceived shortage might reflect a lack of quality aspirants as opposed to the quantity of aspirants (Bush, 2011; Gronn & Lacey, 2004). Whilst this may be true to some extent, there was some evidence from this research suggesting that there was a push back down the ladder away from certain leadership positions. Senior leadership roles were of particular concern with much of the data suggesting that these roles are the least desired to participants in this research which may be due to the many perceived challenges that are attached to the roles. This not only suggests a perceived lack of quality aspirants but also indicated a smaller number of aspirants heading towards these positions. Whilst this may not be an initial concern considering there are fewer roles to fill at the top end of the ladder, there is still a need to promote leadership, otherwise filling these roles is potentially being left to chance (Bush, 2011; Dorman & D'Arbon, 2003). A study by Kane and Mallon (2006) on the perception of teaching indicated that retention of leaders in New Zealand was of growing concern with their findings also suggesting that many potential leaders were turning away from leadership opportunities. This is further supported by Wylie (2013a) in a more recent New Zealand publication that reports teachers are continuing to grow concerned about their already increasing workloads and therefore reluctant to take more on.

Aspirants' perceptions of leadership

One of the on-going challenges identified throughout the research findings was the perception of the leadership roles. Whilst some leadership positions were more desirable than others, none were more clouded in negativity than that of principal. The role of the principal was seen to carry most of the decision-making on behalf of the school community, as well as, a constant state of having to solve many complex problems. The interview findings suggest that the constant state of 'dealing' with issues acted as a demotivation when considering this role. Further to this was the workload that senior leaders were seen to have to work with. Much of the findings from across both the questionnaire and interviews suggest that the workload of leaders was exponential compared with the levels of remuneration received and that this was a challenge for aspirants considering whether they were up for the job. This is reflective of Razik and Swanson (2001) and Owens (2004) who outlined the notion that remuneration was more a maintenance factor and does not act as a sole motivator. This point of view is also supported by Kane and Mallon (2006) and Wylie (2013a) who suggest that job intensification was an increasing turn off for aspirant leaders when considering particularly the role of principal. This was supported by interviewee observations that highlighted the long hours and dedication that their principals were making on behalf of their school.

Whilst a recent OECD report on 21st Century leadership (Schleicher, 2012), moves away from notions of headship to that of a more collective leadership

mentality in order to raise student achievement, the issue remains that principals are still seen as carrying much of the burden on behalf of organisations. Huber and Pashardis (2008) highlight that there may still be a need for one head of school thus further highlighting the lack of clarity around how to develop a collective leadership culture whilst at the same time having a sole principal. Wylie (2013b), in her critique of self-managing schools in New Zealand, suggests that more support for schools from the Ministry of Education at a regional level would enable networks to be established. This networking at regional level could potentially provide principals with the support they need, from other schools and regional educational advisors, to manage their perceived burdens. Until then, principals are reliant on sharing the load (Youngs, 2009) and the role of principal will continue to remain unpopular.

Length of service

Findings from the questionnaire suggest that younger respondents believed they needed to have been teaching for a certain number of years before considering formal leadership roles. This implied a certain length of service was required. Bush (2011) argues that if routes to leadership positions were made quicker then this would make them more appealing to aspirant leaders. This position of quicker routes is problematic however if both senior and middle leadership roles are occupied for significant lengths of time with little indication of retirement or stepping down from the role. This was reinforced by one interviewee that confessed that she had been in her role of head of department for coming up to twenty years. This had created something similar

to a ‘glass ceiling’ for some aspirant leaders. To overcome the ‘glass ceiling’, the schools have restructured in order for other occupants to join the ‘ladder dwellers’; that is, those who have remained in their positions of leadership for considerable lengths of time. One school in this study had essentially extended the ‘leadership ladder’ out width ways, allowing for multiple occupants and increased the number of leadership roles, a growing phenomena as indicated by Reid et al. (2004) and Wylie (2013b). The new occupants on the ladder are essentially the new heads of department albeit under another name such as Leaders of Learning. These new occupants are a way of working around the ‘ladder dwellers’ that continue to occupy the formal leadership role of head of department but may be deemed ineffective. However, the glass ceiling may not last indefinitely whilst the retirement boom still remains a threat. If the retirement boom does occur then this may in fact create a disturbance, particularly within middle leadership roles. This disturbance may see a blow out occur on the ‘leadership ladder’ with an opening up of multiple roles in quick succession. This may result in poorly prepared leaders expected to fill more senior roles (Hargreaves, 2005; Macpherson, 2010).

Whilst individual schools within this study appeared to be addressing concerns for succession with short term solutions, Macpherson (2010) and Hargreaves (2005) suggest that succession planning needs to be addressed through systematic and policy driven approaches. Whether the disturbance on the ladder occurs or if the glass ceiling continues, the need to build capacity in leadership throughout schools is essential for the improvement of student

outcomes (Wylie, 2013b) because the need for effective leadership to be sustained without too much disruption to the organisation is important to be considered (Hargreaves, 2005).

Skills for climbing the leadership ladder or swimming in the ‘pool’ of aspirants

Across both the questionnaire and interviews there was a resounding call for access to leadership development within professional development opportunities. Current provision was identified in the research findings as being limited in access, ad hoc and dependant on the context of the school. Nearly all of the interview participants were in a formal middle leadership role, however, the majority had received little to no leadership development related to their role. This was despite some of them being new to the position indicating that there had also been no induction in place. The principal of one school had asked one interviewee what professional development would be required and was subsequently provided with an external mentor for her role as middle leader when asked. In general, the research findings indicate that much of the leadership development learning opportunities were whilst on-the-job and informal with little connection to wider systematic needs. Scott and Webber (2008) suggest that effective leadership development needs to combine both formal and informal opportunities, however, access to formal professional development opportunities for the participants in this study was limited to either those entering principalship or those willing and able to engage in tertiary studies.

Access to formal leadership development

Day and Antonakis (2012) discuss the need to have a structure that links multiple points of professional development and experiences in order to maximise the learning of leadership. However, the decentralised nature of New Zealand schools has meant that little structure for such co-ordination exists coupled with little Government expectations on what type of qualifications or experience a leader should have when entering leadership roles (Schleicher, 2012). The development and selection of leaders has fallen mainly at the discretion of schools and individuals. To counter this, teachers within two schools, had begun to set the expectations for themselves with talk of aspirant leaders needing to have participated in some form of tertiary education, as explained by two interview participants. However, as Macpherson (2010) described, New Zealand was lagging behind international counterparts in terms of leadership development and access to tertiary and other formal leadership development opportunities was limited. This was because of what Macpherson (2010) described as “serial incompetence” and a lack of direction in Governmental policy with regards to the professionalisation of educational leaders (p. 212). Respondents were interested in pursuing formal leadership development opportunities however were generally held back by the lack of time and money to follow this through. This raises questions about eligibility of access to tertiary and whether a more strategic approach is needed in order to ensure more aspirant leaders have access to such learning. This indicates that whilst the motivators of ‘achievement’ and ‘learning’ as outlined by Bolman and Deal (2008) were

present the ‘maintenance factors’ to support this motivator was lacking thus, aspirant leaders are unable to pursue their goals (Beatty, 2008; Owens, 2004).

The role of mentoring

Mentoring is an avenue for leadership development that was of interest to participants. One interviewee had already begun participating in a mentoring programme with an expert from outside of her school with the notion of the expert being able to help her make sense of her job as a middle curriculum leader, as well as, to support her as she worked her way towards senior leadership. The questionnaire findings also reflected the sentiment of having access to mentoring with a mean response of 4.6 from respondents when asked if this would be a motivator. This was coupled with on-the-job training. Whilst Robertson (2008) indicates that mentoring and coaching are effective ways for aspirant leaders to be able to make sense of their learning and may be the type of structure that Day and Antonakis (2012) allude to, the trend from the questionnaire indicated that leadership development would be welcomed outside that of individual schools and school contexts. This was due to participants indicating that, in their view, schools possibly lacked the capacity to deliver leadership development on their own. A number of interviewees also made mention that having support from outside the school would be beneficial over support from inside the organisation. This notion of leadership development stepping beyond the walls of the school environment is reflected by Wylie (2013b) in her critique of self-managing schools and suggests schools that create a structure of networking at a regional level

could be an avenue for sharing knowledge such as leadership development practices. However such an approach would need support from policy makers.

Focusing on the core purpose as a motivator

The last theme to be discussed is that of the core purpose of any educational organisation; the improvement of teaching and learning. Throughout the interviews, participants continued to refer to the core business of their work, which was working with students. Some participants referred to working with students as their main motivation for pursuing leadership. This response to the pursuit of leadership roles is also reflected in the report by Kane and Mallon (2006) where the moral and altruistic attributes of the job continue to be a motivator for teachers staying in the profession. This reflects Begley (2008) and Owens (2004) with such motivators being high on the hierarchy of motivations. To counter this, however, are reports of increased workloads, burnout and demanding environments of disengaged students (Ingvarson et al., 2005; Wylie, 2013a, 2013b). One interview participant believed that burnout in the classroom was a reason some aspirant leaders further pursued leadership roles with the intent to minimise their contact time with students. This further reinforced the scrutinising of other aspirant leaders as different opinions of motivators were highlighted. Also highlighted was the need for 'maintenance factors' such as appropriate workloads and remuneration to be established in order for aspirant leaders to at least not feel dissatisfied (Owens, 2004; Razik & Swanson, 2001).

However, some respondents also stated that their passion for teaching students was the reason they would no longer pursue leadership roles as the expansion of workload when occupying a leadership role resulted in less contact time with students. Across both the interviews and questionnaire, there was still an acknowledgement that leadership had an impact on student outcomes, though the role of classroom teacher was indicated to have the most impact on student outcomes by the participants in this study. Aspirant leaders seen to want to exit the classroom too quickly were further scrutinised amongst those interviewed as they were seen to be motivated by their own self-interest as reflected by Begley (2008) in his study on the nature of educational leaders. In order to be viewed as pursuing leadership for moral purposes, tensions for aspirant leaders were created as they carefully managed the pursuit of leadership whilst carefully balancing the important role of classroom teacher (Begley, 2008).

A balancing act

A number of interviewees described the struggle of keeping the balance between teaching as well as effectively carrying out their leadership role, particularly that of middle leadership. Attached to this balancing act were feelings of guilt that came with perceptions they were not doing their students justice in the classroom or that the pursuit of leadership roles took them too far away from the classroom. This reflects the role intensification found in recent reports on teacher workload and where burnout can occur as teachers continue to hold the balance (Ingvarson et al., 2005; Wylie, 2013a, 2013b). Further to this, the research findings suggested that whilst aspirant leaders

were holding the balance, they also received little time or remuneration to acknowledge the work they did furthering issues of workload and burnout. Access to leadership development may provide aspirant leaders with the skills to enable them to maintain that balance with much more confidence. The research findings suggest that the alternative appears to be that aspirant leaders will more likely choose students over leadership and for some that has meant deciding not to continue with the pursuit of leadership and the next stepping-stone not being taken. This may result in the ‘leadership ladder’ becoming sparse at differing rungs.

Conclusion

Chapter five has outlined the research findings with regards to the literature. The motivations and challenges that aspirant leaders face have been addressed through the metaphors of stepping-stones and glass ceilings which highlighted the need for succession planning and leadership development to be further considered in New Zealand secondary schools. Chapter six will conclude this research by making recommendations for practice and research as well as highlighting the limitations of the project.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Chapter six provides a summary of the key findings of this research as outlined in more detail in the previous chapter. These findings are addressed according to the research questions:

Why is succession planning an important consideration in New Zealand secondary schools?

What motivations and challenges are there for aspirant leaders in New Zealand secondary schools?

How can leadership development support aspirant leaders in New Zealand secondary schools?

By providing answers to these questions, recommendations for practice are made, as well as, recommendations for further research. Concluding this chapter are the limitations of this research project.

The importance of considering succession planning in New Zealand secondary schools

The aforementioned motivations and challenges may have led to an environment where potential and aspirant leaders are reluctant to continue the pursuit of leadership roles. Whilst aspirant leaders may be practising the art of leadership within the ‘pool’ (Gronn & Lacey, 2004), many were de-motivated from attempting to climb the formal ‘leadership ladder’ due to perceptions of even more demanding workloads and the need to continually solve complex

problems. Aspirant leaders, whilst positioning themselves, were already finding it difficult balancing issues with workloads and expressed a lack of confidence when addressing complex problems. Therefore, some of the participants were reluctant to take on more responsibility.

For others, climbing the ‘leadership ladder’ was filled with its own challenges as on the way up they encountered ‘ladder dwellers’. ‘Ladder dwellers’ are generally at middle leadership level and have been occupying their role for a considerable length of time and are the imminent ‘retirement boomers’ (Bush, 2011). This creates what can be termed a ‘glass ceiling’ as aspirant leaders find that they cannot go any further. One schools’ response to this was to create more leadership positions on the ladder and this is recognised by literature where an expansion of leadership roles is occurring in some schools (Reid et al., 2004; Wylie, 2013b). However, this may create a disturbance on the ladder when the retirement boom does occur, as ill-prepared aspirants will be expected to fill a number of jobs.

Hargreaves (2005) suggests that leadership succession issues should not be left to individual schools to address but rather, a systematic approach is required. The concern here for New Zealand secondary schools working in a decentralised system, is that current succession planning is ad hoc and reliant on leaders to self-nominate, however there is much literature on the need for some strategic succession planning to take place (Bush, 2011; Huber & Pashardis, 2008; Wylie, 2013b). Reliance on aspirant leaders to self-nominate is also reliant on aspirant leaders having success in their

experiences and as Dimmock (2012) and Day and Antonakis (2012) explain, it is relatively by chance whether they will or not. Therefore it is also by chance whether or not the current system of succession planning in a decentralised system is developing successful leaders and as Bush (2008) explains successful leadership is not something that should be left to chance.

The motivations and challenges for aspirant leaders

This research has highlighted a vast array of motivations and challenges faced by aspirant leaders with each participant able to provide an insight into their own journeys as they paved their way through a career in education. Whilst many had individual concerns and examples of good practice specific to their role and context, there were a number of challenges and motivations that rose above the individual context and were examples of systematic challenges and motivations.

One such challenge was the apparent intensification of the job as a result of role creation and expansion and reflects the reports by Wylie (2013a) and Ingvarson et al. (2005). Teachers are being asked to take on more responsibilities over and above their teaching loads in order to support the workloads of those further up the ‘leadership ladder’ as encouraged by notions of collective leadership strategies (Schleicher, 2012; Youngs, 2009).

These extra responsibilities are sold to staff as being opportunities or stepping-stones towards further leadership, yet, without adequate support such as time and money or leadership development, teachers and aspirant leaders are facing increased workloads leading to burnout. Further to this challenge, many aspirant leaders were also carefully juggling an expanding

workload whilst also maintaining a full teaching load. The participants' basic 'maintenance factors' to maintain job satisfaction were often called into question. As Owens (2004) and Beatty (2008) explain, without the 'maintenance factors' being seen to first, individuals will not be motivated to pursue further career goals.

Many of the participants were motivated to further their involvement in professional development in order to support their role as aspirant leader with some motivated to access formal leadership development training such as mentoring and tertiary study. However, a further challenge was presented with limited access to such formal training. This reflects Macpherson (2010) who, in his study on the professionalisation of educational leaders, expressed concern with New Zealand falling behind internationally with regards to access to formal leadership training. The research findings indicated that participants were reluctant to rely solely on on-the-job informal training and were motivated to have some structure that combined formal and informal experiences, a position supported by Dimmock (2012) and Day and Antonakis (2012) in relation to leadership development.

Throughout the research the motivators for pursuing further leadership roles and development opportunities were evident amongst the participants. However, each motivator was attached with a number of challenges that limited an aspirant leaders ability to pursue their goals further. Thus, in order to truly motivate aspirant leaders, more careful consideration of basic needs

and job satisfaction may need to be considered (Beatty, 2008; Owens, 2004; Razik & Swanson, 2001).

Leadership development and aspirant leaders

Leadership development opportunities would be of benefit for aspirant leaders as they position themselves both within the 'pool' and on the 'leadership ladder'. Research finding suggest that those already working within a leadership position would welcome opportunities to learn leadership capabilities. Learning about leadership capabilities would have a two-pronged effect; firstly to support aspirant leaders and their attempts at succession and secondly, to increase that of student achievement outcomes.

Leadership development is said to act as a motivation for aspirant leaders as they look to furthering their career in education (Beatty, 2008; Heck, 2003). This motivation is reflected in the research findings as both the questionnaire and interview findings highlight the need and the desire for leadership development within schools. With aspirant leaders busy balancing demanding teaching loads with leadership roles, the concept of being provided with support in their role, as leader, was a welcomed notion. Many saw this as a solution to making the balance of the dual roles at least more manageable and as Rhodes and Brundett (2009) and Dimmock (2012) suggest, once aspirant leaders are supported in experiencing success in their jobs, the more likely they will maintain motivation to continue aspiring.

Leadership development could also further support the notions of collective leadership which has the intention to improve student outcomes (Schleicher, 2012). Although much current leadership development provision is focused on the role of principal, Harris (2008) and (Gronn, 2008) explain that by enabling leadership development to infiltrate further into schools would create learning organisations. This would enable many participants within a school to be focused on the improvement of teaching and learning through developing their capabilities as a leader (Dimmock, 2012).

Recommendations

Whilst the issues of motivations, challenges, succession and leadership development have been discussed as separate entities, the connected nature of these issues cannot be understated. In making sense of the literature and research findings it was often difficult to distinguish between the beginnings of one issue as a result of another. Rather, the issues were essentially intertwined with multiple starting and turning points. However, not many end points were found but rather, more questions. Therefore, the making of recommendations for future practice is done so with acknowledgement of the intertwining nature of these issues and this required a holistic systems-level approach.

A systems-level response

The recommendations from this research would be to develop a network of schools at a regional level where the knowledge and capacity of leadership development can be shared. This would also allow for a structure that connects multiple formal and informal experiences and allow for planned

succession within the current decentralised system of New Zealand schools (Day & Antonakis, 2012; Dimmock, 2012; Wylie, 2013b). Whilst this network would require support at the Government level it would be important that prescribed standards be avoided, because as Gunter (2012) explains, this can lead to Governments using this as way to roll out reforms. Rather a focus on identifying the capabilities of best practice for schools to work with would be ideal (Cardno, 2012; Dimmock, 2012) as this would allow for flexibility and for the needs of individuals, schools and regions to be individually addressed.

This network could have two purposes. Firstly, aspirant leaders from each school would be able to have access to some type of formal leadership development training. For example, this could be a series of block courses facilitated by professional development providers. These courses may act as stepping-stones towards further tertiary studies. Macpherson (2010) does highlight the conflict of interest however of tertiary institutes being used to provide the professional development and therefore a clear distinction would need to be made in order for tertiary institutes to be able to critique the direction of Governmental agencies.

The second purpose of the network could be to create tiers of mentoring. For example, a new head of department or dean from one school could be provided mentoring from an experienced leader from another school. The notion behind using other people from outside of an individual's school allows for the person being mentored to be open and honest about the issues they may be facing in their school. This however would require schools to no

longer see themselves as the competition. This is an aspect of self-managing schools in which Wylie (2013b) critiques and is another area that the Government would need to come on board with. Like the beginning teachers' induction programme, a similar mentoring system could be established for leaders who are either beginning their journey or on their way. This would require further resourcing from the Government however in order to develop this sustainably within and for schools.

The final recommendation from this research would be for the Government to again recognise the importance of leadership development for the improvement of schools and student outcomes as expressed by recent OECD reports (Pont et al., 2008; Schleicher, 2012). Therefore, leadership development should be taken back off the shelf and reestablished into Government and policy makers agendas.

Recommendations for further research

Firstly, this research has been confined geographically with only three schools within the Central North Island participating in the research. Further research across the country would provide a more realistic picture of the concerns regarding succession planning and the needs for leadership development.

One school in this research project had restructured and expanded their hierarchical system in bid to solve succession issues. Further research into how and why other schools are also restructuring would be of benefit as this may be an area of future concern for schools and Government alike. Further

research also into the constraints that principals have with staffing and maintaining sustainability of roles would be worthy.

With the increase of roles at secondary schools, a number of participants across both interviews and the questionnaire indicated that they received little remuneration or time for their leadership roles. More research into the constraints or ‘mishandling’ of both management unit allocation and timetabling may allow for solutions to be found for this problem. More acknowledgment from the Government and the secondary school teacher union, PPTA, is needed where more time and management units are allocated to schools in order to cater for the expansion of school structures and roles.

Lastly, research into how schools within a regional area including both primary and secondary schools, would feel about creating networks with each other in order to share good practice. This would take the concept of networking for leadership development to the next level and allow for motivations and challenges for schools to be considered.

Limitations of this research

One of the constraints of this research was the number of middle leaders interviewed as their perceptions dominate the research findings. This limited the voice of classroom teachers yet to take on a formal leadership role and their perceptions of these issues are relatively unknown. Therefore, opportunities to understand the decision to move onto the formal ‘leadership ladder’ may not be fully known in this research.

Geographically this research was limited in order to make the project manageable for the researcher. Therefore, schools easily accessible were used. Therefore, findings are limited to the geographic location of the Central North Island. Research conducted outside of this area may have resulted in different findings.

Finally, one last limitation of this research was that only three schools were used and all three were of similar decile ratings. Research conducted in schools of lower or higher decile ratings may have produced differing results from the ones found in this research.

Concluding comments

This research has identified the motivations and challenges that are faced by aspirant leaders within three Central North Island secondary schools. Recommendations for succession planning and leadership development are given in order to ensure that effective leaders are ready and willing to take on leadership roles.

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Appendices

Appendix A: On-line Questionnaire

Motivations and Challenges for Aspirant Leaders

Survey Information

Thank you for agreeing to complete this voluntary survey. This survey is part of a thesis which completes the programme for a Master Degree in Educational Leadership and Management.

This survey covers aspects of a research topic that is investigating the motivations and challenges faced by aspirant leaders in New Zealand Secondary Schools.

By completing this survey you are giving consent for the data to be used within the research. You may leave the questionnaire and return at a later time provided you use the same computer. The questionnaire will need to be completed by June 28th.

Both your school and yourself will remain anonymous and the data collected will only be viewed by the researcher and the research supervisor. No Computer/tablet IP addresses will be collected by the researcher. A summary of the general data will be made available to your school.

Should you wish to withdraw from the research you may do so within ten working days of completing the questionnaire. If you have any concerns in general about this research then feel free to contact the researcher, Stephanie Harford, at stephanieh@haurakiplains.school.nz or the research supervisor, Howard Youngs on 09 815 4321 ext 8411, hyoungs@unitec.ac.nz.

Please also email the researcher Stephanie Harford, stephanieh@haurakiplains.school.nz, if you wish to be part of a focus group session. The focus groups will be conducted in each participating school at a time most convenient to all. The purpose of the focus group is to gain a deeper understanding of the motivations and challenges that teachers face when looking toward leadership roles.

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: (insert number here)

This study has been approved by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee from (date) to (date). If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

**General Information: Please provide a response for the questions you are
wi...**

1. What is your age?

- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60+

2. Do you hold any management units?

- No - Please go to question 5.
- Yes - Please go to question 3.

3. If you answered yes to question 2, how long have you held these management units?

- 2 years or less
- 3-4 years
- 5+ years

4. How many management units do you currently hold?

- One
- Two
- Three
- Four or more

**5. If you answered no to question 2, have you held management units in the past? If so,
what was the highest number you have ever held?**

- No managements held
- One
- Two
- Three
- Four or more

6. How long are you planning to work in Secondary School Education in New Zealand?

You may choose more than one answer.

- This is my last year
- 1-2 Years
- 3-6 Years
- 7-10 Years
- 11+ Years
- Until retirement

7. Do you aspire to hold any of these positions? Tick all that apply.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pastoral Dean | <input type="checkbox"/> Director of Arts/Sports |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Head of Department | <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant Principal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specialist Classroom Teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Principal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guidance | <input type="checkbox"/> Deputy Principal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Dean | <input type="checkbox"/> Principal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher in Charge of Curriculum Area | <input type="checkbox"/> Aspire towards none of these positions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) | <input type="text"/> |

Your perceptions of the leadership environment

8. New Zealand Secondary Schools are facing a shortage of aspirant leaders.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>					

9. Secondary Schools should have leadership development as a strategic focus.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>					

10. Secondary Schools have the capacity to deliver and support their own leadership development programme for aspirant leaders.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>					

11. Secondary Schools have the relevant knowledge and experience to deliver and support their own leadership development programme for aspirant leaders.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>					

12. Developing my career in leadership with appropriate leadership development within New Zealand Secondary Schools is important to me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>					

13. Developing my own teaching profession as a career path within New Zealand Secondary Schools is important to me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="radio"/>					

The Role of Leader

14. It is essential for the following to be provided with leadership development. Those who are:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Principals	<input type="radio"/>					
Aspirant Principals	<input type="radio"/>					
Deputy/Assistant Principals	<input type="radio"/>					
Aspirant Deputy/Assistant Principals	<input type="radio"/>					
Heads of Department	<input type="radio"/>					
Aspirant Heads of Department	<input type="radio"/>					
Deans/Pastoral Care	<input type="radio"/>					
Aspirant Deans	<input type="radio"/>					
Experienced Teachers	<input type="radio"/>					
Beginning Teachers	<input type="radio"/>					

15. It is essential for the following to have a reputation of being an effective teacher. Those who are:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Principals	<input type="radio"/>					
Deputy/Assistant Principals	<input type="radio"/>					
Heads of Department	<input type="radio"/>					
Deans	<input type="radio"/>					

16. The following have a direct impact on student achievement outcomes.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Principals	<input type="radio"/>					
Deputy/Assistant Principals	<input type="radio"/>					
Heads of Department	<input type="radio"/>					
Deans	<input type="radio"/>					
Classroom teacher	<input type="radio"/>					

17. The following have unmanageable workloads.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Principals	<input type="radio"/>					
Deputy/Assistant Principals	<input type="radio"/>					
Heads of Department	<input type="radio"/>					
Deans	<input type="radio"/>					
Classroom teacher	<input type="radio"/>					

22. The following would motivate me towards a leadership role.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Management Units	<input type="radio"/>					
Middle Management Allowances	<input type="radio"/>					
Time	<input type="radio"/>					
On the job training	<input type="radio"/>					
Gaining a relevant qualification	<input type="radio"/>					
Mentoring	<input type="radio"/>					
Professional development courses	<input type="radio"/>					
Career pathway planning	<input type="radio"/>					
TeachNZ Study Award/Study Grant	<input type="radio"/>					
Scholarship	<input type="radio"/>					
Personal Achievement	<input type="radio"/>					
Encouragement from peers	<input type="radio"/>					
Encouragement from home	<input type="radio"/>					

23. The following might act as a challenge for me aspiring towards a leadership role.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Affording postgraduate programmes	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased accountability	<input type="radio"/>					
Increased workload	<input type="radio"/>					
Less classroom contact	<input type="radio"/>					
Family/home circumstances	<input type="radio"/>					
Not enough incentives	<input type="radio"/>					
Specify Incentives	<input type="text"/>					

Thank You

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. If you would like to email the researcher and/or would like to take part in a focus group please email at stephanieh@haurakiplains.school.nz.
The focus groups will be conducted in each participating school at a time that will suit all involved. The purpose of the focus group is to gain a deeper understanding of the motivations and challenges that teachers face when looking toward leadership roles.
Once again, thank you for your time.

Appendix B: Semi-structured interview questions

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Please find below the copy of the questions that will be used during the interview. There are five main questions that will guide the session and these are supported by follow up questions that we may also explore should there be time. The interview will use these questions as a guide only and other areas may be explored depending on the topics raised during the session.

Main Questions:

1. Who is motivated to further their career in New Zealand Secondary Schools?
2. What acts as a motivation to aspire towards leadership roles?
3. What are the challenges towards pursuing these roles?
4. What is your view of leadership development?
5. Does your school create opportunities for leadership development either formally or informally?

Follow Up Questions:

1. Is leaving the classroom a concern?
2. Which leadership roles within your school do you think would be most obtainable?
3. Is leadership development important for secondary schools to offer?
4. What type of leadership development would you want to see occurring?
5. Who should provide the leadership development? Are they able to?
6. Is being an effective teacher a gateway to leadership roles?
7. What are your perceptions of a senior leadership role?
8. Are there any initiatives being implemented at your school that may be a gateway of providing leadership development?
9. Are individuals who aspire towards leadership roles encouraged to leave for jobs in other schools or is internal promotion also encouraged?

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 2013-1024

This study has been approved by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee from 28 May 2013 to 29 May 2014. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix C: Information sheet and consent form



INFORMATION SHEET

Title of Thesis:

Stepping-stones and glass ceilings: the motivations and challenges of aspirant leaders

My name is Stephanie Harford and I am currently enrolled in the Master of Educational Leadership and Management degree in the Department of Education at Unitec Institute of Technology. I am seeking your help in meeting the requirements of research for a Thesis course which forms a substantial part of this degree.

The aim of my project is to identify and understand the motivation and assumptions of secondary school teachers in relation to being potential aspirants of middle or senior leadership positions.

I request your participation in the following way. I will be conducting interviews and would appreciate your participation. I will also be asking you to sign a consent form regarding this event. The interview will take no longer than an hour of your time and is to be conducted at a time most convenient to you.

Neither you nor your organisation will be identified in the Thesis. I will be recording your contribution and will provide a transcript for you to check in which you will have up to ten days after receiving the transcript to edit or withdraw data. You have the right to fully withdraw from this study up to the end of this ten day period. If you have any queries about the project, you may contact my supervisor at Unitec Institute of Technology.

You are able to contact me at any stage at my work email,
stephanieh@haurakiplains.school.nz, should you wish to receive any clarification.

My supervisor is Howard Youngs and may be contacted by email or phone.
Phone: (09) 815 4321 ext 8411 Email: hyoungs@unitec.ac.nz.

Yours sincerely

Stephanie Harford

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 2013-1024

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CONSENT FORM

Research event: Interview

Researcher: Stephanie Harford

Programme: Master of Educational Leadership and Management

THESIS TITLE:

Stepping-stones and glass ceilings: the motivations and challenges of aspirant leaders

I have been given and have understood an explanation of this research and I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered. I understand that neither my name nor the name of my organisation will be used in any public reports.

I also understand that I will be provided with a transcript for checking in which I will have ten days to respond to before data analysis is started. I am also aware that I have the right to withdraw from the study up to the end of this ten day period.

I agree to take part in this project.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 2013-1024

This study has been approved by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee from 28 May 2013 to 29 May 2014. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 6162). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.