How do New Zealand Teachers like to be supported by Psychologists?

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Abstract

Educational psychology as a profession has undergone many changes over the past few years, warranting an exploration of the current understandings of key stakeholders' perceptions and requirements of the profession. While there have been numerous studies investigating the perceptions of teachers who are one of the main stakeholders, regarding the roles of educational psychologists, there are no empirical studies internationally, as well as locally, that have investigated how teachers want to be supported by psychologists who work in schools. This study explored how teachers in New Zealand would like to be supported by psychologists working in their schools, which can include educational, developmental and clinical psychologists, as well as their perceptions of the roles of educational psychologists in particular. The study used a mixed method qualitative research design, combining surveys with an instrumental case study approach. The first phase of the study, involved 50 teachers completing a web-based survey, while the second phase consisted of semi-structured interviews with three teachers. Key findings indicate that teachers had limited knowledge surrounding services that psychologists provided in schools. Overall they believed that psychologists working in schools took an ecological approach to their work, but their role had very rarely been explained to them. Some teachers sought the support of psychologists because they did not feel their training had sufficiently prepared them to meet the extent of needs in their classrooms. The support they wanted from psychologists was professional conversations on a range of issues concerning students, as well as professional development. Even though they identified an increased need for psychological assistance, they were not consistent in seeking this support. The findings have some key implications for the future practice of psychologists in New Zealand Schools. Among others, it highlighted the importance of increasing teachers understanding of the role of psychologists in their school, in particular, educational psychologists. The small sample size and other limitations of the study warrant that further research across primary, intermediate and secondary schools to better understand the nature of support that teachers actually want from psychologists, and if there are differences between the three sectors in the nature of support required. Findings from the study can be useful to inform and tailor the services offered by psychologists, in particular educational psychologists, to the needs of teachers.

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Acknowledgements

Ehara taku toa, he takitahi, he toa takitini-

My success should not be bestowed onto me alone, as it was not individual success but success of a collective

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Chapter One: Introduction

New Zealand is a country made up of many different nationalities in addition to its indigenous population, the Māori people. This has lead to the formation of many diverse communities who all bring their own set of educational requirements, which the New Zealand education system recognises it is obligated to meet: "Our education system must meet the needs of our diverse population, be accessible and relevant to all, and flexible enough to accommodate different aspects and stages of children and young people's lives" (Ministry of Education, 2017a, p. 10).

Education provision in New Zealand is guided by the Education Act 1989, which informs the National Education Guidelines (NEGs) and the National Administration Guidelines (NAGs) informing the National Education Goals (Ministry of Education, 2007). The NEGs provide a unified direction for state education, while the NAGs provide guidelines surrounding the administration of schools (Ministry of Education, 2015a). The National Education Goals 1 and 2 state that schools are required to provide programmes and educational opportunities which enable all students to achieve to their best, and remove all barriers that could impede their success (Ministry of Education, 2015a). One of the Government's efforts to ensure educational success for all learners is to ensure by 2017, 85% of 18-year-olds achieve the National Certificates of Educational Achievement (NCEA) level 2 or an equivalent qualification. NCEA are the national qualifications for students in secondary schools in New Zealand (NZQA, 2017). To this effect, the Ministry of Education has actively responded by providing initiatives, programmes, and additional supports (Education Review Office, 2014).

At present, there are a number of supports available to teachers to promote the New Zealand government's stance of a fully inclusive education system whereby

all students can achieve. Within schools, some of the supports include mentor

teachers for newly graduated teachers (Education Council of Aotearoa, 2011),

Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCos) (NZEI, 2016), teacher aides,

syndicate/level and curriculum leaders who provide extra support and training, as

well as social workers and/or pastoral care personnel in some schools. External

supports include Resource Teachers of Learning and Behaviour (RTLB's),

psychologists, speech-language therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists

and other specialists who are approached when internal supports have been

exhausted, or are unable to meet the student or teacher's specific needs (Bourke &

Dharan, 2015). Among the range of external supports available there has been much

interest in the area of support provided by psychologists, specifically teachers'

perceptions of psychologists working in schools (Wang, Ni, Ding & Yi, 2015), and

in particular educational psychologists (Farrell, Jimerson, Kalambouka & Benoit,

2005; Gilman & Gabriel, 2004; Kikas, 1999; Peterson, Waldron & Paulson, 1998;

Styles, 1965; Thiekling & Jimerson, 2006). Much of this interest is based on

investigating the many challenges teachers face, and the extent and range of supports

available to them from psychologists.

There are a few empirical studies that have investigated teachers' perceptions

on the services provided in schools by psychologists (Dean, 1980; Farrell et al.,

2005; Gilman & Gabriel, 2004; Styles, 1965; Wang et al., 2015). While these studies

have given teachers the opportunity to have their beliefs and perceptions heard, none

have specifically asked teachers what services they would like to receive from

psychologists.

Bardon (1980) once argued that the practice of educational psychology in

New Zealand was superior to that of the United States of America. However, he did

identify that there were some serious issues that required attention for educational psychology in New Zealand to be able to reach its full potential. One of his recommendations was that educational psychologists must ensure that teachers, schools, parents and the community know who they are and what they could offer schools in terms of services and supports. Some 30 years on since Bardon's recommendation and it appears there is still a lack of knowledge in New Zealand around the types of services psychologists can provide in schools (Hornby, 2010), which in turn has often led to a mismatch between the types of services desired by classroom teachers, and the services actually provided by psychologists (Hornby, 2010). Some see it as a direct result of the changes to the professional practice of educational psychology following the structural reforms of 1989 Tomorrow's Schools, the Special Education 2000 policy (SE2000), and because of decisions made by the major employing authority of educational psychologists in New Zealand - the Ministry of Education (Coleman & Pine, 2010).

At present, apart from anecdotal conversations, there are no empirical studies in New Zealand on how teachers in regular classrooms want to be supported by psychologists, to enable them to ensure the participation and learning of all students. While there are many conversations currently around issues and challenges that teachers face, there is very little documented information about how teachers would like to be supported to ensure success for students and therefore for themselves, thus highlighting the need for this study.

1.1. Teacher stress levels

There is documented information about teacher stress levels and teachers leaving the profession, both internationally and within the New Zealand context (Abel & Sewell, 1999; Dinham & Scott 1998; Kuntz, Naswall & Bockett, 2013). The

notion that teaching is a stressful profession is not a novel one. Stress is something that can affect teachers' job satisfaction, as well as their effectiveness with students (Abel & Sewell, 1999; Blasé 1986). In an early study conducted by Coates and Thoresen (1967), the authors found that the most commonly reported causes for teacher stress included time demands, administration duties, complications or frustrations with students, the ability to motivate and control students, large class numbers, financial constraints as well as a lack of educational supplies. Later studies have also indicated similar issues contributing to teacher's stress levels, which Abel and Sewell (1999) explain can be grouped into four broad categories: pupil misbehaviour, poor working conditions, time pressures, and poor school ethos-staff relations. Evidence indicates that disruptive pupil behaviour remains one of the highest contributors to teachers stress levels (Boyle, Borg, Falzon & Baglioni, 1995; Byrne, 1994).

Similarly in a more recent study from the United States of America, Davidson (2009) identified the following challenges as being most frequently reported by teachers: daily heavy workloads including amongst other things, excessive paperwork, unfair workloads, limited resources and supplies, and increased administration workload; student discipline and student interaction problems within the classroom; and issues provoked by No Child Left Behind.

In an international comparative study Dinham and Scott (1998) found that in comparison to teachers in England and Australia, teachers in New Zealand were more likely to rate themselves as satisfied with teaching, however overall teachers in all three countries were increasingly feeling inadequate and over burdened in light of the rising expectations and greater responsibilities being placed on them. A common theme emerging throughout the research is that teachers are under increasingly high

levels of pressure and their stress levels are incredibly high as a result of the expectations placed on them, highlighting the need to provide teachers with more support to assist them with meeting these expectations. The lack of current documented information about the challenges New Zealand teachers face is rather alarming in light of the high levels of stress experienced in the teaching profession worldwide. Before (more) support structures are put into place it would seem logical to enquire as to firstly, what challenges teachers are currently facing and secondly, what supports they would find useful in assisting them to deal with these challenges so as to avoid providing services which do not align with teachers' current needs.

1.2. Highlighting the need for support

Currently, many schools in New Zealand employ a Special Needs Coordinator (SENCo), or head of learning support to assist students with special education needs (Education Review Office, 2015). In most schools, the SENCo role is usually assigned to a classroom teacher as an extra school administration commitment. Responsibilities include identifying specific student needs, coordinating support, allocating resources, documenting guidelines for staff and monitoring student progress (Education Review Office, 2015).

In 2015 the New Zealand Educational Institute conducted a survey of SENCo's, their results added to an increasing body of evidence that "there is a large unmet need for support to make our education system truly inclusive of all our learners and give every child the opportunity to succeed" (NZEI, 2016, P. 1). Similarly, a finding by Statistics New Zealand (2016), showed that approximately 10 000 young people in New Zealand leave school annually with minimal or no formal qualifications. An alarmingly high number, indicative of many young people's educational needs not being adequately met.

The NZEI survey indicated that the number of students who require additional assistance has grown and now greatly exceeds the one percent who are eligible for Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) funding (NZEI, 2016). ORS supplies assistance for students with the highest level of need for special education to be able to learn alongside their peers at school (Ministry of Education, 2017b). The survey indicated that currently an average of 16% of students are listed on school's special needs registers (NZEI, 2016).

1.3. Terminologies used in the study

Psychologist: in this study, the term psychologist refers to any registered psychologist working in a school or education context. It is important to note that not all psychologists working in schools are trained as educational psychologists. However, the term psychologist in this study refers primarily to educational psychologists.

Educational/ school psychologist: Often in literature and by teachers, and as is the case for this study, the terms school psychologist and educational psychologist are used interchangeably; however, the two are not synonymous. There is international variation in the terminology, in addition to the general terminology of psychologist, educational psychologist is used in countries such as New Zealand, The United Kingdom, and South Africa, and the term school psychologist is used in countries such as the United States of America, China, and Estonia.

School psychologists "collectively provide individual assessment of children who may display cognitive, emotional, social, or behavioral difficulties; develop and implement primary and secondary intervention programs; consult with teachers, parents, and other relevant professionals; engage in program development and

evaluation; conduct research; and help prepare and supervise others" (Jimerson, Oakland & Farrell, 2007,p. 1).

Educational psychologists "apply psychological knowledge and theory derived from research to the area of learning and development. By using psychological and educational assessments and applying interventions using systemic, ecological, and developmental approaches, they assist children, young persons, adults, and their families with learning, academic performance, behaviour, and social and emotional development. Such practice is undertaken within an individual area and level of expertise and with due regard to ethical, legal, and Board-prescribed standards" (New Zealand Psychological Society, 2012, p. 1).

Sustainable learning: refers to education that engages students by being contextually relevant to each student and promotes learning and knowledge that endures (Graham, Berman & Bellert, 2015).

1.4. Rationale, Objectives, and Aims of the study

The proposed study aims to contribute to current knowledge of psychological services from teachers' perspectives. There are no studies in New Zealand that have investigated the type of services teachers would like to receive from psychologists working in their schools. Many previous international studies have focused on teachers' perceptions of educational psychology services (Dean, 1980; Farrell et al., 2005; Gilman & Gabriel, 2004; Styles, 1965; Wang et al., 2015), while this study explored teachers' perceptions as well as their experiences of accessing psychological services, and what they perceived to be the most effective in terms of being supported by psychologists, the over-arching objective of this study was to understand how teachers in New Zealand primary, intermediate and secondary schools wanted to be supported by psychologists in their schools?

1.5. Research Questions

The following questions guided the study.

1. What are teachers' perceptions of psychologists' roles?

2. Why do teachers seek the services of psychologists?

3. Does the purpose of seeking the services of psychologists differ between primary, intermediate and secondary school teachers?

1.6. The Research Context

 1.6.1 Education in New Zealand. The idea of inclusive educational practice was once a novel idea to the education sector, however, since 1989 it has become a driving force in education provision (Selvaraj, 2015). Both legal requirements and educational policies in New Zealand guarantee the access of education to all children in their local schools. The 1989 Education Act further ensured the right of children with disabilities to attend their local state schools on the same terms as their peers (MacArthur, 2013). The introduction of this policy brought about radical changes to the role and character of schooling (MacArthur, 2013). Further, the Human Rights Act of 1993 declares it unlawful for any educational establishment to refuse to admit a student, to admit them on terms that are less favorable, or to deny or restrict access to any services generally provided by the establishment as a result of their disability (Kearney, 2016). In addition to legislation ensuring education equality and equity, the Ministry of Health (2001) developed the New Zealand Disability Strategy (NZDS), a framework for government agencies to ensure that barriers faced by people with disabilities are identified and removed. The NZDS identifies inclusive education as the preferred system of education for students with disabilities living in New Zealand (Kearney, 2016). The strategy specifically focuses on crucial aspects of inclusive education including the significance of students with disabilities access to

their local school; of schools developing and bettering their responsiveness to the needs of their students with disabilities; and of appropriate resources being available, including having trained and knowledgeable teachers (Kearney, 2016). The Minister for Disability Issues is required to report annually to Parliament on the progress made implementing the New Zealand Disability Strategy (Kearney, 2016). In addition, education policy in New Zealand is also supportive of an inclusive education system. *Success for All- Every School, Every Child* is an initiative established by the New Zealand Government to achieve an education system that is fully inclusive (Ministry of Education, 2010). These Acts, Strategies, and Policies, which have all contributed to the current provision of education in New Zealand, will be discussed in more detail in the literature review chapter.

1.6.2 Researcher stance. As a teacher with experiences of working with an educational psychologist, I found the process and support to be rather untimely, as I would only have face-to-face contact with them once or twice a term. Behavioural issues in the classroom often escalated, at times to a crisis point, due to the time delay in the service being provided and limited contact with the psychologist. In addition, I was unsure of the options to seek assistance externally. In doing my post-graduate studies in educational psychology, it became evident to me that my knowledge of the services provided by psychologists working in schools was very limited and that this limited knowledge had, in turn, limited my ability to seek the support I needed. It was therefore of interest to me to investigate the extent of knowledge classroom teachers have about the services provided by psychologists working in schools as well as how they feel they could be best supported through psychological services.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter has been designed to orientate the reader to the research undertaken, the necessity for the research and the researcher's stance in undertaking the study. The literature chapter that follows will explore the topics raised in this introduction in more detail as well as examining further literature related to the nature of this study.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This literature review examines teachers' perceptions of the roles of educational psychologists in supporting them to be inclusive of all learners. The review begins by briefly examining the discourse of difference and disability, and various definitions, legislation, and frameworks surrounding *inclusion* and inclusive practices in education. Following this, the educational context in NZ and the negativity surrounding the concept of inclusion is briefly reviewed and provides the segway to a review of literature around an alternative framework for inclusive practice. Following on is an examination of reasons why teachers require support and literature on the current supports available to teachers, with a specific focus on educational psychologists - exploring the changing nature of the role, difficulties defining the role as well as teachers perceptions and expectations of the role. The chapter concludes with a rationale for the study and the research questions guiding the study.

1.1. The discourse of difference and disability

A discourse is a written or spoken communication- it is a way of constructing knowledge, or forming a reality (Kearney, 2013). As Purdue (2004) states, it is through discourse that knowledge and meaning about an occurrence is formed. Similarly, Johnson (2005) explains that it is through discourse that reality, including ideas, values, and beliefs are formed.

Disability has traditionally been understood through medical discourses (Fulcher, 1989), and interpreted as an individual problem or deficit (Kearney, 2013). Kearney (2013) further explains that the ideas, values, and beliefs about disability that are constructed by this discourse designate people with disabilities to become the objects of remediation, treatment and cure. When this occurs, any challenges that a

student with a disability experiences at school is put down solely to their perceived disability (Kearney, 2013; MacArthur, 2013). As Kearney (2013) explains, traditionally this thinking has prevailed in the field of special education, absolving regular schools, and teachers from being mindful of ecological adaptations including curriculum, inclusive policies and teaching practices. There has since been a shift internationally towards more inclusive educational practice. However, the effects of this deficit discourse are still very evident in current practices and policies in many countries (Kearney, 2013; MacArthur, 2013). In order to understand current education provision both internationally, as well as in New Zealand, I will first examine what is inclusive education, and how policy, legislation, and frameworks have mandated it. Then more specifically, I will elaborate on how inclusive education has developed within the New Zealand education system.

2.2. What is inclusive education?

Inclusion is a complex, contentious issue often bringing about heated discussions (Farrell, 2004). Over the years as the concept and practice of inclusion has developed there have been many varying definitions and views on the subject (Booth & Ainscow, 1998; Farrell, 2004). Some view inclusion as a way of attending to difference (Forest & Pearpoint, 1992), while others view it as the extent to which a school or community welcomes and values students with special needs (Booth & Ainscow, 1998; Farrell, 2004; MacArthur, 2013). Loreman, Deppeler and Harvey (2010), define inclusive education as "regular schools and classrooms being responsive, willing to genuinely adapt and change to meet the needs of all students, as well as celebrating and valuing difference" (p. 2). Kearney (2013) expands on this definition by stating that inclusive education is founded on an understanding that the future well being of society relies on the success of all young people, not just a select

few. These views tie in with Booth and Ainscow's (1998) definition of inclusion where they assert that inclusion is a process whereby, not only educational institutions but also communities, local authorities as well as governments endeavour to decrease barriers to participation and learning for all citizens. By viewing inclusion in this manner, the process of inclusion becomes more than just including students with special needs into mainstream schools; instead it becomes focused on policies and practices which take into account ways in which all marginalised groups in society can participate to the fullest extent in the educational process within the mainstream context (Farrell, 2004; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011).

2.3. International and Local Legislation, Policies and Frameworks mandating Inclusive Practice

The foundational framework that ushered in the inclusive education movement internationally is the *Salamanca Statement.* The *Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education* is an inclusive framework, which was adopted by 92 governments and 25 international organisations that met in Spain to promote inclusive education (UNESCO, 1994). The statement affirmed the right to education for everyone regardless of their differences within the regular education system, and the right of children displaying special educational needs to receive any and all extra support that they may need, to ensure they receive an effective education (UNESCO, 1994).

2.3.1 The United Kingdom. In the United Kingdom, Education Acts 1944 and 1981 have encouraged the development of inclusive education (Squires & Farrell, 2007). The British government's 1997 Green Paper *Excellence for All Children* emphasises the British government's support of the Salamanca statement and their commitment to moving their country's education system to being more

inclusive (Rose, 1998). In addition to this, they have enlisted a range of guidance documents for schools including the *Index for Inclusion* (Booth & Ainscow 2002) to encourage the inclusion of not only students with special educational needs but all groups of students who have previously been marginalised (Ainscow, Booth & Dyson, 2006).

2.3.2 Canada. The Canadian Human Rights Act 1985 and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms 1982 entrenched the rights of all Canadian citizens (Saklofske, Schwean, Harrison & Mureika, 2007). While different to other countries such as the United States of America and New Zealand where there is a national education system, in Canada, each province, and territory is responsible for its curriculum and policy (Sokal & Katz, 2015). This was established to enable both French and English settlers to preserve their language and culture within their education systems (Sokal & Katz, 2015).

2.3.3 New Zealand. In New Zealand, The Education Act of 1989 guarantees the right of students with disabilities to access the same education as their peers. The Act states " … people who have special educational needs (whether because of disability or otherwise) have the same rights to enrol and receive education at State schools as people who do not " (New Zealand Legislation, 1989, p. 50). In addition to the Education Act, the Human Rights Act of 1993 states:

> *It shall be unlawful for an educational establishment, or the authority responsible for the control of an educational establishment, or any person concerned in the management of an educational establishment or in teaching at an educational establishment, - (a) to refuse or fail to admit a person as a pupil or student; or (b) to admit a person as a pupil or a student on less favourable terms and conditions than would otherwise be made available; or (c) to deny or restrict access to any benefits or services provided by the establishment; or (d) to exclude a person as a pupil or a student or subject him or her to any other detriment, - by reason of any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination (*New Zealand Legislation, 1993, p. 48*).*

The Treaty of Waitangi, an agreement between the indigenous people of New Zealand and the British Crown, promotes concepts of partnership, participation, and equality in all areas including education (MacArthur, 2013). The New Zealand government has supported the development of inclusive practice with the establishment of the New Zealand Disability Strategy (NZDS), a framework developed for government agencies to guarantee that barriers to the participation of people with disabilities are identified and removed (Ministry of Health, 2001). The aim of the strategy is to achieve "a fully inclusive society that highly values the lives of people with disabilities and continually enhances their full participation in society" (Ministry of Health, 2001, p.1).

Subsequently, *Success for All – Every School, Every Child* was the New Zealand government's initiative to ensure the achievement of a fully inclusive education system (Ministry of Education, 2010). The document outlines the government's commitment to achieving this goal, as well as providing the foundations for demonstrating inclusive practice in education (Ministry of Education, 2010). The main goal of *Success for All* was a fully inclusive education system by 2014, with many strategies such as *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, Ka Hikitea* and *Tau Mai Te Reo* being implemented to support this goal. The New Zealand Education Review Office (ERO) is responsible overall for measuring and reporting on schools performances in becoming fully inclusive (Kearney, 2016). The *New Zealand Curriculum* provides a strong foundation for inclusive education with one of its eight underpinning key principles being inclusion (Ministry of Education, 2007). The curriculum is deemed to be non-sexist, non-racist, non-discriminatory, and one that meets the learning needs of all students (Kearney, 2016).

It is evident through the number of educational legislation, policies, and frameworks both internationally and in New Zealand surrounding inclusion that an education system that is inclusive of all students is a priority.

2.4. The development of inclusive practice in New Zealand

The influence of the medical model on early special education is undeniable - it influenced diagnosis as well as treatment plans. It was only around the 1930's that special educators began to place greater emphasis on pedagogy and slowly began to assert their stance of the social model, distinct from the medical profession (Brown & Moore, 2011; MacArthur, 2013).

By the mid-1980's mainstreaming had become a central theme in special education service delivery in New Zealand. In 1987, reviewing special education services, the then Department of Education encouraged a mainstream approach to education suggesting that the parallel special and regular education system be combined to form a general education system (Brown & Moore, 2011). With the introduction of the Special Education 2000 (SE2000) policy, there was a move towards an inclusive education system, which would "find the best possible learning environment and learning strategies for each student" (Fancy, 1999, p.3). Coleman (2011) explains that the SE 2000 funding model provides for one percent of the school population, which demonstrate the highest levels of need, requiring ORS funding; one percent requiring specialist communication services such as speech-language therapy; and a further one percent displaying serious behavioural issues requiring services from a psychologist or special education advisor. He further explains that nearly half of the children who are identified as having high needs currently attend regular schools and receive specialist services from the Ministry of Education. All other students who are verified as having high needs receive specialist

services from a special school, a special unit, a resource center or high school
learning unit in which they are currently enrolled (Coleman, 2011). Students who
display moderate rather than high needs have their needs catered to by RTLB's, the
Special Education Grant (SEG), and the Moderate Physical Needs Contract
(Coleman, 2011).

Brown (2010) explains that the introduction of this policy has led to
educators having to "search for pathology" (p.14), as teachers have to prove their
students' need to access the limited resource available in this funding model. A
student receiving funding through the funding model usually translates to additional
resources to support the student, or teacher aide hours to support the student in
accessing the curriculum (Brown, 2010).

2.5 Tensions around inclusion

According to Hornby (2010), New Zealand now has one of the most inclusive
education systems in the developed world, where approximately only one percent of
children are taught in special schools or classes. As commendable as this is, Hornby
(2010) explains this has now lead to students who display either moderate learning
difficulties, moderate behaviour difficulties or both, who were previously catered for
in special schools or classes now being included in mainstream schools. Research
conducted by Hornby and Witte (2008) demonstrated that a large percentage of these
students do not achieve success in mainstream schooling, which is in part due to a
lack of relevant training for teachers in mainstream schools, along with the limited
support from trained professionals such as educational psychologists. Some of the
challenges and contentions on the path to inclusive educational practice are explored
further here.

2.5.1 Negativity surrounding inclusionary practices. As Mitchell (2010) has argued, for inclusion to work in practice, both teachers and principals in regular school settings need to accept its philosophies and demands. Studies have shown that there is quite a lot of negativity surrounding the idea of inclusion (Mowat, 2015; Salend & Duhaney, 1999; Spratt and Florian, 2015). In addition to this negativity, Kearney (2013) explains that a language of exclusion has developed as a result of the medical model paradigm that has been used to define special education and inclusion for many years. She notes that common terms that support the language of exclusion include 'special needs,' 'intervention' and 'remediation,' all terms that label and devalue individuals. Attached to this are the assumed meanings and understandings that the individuals who are assigned these terms are somehow less worthy and can, therefore, be treated in inferior and unequal ways (Kearney, 2013).

2.5.2 Insufficient teacher training and support. When reviewing the literature regarding the impact of inclusion on students with disabilities, their peers, and their teachers, Salend and Duhaney (1999) found that teachers had differing attitudes towards inclusion for various reasons. It was reported that some teachers found that having students with disabilities in their classes increased their skill levels in meeting the needs of all their students and that they felt confident to include all students. While other teachers reported not feeling confident about effectively implementing inclusionary practices due to not having the time, expertise, training or resources necessary. In addition, many teachers expressed skepticism about being able to include all students due to their limited training, and a lack of adequate support from skilled professionals.

Similar findings resulted from an earlier study conducted by York and Tundidor (1995), that examined issues and barriers related to the implementation of

inclusive education. The authors found that in addition to the negative attitudes held by some staff with regards to including all students, issues reported were the inability of staff to meet behavioural challenges of students with disabilities, lack of funding to support instructional needs, and limited time for consultation and collaboration with other staff.

Likewise a study conducted by Werts, Wolery, Snyder, Caldwell and Salisbury (1996) investigating teacher's perceptions regarding the need for and availability of supports and resources associated with inclusive practice, found that teachers who had students with disabilities in their classes reported their need of supports and resources exceeded that which was available to them.

A common theme emerging through the literature is that in addition to confusions and negativity surrounding the concept of inclusion, teachers feel they do not have sufficient training, nor adequate support to enable them to apply inclusive practices consistently.

2.6. Sustainable learning: an alternative conceptual framework

In light of the negativity and confusion surrounding the word inclusion (Kearney, 2013), this study has chosen an alternative framework to frame inclusive educational practice; the framework selected for defining effective inclusive practice is s*ustainable learning* (Graham et al., 2015). An interesting point made by these authors is that the use of language "frames the valuing of people and can shape understanding about teaching and learning" (p. 7). This notion was touched upon briefly at the start of the chapter when examining the discourse of difference and disability. Sustainable learning is defined as "learning for all, teaching that matters and learning that lasts" (Graham et al., 2015 p. 2), reframing the concept of inclusion through the use of positive language.

The first component is *learning for all*. Learning for all entails the provision of education that can meet the needs of all students while including their families as part of the school communities (Graham et al., 2015). This ties in with a specific approach titled *inclusive pedagogy*, a pedagogical approach responsive to student diversity through methods that avoid marginalising individual students within the classroom community (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). Inclusive pedagogy urges classroom teachers and specialist staff to view children's difficulties in learning as a professional dilemma, where they are tasked to find new approaches to ensure the learners needs are met, avoiding stigmatisation and fostering an open-ended view of each child's potential to learn (Florian & Black- Hawkins, 2011). Similarly learning for all emphasises that all students should be seen in terms of their capabilities instead of deficits or disabilities. Attempting to meet the individual needs of all students may require some students to be provided with additional learning support, which could take the form of additional help within the regular classroom setting, as well as the student possibly moving throughout the school to different areas, or in some cases moving throughout the community, whatever proves to be most responsive to the students' learning needs. As Graham et al. (2015) explain, focusing on individual students learning needs requires removing all barriers to learning.

The second component of the framework is *teaching that matters*. Here the authors explain that effective instruction facilitates inclusion, with teachers who set high expectations for themselves and their students in collaboration with families and the communities; that if learning is set as being central to all that occurs in the classroom, both teachers, as well as students, sustain each other's learning (Graham et al., 2015). This is in line with the inclusive pedagogical approach encouraging teachers to see students' difficulties as professional dilemmas for themselves, where

they are tasked with finding the best avenue to meeting a students needs (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011) as well as the core idea of transformability (Hart, Dixon, Drummond & McIntyre, 2004) which is the choices teachers make that have the potential to affect a student's capacity to learn. Effective teachers are responsive to the individual learning needs of all students. Teaching practices which are responsive to the needs of all students ensure that there is an alignment between student's learning needs and the learning opportunities which are provided; learning opportunities which are characterized by the use of flexible, differentiated activities and are founded on carefully thought out assessment procedures (Graham et al., 2015). Another important aspect is that of teachers being culturally aware and responsive. A cultural responsive profile for teachers developed in New Zealand, the *Effective Teaching Profile,* has shown to be successful in being responsive to the needs of Māori students (Bishop & Berryman, 2010). This cultural profile has assisted teachers in developing pedagogy that is meeting the needs of Māori students more effectively (Bishop & Berryman, 2010).

The third component in Graham et al.'s (2015) definition of sustainable learning is *learning that lasts*. The authors explain that sustainable learning is rooted in the establishment, development, and maintenance of the processes used by individuals when learning. One of the main aims of sustainable learning is to equip children with the mental tools necessary to ensure that the processes of learning are activated when needed (Graham et al., 2015). No longer is the focus of education on the product, but rather on learning processes, as processes can be applied across all curriculum areas, as well as meeting any other learning challenges encountered by students.

2.7. Teacher stress – the need for support

There has been a high level of teacher stress reported in the literature over the past few decades (Davidson, 2009). The following factors have all been indicated as causes of teacher stress: difficult classes characterized by behavioural problems, heavy workloads, lack of adequate resources, and lack of support (Arvidsson, Håkansson, Karlson, Björk & Persson, 2016; Cunningham, 1983; Davidson, 2009 Friedman, 1995; Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, 1978).

If one considers the many potential stressors which teachers have such as maintaining administrative responsibilities (Arvidsson et al., 2016), balancing home and work obligations (Messing, Caroly & Riel, 2011; Olson & Matuskey, 1982), providing well structured and effective learning environments and learning programmes (Skillern, Richardson, Wallman, Prickett & Marion, 1990; Whitehead, Ryba & O'Driscoll, 2000), as well as dealing with inappropriate student behaviours (Davidson, 2009), it is clear that in order to achieve success in the profession, teachers require a broad range of professional knowledge and pedagogical skills (Arvidsson et al., 2016; Skillern et al., 1990).

In an international study investigating teacher satisfaction, motivation and health, Dinham and Scott (1998) reported that teachers were feeling dissatisfied and stressed partly as a result of the low level of support provided to them to implement changed policies, procedures, responsibilities, and curricula, as well as the lack of support services available for teachers.

In her study, Davidson (2009) investigated the challenges that contribute to teacher stress and burnout by conducting a case study with three teachers in the United States of America, all with varying teaching experience. Her results indicated that the three most distinctive concepts causing stress for teachers were heavy

workloads, high student discipline and student interaction problems, and the *No Child Left Behind Act*. Teachers indicated frustration at having to meet the differing needs of grade-appropriate achieving students and students with special needs, and that a lot of what policy was putting into place was well intended, but not practical in the classroom.

In another study investigating burnout in New Zealand Primary school teachers, Whitehead, Ryba and O'Driscoll (2000) conducted a research study with 386 teachers and principals at 47 North Shore schools in Auckland and found that New Zealand teachers scored higher on the Maslach Burnout Inventory emotional exhaustion subscale compared to the normative sample of the United States teachers. Some of the potential reasons for this higher score include a high workload as well as the need for the teacher to also be a psychological helper and provider of specialised programmes for children with special needs (Whitehead et al., 2000).

Reviewing the literature on teacher stress across nearly four decades, there appears to be a consistent theme of causes. It is evident that while many teachers are supportive of inclusive practice, many experience heightened levels of stress as a result of the inclusion of students with either special educational needs or heightened behaviour management needs in regular class settings as well as feeling they receive insufficient support (Arvidsson et al., 2016; Cunningham, 1983; Davidson, 2009; Dinham & Scott, 1998; Friedman, 1995; Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1978; Whitehead et al., 2000).

2.8. Current supports available to teachers

Teachers in many countries have access to a range of supports and resources. For example in countries such as England, Australia, Canada, China, America, The Netherlands, Norway, Spain and New Zealand teachers receive whole school

professional development specifically focused on assisting teachers to develop their

classroom management approach into one centered around positive interventions and

supports (Kennedy, Hirsch, Rodgers, Bruce & Lloyd, 2017).

This type of professional development on positive interventions and supports

ties in with a model called Response To Intervention (RTI), which is gaining

popularity in many countries including New Zealand. The RTI model is a proactive

conceptual framework aimed at prevention and early identification and intervention

of academic and behavioural difficulties (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). RTI is

conceptualised as a three-tiered model. At the base of the model is evidence-based

behavioural and academic instruction being provided to all students providing a solid

foundation, then working up the tiers supplemental services can be provided at the

first signs of difficulties, regardless of special education eligibility or disability

labels, to the degree necessary to meet the student's needs (Grosche & Volpe, 2013).

The RTI model represents a paradigm shift in providing support and assistance to

students with behaviour and learning difficulties from the more prevalent reactive

approach of waiting for students to fail before intervening to one which is more

proactive, centered on prevention and supportive problem solving (Grosche & Volpe,

2013). However, there is also the argument that RTI is detrimental to inclusive

practice being made. Ferri (2012) explains that RTI is a tactic rather than a reform

and that it is aimed at returning to segregated special education, endorsing many of

the foundational assumptions of traditional special education practices.

In England as well as receiving in-school supports, external supports are

available such as access to an educational psychologist, counsellor and other

specialist services provided by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

(CAMHS) (Sharpe, Ford, Lereya, Owen, Viner & Wolpert, 2016). Children in the

UK who have a learning disability have the option of having their special education needs met either through a mainstream school with additional support for both the student and the teacher, or in a special school (National Health Services, 2017).

Within New Zealand schools, there is a range of in-school supports available to teachers which include: mentor teachers for newly graduated teachers (Education Council of Aotearoa, 2011), SENCos (NZEI, 2016), teacher aides, syndicate/level and curriculum leaders who provide extra support and training, as well as social workers and/or pastoral care personnel in some schools.

Externally, the Ministry of Education provides two types of support for students needing learning and behaviour support – one provided by the Ministry of Education employed specialist services (Ministry of Education, 2015b) and the other by school employed RTLB services (Ministry of Education, 2017c) Students who display moderate needs are catered for by RTLB's, while students displaying more serious needs are catered for by the specialist services (Coleman, 2011). The Ministry Special Education Specialist services include speech-language therapists; occupational physiotherapists; advisors on special education; advisors on children with hearing difficulties as well as early intervention specialists (Bourke & Dharan, 2015). The RTLB teams consist of groups of fully registered specialist teachers who have undergone additional training enabling them to fill the supportive role, where they work together with teachers and schools to provide support for students who have substantial barriers to learning (Ministry of Education, 2017c).

It is evident that there are many forms of support currently available to teachers both in New Zealand as well as internationally, ranging from internal school supports to external more targeted supports such as psychologists or speech-language therapists (Bourke & Dharan, 2015; Sharpe et al., 2016). Despite such reported

supports, there is evidence that teachers feel a lack of specialised support in their day-to-day practice (Goodman & Burton, 2010; Vaz, Wilson, Falkmer, Sim, Scott, Cordier, & Falkmer, 2015), which begs the question as to why teachers feel unsupported despite having support systems available to them? Why is there a mismatch between the need and the support provided and what can be done to bridge this gap?

2.9 The field of educational psychology

In the following section, the field of educational psychology, as one of the avenues of support available to teachers, is examined both internationally as well as in New Zealand, to investigate how the profession has evolved in providing support to those requiring its services.

2.9.1 The history and current status of educational psychology internationally. The roots of educational psychology can be traced back to the early 20th century when concerns were identified by parents and school officials around the fact that only some children appeared to learn in regular classroom settings (Jimerson et al., 2007). Cyril Burt, who was the first educational psychologist in the United Kingdom, considered the main role of an educational psychologist to be that of assessing children to determine if they needed to be placed in a special school (Jimerson et al., 2007; Farrell, 2010). Many countries around the world embraced this notion that intelligence tests were a necessary and valid tool for identifying and assessing children with special needs, and that this was the main role of an educational psychologist (Oakland, 2000). Intelligence testing became something that no other profession could do and as such became a key feature of educational psychology. While many countries including New Zealand have moved away from intelligence testing as the identifying feature of educational psychology (Bourke &

Dharan, 2015), some countries such as the USA still maintain it as a central aspect of an educational psychologists practice (Restori, Gresham & Cook, 2008; Wnek, Klein & Bracken, 2008).

2.9.2. The history and current situation of educational psychology in New Zealand. In 1948 the first educational psychology services in New Zealand was established by the Department of Education (Edwards, Annan & Ryba, 2007). Over the next 40 years educational psychologists assisted learners displaying special needs, these services were provided with a progressively evident focus on holistic and developmental approaches to educational psychology practices (Edwards et al., 2007).

Brown (2010) explains that by the mid-1980's as a result of a focus on mainstreaming students there was a reduction in the number of special classes, which enabled educational psychologists to have increased contact with schools. The Department of Education was restructured by the New Zealand Government in 1989 as the Ministry of Education and along with the name change came policy changes, which decentralised education, enabling local school boards to make decisions that were previously made at a national level (Edwards et al., 2007). In addition, the Special Education Service replaced the Psychological Service and was made up of members of previous educational support services (Edwards et al., 2007).

Until 2002 the Special Education Service was a community-based service. However, in February 2002 it was re-established as a government agency functioning under the Ministry of Education (Edwards et al., 2007). Special Education Service became known as Group Special Education and then as Sector Enablement and Support Teams and is now called Learning Support. They provide educational psychology services and other special education services from district offices around

New Zealand and employ the majority of practicing educational psychologists in the country (Edwards et al., 2007).

As a result of the Special Education 2000 (SE2000) policy framework being steadily enforced from 1998, the main focus of educational psychologists currently is to work with those children with the most severe needs, who make up the top three percent of the funding framework (Phillips, 2011).

2.10. The role of the educational psychologist

The role of educational psychologists has been a topic of much discussion amongst educators and the profession itself for many years (Gilman & Gabriel, 2004; Leach, 1989). Much of the discussion on the roles of the educational psychologist have centered around their expanding jurisdiction, from the more traditional role of conducting assessments to greater involvement in designing and implementing academic and behavioural interventions (Roberts, Marshall, Nelson, & Albers, 2001); consultative services (Sterling-Turner, Watson, & Moore, 2002); as well as individual and group counseling services (Prout, Alexander, Fletcher, Memis, & Miller, 1993; Woods & Farrell, 2006).

Internationally, the profession is undergoing a period of change and development (Farrell et al., 2005). As Farrell et al. (2005) explain, if these developments in educational psychology are to generate improvements for children, families, and schools, it is crucial for the education professionals with whom educational psychologists work, to have knowledge about what to expect when an educational psychologist assesses a child, to be familiar with their role, as well as respecting and valuing the work which they do. Hughes and Benson (1985) stressed the significance of accessing teachers' understandings and requirements of educational psychologists as a valuable resource in the advancement of the

profession of educational psychology stating, " teachers may be the school psychologists' most overlooked and most valued ally in expanding school psychological services" (p.73).

Studies have been conducted to evaluate the extent of knowledge educational professionals have about the roles of an educational psychologist (Farrell et at., 2005; Peterson, Waldron & Paulson, 1998; Thielking & Jimerson, 2006; Watkins, Crosby & Pearson, 2001). On examination of the literature on role definitions of educational psychologists, it is evident that the role is a highly diverse one (Rothi, Leavey & Best, 2008). Educational psychologists undertake their work with a variety of stakeholders, including children, parents, teachers, and schools (MacKay, 2002) as well as consulting and collaborating with a variety of different professionals (Rothi et al., 2008). One of the main stakeholders with whom educational psychologists work with more frequently and closely is the classroom teacher (Farrell et al., 2005). It is usually the classroom teacher who is involved in the referral process of individual students requiring some form of extra assistance. Classroom teachers are also the ones who are required to follow the advice provided by the educational psychologist, as well as working with the educational psychologist in consultation based activities (Farrell et al., 2005). Farrell et al. (2005) explain that if teachers do not understand the roles of educational psychologists or have different expectations of the functions that the psychologist might perform, then it is highly probable that teachers will not actively seek assistance from the psychologist, reducing the possible services that could be offered to children and their families. Reger (1964) stressed this point when examining the relationship between the educational psychologist and the teacher, "… it is the teacher and not the school psychologist who carries out the day-by-day business of education" (p.13). The importance of the

professional relationship between the teacher and the educational psychologist cannot be emphasised enough, as teachers are the ones who usually initiate referrals, contribute to assessments and implement interventions recommended by educational psychologists (Farrell et al., 2005). Therefore, it is logical that the teachers' attitudes towards, and perceptions of, educational psychologists is an important factor influencing the success of the educational psychologists' interventions (Thielking & Jimerson, 2005).

2.10.1. Teachers' perceptions of the roles of educational psychologists.
According to Farrell et al. (2005), there appears to be a definite mismatch between what teachers and educational psychologists believe the educational psychologist's role is. There is a long history of studies investigating teachers' perceptions on the roles and services provided by educational psychologists (Dean, 1980; Farrell et al., 2005; Gilman & Gabriel, 2004; Styles, 1965). One early study was conducted by Styles (1965) who investigated teachers' perspectives regarding the helpfulness and level of training of school psychologists in the USA. The study involved 459 teachers in four schools in Ohio. Styles reported that in general teachers found that the school psychologist was most helpful in situations where there was an emotional disturbance, as well as in consultation. The study further found that teachers believed school psychologists to be in possession of more clinical skills than was the case.

A few years later Dean (1980) found a similar discrepancy between what teachers expected and believed, school psychologists did on a daily basis, compared to what school psychologists did. Dean investigated the difference between pre-service teachers' and experienced teachers' perceptions of the role of school psychologists in the USA. In addition to the discrepancy, the study also found that experienced teachers had markedly more negative opinions of the school

psychologists' knowledge and understanding of problems within the classroom, social groups as well as general school-related problems. He stated that experienced teachers found that the advice given by school psychologists regarding student learning difficulties and the reporting of results obtained through psychometric assessment was less helpful. Similar to what Styles (1965) reported, Dean found that both pre-service and experienced teachers reported high levels of satisfaction with the school psychologists' ability to assist students with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Medway (1977) conducted a study comparing the amount of time that school psychologists spent on professional activities with teachers' perceptions of the amount of time school psychologists spent on professional activities. The study consisted of school psychologists working with teachers in seven schools, three elementary, two junior high and two senior high schools. Medway found that on the whole teachers were not entirely aware of the school psychologists' service priorities and that there was an inconsistency between teachers' attitudes regarding the chosen activities of school psychologists. Specifically, teachers reported believing that school psychologists conducted more interviews, teacher consultation and counseling and less testing and report writing than what the school psychologists did.

In another study conducted in the United States of America, Ford and Migles (1979) found a mismatch between what teachers and school psychologists considered to be the most important roles of a school psychologist. They reported that in general, teachers in America believed that conducting assessments for student placement was one of the most important roles of a school psychologist. In addition they found that teachers identified the role of the school psychologist as *psycho-diagnostician, counsellor* and *case consultant* to be most important, which contrasted

with what school psychologists reported as being their most important roles, namely in-service training and preventative work.

Similarly in a Greek study conducted by Gavrilidou, de Mesquita and Mason (1994) it was found that teachers believed that remediating conduct problems was the largest contribution which educational psychologists made and that they felt that educational psychologists were less helpful when dealing with academic problems. Interestingly Gavrilidou et al. (1994) found that neither before nor throughout the teachers' time working at the schools was the role of the educational psychologist clearly explained to them, clearly assisting in exasperating the discrepancy between the perceived role of the educational psychologist and the actual role of the educational psychologist.

In a study across countries, Farrell et al. (2005) investigated the perceptions of teachers from Cyprus, Denmark, England, Estonia, Greece, South Africa, Turkey, and the United States of America on the roles of school psychologists. This was the first study of its kind, making international comparisons between teacher's perceptions of the roles of educational psychologists. The authors explained that they chose these eight countries to reflect different stages in the development of school psychology services worldwide, with the USA and England having the longest established history and Cyprus and Greece potentially being the most newly established. In addition, the location of the educational psychologist varied across countries - some were located in schools while others were located externally, servicing multiple schools. With regards to the time school psychologists spend in schools and their perceived value the authors found that in South Africa, England and Cyprus, where schools were receiving less than one hour a week of school psychological services, teachers were the least satisfied with the frequency of

contact. They found that on the whole countries where schools were receiving more than two full days of service from school psychologists were most satisfied with the frequency of contact time with the exception being the USA. The authors explain that this may have been as a result of the profession's established history in the country, where teachers are aware of the wider range of services school psychologists provide and as a result remain dissatisfied with the current contact time limiting the services of the school psychologists. However, as a whole the study found that the majority of teachers felt that the amount of time they had with the school psychologist was enough, or they indicated wanting more time with the psychologist. The mean ranking of the quality of school psychologist's work was rated as satisfactory or better. In terms of teachers' views of the range of work school psychologists undertake, the authors found that working with individual children for special education assessment or for therapy, providing advice to teachers on conduct problems and working together with staff in schools were all activities that teachers believed school psychologists performed regularly. Whilst activities which teachers perceived school psychologists performed less frequently included assisting teachers with whole school development, curriculum planning, teacher training, professional guidance as well as working with parents. The findings indicated that teachers wanted school psychologists to do more of the activities they currently perceived as not being done. In addition, the authors reported that teachers found individual assessment carried out by school psychologists not to be important. Overall from an international perspective, it would seem that teachers in general favour the move away from routine assessments for special education provision by educational psychologists towards including more consultative work, a similar finding to the Gabriel and Gilman (2004) study.

In a more recent study, Wang et al. (2015) investigated Chinese teachers' perceptions of the roles and functions of school psychological services in Beijing. Ninety-four teachers from 92 primary and secondary schools were involved in the study. The authors found that teachers saw the role of the school psychological services to be preventative, focusing on services for students such as teaching mental health classes, counselling, and consultation, with a solid emphasis on early intervention. The study further found that half of the teachers surveyed reported being satisfied with the services they received, while others reported having no contact with school psychological services, or being dissatisfied with the services provided mostly due to what they considered to be a lack of training or the educational psychologists lack of skills.

When comparing regular and special education teachers' perceptions of school psychology in the USA, Gilman and Medway (2007) found that compared to special education teachers, regular teachers had less knowledge of school psychology, believed school psychologists to be less helpful, and reported generally lower levels of satisfaction with school psychology services which is consistent with the Farrell et al. (2005) findings. The study also found that both groups of teachers had quite a limited understanding of the many roles and services that a school psychologist can provide. An earlier study conducted by Edzards (1996) also in the USA, investigated pre-service teachers' level of knowledge and perceptions. The study reported similar discrepancies between pre-service teachers with a major in regular education and pre-service teachers with a major in special education. It was found that pre-service teachers with a major in special education had better knowledge of the roles of the school psychologist as well as placing a higher level of importance on the services provided by school psychologists. It is interesting to note

that in both the Gilman and Medway (2007) study and the Edzards (1996) study, three out of the four groups of teachers had quite a limited knowledge of the roles of the educational psychologist. It is difficult to ascertain whether the teachers from the USA included in the Farrell et al. (2005) study had similar levels of knowledge as they were provided with a list of educational psychologist roles and asked to rank them based on how often they occur.

   2.10.2 Teachers' expectations of the role of educational psychologists. A study investigating school psychology practices in England found that there was a definite mismatch between what school psychologists believed they should be doing and teachers' perceptions of what they should be doing. One of the aspects was that teachers over-emphasised individual assessments, as opposed to the more expansive roles of the school psychologist (DfEE, 2000). Similar results have been found in other studies conducted in the UK (Dowling & Leibowitz, 1994; Evans & Wright, 1987). Dowling and Leibowitz (1994) found that important aspects teachers wanted from school psychologists were related to individual assessment and casework. Many years earlier Evans and Wright (1987) reported finding similar results. These findings, however, contradict those of the international study carried out by Farrell et al. (2005) who found that teachers did not view individual assessments to be that important.

   Kikas (1999) conducted a study into the expectations of teachers and school psychologists versus the reality of the problems school psychologists deal with in schools. The study was conducted in Estonia, where the practice of school psychology is still in its nascent stage. The study involving 190 teachers and 30 school psychologists found that the majority of the teachers interviewed felt that having a psychologist in the school was important, or very important, but the

problems which warranted intervention by a psychologist were perceived differently by teachers and school psychologists. The results demonstrated that teachers valued the child-centered nature of the work of school psychologists, such as dealing with students learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties. However, they did not want any additional services from them. These findings by Kikas (1999) are in agreement with findings by Dean (1980) and Styles (1965), regarding teachers valuing the work of school psychologists in relation to emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Gilman and Gabriel (2004) conducted a multi-state survey study in the United States of America involving more than 1600 teachers and administrators on their perceptions of school psychological services. The study compared school administrators' perceptions with the perceptions of teachers and found that the teachers reported significantly lower satisfaction rates with regards to school psychological services. From their investigation the authors concluded that reasons for this discrepancy might be that: a) student difficulty needs to be at a very high level before it warrants a referral to an educational psychologist, placing more strain on the teacher, but adding no additional strain to administrators and b) perceptions of the types of roles and functions of the educational psychologist, whilst mostly similar, did indicate that teachers would prefer not only assessments but also consultation services.

2.10.3. Difficulties defining the role of the educational psychologist. As the literature has shown, a universal definition and understanding of the roles of the educational psychologist has yet to be established. According to Ashton and Roberts (2006) one reason for this may be that the official client of the educational psychologist is unclear, and it is, therefore, difficult to determine to whose advantage the role should work. As MacKay (2002) explains, children, parents, and schools

could all be considered the educational psychologist's clients. However their demands may differ considerably. A second possibility identified by Kelly and Gray (2000) was the discrepancy between what schools wanted from educational psychologists and what educational psychologists actually wanted to do. So not only do educational psychologists have a large number of clients, all of whom have different expectations, but there is also the educational psychologists' own beliefs about the services that they should be providing. Another issue contributing to the difficulty in establishing a universally understood and accepted definition of the roles of the educational psychologist is that there are other agencies and professionals such as school counsellors and specialist teachers, whose jobs could be seen overlapping with the role of educational psychologists (Kelly & Gray, 2000). As a result of such overlaps, there are difficulties in defining the role of the educational psychologist, making it difficult for teachers to know when they should be working with an educational psychologist instead of another professional, or an educational psychologist together with other professionals (Ashton & Roberts, 2006).

Norwich (2005) examines the complexity experienced by the profession in balancing individual work with more systemic level work that some teachers want (Farrell et al., 2005; Gabriel & Gilman, 2004). Norwich explains that the more the profession takes a systemic psychology approach, the less one is working in ways that are distinctive from other professional groups. He goes on to explain that when defining an educational psychologist as someone who applies psychological knowledge and understanding, it calls in to question whether one needs to be a professional educational psychologist to be able to apply such knowledge to assist others, as many other professionals such as teachers, counsellors, and educational consultants also apply psychological knowledge, creating much uncertainty about the

exact role of the educational psychologist. In addition, when one takes a more individual approach the less likely they are to be able to affect systemic level changes (Norwich, 2005). This indicates that even within the profession, there is still some uncertainty as to how best to define the role of an educational psychologist to accommodate its preference for both individual level work, as well as more systemic level work.

2.10.4. Duties and roles of educational psychologists in New Zealand.

Educational psychologists in New Zealand typically work across a range of educational, family and community settings (Bourke & Dharan, 2015; Edwards et al., 2007). The New Zealand Psychologists board (2004) defines the practice of educational psychology as follows:

> Educational Psychologists apply psychological knowledge and theory derived from research to the area of learning and development, to assist children, young persons, adults and their families regarding their learning, academic performance, behavioural, social and emotional development, by using psychological and educational assessments and applying interventions using systemic, ecological and developmental approaches. Such practice is undertaken within an individual's area and level of expertise and with due regard to ethical, legal, and Board-prescribed standards (p.1).

While there are a few educational psychologists who work privately (Edwards et al., 2007), the majority of educational psychologists in New Zealand are employed by the Ministry of Education (Bourke & Dharan, 2015). Psychologists working within the education sector are required to "work closely with parents and whānau, teachers and other specialists across a range of educational settings (early childhood and school) to help children and young people with special education needs learn and develop; develop individualised programmes for learners to overcome the challenges they face; and apply psychological knowledge and behaviour and learning theory to assist children and young people as well as the

adults around them" (Ministry of Education, n.d., p.4). Within the Ministry of Education, educational psychologists work mainly in two of the central initiatives under the Special Education Policy 2000: the Severe Behaviour Initiative, which is aimed towards children who exhibit difficult behaviour, and the Ongoing Reviewable Resource Scheme which is aimed at students who are likely to have ongoing special needs whilst in school (Edwards et al., 2007).

As literature has illustrated, there is some confusion defining the role of the educational psychologist. It is apparent that there is some variance between teachers' perceptions and expectations of the role of an educational psychologist and the actual role of the educational psychologist. In addition to this, there is also some variance between what teachers consider to be the most valuable aspect of the educational psychologist's role, some still view individual assessment to be the most valuable aspect, while others are favouring the move away from this towards a more holistic consultative approach. Regardless of perceptions of the role of the educational psychologists, it is evident that the role requires educational psychologists to be in possession of a wide range of skills in order to be an effective practitioner (Bourke & Dharan, 2015).

2.11 Conclusion

This literature review has examined and summarised a range of literature relating to current education provision both internationally as well as locally. In addition, it has examined the literature on difficulties teachers are experiencing in the profession and the various supports available to them, specifically the educational psychologist. On examining the literature, it is evident that there is a lack of New Zealand literature particularly on ways teachers would like to be supported by psychologists. The proposed study aims to contribute to current knowledge of

psychological services from teachers' perspectives. This will be done by examining

how teachers across primary and secondary schools want to be supported by

psychologists, which will be guided by the following research questions.

1. What are teachers' perceptions of psychologists' roles?

2. Why do teachers seek the services of psychologists?

3. Does the purpose of seeking the services of psychologists differ between primary, intermediate and secondary school teachers?

The approach to obtaining answers to these questions is detailed in the following methodology chapter.

Chapter Three: Research Design

This study explored how teachers in Aotearoa/New Zealand would like to be supported by psychologists. This chapter details the research objective; the research design employed and explains the methodology and methods used. It then concludes with the ethical considerations and some of the limitations of the study.

3.1. Research Objective

This research aims to contribute to knowledge of psychological services in New Zealand schools, by exploring how teachers want to be supported by psychologists.

3.1.1. Research Questions. The over-arching question guiding this study was*:*

How do teachers in New Zealand primary, intermediate and secondary schools want to be supported by psychologists?

The guiding questions to explain the research objective are:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of psychologists' roles?

2. Why do teachers seek the services of psychologists?

3. Does the purpose of seeking the services of psychologists differ between primary, intermediate and secondary school teachers?

3.2. Methodology

There are three underlying factors guiding social research, namely ontology, epistemology, and methodology (Sarantakos, 2013). Ontology examines the nature of reality- either realist or constructionist; while epistemology examines the nature of knowledge; and methodology is concerned with the nature of research design and methods (Sarantakos, 2013). This study was a mixed method qualitative research design, combining surveys with an instrumental case study (David & Sutton, 2011;

Mertens, 2010), guided by a social constructionist view. As Graham et al. (2015) observe, language shapes perceptions and beliefs; therefore the framework of sustainable learning has been used to underpin the teacher surveys as well as the follow up interviews. The questions used to inform the data collection of this study were underpinned by a positive foundation, a belief that all students can achieve success with the right type of support.

3.2.1. Qualitative Research. Qualitative research aims to induce and explore versus testing preconceived theories (David & Sutton, 2011). It involves an interpretive naturalistic approach to the world, meaning that qualitative researchers observe and study things in their natural settings and endeavour to understand phenomena in relation to the meanings which people ascribe to them (Mertens, 2010; Punch & Oancea, 2014). Literature has shown that there can be a high level of complexity with regards to the demands teachers face, therefore, as the preferred research method to make sense of complex situations, a qualitative research design was selected for this project (Punch, 2014). The qualitative approach of a questionnaire survey and in-depth small-scale case studies allowed the exploration of teachers' personal experiences and the meanings that they attach to them (David & Sutton, 2011; Mertens, 2010).

3.2.2 Surveys. Surveys are a method frequently employed in educational and psychological research (Mertens, 2010). Generally speaking, they are a method where information is obtained through either written, or oral questioning (Sarantakos, 2013). Surveys allow for data to be collected from a large number of people and rely on each individual's self-report (Mertens, 2010). The questions used in the survey were informed mainly by an in-depth examination of the literature related to teachers' perceptions of the roles of psychologists and the reasons for

which they may seek additional assistance and supplemented by a peer review in which the primary researcher undertook a mock administration of the survey to a few teachers who were not involved in the study.

3.2.3 Instrumental Case Study. Case studies can be defined as an approach concerning the comprehensive exploration of a singular case (McDuffie & Scruggs, 2008), and can be based on any number of units of analysis (Mertens, 2010). Case studies are well suited to small-scale research, which focuses on only a few sites (Denscombe, 2007), such as this study. An instrumental case study is one where a specific case is investigated to provide insight into an issue (Punch, 2014). In these case studies the issue investigated was teachers' perceptions of how they would like to be supported by psychologists. The participants in this study were from 5 schools within one New Zealand Community of Learning.

3.2.4. Social Constructionism. This research project is about participants' experiences and perceptions, which makes social constructionism the appropriate theoretical basis for this study. The ontological foundation of constructionism is that reality is not absolute; instead, it is socially constructed with multiple realities, which are dependent upon time and context (Mertens, 2010). According to social constructionism, personal meaning emerges from social and lived experiences, which construct many different, continuously changing and developing realities (Gubrium & Holstein, 2000).

3.3 Methods

3.3.1. Participant selection and sample. Simply stated, sampling refers to the methods a researcher uses to select some people in a population to take part in a study (Mertens, 2010). Mertens (2010) goes on to explain that the strategy the researcher employs, influences both the quality of the data, as well as the inferences

one can make from the data. This study chose a purposive approach to sampling, which is the preferred approach for researchers with a constructionist paradigm (Mertens, 2010).

The study was conducted in a large city in the North Island of New Zealand. Classroom teachers from one Community of Learning (CoL) were invited to take part in the survey. Communities of Learning are groups of schools, Kura (Maori medium schools) and Early Childhood Education (ECE) centers that unite to raise achievement for students by sharing knowledge in teaching and learning; supporting each other; and working collaboratively to ensure that a student's journey through the education system is easier (Ministry of Education, 2017d). The CoL selected for this study included eight primary schools, one intermediate, and three secondary schools, totalling 12 schools.

One of the advantages of purposive sampling is that it allows the researcher to access their target population in an expeditious manner by facilitating the selection of a sample, which is founded on the purpose of the study as well as the researcher's knowledge of the sample (David & Sutton, 2011; Mertens, 2010). A further advantage, one which was of particular appeal to this study as it consisted of two phases, is that purposive sampling enabled the use of multiple sampling techniques, which can be applied if a study consists of more than one phase, as is the case in many qualitative studies (David & Sutton, 2011; Punch & Oancea, 2014). All schools that were invited to participate in this study are state schools except for three, one primary and two secondary, which are state integrated.

A random purposeful sample was selected for the second phase of the study, where three participants were selected from those who indicated their consent to be

interviewed. The use of this strategy provides credibility to the sample when the potential purposeful sample is too wide (Punch & Oancea, 2014).

For the first phase of the study there was a total of 74 participants, however, after data refining where only surveys that had all the questions completed were accepted, only 50 were included for final analysis. For the second phase of the study eight teachers indicated an interest in participating in interviews. After numerous attempts to make contact with these teachers through email and phone calls, only three participants responded and indicated still being interested in participating in the research further.

3.3.2. Participant recruitment. Of the 12 schools in the COL, five chose to participate in the study. Access to teachers within each of the five participating schools was obtained by contacting the principals of each of the schools either through email, telephone, or in person, to invite them to be part of the study. All principals were provided with an information sheet detailing the research (Appendix A). Before commencing a research study, it is a crucial requirement that permission to approach individuals is obtained from an intermediary person (in the case of this study it was the principal of each of the participating schools), as there is the possibility of the intermediary influencing the extent to which the participants are likely to co-operate (Crano, Brewer & Lac, 2015).

Following the initial contact, information sheets about the surveys were sent out to all classroom teachers in each of the participating schools (Appendix B). Participants were requested to indicate at the end of the questionnaire whether they would be interested in assisting further with the study by participating in an interview.

3.3.3. Informed consent. Informed consent is the process whereby the researcher provides the participants with a clear and adequate explanation of all information relating to the nature of the research; the researcher-participant relationship; and the potential consequences of taking part in the research (if any) for the participants. Following this, the participant has the opportunity to consent to participate in the project (Sarantakos, 2013) in the case of this study, by completing the survey. This information was provided to participants in the information sheets (Appendix B), and specifically detailed in the participant's rights section.

Informed consent was obtained from the principals to send the survey to classroom teachers in their schools. Information sheets detailing the research were attached to the surveys that were sent out to the classroom teachers. It was explained that by completing the survey, participants were giving their consent for the information they provided to be used anonymously for the study.

Classroom teachers who indicated an interest in being contacted to provide information in a follow-up interview gave consent to be contacted by providing their email in the section of the survey asking for participants to take part in follow up interviews (Appendix C). Following this, additional verbal consent was obtained from each of the teachers who consented to be interviewed before the recording device was turned on during interviews.

3.3.4 Data collection. This study used a web-based survey and semi-structured interviews to gather data. David and Sutton (2011) explain that the two traditional methods of data collection in qualitative research are the questionnaire survey and interviews. These two data collecting tools were selected to compliment each other. The study was conducted in two phases.

3.3.4.1 Web-based survey. The first phase consisted of the web-based survey being completed by classroom teachers (Appendix D). This survey was designed to answer specific research questions and to provide guidance as to which areas needed further clarification and discussion in the semi-structured interviews. Punch (2014) states that web-based surveys attract a high response rate as well as being quite user-friendly. As previously mentioned, the use of the survey allowed for answering specific research questions by providing information which might not have been as easily obtainable through interviews alone. Initial analysis of data from the web survey informed the formulation of the interview questions.

3.3.4.2 Semi-structured interviews. The second phase of the study consisted of semi-structured interviews, which provided more in-depth explanations of topics of interest from the survey, as well as providing further information not readily obtainable through surveys. Semi-structured interviews encourage participants to speak more freely without the set structure of a more formal situation. However, the researcher does still set specific questions, which need to be answered (Denscombe, 2007). Another benefit of semi-structured interviews is that they are flexible and allow the researcher to further investigate anything of interest that came up in the surveys (Denscombe, 2007).

Due to the primary researcher being overseas at the time of the semi-structured interviews, interviews were conducted via telephone calls and Skype. There are many advantages to telephone interviews, such as producing immediate results, allowing for more open communication due to the participant not being confronted by the interviewer and reduced bias due to factors such as race, ethnicity, and appearance not influencing either the interviewer or the participants (Sarantakos, 2013). Iacono, Symonds and Brown (2016) state that Internet based methods of

communicating such as Skype are becoming more prevalent and although they cannot entirely replace face-to-face interviews, they provide researchers with a viable alternative to face-to-face interviews.

Interview dates and times were arranged with the participants to ensure minimal disruption to their daily lives and obligations (David & Sutton, 2011). The semi-structured interview schedule was developed by reflecting on information obtained through phase one, which enabled the researcher to identify key themes to further investigate (David & Sutton, 2011). From these key themes, a set of questions and prompts were developed to guide the interview (Appendix E).

Semi-structured interviews of approximately 30 minutes were conducted with the teachers who were included in the sample. Audio recorded, individual, semi-structured interviews provided an effective way of allowing teachers to explain how they wanted to be supported by psychologists in their schools. These audio recordings were then transcribed, and all participants declined the invitation to review the transcripts of their interview before the data was analysed.

3.4. Data Analysis

David and Sutton (2011) define data analysis as the pursuit of identifying the presence or absence of significant themes, common and/or conflicting ideas, beliefs or practices. Similarly, Miles and Huberman (1994) explain that most analysis in qualitative research is done with words, which can be grouped, sub-clustered, and broken into semiotic segments, which can then be organized to allow the researcher to contrast, compare, analyse, and assign patterns to them. The Miles and Huberman (1994) framework for qualitative data analysis was used to guide the data analysis for this study.

According to this framework, there are three concurrent activities that interact throughout the analysis; they are data reduction, data display, and drawing and verifying conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Miles, Huberman & Saldanha, 2014). *Data reduction* occurs throughout the entire analysis process. Initially, it occurs through editing, segmenting, and summarising data; in the middle, it occurs through coding, memoing, and identifying themes and patterns; and in the later stages, it occurs through conceptualising and explaining (Punch & Oancea, 2014). *Data displays* organise and gather information and are used at all stages as they allow the data to be organised and provide the basis for further analysis (Punch & Oancea, 2014). The final component *drawing and verifying conclusions* takes place right from the start, even though conclusions drawn at the start of the analysis process may be vague or ill-formed, they are held onto and refined as the analysis process continues. Only once all the data are in, are final conclusions drawn and verified (Punch & Oancea, 2014).

Initially, descriptive codes were assigned to pieces of data to identify and label information, following this pattern codes were assigned to interpret and conceptualise data (Punch & Oancea, 2014). Memoing was occurring concurrently with coding (Appendix F).

3.5. Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were examined in accordance with the Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct for Research, Teaching, and Evaluations involving Human Participants (Massey University, 2015). A full ethics application was made to the Massey Human Ethics Committee for approval to conduct this study. The research project was reviewed and approved by Massey Human Ethics Committee (Appendix G).

Principals were fully informed of the nature of the study through a mix of telephone conversations, email, or in person to obtain permission to approach the teachers in their schools to participate in the study.

Informed and voluntary consent was obtained from all teachers involved in the study. All teachers who participated were provided with information sheets advising them of their right to decline the invitation to participate in the study or to withdraw from the study at any time before the end of term one, 2017 when data analysis commenced. In addition, it was explained that participants could ask questions at any stage of the study and that they had the right to refuse to answer any questions. It was explained to participants that all information obtained through the study would remain strictly confidential, the participants would remain anonymous, and pseudonyms would be used throughout and that no individual or school would be identifiable. Teachers were asked not to name psychologists, or students, by name when providing information on the survey or during interviews to ensure privacy, professionalism, and confidentiality were maintained. It was made clear to participants that this study would not cause them emotional distress, stress or any level of embarrassment. Participants were also advised that transcripts of the interviews would be provided to them for editing purposes before the information obtained was used for analysis. Participants were advised that all data collected would be stored by the first supervisor of this study and disposed of upon completion of the study.

One of the schools involved in the study was a school where the researcher previously taught. However, there was no dependent relationship between the researcher and any of the participants involved in the study, so there was no conflict of roles or interests involved in this study.

It was explained to participants that this study was likely to create a greater awareness of how teachers in New Zealand would like to be supported by educational psychologists and that ultimately this knowledge would be of benefit to the profession. Lastly, participants were informed that they had a right to receive a summary of the findings of the study upon its completion.

3.6. Limitations

One limitation with regards to the use of semi-structured interviews is that the extent to which the participants feel comfortable with the researcher can affect their responses, which could compromise the reliability and validity of the data (Denscombe, 2007). In order to mitigate this, the researcher spent some time at the start of each interview discussing any concerns with participants about being interviewed and recorded as well as answering any questions they may have had about the study.

A further limitation is that the researcher may be perceived to be biased. However, this has been guarded against, as the schools included in the sample are not schools where the researcher currently works.

3.7. Conclusion

The mixed method qualitative research design of this study, guided by a social constructionist view, offered the opportunity to explore how teachers would like to be supported by psychologists working in their schools. A total of 50 teachers participated in the first phase of the research and three in the second phase. The study made use of surveys and semi-structured interviews to obtain data, which was then analysed using the Miles and Huberman (1994) framework for qualitative data analysis. The next chapter discusses the findings of the analysis and interpretations of the data.

Chapter Four: Findings

This chapter details findings from the surveys and interviews. The information from the two phases of the study is reported separately. The study explored how teachers in New Zealand schools would like to be supported by psychologists. The following questions guided the study:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of psychologists' roles?

2. Why do teachers seek the services of psychologists?

3. Does the purpose of seeking the services of psychologists differ between primary, intermediate and secondary school teachers?

4.1. Surveys

Table 1

Number of schools participating and surveys used for analysis

Schools Approached	Schools Participating	Number of surveys submitted	Completed surveys used for analysis
12	5	74	50

There were a total of seven males and 43 females involved in the study. Thirty-two participants identified as New Zealand European, six as Māori/NZ European, two as Māori, two as Samoan, two as British, one as Latin American, one as Fijian Indian, one as NZ European/Tongan, one as Indian and one as Tongan. A full list detailing participant demographics including information on participants' ages and teaching experience is included in Appendix H.

To provide clarity of interpretation and applicability, data are presented according to the following three key themes: i) teachers' interactions with

psychologists ii) teachers' perceptions of the role of the educational psychologists, and iii) how teachers want to be supported by psychologists.

The theme of teachers' interactions with psychologists was used to group smaller themes identified, such as frequency of interaction with psychologists, where codes such as *Never, Fewer than five,* and *more than five* were used. Teachers' perception of the role of the educational psychologist was used to group and describe data related to teachers' perceptions of the role. Codes used in the data analysis included *ecological, holistic, supporting teacher,* and *supporting student*. The third theme- how teachers want to be supported by psychologists was selected to group smaller themes identified that were related to supports wanted such as *assessment* and *professional development*.

4.1.1 Interactions with psychologists. Of the 50 respondents, a total of 30 respondents indicated as having worked with a psychologist at some point in their career. Twenty-five respondents reported having interacted with five or fewer psychologists and having had minimal contact with psychologists, while five respondents indicated having worked with more than five psychologists in their career and also having more frequent contact with psychologists.

Teachers' interactions with psychologists are reported under the following subheadings: i) Types of psychologists they have worked with, ii) Usefulness of advice/support and satisfaction with the interactions, and iii) Reasons why psychological services are accessed or not accessed by them.

4.1.1.1 Types of psychologists' they have worked with. Nineteen of the 30 teachers who have worked with a psychologist, indicated that they were aware that they were working with psychologists who were from different fields of practice, such as clinical or educational, etc. Fourteen teachers indicated having worked with

an educational psychologist, while two teachers indicated having worked with a psychologist involved with "learning difficulties?" and "behaviour," that implied it might be an educational psychologist. One teacher each indicated having worked with a clinical psychologist, child-counselling psychologist, and a trainee psychologist- however, they were not sure which field of psychology they specialised in.

4.1.1.2 Usefulness of advice/support and satisfaction with the interaction. More than half of the respondents indicated being satisfied with the services they received from psychologists and found it to be beneficial. These teachers reported valuing the specialist knowledge and insights of the psychologists, as well as the extent of communication maintained by the psychologists with them.

One teacher explained that one of the reasons why she valued the service and support from psychologists is because of their professional knowledge to offer new solutions: "They (psychologists) tend to see things from a different angle and offer another perspective, which is based on their knowledge and experience"(Respondent 30).

One respondent explained that working with a psychologist enabled him to better understand students' situations, while also receiving practical classroom support:

> (The psychologist) Helped me understand some things the child
> was dealing with and gave me some ideas of what to do in the
> classroom to support them (the student). Also gave me a better
> understanding of the child (Respondent 35).

Another valued the collaborative approach of the psychologist:

> The in-school counseling was very beneficial- we had open

> communication between psychologist, parent, and teachers. Also
>
> guidance from the psychologist as to what strategies she was using
>
> and how we could implement these into our classroom (Respondent
>
> 41).

Some teachers also indicated that they valued the professional development they received from psychologists, the consistency of home/ school interventions and psychologists access to specialised assessments. One teacher indicated that she valued the professional, respectful relationship between the psychologist and herself-where the psychologist developed a plan which was both practical for the classroom, as well as respectful of her teaching philosophies (Respondent 20).

Two teachers expressed finding the service partially helpful and being partially satisfied with the service they received. One of them found the psychologist's services to be beneficial for the student, but not for her:

> I found the psychologist was good for the child and developed a
>
> relationship with them, however, didn't offer me good strategies other
>
> than 'warm fuzzies' (Respondent 25).

While another teacher expressed frustration at not being able to fully understand the report due to the use of specialised language: "somewhat…had a lot of jargon that I didn't completely understand" (Respondent 7).

Five teachers indicated not being satisfied with the services they received, or not finding the service particularly helpful due to differing opinions, poor communication and finding that the suggestions and interventions provided had already been tried. There were cultural differences between teachers and psychologists and some frustrations with the types of services provided. Respondent 12 indicated being frustrated with the service she received due to a difference of

opinion between herself and the psychologist: "I didn't agree with the psychologist in regard to boundaries for the child involved." While respondent 44 indicated being dissatisfied because the psychologist failed to provide new solutions to problems she was experiencing:

> He (the psychologist) spoke at me and basically gave me ideas that I'd already tried. I told him I'd already done them and needed something else and he said that was it.

Another explanation for being dissatisfied with services from psychologists was provided by Respondent 15, who expressed frustration over the prevalence of specific types of support: "There seems to be a lot of assessment, but not a lot of other help".

4.1.1.3 Reasons why psychological services are not accessed by them. Data indicated that teachers do not consistently seek psychological assistance. The most common theme that emerged as to why teachers were not consistent in seeking psychological services when they thought it could be beneficial was frustration. This was especially evident in the perceived limited availability of support: "(psychological assistance) not available, waiting list too long" (Respondent 8); "Seems almost impossible" (Respondent 46)"; extremely unlikely to have a psychologist available" (Respondent 31).

In addition to frustration with the limited support available, teachers indicated a belief that the processes involved in referrals were too laborious considering students might not meet all the criteria required to receive support: "(the) process seems too much extra work for teachers' as they (the students) might not even qualify" (Respondent 13).

Other findings that emerged were teachers' limited knowledge or awareness of the available supports; and parental decisions to not follow through on recommendations, either because of the financial costs, or the parents' personal choice to not access the specific support.

4.1.1.4 Reasons why teachers access psychological support. Analysis of the data indicated teachers would seek psychological support for the following reasons: after all in school supports have been tried; students' emotional or mental well-being (internalised behaviour); concerning student behaviours (externalised behaviour); academic support and assessment; general support/advice; concerns over students' home life, and concerns from parents that prompt the referral to psychologists' services.

4.1.1.4.1 Externalising behaviours. Fifteen teachers mentioned seeking additional support for students displaying externalising behaviours that were challenging or unusual. They would seek assistance for behaviours which were either unexpected, extreme or when the behaviour students were displaying was challenging or unusual and might have required assessment: "to assess children with challenging/unusual behaviours" (Respondent 29).

4.1.1.4.2 Internalising behaviours. Eleven teachers indicated seeking support for students' displaying internalising behaviours such as anxiety, depression, or stress: "When a child is anxious" (Respondent 36).

4.1.1.4.3 Learning/ academic difficulties. Seven teachers indicated seeking support for students' displaying learning or academic difficulties: "To assess a child who is not learning at all or finds learning difficult" (Respondent 9).

4.1.1.4.4 General support. There were 13 teachers who indicated that they would seek support from psychologists but did not specify their reasons for it. The

other reasons teachers provided as to why/when they would seek additional support were after all their internal supports and resources had been tried. At times, services of psychologists were requested by parents to further support their children.

4.1.2 Teachers perceptions of the role of the educational psychologist. A common theme emerging from the data analysis was the belief that educational psychologists undertook an ecological approach when conducting their work. Twenty-nine teachers provided responses which indicated their perception that an educational psychologist supports, or works, with the student as well as others, who are involved in the student's life: "(An educational psychologist is) someone who works closely with the school to provide training/advice and support for the teacher, as well as the parent and child" (Respondent 36); "(They) work with a team of school staff, parents and other agencies that may be involved in helping the child" (Respondent 29).

Nineteen teachers believed the role of an educational psychologist was to provide support and advice to teachers, students, and the student's family on matters such as student's learning, behaviour and/or emotional well-being: "(An educational psychologist) supports children, families, and teachers with certain learning and behavioural conditions in children- provides strategies and monitors" (Respondent 48).

While one teacher believed that an educational psychologist was someone who worked with teachers, children, and families impacted by traumatic events.

Another indicated that the role of the educational psychologist was to provide support for students' emotional well-being beyond what teachers could offer: "Provide students/staff and families with support around the emotional well-being of

students in areas that exceed the skills of support that teachers can offer"

(Respondent 4).

Fifteen teachers believed an educational psychologist was someone who

supported the classroom teacher and the student: " To support teachers and

individual students where there is a need for intervention and support"(Respondent

37);

> Someone who can look at children's learning/behaviour and help me to
>
> understand their difficulties and possible causes. Could advise me on how
>
> best that child learns, or how I could teach/approaches I could use to
>
> manage/help/support that child (Respondent 34);
>
> (Someone) helping children develop strategies for managing their behaviour,
>
> counselling, helping teacher(s) develop strategies for dealing with the child
>
> and providing insight into reasons for their behaviour (Respondent 25).

Eleven teachers believed the role of the educational psychologist was to

support only the student: "To support and scaffold the child into managing

themselves when feeling overwhelmed or anxious. Giving them a toolkit to

understand their thoughts and feelings" (Respondent 11).

This was also evident in another teacher's response, where she explained the

role of the psychologist was supporting students to successfully participate in

mainstream education: "Provide support to help a child who is experiencing

difficulties so they can cope and be successful in mainstream, integrated classrooms"

(Respondent 49).

A further three teachers believed the role of an educational psychologist was

to support only students and their families: "To support the children and their

families who are having academic and behavioural issues. Support for single-parent families." (Respondent 45)

Seven teachers saw the role of an educational psychologist to be diagnostic, however this was also mostly seen as one aspect of the role of an educational psychologist, not their only role: "To assist in diagnosing learning and behavioural conditions and assist the school, teacher and parents with suggestions to overcome and provide the best learning opportunities possible" (Respondent 7).

4.1.3 How teachers want to be supported by psychologists. Data analysis indicated that supports teachers would find most helpful from psychologists were professional conversation around dilemmas they may be experiencing or as a preventative measure, assessment, and professional development.

4.1.3.1 Conversation/support. This section describes the formal and informal interactions between teachers and psychologists, where teachers are provided with advice and support both as a preventative measure, as well as when a situation requires additional support. Twenty- three teachers indicated wanting conversation with psychologists. Teachers reported that they would find it helpful if they could discuss situations or challenges they are facing with psychologists: "To talk more informally about issues with someone who knows what they are talking about and can give me some suggestions to take it further" (Respondent 34).

While another wanted regular contact with psychologists to evaluate the effectiveness of suggestions and interventions: "Regular feedback from the psychologist about how we can best support those children in the classroom, what things to avoid/minimise, etc." (Respondent 35).

Some others indicated that they would find it useful to engage in conversation with psychologists surrounding behaviours, emotional well being and learning of

students: "I feel I would benefit from a deeper understanding of my children and why they are behaving as they are" (Respondent 34); "dealing with social anxiety and general anxiety, growth mindset, friendship and resilience" (Respondent 41); "…advice about the child's learning programme" (Respondent 9).

A few wanted psychologists to be available as and when they needed some assistance: "Support in understanding specific issues with children when they arise" (Respondent 38); "Co-construct a plan to support the child and others affected by the child" (Respondent 42).

4.1.3.2 Assessment. Eleven teachers indicated they would find assessments by psychologists to be particularly useful. One teacher valued intelligence testing undertaken by psychologists while 10 teachers indicated that they would like assessments, or diagnoses (if applicable) for learning and/or behaviour: "A proper assessment and diagnosis if appropriate of children with learning or behavioural problems" (Respondent 47); "Assessment of children with learning and/or behavioural difficulties, and advice and support in implementing recommendations" (Respondent 29).

4.1.3.3. Professional Development. Nine teachers indicated their interest in receiving training or professional development from psychologists. Some teachers indicated wanting training on specific topics such as anxiety and autism: "… how we can be working with the growing range of anxiety based factors our students are experiencing" (Respondent, 28); "strategies for dealing with children with Autism, or on the spectrum" (Respondent 2).

While other teachers indicated an interest in general professional development to better equip them to support their students: "An understanding of what signs to look out for regarding children's mental health and wellbeing that are

not 'regular' or 'normal', i.e. what are the indicators that there might be something else underlying" (Respondent 37); "upskilling me, e.g. how I can help specific children who are having difficulties so that they may remain in the classroom" (Respondent 20).

4.1.4 Conclusion. In summary, it was found that of the 50 respondents involved in phase one of the study 30 respondents had some experience working with a psychologist. However, they were not all aware of the scope of practice of the psychologist they had worked with. More than half of these 30 respondents found the psychological services they had received to be useful, valuing the specialist knowledge of the psychologist as well as the communication maintained by the psychologist, with two respondents finding the service partially useful and five respondents finding the service they had received to not be at all useful.

Data indicated that teachers do not consistently seek psychological assistance. The main reasons for this were a perceived limited availability of support and frustrations surrounding processes in accessing support. It was found that teachers would seek psychological support once they had exhausted all in school supports for reasons such as students emotional well-being, internalising and externalising behaviours, learning or academic assessments, concerns over students home lives, concerns from parents prompting the referral process and for general support.

There was a common perception that educational psychologists undertook an ecological approach when conducting their work. More than half of the respondents involved in the survey believed an educational psychologist worked with the student as well as all other stakeholders involved with the student- their families, agencies etc.; some believed the role was to provide support and advice to the student, their teacher, and family on matters such as learning, behaviour, and emotional well-

being; a few others believed that the role was to support the student and the classroom teacher; other respondents believed the role was to support only the student; with other respondents believing the role was to support only students and their families. Some respondents saw the role of the educational psychologist to be diagnostic. However, this was not considered to be their only role.

Data also indicated that teachers wanted to be supported by psychologists through professional conversations around dilemmas they may be experiencing or as a preventative measure, assessment, and professional development. This chapter now continues by reporting the findings from the interviews in the second phase of the study.

4.2. Interviews

Three teachers participated in the second phase of data collection. All three participants were experienced teachers; with two having over 15 years of teaching experience and one has over 35 years of experience. All three were primary school teachers- with a participant from the junior, the middle, and the senior section of different primary schools. To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms are used for reporting interview data.

Table 2

Interview participants' experience, ethnicity, and school level being taught

Participant	Experience	Ethnicity	Primary School level
Mary	15 +	NZ European	Middle
Jen	15+	NZ European	Senor
Beth	35+	NZ European	Junior

In order to provide clarity of interpretation and applicability, interview findings are presented according to the following four key themes: i) Interactions with educational psychologists- where data such as '*not closely at all*', '*hardly ever used a psychologist*' and '*very little*' were deemed to be limited contact; ii) Reasons for seeking support where group headings such as inadequate training, uncertainty, learning or behaviour were used; iii) Knowledge and experience with supports currently available ranged from very limited knowledge to a considerable amount of knowledge of internal or external supports and the processes accessing support; and iv) How teachers' want to be supported by educational psychologists resulted in sub-themes such as professional development, training and practical.

4.2.1. Interactions with psychologists. All three participants reported having limited contact with psychologists- with one teacher explaining that she had completed surveys sent out by psychologists, however, hadn't actually spoken face-to-face with a psychologist.

When I asked Beth about her interactions with psychologists, she said:

> …are there any psychologists out there now? I mean do you ever see psychologist's, you see RTLB's and you see speech and language, but I don't think I've seen a psychologist for, gosh! I couldn't tell you when was the last time I'd seen a psychologist.

4.2.2 Reasons for seeking support. Jen felt that teacher training had not adequately prepared her to meet the needs she was currently facing in her classroom. Particularly the increase in the number of students presenting with autism. She also explained that when she started her teaching career, there were special schools that catered for those students. She added that students who previously would have been

placed in these special schools were now being placed in regular classrooms and teachers were expected to meet all the students' needs.

Beth indicated that because she had hardly worked with a psychologist she wasn't entirely sure for what she could seek assistance, while Mary indicated that once she had explored all in school supports she would access psychological support for students displaying learning needs which she couldn't meet, students with behaviour difficulties and for students with special needs in her class.

4.2.3 Knowledge and experience with supports currently available. When discussing the services and supports currently available to teachers, Beth indicated having very little knowledge about the range of supports and services available in general, while Jen had very little knowledge about the supports provided by psychologists in particular. Mary, on the other hand, had considerable knowledge of the different services and supports currently available. In both cases where the teachers had limited knowledge of the services available, this appeared to be related to processes in their schools where they would refer students on to either their SENCo or senior management, who would then access further supports from external agencies, which distanced them from the referral/accessing support process.

Jen, who started her teaching career around the introduction of tomorrow schools, explained that she believed there were now more supports available for helping children in need: "They looking more into the needs of children than they used to instead of sort of toughen up and get on with life".

Between them, the three teachers indicated that they were either currently accessing or were aware of the following external services and supports: RTLB's, speech and language therapists, ECE to Primary transition support, Marinoto- a team within the government health services providing mental health assessments and

therapy for children and teenagers (Waitemata DHB, 2017), kid-power- a bullying preventative school-wide program and Social Workers In Schools (SWIS). They were also aware of school-based supports and resources such as teacher aides, on-site child psychologists or counsellors, curriculum professional development as well as school run preventative programs to support students struggling with family separation, or anger issues. Two of the teachers indicated that they had a psychologist on site in their schools, whose specific focus was one to one counselling with students. They were able to access the psychologists in passing to informally discuss issues and get advice, which they had found particularly useful.

Two of them expressed frustration with regards to the processes around accessing psychological supports, particularly students' going onto waitlists, the time delay in receiving support as well as a large number of students who do not qualify for support because of not meeting the strict criteria list. Jen expressed her frustration over the many referrals sent through for psychological support which were rejected because of the excessively strict criteria: "Most cases do get referred and then there are a lot thrown back because the kids just don't meet the standards required to get this funding (special education funding) and this help, it's ridiculous, it's just way too high".

Regarding accessing support from psychologists, Mary reported that she could access psychological services. However, the process took very long:

> We have access to a group of educational psychologists here… so I think
> that's serving that, but the fact is that it takes quite a while to get them in,
> there is quite a process to get them in and then quite a process in getting
> things kick started after that.

Jen explained that another way in which schools were trying to support the students who did not meet these strict criteria lists is to pair up teacher aides:

> We have teacher aides and the school is pretty good in that they double up, if a child has funding then they'll double up and pair them up with one or two other kids who are in the same boat.

4.2.4. How teachers' want to be supported by psychologists. All three teachers indicated that they wanted professional development and training from psychologists. In particular two of the three teachers specifically mentioned that they would find training around autism to be helpful. Jen explained: "…Like autistic children, there's been quite a bit of work on that lately and just the hints of what to look for with that really and how to help these kids would be really helpful to teachers I think".

> As well as Mary stating:

> (Training) On autism and that whole spectrum but maybe some of the main things you have to deal with in the classroom and so that you are just more aware of children and how they operate. And even how to deal with the parents because it must be incredibly difficult as a parent.

Mary further explained that she would like the psychologist to provide support not only for her and the student in school but also the family so that everybody involved in the student's life have a shared understanding of the situation. Jen wanted support from psychologists that would enable her to keep all her students in her class for all lessons. Beth, on the other hand, wanted psychologists to provide her with 'hands-on' practical advice on how to work with specific students.

4.2.5 Conclusion. All participants involved in the second phase of the study reported having had limited contact with psychologists. The degree of knowledge each participant had with regards to psychological service varied greatly. The limited knowledge of psychological services available reported on by some of the participants appeared to be related to current processes of referrals in their schools.

Some participants indicated frustration with regards to the process of accessing psychological services, specifically students going on too long waitlists, the time delay in receiving support as well as the number of students who did not meet the strict criteria requirements. One way in which a participant's school was trying to support the students who did not meet the strict criteria was to pair them up with a student experiencing similar challenges who had funding in place.

Participants indicated that they would like to receive professional development and training from psychologists, with some specifically stating they would find training on autism to be beneficial.

4.3. Conclusion

Findings from the analysis of the survey data and interview data have been reported separately in this findings chapter to enable accurate interpretation and applicability. Some commonalities to report include the frustration experienced by participants with regards to processes around accessing psychological supports. This was one of the main reasons expressed by teachers in the surveys for why they did not access psychological support as well as being mentioned by two of the three participants involved in phase two.

Another commonality was that in both phases of the study participants indicated that they would seek psychological support after all in school supports had been exhausted. It was also found in both phases that participants would seek

psychological support for student's emotional well-being, behaviour difficulties, and learning difficulties.

      The last identified commonality was that across both phases of the study participants indicated that they wanted to be supported by psychologists through professional development. Specific professional development in autism was mentioned in both phases. The combined findings of both phases of the study and the implications of these findings are discussed in detail in the following discussion chapter.

Chapter Five: Discussion

In this chapter, the findings from this study are discussed and linked to relevant literature. This study has sought to answer how teachers in New Zealand schools want to be supported by psychologists. The following questions guided this investigation:

1. What are teachers' perceptions of psychologists' roles?

2. Why do teachers seek the services of psychologists?

3. Does the purpose of seeking the services of psychologists differ between primary, intermediate and secondary school teachers?

This final chapter examines findings in relation to these questions in a thematic manner outlined below, as well as highlighting other noteworthy findings. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the limitations of the research, the implications for practice, and recommendations for future research.

5.1. Discussion

This discussion covers the following themes: What are teachers' perceptions of psychologists' roles; Why do teachers seek the services of psychologists; and What services would teachers like to receive from psychologists?

5.1.1. What are teachers' perceptions of psychologists' roles? As previously discussed, Hornby (2010) identified that there is still a lack of knowledge in New Zealand around the types of services psychologists in schools can provide. Findings from this study indicate that even a few years on since the publication of that article, there is still limited knowledge surrounding the services that psychologists can provide in schools. An encouraging finding though was that there are some similarities between teachers' perceptions of the services that an educational psychologist can provide, and the current service provision.

On the whole, teachers involved in this study believed educational psychologists undertake an ecological approach when conducting their work. This finding is consistent with a section of the New Zealand Psychologists Board (2004) definition of educational psychology, stating that educational psychologists apply interventions using ecological approaches, providing a clear indication of the correlation between the actual role and teachers' perception of the role.

Similar to findings from Gavrilidou et al. (1994), it is apparent that the role of the educational psychologist has not been explained to many of the teachers participating in the study. This was explicitly stated by one of the interview participants as well as a survey response indicating a desire for the role of the educational psychologist to be explained: "I would welcome the psychologists related to my school coming in at the beginning of the year and introducing themselves and perhaps explain their role" (Respondent 6). Some responses in the survey indicate that as a result of not having worked with a psychologist, teachers are unsure of what exactly the role of the psychologist is. One of Bardon's (1980) recommendations for the practice of educational psychology in New Zealand was that educational psychologists ensure that among others teachers know who they are as well as what services they can offer. Results from this study indicate that there is still a need for this recommendation to be successfully implemented.

It is reassuring to note that the majority of the teachers who responded to the study believe that educational psychologists work with not only the student but the parents and the classroom teacher as well. What is surprising though is that three respondents indicated their belief that educational psychologists work only with the student and their parents and not with the teacher, while others were of the perception that the role of the educational psychologist is to work with only the

student. These findings are consistent with what Ashton and Roberts (2006) note about the confusion surrounding who the official clients were of educational psychologists.

Findings indicate that teachers in New Zealand believe the role of the educational psychologist is to assist students with academic or learning difficulties, behavioural issues as well as emotional wellbeing, consistent with the New Zealand Psychologist Board (2004)'s definition, however interestingly, not once, in both phases of the study, did participants mention the role as supporting children in the area of social development, showing there is inconsistency between teachers perceptions of the roles of the educational psychologist and the actual role, consistent with the findings of Farrell et al. (2005).

Findings from this study confirm Kelly and Gray's (2000) statement that there are many other agencies and professionals providing similar support to teachers which adds to the confusion surrounding a universal definition and understanding of what the role of the educational psychologist is. Given the wide range of support services available such as RTLB's; RTLit's; trainee psychologists; Social Workers In Schools (SWIS); Marinoto; Child, Youth & Family (CYF's); psychologists and crisis intervention teams, teachers in the study expressed some confusion over who they should be approaching for assistance, consistent with what Ashton and Roberts (2006) stated about it being difficult for a teacher to know when they should be working with an educational psychologist, another professional or both. This indicates a potential need to further increase teachers' knowledge of working as a professional community.

Unlike international findings where teachers expressed high levels of satisfaction with the services provided specifically in relation to emotional or

behavioural situations (Dean, 1980; Styles, 1965), the majority of teachers involved in this study value the specialist knowledge and welcomed professional conversations with psychologists related to their needs.

Teachers in this study indicate valuing the training and professional development they have received from psychologists, again unsurprisingly this is also identified as a service which teachers wanted from psychologists to further support them in their practice.

Similar to international findings (Farrell et al., 2005; Gilman & Gabriel, 2004) this study found that overall the teachers involved in this research are supportive of psychologists conducting fewer assessments. However, it was also found that assessment is also seen as a service that teachers would like to receive from psychologists. This can be interpreted in relation to the specialist training psychologists have in assessment, positioning them to best support and advise teachers on the most effective interventions. However, this could also be interpreted in relation to teachers feeling they need assessments for students to meet specific criteria for additional supports.

5.1.2. Why do teachers seek the services of psychologists? The data indicates that while teachers may feel there is an increased need for psychological support in schools they do not consistently seek this support.

Interestingly, and with more concern, is the finding that in some cases psychological support is not being sought because of the processes involved in accessing support, particularly with regards to the high criteria requirements and the burden the process places on teachers' work loads. This finding highlights what Brown (2010) stated about teachers having to "search for pathology" (p.14) to access support for their students under the current funding model for special education

needs, and it begs the question as to why services designed to support teachers and their students is, in fact, exacerbating the challenges of the already high workloads experienced by teachers (Davidson, 2009). Hornby and Witte (2008) have highlighted that many of these students do not achieve success in mainstream schooling, so not only are they not receiving the support necessary for them to access the curriculum, but also not even being considered for the support they require. This practice calls into question whether schools can provide programmes and educational opportunities best suited to the needs of all students, while simultaneously removing all barriers which may impede students from achieving success, as is set out in the NAGs 1 and 2 (Ministry of Education, 2015a).

Upon further exploration of the reasons for seeking psychological support in the interviews, one participant explained that she does not feel she has been adequately trained and prepared to meet the current needs of all her students. She stated that students who previously have had their needs catered to in special schools or special classes are now being placed in regular classes and her teacher training has not adequately equipped her to meet these students' needs. A belief similar to that being expressed by another interview participant, who stated thinking teacher training college could include a beginners course on things such as Autism and learning how children operate to better equip teachers to meet the diverse needs they are facing in their classrooms. This data is consistent with finds from Salend and Duhaney (1999) and York and Tundidor (1995) who found that one of the main reasons teachers held negative attitudes towards inclusion was because they considered their teacher training to have not adequately prepared them for educating students with diverse needs. Similarly, this is consistent with the findings from Dinham and Scott (1998) that teachers in New Zealand are feeling increasingly

inadequate to meet the current demands of teaching. The training needs for teachers

is covered briefly in the New Zealand Disability Strategy (Ministry of Health, 2001)

in that for the strategy to be effectively implemented there is a need for adequate

training to create knowledgeable and capable teachers (Kearney, 2016; Ministry of

Health, 2001). These comments signal a need for ongoing professional development

opportunities.

5.1.3 What services would teachers like to receive from psychologists?

When asked what services they would most like to receive from a psychologist,

responses from teachers mostly indicate that they want professional conversations-

where the psychologist provides advice and/or strategies to support teachers with

aspects such as children's learning, challenging or unusual behaviours, conversation

around how to encourage and connect with at-risk students as well as continuous re-

evaluation, improvement, and reassurance that the programmes being implemented

by the classroom teacher are appropriately meeting the students needs. Interestingly,

the data on the level of interaction with psychologists' shows that teachers currently

have very little interaction with psychologists with some feeling that it is almost

impossible to access support from psychologists. This could be explained by the

current service provision in NZ, where only the most extreme cases receive support

from psychologists (Brown, 2010), with more moderate cases being catered for by

RTLB's (Coleman, 2011). Even though teachers have minimal interaction with

psychologists, they did indicate feeling that there is, in fact, an increased need for

psychological services in schools. This is consistent with what Stanley (2010) stated,

that New Zealand is facing alarming percentages of problematic child and adolescent

behaviours requiring proven remediation programmes and practices and that

educational psychologists are proven to be the most suitably trained professionals to provide empirically supported practices to meet these needs.

The results from this study, similar to the findings of Dean (1980), Kikas (1999), and Styles (1965), indicate that teachers in New Zealand value the child-centered nature of the work of educational psychologists such as assisting with student's emotional or behavioural difficulties as well as the assistance of educational psychologists in relation to student learning.

Consistent with findings from Farrell et al., (2005) and unsurprisingly, based on the profession's established history in assessment, individual student assessment is a service that teachers in New Zealand would like to receive from psychologists. However, they do not consider this to be the most significant service they require. Teachers indicate wanting assessments, however only when required and as part of a more holistic plan focused more on advice and support implementing suggestions based on the assessment results. What is reassuring here is that through their indication of how they would like to be supported by psychologists, teachers in New Zealand demonstrate their support of the move away from assessments for the sake of assessments, thereby asserting their beliefs that specialised assessments are a useful tool when they are being used as part of a bigger support plan. This is consistent with the ecological orientation of contemporary educational psychology training and practice in New Zealand, where functional interventions are embedded within a students ecosystem, while considering the importance of the culture of the children and young persons and their families (Phillips, 2011).

The data further indicates that teachers' desire to be supported by psychologists through professional development. Having already demonstrated that they value the specialist knowledge of psychologists as well as indicating that they

do not feel sufficiently trained to meet the needs of all their students, teachers are here showing an understanding of the limitations of their knowledge as well as their understanding that psychologists have the skills and training to provide them the necessary support to improve their practice.

5.2. Limitations

Responses to the survey limit the extent to which the research question of whether the purpose of seeking the services of psychologists differ between primary, intermediate and secondary school teachers can be answered as all respondents are from a primary school context. Had the original sample size been larger, potentially selecting a larger COL, or selecting more than one COL to include in the study the probability of being able to answer the research question would have been much higher. In addition, a larger COL might have included some Kura Kaupapa's allowing for a more culturally diverse sample.

However, interview participants were selected from junior, middle, and senior primary school levels to at least provide some insight as to whether the services sought might differ between these in school levels. The main reason the teacher in the junior classes will seek psychological support was for behavioural issues in the class; the middle school teacher will seek support for students displaying signs of abuse, learning, behaviour and special needs; while the senior school teacher will seek support for learning and emotional needs. Even from this rather small sample of three teachers, it became apparent that there are differences in the reason for involving psychologists. Further investigation is needed on this point to allow for stronger conclusions to be made.

An additional limitation of this study, a recognised limitation of case studies, is the ability of this study to be generalised to greater New Zealand based on the

small sample size. The study aimed to get 12 schools participating. However, many principals opted out of the study due to teachers already high workload -high workloads being one of the main challenges teachers reported facing in the Davidson (2009) study as well. The sample size was further reduced due to the researcher being overseas for part of the research project, meaning that face-to-face interviews needed to be changed to interviews using video call software. It is likely that this limited the number of participants who were prepared to participate in the second phase of the research. The level to which teachers feel comfortable using technology for interviews may also be a factor in the limited number of interview participants.

5.3. Implications for practice and recommendations for future research

As Hughes and Benson (1985) state "teachers may be the school psychologists' most overlooked and most valued ally in expanding school psychological services" (p.73). While teachers involved in this research generally indicate being content with the service they are currently receiving from psychologists, it is possible that the Ministry of Education, the largest provider of psychological services in New Zealand schools (Edwards et al., 2007), could use the research provided here, specifically the teacher's descriptions of how they would like to be supported, to continue to improve psychological service delivery to schools.

Further, it is suggested that to ensure agreement between the actual role of the educational psychologist and teachers' understanding of the role, that psychologists working in schools visit schools periodically to explain their role and the services that they are trained to provide. This is likely to increase the likelihood of teachers seeking psychological support as, Farrell et al. (2005) states, if teachers have different expectations or don't necessarily understand the role of the educational

psychologist, it is highly probable that they will not actively seek the assistance of the educational psychologist, which was evident in this study.

Further research investigating whether the purpose of seeking the services of psychologists differs between primary, intermediate and secondary school teachers as well as exploring the potential reasons behind any differences if they are found, would further inform psychological service provision in New Zealand.

Lastly, in light of the results surrounding teachers not accessing support due to the process involved, it is suggested that research is conducted into the current process of accessing psychological support and investigating ways of improving the system.

5.4. Conclusion

Even though there have been many conversations going on in New Zealand around challenges teachers face in their classrooms with a range of learning and behavioural issues, as well as discussions around the current supports available, this study has been the first of its kind to focus specifically on documenting how teachers themselves would like to be supported by psychologists. It has contributed valuable knowledge to the practice of educational psychology in New Zealand as well as providing a platform for further research into this area.

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Appendices

Appendix A:

Information sheet for Principals and Boards of Trustees

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
TE KURA O TE MĀTAURANGA

Information sheet for Principals and Boards of Trustees

Kia ora koutou,

My name is Melissa Canning. I am a primary school teacher with teaching experience in the Waitakere Community of Learning and am currently undertaking a research project as part of my Master of Educational Psychology Degree at Massey University. I would like to invite permanent teachers in your school to participate in the study detailed below.

Purpose of the research project
The focus of this study is to gain an understanding of how teachers in New Zealand schools would like to be supported by psychologists. While there is international literature on teachers' perspectives of the roles and services provided by psychologists working in schools, there is at present very little published information about New Zealand teachers' perspectives on the roles and services provided by psychologists working in schools. And particularly there is no published information on how New Zealand teachers would like to be supported by psychologists working in their schools.

Participant Identification and Project Procedures
All current primary, intermediate and secondary teachers in the Waitakere Community of Learning (CoL) will be invited to participate in this research project to obtain a range of perspectives. This study will be conducted in two phases. In the first phase permanent teachers in your school will be invited to complete an e-survey questionnaire taking approximately 15-20 minutes. At the end of the survey they will be asked to indicate their willingness to be involved in Phase 2 of the study, which is an individual interview of approximately 30 minutes. Among those who indicate an interest to be interviewed, selection will include teachers with a range of teaching experience. The time and space for the interviews will be negotiated with each participating teacher.

Participants' Rights
Teachers will be under no obligation to accept this invitation to take part in this research project. Completing the e-survey questionnaire will imply consent for phase 1. Teachers can refuse to answer some questions, however partially completed questionnaires will not be included in the data analysis. All responses provided will be used only for research purposes and will be kept anonymous, no teacher or individual school will be identified in the research results and final write up. If selected for interviews, teachers have the right to request the recorder be turned off at any time. All email addresses of those willing to participate in the second phase will be separated from responses to ensure anonymity of e-survey data. Teachers have the right to withdraw from this study before the commencement of data analysis at the beginning of Term 2, 2017. Lastly, teachers have the right to request a summary of the research findings after completion of the project.

Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa

Institute of Education
Cnr Albany Drive & Collinson Road, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North 4442, New Zealand T 06 356 9099 www.massey.ac.nz

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TE KURA O TE MĀTAURANGA

Ethics

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, Application 16/55. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Mr Jeremy Hubbard, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, telephone 048015799 x63487, email humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz.

Project Contacts

If you have any questions about this study you are invited to contact:

Primary Researcher:
Melissa Canning (M.EdPsych Student)
Email: melissa.canning1@uni.massey.ac.nz

First supervisor:
Vijaya Dharan
Senior Lecturer
Institute of Education, Massey University
Tel: 06-3569099 ext 84315
Email: V.M.Dharan@massey.ac.nz

Second supervisor:
Terence Edwards
Senior Professional Clinician (Educational Psychology)
Institute of Education, Massey University
Tel: 09-4140800 ext 43526
Email: T.Edwards@massey.ac.nz

Thank you for considering the invitation for your teachers to participate in my study. Your time spent reading through this information sheet is appreciated. I will contact you via email or telephonically in the next week to follow up.

Yours sincerely

Melissa Canning

Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa

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Appendix B:

Information sheet for Teachers

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
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TE KURA O TE MĀTAURANGA

Psychological services and support for New Zealand teachers

Information sheet for Teachers

Kia ora koutou,

My name is Melissa Canning. I am a primary school teacher with teaching experience in the Waitakere Community of Learning and am currently undertaking a research project as part of my Master of Educational Psychology Degree at Massey University. I would like to invite you to participate in the study detailed below.

Purpose of the research project

The focus of this study is to gain an understanding of how teachers in New Zealand schools would like to be supported by psychologists. While there is international literature on teachers' perspectives of the roles and services provided by psychologists working in schools, there is at present very little published information about New Zealand teacher's perspectives on the roles and services provided by psychologists working in schools. And particularly there is no published information on how New Zealand teachers would like to be supported by psychologists working in their schools. By participating in the study, you will be contributing to a body of knowledge that can be useful for teachers in schools.

Participant Identification and Project Procedure

All current primary, intermediate and secondary teachers in the Waitakere Community of Learning schools are being invited to participate in this research project to obtain a range of perspectives. This study will be conducted in two phases. The first phase consists of an e-survey questionnaire taking approximately 15-20 minutes. At the end of the survey you will be asked to indicate your willingness to be involved in phase 2 of the study, which is individual interviews of approximately 30 minutes. Among those who indicate an interest to be interviewed, selection will include teachers with a range of experience. The time and space for the interviews will be negotiated with each participating teacher. Transcripts of the interview will be provided to you for editing purposes.

Participants' Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation to take part in this research project. Completing the survey will imply your informed consent for phase 1. You may refuse to answer any questions, however partially completed questionnaires will not be included in the data analysis. All responses provided will be used only for research purposes and will be kept anonymous, no teacher or individual school will be identified in the research results and final write up. If selected, for interviews you have the right to request the recorder be turned off at any time. All email addresses of those willing to participate in the second phase will be separated from responses to ensure

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TE KURA O TE MĀTAURANGA

anonymity of e-survey data. You have the right to withdraw from this study at any time before the data analysis begins at the beginning of Term 2, 2017. Lastly, you have the right to request a summary of the projects findings after completion of the project.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, Application 16/55. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Mr Jeremy Hubbard, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, telephone 048015799 x63487, email humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz

Project Contacts

If you have any questions about this study you are invited to contact:

Primary Researcher:

Melissa Canning (M.EdPsych Student)
Email: melissa.canning1@uni.massey.ac.nz

First supervisor:
Vijaya Dharan
Senior Lecturer
Institute of Education, Massey University
Tel: 06-3569099 ext 84315
Email: V.M.Dharan@massey.ac.nz

Second supervisor:
Terence Edwards
Senior Professional Clinician (Educational Psychology)
Tel: 09-4140800 ext 43526
Email: T.Edwards@massey.ac.nz

Thank you for your participation in this important research project, your time and effort is appreciated.

Yours sincerely
Melissa Canning

Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa

Institute of Education
Cnr Albany Drive & Collinson Road, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North 4442, New Zealand T 06 356 9099 www.massey.ac.nz

Appendix C:

Permission to contact teachers for interviews

Follow up Interview

20. Please indicate here by providing your email address if you are interested in participating in a 30 minute interview to further discuss how you as a teacher would like to be supported by a psychologist working in your school. I will be contacting a number of teachers with a range of teaching experience to take part in the interviews.

Appendix D:

Survey

Demographics

1. What is your gender?

○ Female

○ Male

2. What is your age?

○ 20 to 25

○ 26 to 30

○ 31 to 35

○ 36 to 40

○ 41 to 45

○ 46 to 50

○ 51 to 55

○ 56 or 60

○ 61 +

3. How many years have you been an active classroom teacher (including current year)?

○ Less than 2 years

○ At least 2 years but less than 5 years

○ At least 5 years but less than 10 years

○ At least 10 years but less than 15 years

○ 15 years or more

4. Please identify additional roles you have in your school (e.g. SENCo, other leadership roles).

```
[                                                    ]
```

5. Do you teach full time or part time?

○ Full time

○ Part time

6. If you teach part time, how many days are you in the classroom?

- ○ 1
- ○ 1.5
- ○ 2
- ○ 2.5
- ○ 3
- ○ 3.5
- ○ 4
- ○ 4.5

7. Is your school a

- ○ State Primary
- ○ State Intermediate
- ○ State Secondary
- ○ State Integrated Primary
- ○ State Integrated Intermediate
- ○ State Integrated Secondary
- ○ Private Primary
- ○ Private Intermediate
- ○ Private Secondary
- ○ Kura Kaupapa Maori
- ○ Other (please specify)

8. What is your ethnicity? (Please select all that apply.)

- ☐ Maori
- ☐ NZ European
- ☐ Samoan
- ☐ Tongan
- ☐ Cook Island
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Middle Eastern
- ☐ Latin American
- ☐ African
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Psychological Services

9. What are some of the services provided in your school by psychologists?

<div style="border:1px solid; height:70px; width:600px;"></div>

10. Generally speaking at what point and/or under what circumstances would you personally seek the assistance of a psychologist?

<div style="border:1px solid; height:70px; width:600px;"></div>

11. Please indicate approximately how often you requested the following services in 2016.

Assessment of a learning disability	
Behavioural consultation	
Academic consultation	
Individual counselling	
In-service training	
Crisis intervention	
Curriculum development	
Other (Please specify)	

12. In the previous year were there any students in your class whom you thought might benefit from receiving assistance from a psychologist, but whom you did not refer on?

○ No

○ Yes

○ If yes, please explain the reason(s) why a referral was not made.

<div style="border:1px solid; height:40px; width:400px;"></div>

13. Please indicate which of the following psychological services you saw in your school in 2016 (please select all that apply).

☐ Assessment of a child who may need SE provision

☐ Counselling and therapy for individual children

☐ Advice for teachers on how to work with a child whose behaviour is disruptive

☐ Advice for parents about a child's behaviour and learning

☐ Advice for teachers about a child's learning program

☐ Group therapy for children who have behavioural difficulties

☐ Working with a team of teachers on whole school development

☐ Training for teachers

☐ Advising teachers on the development of new curriculum materials

☐ Working with a group of parents

☐ Supporting staff

☐ Crisis intervention

☐ Implementing school wide programs (e.g. PB4L)

☐ Consultation

14. What help would you as a classroom teacher consider to be most useful from a psychologist?

15. Approximately how often have you worked with a psychologist in your teaching career?

16. Was the service and advice you received helpful? Please elaborate on your answer.

17. Do you know what type of psychologist you were working with (i.e. clinical, health, educational, etc.)?

○ I have not worked with a psychologist

○ No

○ Yes. Please state the psychologists field

18. Please provide a description of what you believe the role of an educational psychologist should be.

19. Please add any other relevant comments or suggestions you have regarding access to and use of additional support services from a psychologist in your school.

Follow up Interview

20. Please indicate here by providing your email address if you are interested in participating in a 30 minute interview to further discuss how you as a teacher would like to be supported by a psychologist working in your school. I will be contacting a number of teachers with a range of teaching experience to take part in the interviews.

Summary of results

21. If you would like to receive a summary of the results of this research study please provide your email address here. Email addresses will be separated from questionnaire responses to maintain anonymity.

End of survey

You have reached the end of the questionnaire. Thank you for your participation. Your contribution to this project is greatly appreciated.

Appendix E:

Possible Interview Questions/Prompts

(Semi-structured Interviews)

Interview Schedule

Introduction
- Welcoming comments and thanking the teacher for their participation
- Briefly repeat: purpose of the study, confidentiality and participants right
- Acknowledge and explain recording device
- Gain informed consent to continue

Interview Questions

1. I am interested in what lead you into teaching?
   Probes: when they trained & approx. how long teaching etc.)

            Can you tell me how long you have been teaching?
            Have you taught in the same school?
            Have you always taught this age group?
            What is it about teaching yr x that you enjoy?

2. As an experienced/novice teacher what are some of the situations that you might seek support for
        A from within the school
        B from outside services.

3. Responses from the survey indicated some uncertainty around teacher's knowledge about the types of services provided by psychologists, are you aware of any services provided by psychologists?

4. Some teachers reported finding it quite difficult to access a psychologist, has this been your experience?

5. What are the current processes that you follow if you have any concerns about a student or supporting your class in general? (How/ where do you access help)

6. What supports are currently available to you to ensure that all the students in your class participate fully in their learning?
   Probes: supports currently available in your school?
          external supports that you know about?

7. In order to ensure ongoing success for both yourself and your students, what support would you as a classroom teacher like to get from a psychologist?

8. Survey responses indicated that teachers would value psychologists supporting them by providing various forms of professional development and training. Would you find this type of support useful?

   -if yes, why, what sort of training would you find most useful

9. If you were to work with a psychologist what expectations would you have for their engagement with you?

10. Responses in the survey indicated that some teachers would find it beneficial to have a psychologist on site or shared between 2 schools for various reasons, is this something which you as an educator would find helpful or not?

11. Finally, is there any thing else that you would like to add in terms of the supports or possible supports from psychologists that has not already been covered?

Closing

Thank participant for their time

Appendix F:

Examples of data analysis

When teachers will seek further assistance from a psychologist

RAW DATA *Researcher thoughts in red*	CODES
. I have sought the assistance of a psychologist for help and support with my own children regarding depression/ anxiety/ childhood issues. I would not make such a referral at school. (need for service but not being referred on?) . If child, parent/caregiver/members of staff are in need of extra support and/ or advice regarding contacting other agencies for help with an issue/problem. . To assess a child who is not learning at all or find learning difficult. . In consultation with our SENCO team and parents, to assess children with challenging/unusual behaviours, which are not successfully modified or responsive to class or in-school management. . Behaviour, academic issues . not sure how this process works . When a child's behaviour is extreme and we have exhausted all of the resources available through the school. . When I felt as though I was beginning to need support . If I can see the child is distressed over an issue, seems vacant or if I have heard there are things going on at home . when all other strategies have been tried. When permission from parents has been given . when an issue has gone beyond that of a general practitioner . Extreme behaviour issues	Emotional – (internal) any form of emotional difficulties a student is facing Behaviour – (external) concerning or challenging behaviour Learning/academic- difficulties with learning or academic work General support- either unspecified or supporting staff in general, meeting whatever needs are present. Personal- teachers seeking support from a psychologist for personal reasons Systems issues/ confusions- teachers being unsure of how to access support and having difficulties in accessing support or not being aware of the support available to them Family/home issues- difficulties at home possible affecting the student's school life Exhausted in-school supports- all internal supports have been tried, there is a need for additional support Parent concerns- parents approaching teachers about concerns or seeking support Mental health concerns- any psychological or emotional difficulties Accessing other agencies

Reasons for not referring

RAW DATA	CODES
• We didn't have any awareness about that. • difficult or inflexible parents • Cost to parent • students very low in confidence and self esteem - no services available to help them • It was suggested to the parents that assistance would benefit the child, the parents decided not to go down that route. • first there needs to be a referral to the RTLB service, they are the path to MOE Sp ED • Passed onto senco: no referral made • Process seems too much extra work for teachers as they might not even qualify	Parents: cost/refusal/choice Knowledge: limited knowledge about processes/support available Process: In school systems of referrals Ministry systems of referrals too lengthy/too much paper work involved Criteria: Belief that the student was not severe enough or wouldn't meet criteria/ not enough psych's to meet the need

Appendix G:

Ethics Approval

MASSEY
UNIVERSITY
TE KUNENGA KI PŪREHUROA
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

Date: 27 October 2016

Dear Melissa Canning

Re: Ethics Notification - SOA 16/55 - How teachers in New Zealand would like to be supported by psychologists working in schools.

Thank you for the above application that was considered by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Human Ethics Southern A Committee   at their meeting held on Thursday, 27 October,

Approval is for three years.   If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, reapproval must be requested.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Dr Brian Finch
Chair, Human Ethics Chairs' Committee and Director (Research Ethics)

Appendix H:

Survey participant demographics

Participants	Gender	Age	Experience (Years)	Ethnicity
Respondent 1	Female	61+	15+	NZ European
Respondent 2	Female	61+	15+	Maori/NZ European
Respondent 3	Female	31-35	10-15	NZ European
Respondent 4	Female	20-25	5-10	NZ European
Respondent 5	Female	36-40	15+	Samoan
Respondent 6	Female	41-45	15+	Maori
Respondent 7	Male	26-30	5- 10	Maori/ NZ European
Respondent 8	Male	51-55	15+	NZ European
Respondent 9	Female	51-55	15+	Tongan
Respondent 10	Female	41-45	15+	Indian
Respondent 11	Female	20-25	2-5	NZ European
Respondent 12	Female	61+	15+	NZ European
Respondent 13	Female	61+	10-15	NZ European
Respondent 14	Female	36-40	5-10	Maori/NZ European
Respondent 15	Female	51-55	15+	NZ European
Respondent 16	Male	36-40	5-10	NZ European
Respondent 17	Female	51-55	15+	NZ European
Respondent 18	Female	41-45	15+	Maori/NZ European
Respondent 19	Female	56-60	15+	NZ European
Respondent 20	Female	56-60	15+	NZ European
Respondent 21	Female	20-25	<2	NZ European
Respondent 22	Female	36-40	10-15	Samoan
Respondent 23	Female	56-60	15+	NZ European/ Tongan
Respondent 24	Female	41-45	10-15	NZ European
Respondent 25	Female	36-40	2-5	NZ European
Respondent 26	Female	26-30	5-10	NZ European
Respondent 27	Female	41-45	15+	Maori
Respondent 28	Female	31-35	5-10	NZ European
Respondent 29	Female	61+	15+	NZ European
Respondent 30	Female	41-45	15+	Maori/NZ European
Respondent 31	Female	61+	15+	NZ European
Respondent 32	Male	41-45	10-15	Latin American
Respondent 33	Male	41-45	10-15	NZ European
Respondent 34	Female	51-56	10-15	British
Respondent 35	Male	20-25	<2	NZ European
Respondent 36	Female	36-40	15+	NZ European
Respondent 37	Female	31-35	10-15	NZ European
Respondent 38	Female	26-30	5-10	NZ European
Respondent 39	Female	41-45	15+	NZ European
Respondent 40	Female	26-30	5-10	NZ European
Respondent 41	Female	36-40	10-15	NZ European
Respondent 42	Female	56-60	15+	NZ European
Respondent 43	Female	56-60	15+	Asian

Respondent 44	Female	31-35	5-10	Maori/ NZ European
Respondent 45	Female	41-45	15+	Fijian Indian
Respondent 46	Male	61+	15+	NZ European
Respondent 47	Female	56-60	10-15	NZ European
Respondent 48	Female	41-45	10-15	NZ European
Respondent 49	Female	41-45	15+	British
Respondent 50	Female	46-50	5-10	NZ European