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Poutoko whakatipu poutoko: whakamanahia ngā poutoko kōhungahunga hei hautūtanga toitū
Leaders growing leaders: effective early childhood leaders for sustainable leadership

Debbie Ryder, Gwen Davitt, Raewyn Higginson, Sue Smorti, Mere Smith, & Janis Carroll-Lind

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Ako Aotearoa™

Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand

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Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini

Success is not the work of one but the work of many

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is a key factor in lifting the quality of early childhood services. Yet, although effective leadership plays a major role in promoting the necessary systems and structures to drive quality outcomes in early childhood services, many people holding leadership positions in these settings have limited professional preparation for their leadership and administration roles. In most cases, leadership development is limited to 'on-the-job' learning.

The aim of this study was to demonstrate how effective early childhood leaders support the 'on-the-job' leadership development of themselves and their teaching teams for sustainable leadership in early childhood education (ECE) settings within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Based on an emerging design of grounded theory and using a mixed method application involving qualitative and quantitative procedures, a picture unfolded of current ECE leadership experience and qualifications, beliefs and practices, including the organisational structures and processes underpinning the leadership culture in early childhood centres.

Designated leaders and their teaching teams from seven teacher-led ECE services (characterised by their diversity and effective leadership) participated as case studies. The high level of congruence found between what the leaders said they valued (espoused leadership theories of action), and the practices they enacted (leadership theories-in-use) underscores the value of making 'leadership practice' a more explicit part of what leaders and teachers reflect on and articulate within their everyday professional lives.

The study generated a framework emerging from the data to support the professional learning and development in leadership, for leaders and their teams, to ensure that effective leadership is purposefully grown, developed and sustained across their ECE settings.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

There is now wide recognition, both nationally and internationally, that leadership is a key factor in lifting the quality of early childhood services (Bloom & Bella, 2005; Education Review Office, 2010, 2011; Grey, 2004; Kagan & Bowman, 1997; Rodd, 2013). It is also well understood that the early childhood education (ECE) sector needs visionary and capable leaders who are able to make change happen, in both political and professional contexts, for the benefit of young learners and their communities. The ECE sector is not alone in this; growing leadership capability is the main issue identified in nearly all professions.

Effective leadership facilitates a sense of community and high-quality services (Rodd, 2013). Effective leadership also has a significant effect on children's educational outcomes by creating minimal staff turnover, shared vision, and strong pedagogy and curriculum (Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007). Maxwell (2001) asserts, "There is almost no limit to the potential of an organisation that recruits good people, raises them up as leaders and continually develops them" (p.185).

Compared to the compulsory school sector there is limited leadership research, or leadership professional learning and development in the early childhood education sector within New Zealand (Ang, 2012; Muijs, Aubrey, Harris & Briggs, 2004; Ord et al., 2013; Thornton, 2014; Thornton, Wansbrough, Clarkin-Phillips, Aitken, & Tamati, 2009). Government-funded leadership development programmes for primary and secondary leaders and aspiring leaders are available but there is no equivalent leadership strategy in the early childhood sector.

The limited number of formal ECE leadership programmes means that leadership development is often reduced to 'on-the-job' learning and the role modelling of other leaders. It is challenging for such leaders to be sustaining and building a leadership culture within their organisations when they are developing themselves as well as others (Aubrey, 2011; Nupponen, 2005). While some umbrella organisations (i.e., those with a managing body) have instituted their own induction programmes for emerging or newly appointed leaders, none of these lead to a leadership qualification registered on the National Qualifications Framework.

Thus, the development of ECE leadership qualifications is a relatively recent initiative. Lack of leadership development programmes in ECE was the driver behind Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand (ECNZ) investing in the development of a Postgraduate Certificate and Diploma in Leadership (ECE) that was launched in 2014 following approval and accreditation from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA). This level 8 qualification targets qualified early childhood teachers who are already experienced and working in early childhood settings. Many of the students in this programme are the owners or the designated pedagogical leaders of their ECE services.

Those who graduate with these leadership qualifications change from leading by intuition, or informally derived understandings, to having a good knowledge and understanding of what effective leadership entails in early childhood settings. Arguably, through their new learning, leaders and aspiring leaders expand and/or transform their thinking and leadership practices to improve their services' organisational systems, teamwork, curriculum and pedagogy.

Teaching in our leadership programme has convinced us (i.e., the research team for this present study) that leadership is not something that just occurs – leadership needs to be purposefully grown, developed and sustained across the ECE setting and across the sector. Teaching must be informed by research and we wanted to conduct a project that was directly relevant to the papers we were teaching within our leadership qualification. Therefore, the time was right to explore how effective early childhood leaders in Aotearoa New Zealand support the leadership development of themselves and their teaching teams to sustain leadership development capacity in their early childhood education (ECE) settings.

The aim of this study was therefore to provide a picture of current ECE leadership experience and to extend understanding of how to provide sustainable leadership. By exploring 'on-the-job' leadership beliefs and practices across diverse ECE settings, we hoped to generate a model of sustainable leadership development for the ECE sector. The intention was that the insights generated from the study would also be of interest, not only to the students studying in our leadership programme, but also to policy makers and teacher education providers. Furthermore, promoting dialogue in the sector on ways to maximise the potential of ECE leaders would contribute, albeit indirectly, to improved educational outcomes for all children attending ECE services.

Overview of the Report

This report outlines the professional learning and leadership development that effective ECE leaders undertook and how this development has effected change in leadership practice. Leadership actions (pedagogical, team leadership, and organisational) that ECE leaders take in developing others as leaders were identified during the examination of their 'espoused theories' and 'theories-in-use'. Finally, we offer a resource for supporting leadership capability and capacity within early childhood education settings.

The report is organised into six chapters. This first chapter stated the problem situation and outlined the background to the study. The next chapter reviews the literature and related research that informs and supports the aims of this present study. Chapter Three presents the methodological frameworks for the study as well as the methods and procedures used to conduct the research. This includes an explanation of the process for selection and recruitment of the participants as well as describing the characteristics of the seven case study centres. Ethical considerations are also discussed in this chapter. Chapters Four and Five present our overall findings. As we used a mixed-method approach, the quantitative data gathered in Phase One of the project is presented first in Chapter Four. Chapter Five reports the qualitative findings that emerged from the cross-case study analyses. We are particularly excited about the findings pertaining to the designated leaders' 'espoused theories' and 'theories-in-use' regarding their leadership actions. Discussion of the findings takes place in the final chapter (Chapter Six). Here, the research questions are revisited in light of the implications of these findings, which are also critiqued within the context of the existing literature. A framework that emerged from the findings is presented as a professional learning and development tool to support the leadership capacity and capability within ECE centres. This chapter ends by summarising and drawing conclusions about the study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The literature review begins with an examination of leadership within the New Zealand ECE sector. This is followed by an exploration of the term 'effective leadership' and some of the considerations involved in researching ECE leadership in this country, i.e., the variety in ECE leadership terminology; the majority of ECE practitioners and leaders being women; the issue of designated leaders not necessarily being the pedagogical leaders, and the lack of professional leadership education and learning opportunities in Aotearoa New Zealand. The final section discusses the need for research in ECE leadership with a focus on the leadership processes employed by effective ECE leaders, as well as the beliefs and values underpinning these processes and how they are modelled in practice to develop, not only their own leadership, but also the leadership of others within their ECE setting. The literature review concludes by identifying the need for more research in the area of leadership processes that are sustainable over time.

New Zealand Early Childhood Education as a Leadership Context

Early childhood education in Aotearoa New Zealand is non-compulsory, partly public-funded and characterised by diversity of service type. The two main types of ECE services are teacher-led and parent-led services. Among teacher-led ECE services are kindergartens, centre-based and home-based education and care services. Parent-led ECE services include playcentres, playgroups and Kōhanga Reo (Māori immersion). Pasifika language nests can be either teacher and/or parent-led.

The 2011 report by New Zealand's Education Review Office lists leadership as one of the five key factors of quality ECE and school development. Several studies (see Bloom & Bella, 2005; Grey, 2004; Hujala, Waniganayake & Rodd, 2013; Kagan & Bowman, 1997; Rodd, 2013; Thornton, 2006; Thornton, Wansborough, Clarkin-Phillips, Aitken & Tamati, 2009) also discuss leadership as an important factor in the quality of ECE service. Stoll, Fink and Earl (2005) and

Siraj-Blatchford and Manni (2007) extend the discussion about 'effective leadership' and quality, identifying the significant effect these factors have on the achievement of children's educational outcomes. The correlation between leadership and improved educational outcomes for children continues to be prioritised in more recent research studies (see Davis, Kreig & Smith, 2014; Grarock & Morrissey, 2013; Reynolds & Cardno, 2008).

Effective Leadership

Successful early childhood settings are characterised by effective leadership, where there is minimal staff turnover; a shared vision of practices, pedagogy and curriculum (Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007; Stoll et al., 2005) and promotion of leadership within an inclusive culture (Education Review Office, 2011). According to Rodd (2013) "effective leadership in early childhood is concerned with working towards creating a community of learners and providing quality service for children and families" (p. 24). An analysis carried out by the Education Review Office (2010) identified factors that are evident where effective leadership is occurring, i.e., a strong centre vision; professionalism, trust and unity amongst team members; inclusion of parents/whānau; integration of planning, assessment and practice; ongoing self-review; continual improvement of practice; together with implementation of sustainable teaching and learning practices.

The Education Review Office (ERO) report also discusses the influence of leaders' beliefs and values (both espoused and enacted) on the quality of education and care provided for children. As stated by ERO (2010):

> In high quality services, well-qualified and experienced leaders have a key role in setting expectations for staff and children. They are the educational leaders of the service, with a sound, up-to-date knowledge of how children learn and develop. They translate this knowledge into coherent expectations for centre management and practice, effective teaching, and ongoing reflection on practice. Effective leaders trust and empower educators, children and families, promoting a collaborative, inclusive culture of continuous improvement for all. (p. 4)

Various researchers affirm the significance of the processes and discourses that influence and effect leadership in practice (see Colmer & Waniganayake, 2014; Davis, Kreig & Smith, 2014; Hard & Jónsdóttir, 2013). These studies align with ERO's assertion that 'effective leaders' in ECE are defined as people who are "inspirational, enthusiastic and innovative thinkers" and "manage change, motivate others to make change, and [have] a good awareness of pacing change that leads to improved quality (Education Review Office, 2010, p.4).

Discourses about ECE Leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand

This next section discusses contemporary issues pertaining to leadership within New Zealand's early childhood sector.

Understanding leadership in ECE.

Difficulty in understanding leadership in ECE has contributed to its relatively low profile in early childhood policy and scholarship (Thornton et al., 2009). First, leadership terminology varies according to the diverse nature of service provision in ECE. In contrast to the school sector (where those who hold acknowledged leadership positions are more easily identifiable with their assigned titles and leadership roles), the variation in ECE leadership terminology makes it difficult to know who has ultimate leadership responsibility. Examples of some of the titles used to label people holding leadership responsibilities in ECE include owner, manager, director, supervisor, senior teacher, head teacher, room leader or team leader (Colmer, Waniganayake, & Field, 2014; Stoll, Fink, & Earl, 2005; Thornton et al., 2009).

Second, in the early childhood sector, designated leaders are not necessarily the pedagogical leaders. Research shows that teachers are only accepted as pedagogical leaders when they are formally appointed with a leadership title (Colmer & Waniganayake, 2014; Heikka, 2014; Sergiovani, 1998; Thomas & Nuttall, 2014). Hard and Jónsdóttir (2013) note that being a positional leader means holding a position of power because of the associated roles and responsibilities. Reynolds and Cardno (2008) support this claim, explaining that those in positions of leadership are responsible for influencing and enacting change.

These arguments strengthen the acceptance of designated leaders as being the staff members who lead and manage the teaching and learning. However, in reality designated leaders may have a limited impact on teaching and learning, due to the managerial tasks they have to accomplish (Heikka, 2014; Hujala, 2004). This raises the challenge as to how effective leaders lead when they have both pedagogical and managerial responsibilities. Grarock and Morrissey (2013) attest that without managerial and pedagogical roles and responsibilities teachers do not consider themselves leaders and thus do not engage in intentional pedagogical or leadership practices.

Gender composition.

Another distinctive feature of the New Zealand ECE sector is that most ECE practitioners and leaders are women. According to Statistics New Zealand, male teachers comprise just 3% of the total population of 23,580 ECE teachers in New Zealand (as cited in Morrison, with the Early Childhood Education Analysis Team, 2014). By inference, few early childhood leaders are men. In contrast, leadership positions in the business sector are primarily male dominated (Aubrey, Godfrey, & Harris, 2012; Scrivens, 2002).

In an earlier study, Court (1994) found that effective women leaders in education have an affective and holistic approach to leadership, with an emphasis on shared decision-making and the empowerment of others. Barsh, Cranston, and Lewis (2011), from the business world describe the characteristics of leadership where the "traditional requirements and attributes of leadership [are] a strong desire to lead, vision, [and] ability to build a great team" (p. 286). However they also noted that "the clusters of traditionally male traits that are associated with leadership do not explain the sense of meaning and connectedness that made some women extraordinarily effective leaders" such as "the power of the 'softer' aspects of leadership" (p.286), for example, empathy. This is reiterated by Gallant (2014) who concluded from her research that "the social construction around women leaders was nurturing; [and] communicators; [who were] relationship focused" (p.213). Therefore, it is possible that women leaders in both business and ECE settings may have some leadership styles, strategies and competencies in common. Accordingly, examining literature regarding the influence of gender on women's leadership in ECE and early childhood education as a highly feminised

profession and thus leadership domain (Davis, Kreig & Smith, 2014; Hard & Jónsdóttir, 2013) was pertinent to this study.

Lack of professional leadership preparation in ECE.

Although effective leadership plays a major role in promoting the necessary systems and structures required to grow successful ECE learning organisations, many people holding leadership positions in these settings have limited professional learning for leadership and administration roles (Aubrey, 2011; Davis, Kreig & Smith, 2014; Nupponen, 2006; Thornton, et al., 2009). In most cases, leadership development is restricted to role modelling of others and 'on-the-job' learning. In Aotearoa New Zealand the development of specific ECE leadership qualifications (such as offered at our institution) are quite recent initiatives within the ECE sector.

The need for Aotearoa New Zealand research on ECE leadership.

Whilst there is extensive research of educational leadership in the compulsory education sector, leadership in early childhood settings has remained a relatively unexplored area of research (Ang, 2012; Muijs, Aubrey, Harris, & Briggs, 2004; Thornton, 2014). The reasons for the low profile of leadership research in early childhood education are multifaceted due to the unique characteristics of the ECE sector within Aotearoa New Zealand. Thornton and colleagues (2009) categorise the following as key concerns for the ECE sector:

- Low profile of leadership;
- Lack of an accepted definition or common understanding of leadership;
- Confusion between leadership and management terminology used in the sector which emphasises management over leadership;
- Newly qualified, less experienced teachers taking on management positions;
- Lack of emphasis on leadership in the early childhood sector by the Ministry of Education; and
- Lack of leadership development programmes in ECE (pp. 5-11).

Although there have always been leadership practices in early childhood settings, those practices have not been a research focus until recently (see Clarkin-Phillips, 2011; Tamati,

Hond-Flavell, & Korewha, 2008; Thornton, 2006, 2014). There is an increasing need for effective early childhood leaders (Ord et al., 2013) and for more research of early childhood leadership nationally (Fasoli, Scrivens, & Woodrow, 2007; Thornton, 2006; Thornton et al., 2009) and globally (Hujala, Waniganayake & Rodd, 2013; Nupponen, 2006; Rodd, 2013; Siraj-Blatchford & Manni, 2007).

Summary

This brief literature review has provided the background to our research project and identified a gap in the literature pertaining to the development of leadership sustainability. The diverse nature of the ECE sector in Aotearoa New Zealand and the resulting influence this has on differing leadership practices highlights the need to better understand the leadership processes that effective ECE leaders use to develop, not only their own leadership, but that of others within their teaching teams. Therefore, it was salient for this research to explore not only the processes that ECE leaders use, but the structures, values and beliefs (both espoused and enacted) that underpin these processes. Furthermore, the literature review identified the importance of exploring whether or not the leadership practices demonstrated by ECE leaders actually emulated the values and beliefs they possessed.

The focus of this research project, therefore, turned to exploring the processes and structures effective ECE leaders used in their ECE settings to enhance the sustainability of the leadership culture.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The *'Leaders Growing Leaders'* research project was undertaken to gain knowledge of how effective early childhood leaders support the leadership development of themselves and their teaching teams in order to sustain leadership development capacity in their early childhood education (ECE) settings within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The aims of the project therefore were to: (1) provide a picture of current ECE leadership experience and qualifications; (2) explore 'on-the-job' leadership beliefs and practices across diverse ECE settings; and (3) develop further understanding on how to provide sustainable 'on-the-job' leadership development.

Research Questions

To examine the issues pertaining to sustainable leadership this study addressed five questions, with the overall question being:

- What leadership processes and structures do effective ECE leaders develop in their centres for the sustainability of the leadership culture?

Four further questions underpinned the main question to frame the project:

1. What professional learning and leadership development do effective ECE leaders undertake and how has it affected change in leadership practice?
2. What leadership actions (pedagogical, team leadership, and organisational) do ECE leaders take in developing others as leaders?
3. What are the 'espoused theories' and 'theories-in-use' used by effective leaders?
4. How can the identification of leadership barriers build capability and capacity within the ECE setting?

This chapter determines the data necessary to answer these research questions and explains the method for collecting and analysing the data that address the questions. The theoretical influences and methodologies informing the study are outlined, along with the ethical considerations that were integral to all phases of the research process.

Theoretical Influences

The theoretical influences that informed the study are as follows:

Grounded theory.

The study was based on an emerging design of grounded theory. Systemic qualitative and quantitative procedures were followed in order to generate a model, or rather framework, to support sustainable leadership development in early childhood settings. Grounded theory is about "understanding processes and theoretically constructing models based on the stages and phases of phenomena over time" (Morse & Richards, 2002, p. 156). Creswell (2014) explains that grounded theory is suitable for research projects that aim to generate or modify a theory or explain a process, that is, by using grounded theory "the researcher derives a general abstract theory of a process, action or interaction grounded in the views of the participants" (p. 396). In other words, a theory is generated when existing theories do not address the research problem or the participants being researched. Bell (2014) elaborates on how the theory "emerges as the research proceeds by means of analysis of the data" (p. 18).

While there are some studies that focus on explaining leadership in ECE by developing a model (Hujala, 2004; Kagan & Hallmark, 2001; Siraj-Blatchford & Hallet, 2013) no existing theory actually offers a feasible answer to the leadership actions and strategies that lead to successful, effective and continuous development in ECE services. Furthermore, the models explained in the existing studies are context specific to the country in which the research was undertaken. Early childhood education in Aotearoa New Zealand is unique with its diverse ECE services and bicultural curriculum. Our methodological aim was to produce a theory grounded in local data that will provide a contextually appropriate explanation of ECE

leadership in Aotearoa New Zealand, at least arguably more so than any borrowed or adapted model.

Theories of action.

An additional theoretical framework underpinning the methodology of this project draws on the seminal work of Argyris and Schön (1974). They argue that people's behaviour is guided by, and can be explained by, their 'theories of action'. Argyris and Schön (1974) describe two types of theories of action: espoused theories of action and theories-in-use. Theories-in-use are led by people's mental maps, which shape people's plans, implementation and review of their actions, and the way people act in different situations. Espoused-theories, on the other hand, consist of theories and beliefs about what people would do in a certain situation. People's actions are governed by their theories-in-use of which they are mostly unaware and can differ from the values and beliefs to which they aspire (Argyris & Schön, 1974). Therefore, at times this can lead to incongruence between theory and action, as explained by Argyris and Schön:

> When someone is asked how he would behave under certain circumstances, the answer he usually gives is his espoused theory of action for that situation. This is the theory of action to which he gives allegiance, and which, upon request, he communicates to others. However the theory that actually governs his actions is his theory-in-use, which may or may not be compatible with his espoused theory; furthermore, the individual may or may not be aware of incompatibility of the two theories. (pp. 6-7)

In other words, theories of action can become so taken for granted that people do not realise they are using them (Argyris, 1999). Argyris further explains: "People consistently act inconsistently, unaware of the contradiction between the espoused-theory and theory-in-use, between the way they think they are acting and the way they really act" (p. 131). Drawing on Aryris and Schön's (1974) premise, in the continuous professional development of leaders it is therefore argued that they first make their 'espoused-theories' and 'theories-in-use' explicit and then determine any inconsistencies between them (Dalgıç & Bakioğlu, 2014).

Māori and Pasifika Research Methodologies

Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand is one of the main providers of bicultural early childhood teacher education programmes in Aotearoa New Zealand. Our undergraduate and postgraduate qualifications are required to be research-informed and a key principle of the organisation's research strategy is that ECNZ's researchers recognise that Te Tiriti o Waitangi extends equal status and rights to Māori and tauiwi (non-Māori). Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand (ECNZ) is also committed to upholding Pasifika values, knowledge and beliefs; therefore both the Māori and Pasifika research principles to which our research studies adhere to are now discussed.

Māori research principles.

As a theoretical influence, Kaupapa Māori (Māori principles) is pivotal in providing the appropriate foundation, practice and analysis from a Māori worldview (Bishop & Glynn, 1999; Pihama, Cram, & Walker 2002; Ord et al., 2013; Graham Smith, 1997; Graham Smith, 2012). Historically, western theorising by academics (with taken for granted intellectual and cultural validity), have ignored Māori truths and have positioned Māori people with unequal power relations, and social deficits; only to legitimise and reinforce their own neo-colonial ideologies (Graham Smith, 2012). There continues to be disputes regarding who should participate in the subject of kaupapa Māori research, and whether tauiwi should take part. In addition, there are some Māori, who due to historical harmful research practices, are unconvinced of a positive outcome (Graham Smith, 2012). Furthermore, traditional research has misrepresented Māori understandings and ways of knowing by simplifying, conglomerating and commodifying Māori knowledge for "consumption" by the colonisers (Bishop, 1999, p.1).

The use of kaupapa Māori research principles advocates and supports the principle of rangatiratanga (self-determination) to support Māori in controlling their own destiny. It is therefore crucial that whānau (family group/extended family), hapū (subtribe) and iwi (tribe) are given opportunities to validate the way in which knowledge is theorised and documented (Bishop 1999; Graham Smith 2012). This gives Māori a strong voice and empowers them in legitimising Māori ways of knowing and being, with an end result that benefits Māori.

Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand has a commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the partnership between tangata whenua (Indigenous people) and tangata tiriti (non-Māori New Zealanders). In order to find and maintain Māori voice and identity, the principles of kaupapa Māori research, theory and practice (initially outlined by Graham Smith in 1990 and further developed in 1997) underpinned this study. Following Graham Smith, the principles have since been developed by other kaupapa Māori theorists such as Linda Smith (2012), Bishop and Glynn (1999), and Pihama and Gardiner (2005). Bishop (1999) advises that whilst Māori knowledge and cultural practices are authentic, so too are kaupapa Māori research principles.

A kaupapa Māori framework provided the appropriate foundation to investigate leadership from a te ao Māori worldview in our kōhanga reo (Māori immersion early childhood education centre) case study. The kaupapa Māori research principles provided a clear definition and understanding around the purpose of kaupapa Māori and as a means of advantaging Māori ways of knowing and being to strengthen leadership in early childhood education (Rameka 2012; Walker, 2008). In particular, the research project adhered to the following kaupapa Māori principles:

- Tino Rangatiratanga: The Principle of Self-Determination;
- Taonga Tuku Iho: The Principle of Cultural Aspiration;
- Ako Māori: The Principle of Culturally Preferred Pedagogy;
- Kia piki ake i ngā raruraru o te kainga: The Principle of Socioeconomic Mediation;
- Whānau: The Principle of Extended Family Structure;
- Kaupapa: The Principle of Collective Philosophy;
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi: The Principle of the Treaty of Waitangi; and
- Ata: The Principle of Growing Respectful Relationships.

Researchers should always aim to benefit Māori communities and participants directly and in non-material ways. Rameka (2012) maintains that “these values are the foundations for ideas of ethicality along with the universal concerns for social sensitivity, protection from harm, informed consent, and confidentiality” (p.28).

Pasifika research principles.

The research methodology is also consistent with Pasifika Education Research Guidelines (Anae, Coxon, Mara, Wendt-Samu, & Finau, 2001) with its investigation of the aspects of ECE leadership within Pasifika ECE centres and approaches most familiar and appropriate to Pasifika teachers, children and their families. Research must be underpinned by Pasifika values, knowledge and beliefs and where particular Pasifika communities are involved (e.g., Samoan, Tongan, Cook Islands and Niuean), then those distinct traditions, languages, histories, worldviews and identities must be respected. Accepting that research is never neutral or totally objective, the aim of any research carried out within Pasifika paradigms and epistemologies must primarily be to articulate and reclaim Pasifika knowledge and values for Pasifika peoples (Anae et al., 2001, pp. 8-9). Consequently, research must be transformational as well as respectful; provide deeper understanding of the issues researched; and address issues of social equality, as well as cultural and ethical questions.

Leadership is a term, which is socially and culturally constructed and likewise in Pasifika communities a number of traditional practices and assumptions prevail that may appear contrary to dominant Eurocentric managerial models. Leadership is characterised by service and accountability to others in their Pacific communities (Airini, Sauni, Leaupepe, Pua & Tuafuti, 2010). It is often kin-based and characterised by collective collaboration, respect for age, experience and traditional cultural status. Increasingly, Pacific leaders must operate intelligently and respectfully in cross-cultural situations where being fluent in their heritage language and cultural knowledge is important. Identity is always derived from the collective and where notions of generosity in time, work and property are important. Time devoted to church and other cultural community events, humility and strength of character are Pacific dimensions of leadership (Airini et al., 2010).

Airini et al. (2010) have described a metaphor through which Pacific research paradigms can be linked with policy development, knowledge generation and underpin action towards Pasifika educational success. The concept of Teu Le Va can be thought of as a cultural and philosophical reference point that can help to "expose, reconcile and direct human judgement and experience" (2010, p. 18). It is essential that collaborative relationships and processes be established from the initial stages of any research. For the ‘Va’, “a space that

transcends a physical dimension or construct" (Mara, 2013, p. 61) to be useful and productive the spiritual, physical, social and emotional 'space' occupied by all stakeholders must be welcoming to all perspectives. All stakeholders must have a commitment to restoring balance, common sense, safety and wellbeing of everyone involved. Research carried out consistent with the principles of Teu Le Va must devote time to reaching win-win outcomes, engagement in power-sharing and reaching outcomes that benefit everyone. It is strengths-based, empowering and assists in building capacity and capability of emerging Pasifika researchers. The Tongan Talanoa research methodology (Vaioleti, 2006) supports Teu Le Va in building the relationships within the spaces created.

While there was no actual Pasifika case study, in this project the researchers were mindful of the Pasifika research principles during the recruitment and data collection phases of the research study, because of the potential for Pasifika participants to be involved. Indeed, some of the ECE teachers in the case study centres were of Pasifika ethnicity. Due to the nature of our research process there was no opportunity for the researchers to communicate on a one-to-one basis with participants other than with the designated leader. However, the researchers worked to create a safe space and a sense of trust and respect by allowing time and space for participation and/or contributions to occur in the focus group interviews. As a bicultural organisation, our research team were cognisant of ensuring that the research process was underpinned by manaakitanga and whanaungatanga, which uphold Pasifika principles and values too.

Method

The study used a mixed methods design in which both qualitative and quantitative research methods were employed to answer the main research question. Yin (2009) asserts that using a mixed method research design permits "researchers to address more complicated research questions and collect a richer and stronger array of evidence than can be accomplished by any single method alone" (p.63). The study was carried out in three phases. In phase one, an online survey utilised a questionnaire designed to ascertain information relating to aspects of leadership development experienced and valued by the respondents. Details of this are

reported later in the chapter. Further to the questionnaire survey, phases two and three drew on qualitative research methods; mainly using an inductive research strategy (rather than testing existing theory) in order to build abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, or theories (Merriam, 2009).

The "use of different methods of collecting data within the case studies, such as observations … and interviews is an example of triangulation and can improve the validity of the information gathered" (Yin, 2009, p. 106). Furthermore, using mixed methods, by means of triangulation, can enable researchers to collect "converging evidence" (Yin, 2009, p.174), corroborate multiple sources of evidence, and conduct counterpart analyses (Yin, 2009). Creswell (2014) concurs, explaining that as "each method of data collection has both limitations and strengths, we can consider how the strengths can be combined to develop a stronger understanding of the research problem or questions" (p. 215), and thus overcome the limitations of each.

The research literature provides multiple definitions and purposes of a case study. Yin (2009) defines "a case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context" (p.18). The emphasis is on studying a phenomenon within a real-life setting, whereas Klenke (2016) explains that the purpose of utilising a case study approach is that it "allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics for real-life events such as leadership processes" (p. 61). Mukherji and Albon (2015) explain that "case studies can be used to investigate an important issue in depth or to develop or test a theory" (p.105) as the "findings observed reflect what happens in 'real life'" (p.108). Klenke (2016) suggests that case studies are "units of analysis" (p.68) which provide a range of data and findings in response to the research question and the aim of the overall study, which hopefully includes replication of the key themes.

The perspectives of the participants become the central focus in case study research, as the data gathered provides a rich description of the actions of the participants 'in situ', (i.e., 'real life') and various aspects of a system and also the interrelationship between those aspects are examined (Bell, 2014; Mukherji & Albon, 2015). Klenke (2016) contends:

> In the turbulent, global environment in which leaders operate, there is an abundance of concepts and variables that determine leadership style, leader-follower relationships, and so on that are difficult to quantify using experimental or survey methods but can be carefully assessed using case study research. (p.66)

The case studies in this research can be defined as *instrumental cases* because the "case study is instrumental in understanding something else, i.e., leadership effectiveness" (Klenke, 2016, p.62). The logic behind triangulating qualitative and quantitative data in this study is based on Argyris and Schön's (1974) 'Theories of Action'. Quantitative data collection took place in Phase One to obtain a national understanding of all forms of leadership development and the effect it has had on practice. Qualitative research methods were then adopted in Phases Two and Three to ascertain what actions leaders took to build leadership in others. In the third phase qualitative data collection methods were also used to explore 'theories-in-use' and 'espoused-theories' and identify barriers that could affect building leadership capability and capacity.

Multiple case study approach.

A multiple case study design was utilised to gather contextual data regarding leadership actions and strategies to sustain leadership development in ECE settings. Use of multiple case studies, where the research design is replicated, "places case study research firmly in the inductive tradition of the relationship between theory and research" (Bryman, 2004, p.52). It is, therefore, critical to ensure that the data collection methods are carefully replicated in each case study to support the processes of reliability and validity of the data collected because of the "expectation that the findings from an in-depth study of one case can be generalised across to similar cases or settings" (Mukherji & Albon, 2015, p. 104).

Similarly, in multiple case studies "the aim is to gather information that can be generalised out to a wider population that shares the characteristics of the cases" (Mukherji & Albon, 2015, p.106). Comparative design when there are multiple cases, enables cases to be compared and contrasted to provide a more effective understanding of the relationships and commonalities across the specific cases. Furthermore, "the evidence from multiple case

studies is often considered more compelling, and the conclusions more robust" (Klenke, 2016, p. 68) because "the more the results back the theory which undergirds the case study, the greater its credibility" (Klenke, 2016, p. 70).

Bell (2014) explains how case studies are useful in understanding depth, and can provide rich descriptions of particular instances of a process or phenomenon based on a variety of data sources (Yin, 2009). Multiple cases are very suitable for generating or modifying a theory by means of replication logic (Eisenhardt, 1989; Klenke; 2013; Yin 2009). Eisenhardt (1989) applies *replication logic of multiple cases* to a series of related experiments. While experiments isolate phenomenon from their context, case studies provide a real-world context in which the process or phenomenon takes place. Yin (2009) notes that multiple cases can serve as replications, contrasts and extensions. Multiple cases enable comparisons among cases to clarify whether an emergent finding is only valid for a particular case or consistently replicated in several cases (Eisenhardt, 1989). Theory building from multiple cases provides more generalisable and testable theory than single case research (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). The case study design adopted for the present study in this study was initially developed by Cosmos Corporation (1983, as cited in Yin, 2009). The design framework is presented below (see Figure 1):

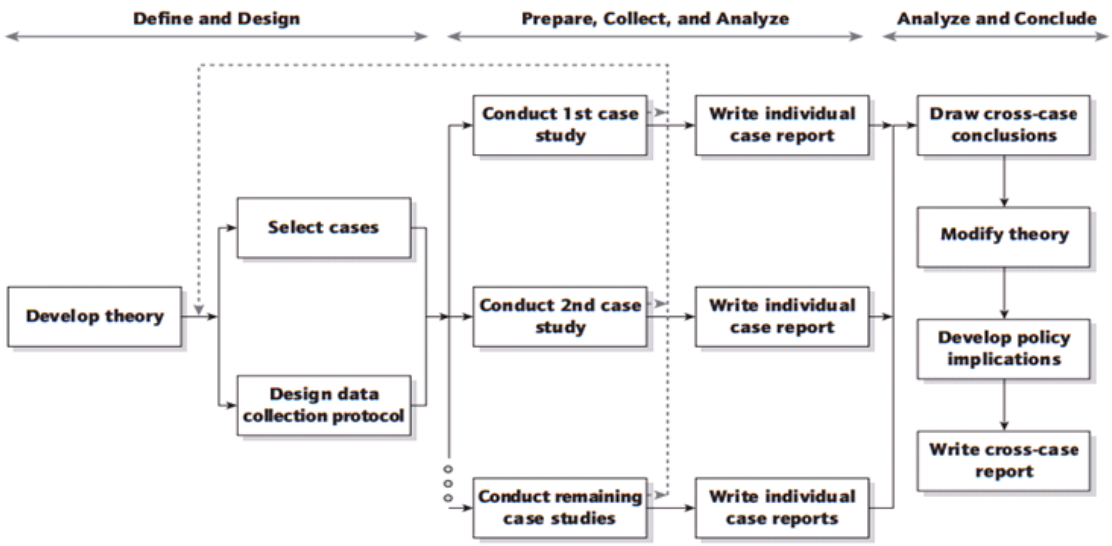

Figure.1: **Case Study Design**

Procedures

Recruitment of participants.

The recruitment of the participants for each phase of the research project are outlined first, followed by a description of the case study selection.

Phase 1: Electronic survey.

All teacher-led early childhood centres throughout Aotearoa New Zealand (see Appendix A: Leadership Development Survey) were sent an email inviting participation in Phase One of our research project. Email addresses were accessed by using the Ministry of Education database, which incorporates the many types of early childhood centres (excluding home-based care and play centres). An information sheet was attached to the email and a link to an electronic questionnaire was provided in the email.

Although our focus was on early childhood education leadership the research team decided anyone working in the centre could complete this survey, as it would add depth to the overall understanding of leadership. Two hundred and twenty three (223) people responded to the electronic survey. Everyone who completed this was deemed a participant of Phase One, i.e., the national survey.

Phases 2 and 3: Case study participants.

To recruit potential case study participants for Phases Two and Three, information at the bottom of the phase one questionnaire provided details of how centres might register an expression of interest in participating as a case study centre.

On receipt of the initial expression of interest, centres were emailed an expression of interest form (see Appendix B: Participant Expression of Interest Form) and an accompanying information sheet (see Appendix C: Information Sheet). Where services operated under the governing auspices of an umbrella organisation, that organisation was approached first, as participation in the programme was dependent on approval from such bodies.

Approximately two thirds (n=110) of the survey respondents indicated they were willing to be contacted further to contribute to the second and third phase of the research. It is unsure

whether everyone who responded meant to indicate this participation. Some people may have misread the last question, or may have chosen not to answer it. Nevertheless all the people who gave their details in this section were emailed by the research leader and provided with the 'expression of interest' form.

Once all expression of interest forms were received by the due date, seven centres who met the research criteria (see below), were invited to participate further in Phase Two and Three of this research project on leadership.

Case study selection.

Theoretical sampling was employed to select the seven cases. In theoretical sampling, cases are selected because of their particular suitability for illuminating and extending relationships and logic among constructs (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). According to Klenke (2016) "case study selection is influenced by resources involved in contacting participants, travelling to their locations, transcription of interview data, and other practical issues of importance" (p. 67). For example, inclusion of Māori and Pasifika representation of researchers and cases was of importance to the present study.

Several expressions of interest to be considered as a case study in Phases Two and Three of the research project were received. The following criteria determined eligibility:

- The designated leader had pedagogical and administrative/managerial leadership responsibility;
- The current ERO report rating was either 'very well placed' or 'well placed';
- Evidence that the designated leader had implemented practices to grow leadership capacity (e.g., their own leadership development, growing others as leaders, and sustaining leadership culture) in the centre;
- Availability of release time to ensure each staff member's full participation; and
- The centre was not currently engaged in in-depth and/or cluster Ministry of Education funded professional development.

For the purpose of this study the term 'designated leader' was used to refer to the person who has pedagogical and administrative/managerial responsibilities.

The seven centres were selected from a range of locations across Aotearoa New Zealand, with priority given to potential case study centres situated in the geographic regions in which the researchers lived. However, to enable two additional centres to participate, two of the research team travelled to those areas (one was located in the North Island and the other was in the South Island).

Each case study centre was assigned a researcher who built a relationship with the centre before commencing the data collection process. During the initial meeting the researcher explained the purpose of the research to the centre staff, the data collection processes, addressed any of their questions, and distributed the information sheets and consent forms (see Appendix D: Consent Forms).

Characteristics of the Case Studies

Table 1 presents the names and types of centre for the seven ECE services that participated in this research project. Of the seven centres, one centre opted to use its real name, the Kōhanga Reo called itself Kōhanga Reo in place of its full name and five centres chose to use a pseudonym for both the name of their centre and the designated leader.

Table 1. ***Participating Early Childhood Centres for Phases Two and Three***

Centre Type	Centre Name
Education and care centre North Island Designated Leader is BC (Owner/Manager)	Whānau Akomanga
Education and Care Centre North Island Designated Leader is Nanny	Tamariki o ngā Mātua: Children of the Parents
Preschool North Island Designated Leader is Louise	Liberty Kids
Kindergarten South Island Designated Leader is Kathryn	Mayfield

Education and Care Centre North Island Designated Leader is Hannah	Pukeahu Preschool
Te Kōhanga Reo North Island Designated Leader is Rina (Tumuaki/principal manager)	Kōhanga Reo
Kindergarten North Island Designated Leader is Vera Maud (Head Teacher)	Babbling Brook

Whānau Akomanga

The Designated Leader (BC), who is of Māori descent with links to various iwi in the North Island of Aotearoa/ New Zealand, currently owns and manages two early childhood centres known as Whānau Akomanga, meaning family classroom or classroom of the family. These centres are just four kilometres apart, enabling BC to travel easily between the two centres on any one day. The centre has a staff of 15 (including the relievers) and licence capacity for 75 children overall.

Tamariki o ngā Mātua

Tamariki o ngā Mātua means 'children of the parents' and has been chosen as the pseudonym to reflect the special character of this specific education and care centre. Tamariki o ngā Mātua was originally established in the 1990s as a community based, early childhood centre to support a teen parent unit of a local high school, thus enabling students to continue their education alongside parenting. The centre is licensed for 32 children; 24 of whom are aged less than two years. Currently 40% of the children identify as Māori and 30% identify as being of Pasifika ethnicity. The centre operates Monday to Friday and from 8.30 am to 3.30pm to coincide with the school hours of their teen parents. The centre manager chose the pseudonym 'Nanny', a name bestowed upon her by the children attending the centre, which reflects the whānau approach underpinning both the philosophy and practices of the centre.

Liberty Kids

Liberty Kids is situated in the North Island of New Zealand and was initially a privately owned, purpose-built, all day education and care service. Since 2014, it has undergone a major change of ownership, and is now owned by a publicly listed company, with the centre being one of a large number of early childhood education centres owned by the company. The centre is licensed for children in three age groups, that is., children aged up to 18 months of age, 18 months to three years, and three years to school age. 'Louise' is the pseudonym given to the designated leader of Liberty Kids.

Mayfield Kindergarten

This kindergarten is one of seven run by the Marlborough Kindergarten Association. Its new purpose-built building is situated on a large section and the centre has a strong focus on the environment and the outdoors. The hours of operation are Monday to Thursday (8.45am to 2.45pm), and Friday (8.45am to 1.00pm). Children attend in mixed age groupings. Kathryn, the head teacher, has responsibility for the day-to-day running of the kindergarten, including the staff appraisal of the teachers.

Pukeahu Preschool

Pukeahu Preschool is an established multicultural centre located in central New Zealand. Whilst Pukeahu Preschool provides education and care for children and families of the wider community, it is also a 'special character' setting serving specific religious families as well. Pukeahu Preschool operates as a non-profit parent cooperative and caters for children aged over two years. A management committee (comprised of parents whose children attend the centre) governs the centre with the support of the experienced leader, Hannah. A level of governance and management support are provided by a parent committee.

Te Kōhanga Reo

This urban Kōhanga Reo is pan-tribal, sitting under the umbrella of the local iwi, and operating within a tertiary organisation. Te ao Māori is integral in all that the centre does. The ethos of the whānau is driven by the desire and the determination to educate and support their tamariki in learning te reo Māori (Māori language). This Kōhanga Reo has played a large role in the support and implementation of the Ministry of Education's early childhood exemplars,

Te Whatu Pōkeka: Kaupapa Māori Assessment for Learning (Walker & Walker, 2009), which is a kaupapa Māori assessment framework aimed at supporting Māori children attending early childhood services. The actual position of the designated Leader (Rina) is that of Tumuaki/Principal Manager. Although involved with Kōhanga Reo for a number of years, at the time of this study she was relatively new to the position, following the departure of the previous leader of over 15 years.

Babbling Brook

Babbling Brook Kindergarten is located in a provincial city and is one of a number of centres within the wider geographic region that operate under an umbrella Kindergarten Association. This particular Kindergarten Association was established in 1949. It is a not-for-profit organisation, and governed by a Board elected by its local community who sets its strategic direction.

Babbling Brook is licensed under the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations for 40 children aged over two years and operates according to ratios of 1:10. Session times run from 8.30 am to 2.30pm each weekday. The designated leader, Vera Maud (pseudonym) is the Head Teacher at Babbling Brook Kindergarten.

Data Collection

Data gathering occurred during semester two 2015 and semester one 2016 and involved three phases.

Phase One: National survey.

As previously mentioned, all teacher-led ECE centres on the New Zealand Ministry of Education's database were invited to participate in the survey and the survey questionnaire was sent electronically. The questionnaire comprised two parts. The first part focused on aspects of effective leadership for leadership development and sustainable leadership. The second part of the survey gathered information on items relating to demographic variables (position of the designated leader, type of centre, gender, age group, length of time in ECE,

length of time in the current position, type of initial training, and additional training/qualifications) (see Appendix A: ECE Leadership Development Survey).

Phase Two: Qualitative case studies—beliefs of designated leaders

To explore the beliefs (espoused theories) of designated leader participants, data gathering involved:

- One semi-structured interview with the designated leader;
- Three Critical Incident reflections from the designated leader's journal of critical incidents (written over a one-month period; and
- Researcher field notes.

Phase Three: Qualitative Case Studies—leadership practices

To explore the leadership practices of designated leaders (theories-in-use), the qualitative data gathering involved:

- One semi-structured focus-group interview with the designated leader's teaching team;
- Three in-centre observations of the designated leaders's leadership practice (shadowing sessions over three different days);
- Researcher field notes; and
- Centre documentation such as centre philosophy, team meeting minutes, and powerpoint handouts.

Interviews in phases two and three were voice recorded, transcribed and returned to participants to check for accuracy and to make any additions/deletions on the transcripts. Some participants were asked for more than one interview, depending on their responses in the interview transcriptions and the themes that emerged from individual and cross-case analyses. All interviews were approximately one hour in duration. Observations, which comprised three days of shadowing the designated leaders, were documented in conjunction with researcher-field notes.

To ensure that all data was collected in a methodical manner, an interview and observation schedule was developed for researchers to plan and record when the data collection occurred (see Appendix E1: Interview and Shadowing Observation Schedule). Protocols were provided (see Appendix E2: Shadowing Guidelines for the Observers) around what this process should and should not look like, taking into consideration such factors as researchers being aware of confidential conversations between parents and teachers.

For consistency, all researchers used the same protocol for conducting semi-structured interviews with the designated leaders and the teaching teams (see Appendix F: Semi-Structured Interview Protocols).

Designated leaders were provided with a template for a 'critical incident report' (see Appendix G: A Leader's Journal of Critical Incidents), which they were asked to fill out after each of the three days they were observed. Various centre documentation was also collected, such as: the centre's overall philosophy; strategic and self-review plans; job descriptions of the designated leader; centre policies and processes; staff meeting minutes; and photos of parent and staff meeting boards; as well as the current ERO report. The centre documentation was the only method of data collection that varied across the participating centres.

Ethical Considerations

The research project followed the ethical procedures set out in Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand's *Ethical Standards of Practice for Research.* Using the organisation's *Ethical Approval for Research Applicatio*n process, the research project gained ethical approval to proceed from ECNZ's Research and Ethics Committee (as per letter dated 4 June, 2015).

In addition to observing the New Zealand Association for Research in Education (NZARE) Ethical Guidelines, there was a commitment to carry out the research consistent with Kaupapa Māori (see www.rangahau.co.nz) and Pasifika research guidelines (see Anae, Coxon, Mara, Wendt-Samu, & Finau, 2001). An advisory committee was established to provide advice and guidance on all aspects of the project.

Informed consent.

The process for obtaining informed consent was initiated via an information sheet (Appendix C: Information Sheet) outlining what participation in the project entailed. This was followed up with a verbal discussion with the researcher before the first designated leader interview and again in the semi-structured focus group interview whereby the participants could ask questions and have their queries clarified before agreeing to sign a consent form (Appendices D1 and D2: Consent Forms).

Participants were informed that they could withdraw at any stage of the project. Additionally, all participants retained the right to withdraw their data at any time until the data were analysed.

Anonymity and confidentiality.

While confidentiality was guaranteed the participants were informed that the unique characteristics of some centres meant that anonymity could not be assured. To mitigate the risks to their anonymity designated leader participants were asked to provide a pseudonym for themselves and their centre. Six of the seven case study centres chose to do so. While the designated leader of the Kōhanga Reo has a pseudonym, the Kōhanga Reo is simply called 'Kōhanga Reo' for the purpose of this research report. No other identifiers that could be used to deduce the identity of participants will be included in any dissemination of the research findings.

All transcribers were required to sign confidentiality agreements (see Appendix H). On completion of each interview transcription, the transcriber destroyed the audio recording. Each interview transcript was de-identified by the researcher who undertook the interview.

Minimising harm.

Participation in the project was voluntary. Participants were not required to answer any questions that they considered personal, intrusive, or potentially distressing. If a situation of a sensitive nature arose during the interviews, or during any of the observation and shadowing sessions, participants were asked whether they wished to continue the interview/observation. Participants had the right, at any time, to request that recording be

discontinued. Participants received a transcription of their interview for data verification and were asked to return their comments, changes, objections, or additions to the transcribed data within two weeks of having received it. Participants were informed that if they did not respond within two weeks it was assumed by the researchers that they approved of the transcribed data being used in the analysis.

Social sensitivity.

It is important to consider ethical issues relating to culture. As this project involved a diverse range of participants, approaches that are culturally appropriate and adhere to Kaupapa Māori and Pasifika Research Principles were conducted in all aspects of this project. Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand has a commitment to biculturalism; therefore, protocols are guided by ethical practices in accordance with tikanga Māori (Māori customs and practices) and Pasifika cultures, where recognition and respect of all peoples is paramount. Although the methodology ensured appropriate processes and protocols the Māori and Pasifika members of the Advisory Committee provided further cultural leadership and safety.

Research should benefit the participants; therefore a preliminary report of their individual findings was delivered to each of the seven case study centres.

Data Analysis

The national survey undertaken in Phase One was analysed using the SPSS 20 programme for descriptive and parametric and non-parametric analyses.

In Phases two and three the data generated from the various data sources were analysed using a cross case, inductive analysis approach (Patton, 1990). Each case study was initially analysed separately, followed by a cross-case analysis of the seven case studies. Participant responses were grouped around common interview questions, whilst thematic meaning units were identified within all interviews.

The following table illustrates how the research team initially moved from the text to codes to categories to subthemes to allow the themes to unfold from the data.

Table 2. ***Initial Case Study Analysis Process***

Data Sources Research Questions		Analysis linking to research	
Espoused leadership theories	Leadership theories-in-use	P – yellow	Process
Designated leader interview	Teaching team interview	St - green	Structures
Critical incident reflections	Designated leader observation	Su – pink	Sustainability
Any other reflection supplied by the designated leader	Other data i.e. staff or committee meeting notes	Pd – red	Professional learning and development
Researcher field notes	Researcher field notes	Of – grey	Other factors Demonstrating effective leadership

Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodology and methods applied to this study. One of the project's aims was to develop a model for sustainable ECE leadership based on the collective case study analyses.

A number of theoretical influences informed the study. The theories that have a particular contribution to make were discussed: Grounded Theory, Theories of Action, Māori and Pasifika research methodologies.

The case study method including the techniques and procedures applied to the study were outlined. In particular, the questionnaire survey and the data gathering procedures for the case studies were described. We turn now to present our analysis of data obtained from the electronic survey.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS—QUANTITATIVE DATA

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from Phase One of the study, the national survey. Phase One involved an electronic survey (Appendix A: ECE Leadership Development Survey). The survey was designed to yield information on aspects of effective leadership development. The questionnaire was comprised of two sections. The ten questionnaire items in the first section asked for statistical details (labelled background information) and elicited demographic variables (e.g., position of the designated leader, type of centre, gender, age group, length of time in ECE, length of time in the current position, type of initial training, and additional training/qualifications). The second section of the survey asked respondents for their opinions on leadership development (see Appendix A: ECE Leadership Development Survey).

The respondents were given two weeks (until 6 August, 2015) to complete the survey. Of the 4200 centres, the survey was sent to, 223 people responded. Of the respondents 211 (94.6%) held leadership positions while 12 (5.4%) were 'teachers'. Although only 50% of appropriate people in the centres may have received the survey due to the type of delivery (i.e., electronic) we were able to use the information obtained in the survey returns to draw out the general findings as explained in this chapter.

The Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS 20) for descriptive, parametric and non-parametric analyses was used to analyse the survey data, and generated the multivariate analyses to gain some insight into the complexity of the variables.

Phase One: Survey Results

This chapter is in two parts. The first section details background information of participants. Following this, Section Two details respondents' answers to questions about leadership development.

Section One: Demographic information.

Almost all survey respondents were female (99%). This reflects the national statistics on gender within the ECE teaching force where, according to the Annual Census of Early Childhood Education (ECE) Services summary report (Ministry of Education, 2014) male teaching staff accounted for 2% of all teaching staff. The majority of respondents identified as New Zealand/European (55.8%) or European (16.2%). (See Table 3 for a breakdown of respondents by ethnicity).

Table 3: ***Ethnicity of Respondents***

Ethnicity	Percentage of respondents
Asian	2.23
Australian	2.68
European	16.52
Māori	12.05
New Zealand European	55.80
Pasifika	6.70
Other	4.02
Total	100

Of the respondents, 12% were of Māori ethnicity, although this was not as many as hoped for. New Zealand's early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996) is fundamentally a bicultural curriculum supporting both the Western view as well as te ao Māori, therefore we wanted equal numbers of Māori and non-Māori participants.

The greatest number of respondents were aged between 40 to 49 years, with the majority having taught in ECE for over twenty years. Respondents worked in a broad range of ECE services as identified in Figure 2.

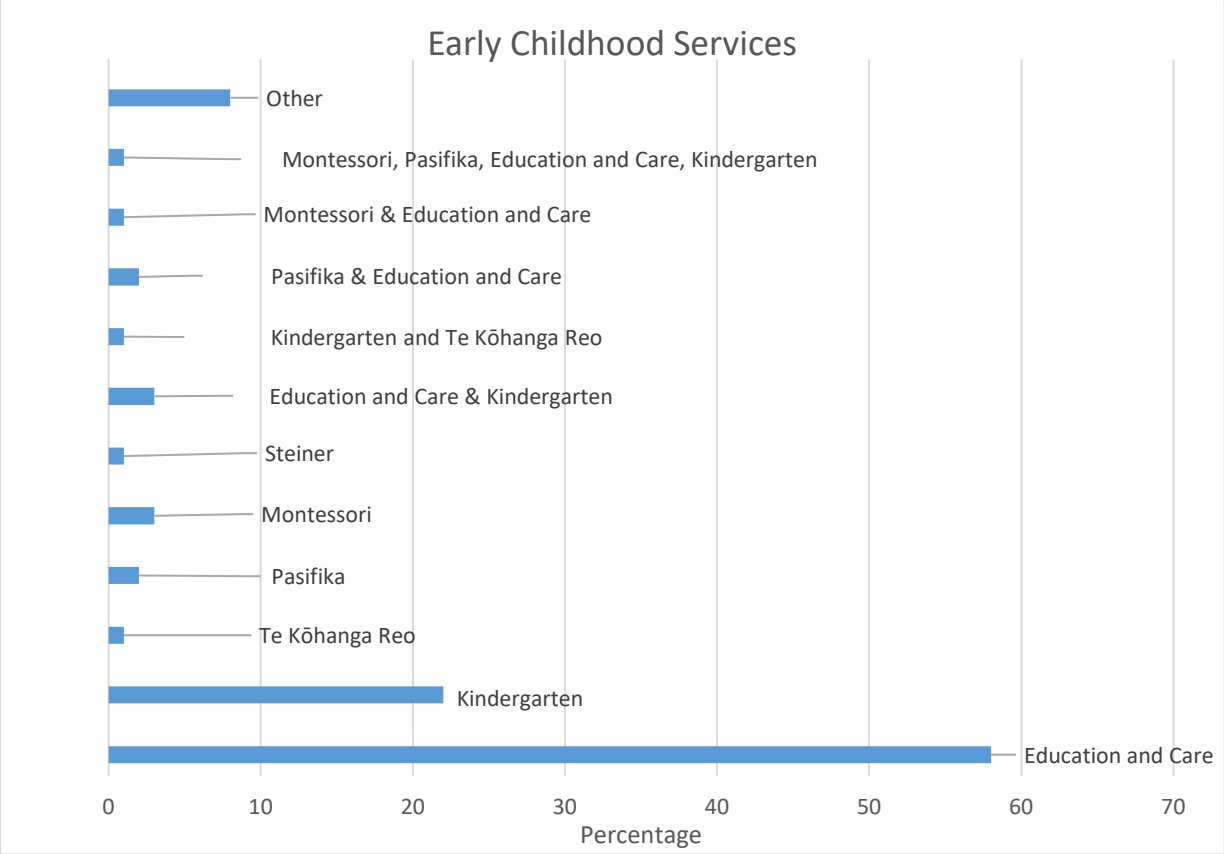

Figure 2. **Early Childhood Education Services**

A large majority of those answering the survey worked in Education and Care settings. Interestingly, 4% of the respondents worked in Pasifika settings and only 1% in Te Kōhanga Reo settings. The majority of the survey respondents have been in their current positions for approximately two years.

SPSS cross tabulation was used to compare demographic information. We found that those who worked in one specific setting were more likely to stay within that setting rather than move to another setting (e.g., Kindergarten to Steiner). In the Kindergarten sector 56.3% of respondents stayed for over 16 years while in the Education and Care sector 65.3% of respondents had taught there for over 16 years. The survey asked respondents to describe the title of their current positions (see Figure 3).

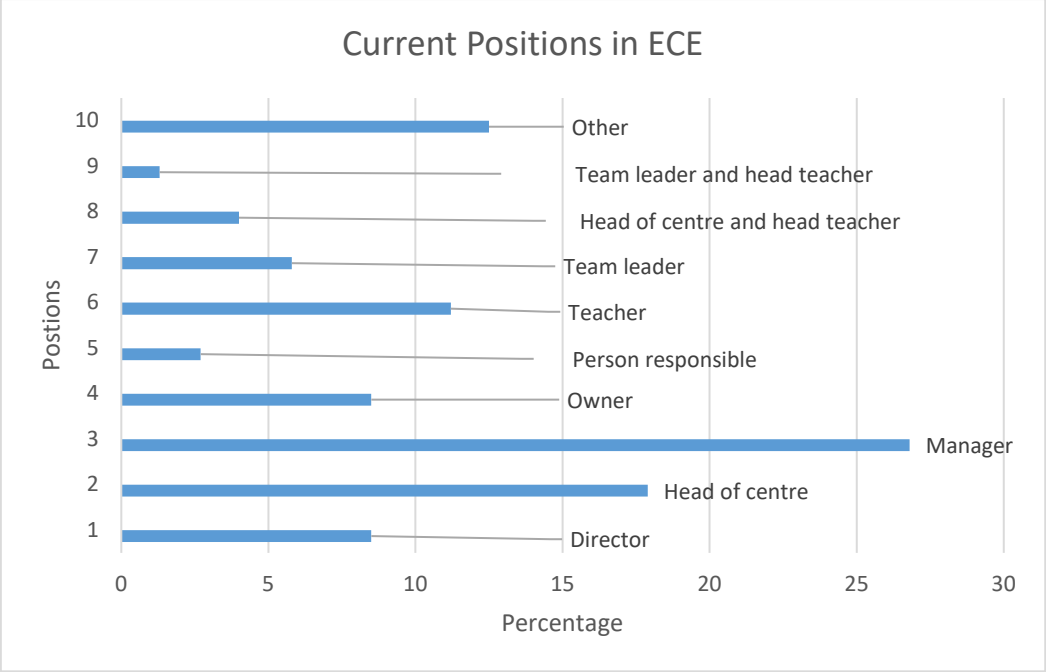

Figure 3. **Current Positions in ECE**

Figure 3 shows a breakdown by percentage of the description of titles that respondents nominated or self-identified. The most frequently cited title was of 'Manager' with 26.8% of respondents selecting this option. 'Head of centre 'was the next most frequently cited title, identified by 17.9% of respondents. Of the respondents 11.2% described themselves as teachers, which is assumed that no leadership role was attached. A number of alternative titles were also given (e.g., Director, Owner, etc.). 'Others' refers to positions described by only one or two respondents (e.g., liaison/associate teacher, principal, supervisor etc.).

The majority of respondents trained in the area of birth to five years. A high percentage (87.5%) of the respondents said that they had undergone some other ECE training since their original qualification. The majority of leadership courses attended have been in-service professional development (70.1%), with the next most frequent being 'short courses' (52.7%). Some very good qualitative data has been provided as to what type of professional development people have attended.

Using SPSS it was found that men in this study stayed in their current position for 3-10 years; however, the women in this study tended to stay longer with eight staying over twenty years

in the same workplace. SPSS correlations explored differences between the respondents' age, gender, length of employment in the same workplace, additional qualifications and leadership sustainability

Age and further qualifications were compared. Of interest to this study 11.2% of the respondents reported having no further training beyond their original qualification. Interestingly, the older age group (forty years plus) were less likely to have engaged in further professional learning and development. However, a significant number of respondents (88.8%) did go on to engage in further training. Table 4 shows the variety of additional professional qualifications either currently engaged in or held by the respondents.

Table 4. ***Additional Professional Qualifications***

Additional Professional Qualifications	Number
Upgraded to an ECE teaching degree	3
AMI Montessori 3 -6 diploma (USA) - Postgrad level Postgrad Cert in Leadership Currently completing PGDip in Leadership	1
Bachelor of Education	4
Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Commerce	1
Bachelor Degree	1
Bachelor of Education; Pathways course to gain Diploma of Teaching (ECE); and also a Post Graduate Diploma in Educational Studies (similar to an honours year, and this qualification included a postgraduate paper in Educational Leadership).	1
Bachelor of Māori Education	1
Bachelor of Teaching and Learning	1
Bachelor of Teaching ECE	2
Child Matters Certificate; Certificate in Family Studies and counselling papers in Social Psychology; Two years of professional development in my job as a kindergarten teacher and Head Teacher; IYT training (Incredible Years for Teachers); Alternatives to Violence project training. Currently upgrading my diploma to a degree.	1
Completed two thirds of Certificate in Leadership	1
Completion of Bachelor of Teaching and Learning ECE including some leadership papers following the completion of my Diploma of Teaching ECE	1
Currently enrolled PhD doctoral studies	1
Currently half way through my Master's qualification.	1
Diploma in the Education of Students with Special Teaching Needs; Higher Diploma of Teaching, Bachelor of Arts	1

Diploma of Child Protection	1
ELP - Educational Leadership Project	1
Extensive training in leadership and strategic planning, systems along with 35 years practical experience in leadership both in the private and public sectors	1
I have a leadership coach	1
Incredible Years Group Leader Certification	1
Finishing my degree in early childhood teaching	1
Starting my ECE training	2
Total	**29**

While some respondents had completed these additional qualifications (82%), others are still in the process of completing them (17%). Furthermore, two respondents chose to report their professional experience rather than qualifications.

Section Two: Leadership development.

Section Two of the survey attempted to give this research study some answers to leadership development in early childhood education (ECE). Three specific questions were asked:

- 2a. What indicators of leadership potential would you identify as important in ECE professionals at the start of their career?
- 2b. What aspects of the ECE designated leader's main roles, responsibilities and functions do you regard as the most important?
- 2c. What aspects of the ECE leadership role would you say contribute most to the sustainability of leadership development in your institution?

It seems that the indicators of leadership practice (question 2a) that were offered as examples were fairly evenly spread across people's preferences. However, it should be noted that some people in their comments stated that the question in this section was difficult to understand or the question was difficult to answer, therefore a sizeable proportion of the respondents did not answer this section.

Leadership potential.

This item on the questionnaire asked the respondents to list the top five indicators of leadership that ECE professionals should demonstrate at the start of their career. Eighty nine

percent of respondents answered this question. There is a 23.1% difference (excluding 'other') between the most chosen descriptor and the least chosen descriptor. The highest majority of respondents (72.3%) identified the descriptor 'critically evaluates and tries new ideas and ways of work'. This was followed by 'willingness to work with others' (69.2%) and 'attitude to life-long learning' (67.4%) Table 5 presents the most frequently reported leadership potential indicators that the participants perceived to be the most important.

Table 5. ***Frequencies of Leadership Potential***

	Critically evaluates and tries new ideas and ways of working	Willingness to work with others	Attitude of life-long learning	Dedication	Constantly questions own practice	Guides and mentors during professional experience	A variety of teaching experiences
Selected in top five	**162**	155	151	140	136	131	96
Not selected in top five	62	69	73	84	88	93	**128**

It is apparent that not all agreed with these descriptors, with 15.2% offering other possible thoughts. These have broadly been placed into five themes: knowledge (n=8), social/cultural understanding (n=3), sustainability of leadership (n=1), professionalism (n=9) and relationships (n=5). One respondent did reiterate the second descriptor (willingness to work with others) in Table 5.

Indications are that respondents consider the continuation of learning and implementation of new ideas alongside being a collaborative leader to be important indicators of leadership potential. In general, the themes of knowledge, relationships and professionalism appear to be important to the respondents.

Main roles, responsibilities and functions of leaders.

This questionnaire item asked the respondents to select the top five aspects of the Designated Leader's main roles, responsibilities and functions. Eighty percent of respondents chose to answer this question. As for Question 2a the descriptors were given, however some people chose to add their own ideas in the 'other' section. Here there was a range of 41.5% (excluding 'other') within the frequency of choices made. The majority of respondents chose 'to engage in a collaborative and partnership style of leadership' (72.3%), closely followed by 'to be accountable and act as an advocate for children, parents, staff, the professional and the general community' (71.4%) and 'to ensure the delivery of quality services (69.6%). Table 6 presents the most frequently reported aspects of an ECE leader's job.

Table 6: ***Most Frequently Reported Aspects of an ECE Leader's Job***

	To engage in a collaborative and partnership style of leadership	To be accountable to and act as an advocate for children, parents, staff, the profession and the general community	To ensure the delivery of a quality service	To be sensitive and responsive to the need for change and manage change effectively	To engage in ongoing professional development and to encourage it in all staff	To describe and articulate a philosophy, values and vision	To adopt an entrepreneurial approach that is mindful of competition with others in the sector	Other
Selected in top five	**162**	160	156	147	146	129	69	16
Not selected in top five	62	64	68	77	78	95	**155**	208

Within the 'other' responses (7.1%) a couple of similar themes to those in Question 2a were recorded: relationships (n=2) and professionalism (n=2). Two new themes emerged: financial administration (n=1) and mentoring (n=1). Interestingly two could not rate the descriptors stating they were all of equal high value and two respondents wrote descriptors using different language but essentially meaning the same as the original descriptor.

Sustainable leadership.

The question regarding the sustainability of the leadership related to their own institution. Respondents were given a number of attributes (with descriptions) to rate on a Likert scale with 1 (very low) through to 5 (very high). Table 7 shows the results using percentages. With each attribute, the highest percentage has been made bold.

Table 7. ***Aspects of Sustainable Leadership (percentages)***

Attribute	1 (Very low)	2 (Low)	3 (Moderate)	4 (High)	5 Very High)
Pedagogical leadership (relating research to teaching and learning practice)	1.12	2.79	15.08	**48.60**	32.04
Career development leadership (enabling practitioners to see progressive and fulfilling career paths)	0.00	6.18	34.83	**48.31**	10.67
Conceptual leadership (vision to change in context of broader social policy shifts)	0.56	6.18	33.71	**46.63**	12.92
Entrepreneurial leadership (vision, forward thinking, planning, taking risks)	0.00	2.79	20.11	**45.81**	31.28
Community leadership (understanding and responding to day by day centre based issues and problems)	0.56	2.25	16.29	**45.51**	35.39
Advocacy leadership (represents children and whānau, brings public attention and seeks to improve)	0.00	2.26	25.42	**40.11**	32.20
Administrative leadership (focusing on administration and financial management)	1.70	10.80	36.93	**39.77**	10.80
Performance-led leadership (emphasises efficiency, performance and technique practice)	0.00	9.04	35.03	**35.59**	20.34

Table 7 shows that the majority of respondents considered all the attributes were moderate to very high in importance for sustaining the leadership within their institution, with all

leadership attributes having the greatest percentage in four (high). Conversely, the leadership aspects rated one (very low) consistently. The willingness for the leaders to be transformative change agents was apparent across all age groups except for those aged 50 to 59 years.

Of those who did not respond (18.8%) to this question, two indicated this was a difficult question to answer, one suggested not overstretching of teachers was a big factor, while another indicated the small team meant limited career options. Others simply omitted this section of the survey.

Summary

This survey was used as a method to gain some statistical data across a wide range of centres. The percentage of the survey return is considered statistically reliable. However, there is some concern (as already mentioned) about the poor response rate from Māori and Pasifika people, and the lack of men who responded (which does correlate to the Ministry of Education workforce gender statistics).

There is consistency from the respondents on the attributes leaders require (Question 2c), however the variability and added suggestions on leadership potential (Question 2a) and main roles, responsibilities and functions of a leader (Question 2b) suggests further investigation is needed.

The qualitative data gathered from the case studies endeavours to address these variabilities and concerns in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS—QUALITATIVE CASE STUDIES

Introduction

While the national survey of early childhood centres (conducted in Phase One) elicited important demographical information and recruited the seven case study centres, the qualitative data gathered in Phases Two and Three of the project provided a rich description of the actions of the participants. This chapter reports the results of the cross-case analyses across the seven case studies participating in this research study.

The qualitative component of the research project used a case study method for collecting data. This process is similar to an earlier study conducted by our organisation (see Meade et al., 2012) where we sought to understand patterns or themes that went beyond the specifics of any particular centre. While one or other of the individual case studies may be disseminated in future publications, only the findings from the cross-case analyses are reported in this chapter.

To ensure that the analyses kept returning to the data and that the findings emerged systematically from that data, the text was coded, then categorised from subthemes to themes. Themes that unfolded from the collective case studies form the basis of the findings in this chapter.

Structure of the Chapter

First, the background information relating to the individual case studies is presented, followed by an explanation of the analytic steps by which we arrived at our findings for those seven case studies. Next, the cross-case analysis is reported, including the themes that emerged systematically from the data and formed the basis of the cross-case analysis. The second and main part of the chapter presents the three themes and related sub-themes that were identified within the case-study analysis.

The culture of organisational leadership was evident across all the case study centres. This notion of 'organisational leadership as a cultural practice' is reported first, followed by the two other main themes, i.e., the concept of *congruent* leadership practices and *incongruent* leadership practices. The 'congruent leadership practices' section is divided into three sub-themes: (1) strong leadership as an expectation; (2) leadership dispositions that were apparent; and (3) participants' views on professional learning and development as a way of growing leadership capability and capacity. Once the congruent leadership practices have been identified, the chapter finishes by highlighting examples of incongruence between how leadership is perceived and how it is enacted.

Relevant Background Information Relating to the Individual Case Studies

The New Zealand early childhood sector is varied and consists of teacher-led and parent-led services. The teacher led services are Kindergartens, Home-based, Education and Care centres. Parent-led services are Playcentres; Te Kōhanga Reo; and Playgroups; Ngā Puna Kōhungahunga (Māori Playgroups),which provide learning programmes in both te reo Māori and English; and Pacific Island Early Childhood groups that are often church or community based (Ministry of Education, 2014). For the purposes of this study, only teacher-led services were researched. Seven teacher-led early childhood centres were recruited as case studies for this research. The centres were comprised of: two kindergartens; four early childhood education and care centres; and one kōhanga reo. These case study ECE services were located in both the North and South Island of Aotearoa New Zealand.

Further to the variety of teacher and parent-led services, there are differences in ownership The different ownership structures consist of community-owned (which may or may not be affiliated to an umbrella organisation), privately-owned and corporately owned centres. The case studies in this project contained all three types of services (as reported in Figure 2). Some of the case study settings were also recognised for their unique special character. All case study centres differed in terms of the number of children licensed to attend, and the community they served.

Individual case study data

Initially, the data from each of the case studies were analysed separately using a process of *a priori* analysis (Creswell, 2014). The *a priori* (concepts brought to the analyses) stemmed from the main research question, i.e., what leadership processes and structures do effective ECE leaders develop in their centres for the sustainability of the leadership culture? The first level (*a priori* analysis,) consisted of analysing the data using the following constructs: processes, structures, sustainability, and professional learning and development. Additionally at this same level, a category for inductive analysis was titled 'other factors'. Next, analysis of the four sub-research questions was undertaken, and focused on the following areas: (1) professional learning and development; (2) leadership actions; (3) theories-in-use and espoused theories; and (4) the identification of leadership barriers. Inductive and deductive thematic analysis (as described in Patton, 2002) occurred through exploration of the four research sub-questions that investigated change in leadership practice; how leaders reported growing leaders; theorising leadership practice; and building leadership capability and capacity.

Cross-case analyses

After conducting the individual thematic analysis an inductive analysis (see Patton, 2002) was applied across the seven case studies. Braun and Clarke (2006) refer to inductive thematic analysis as a process of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within the data, and this form of data organisation describes data in rich detail. A process of thematic meaning making occurred across the individual case studies. Three of the researchers were involved in this process. Firstly, two of the researchers analysed the themes separately and then all themes from both researchers were brought together. A third researcher acted as 'another pair of eyes' to the analysis that had been performed. Crosschecking was done across all the identified themes. It was at this point that three main themes emerged: (1) leadership as an organisational cultural practice; (2) congruent leadership practices; (3) and incongruent leadership practices. Within the 'congruent leadership practices' section three secondary categories unfolded: strong leadership as an expectation, leadership dispositions, and professional learning and development. The category of 'being accountable' was examined

within the theme of 'incongruent leadership practices'. The centres that exemplify these themes are listed in parentheses.

Developing an Organisational Leadership Culture

ECE leadership as an organisational cultural practice was the dominant finding across the case study centres. The term organisational leadership culture refers to the climate and ethos engendered by the leadership. We found that the culture of organisational leadership appeared to be strongly influenced by the unique character of the individual centres and to a lesser degree, the position the designated leader held. For example, some of the different positions the designated leader held within the case studies were owner (Whānau Akomanaga); head teacher (Babbling Brook, Mayfield), manager (Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Liberty Kids, Pukeahu Preschool) and/or Māori leader (Kōhanga Reo, Whānau Akomanga). The centres' team, community and vision for practice, pedagogy and curriculum were part of the development and enactment of each centre's leadership culture. The following three sub-themes: approaches to leadership; leadership within the centre team; and leadership culture, including the influence of their communities on ECE centres, provide evidence of ECE leadership as an organisational cultural practice.

a) Approaches to leadership.

Several of the participants were able to articulate how they operated using a specific leadership approach. These approaches included *distributed, collaborative* and/or *shared* leadership and in effect emphasise a shift away from leadership as overly located in a single person who holds positional power. For example, one of the Kōhanga Reo's teaching team explained how the centre was "currently in the transition from a hierarchical leadership system within our kōhanga to a shared leadership system". This was due to the departure of a leader who had held a significant leadership position for over 15 years. Similarly, the designated leader of Tamariki o ngā Mātua expressed her belief that "an effective leader empowers others in the team to contribute and share responsibility and ideas. This means a team works together collaboratively in a learning community towards a shared goal or vision". Collaborative practice was further emphasised by others:

> *I think leadership is collaborative from the point of view of working with whānau, with families as well, to develop goals for their children, to work through difficulties there's a sense of partnership and collaborativeness within the leadership here.* [Mayfield Kindergarten, Teacher]

> *Collaborative leadership was also…I think we work well together; it's like a collaborative*. […] *Yes, we try and help each other as much as we possibly can.* [Whānau Akomanga, Teacher]

Whānau Akomanga's designated leader highlighted the importance of using collaboration to develop her team's *emergent* leadership skills:

> *My aim was to have that emerging leadership, you know, the girls know what to do and how to do it without me. They can make decisions over things* and… *So we are just trying to work something where we might be able to do networking around the ECE area and will hold something and the girls can facilitate them.* [Whānau Akomanga, DL]

At Babbling Brook the concept of distributed leadership was drawn on by both the designated leader and members of the teaching team in their separate interviews. The following quote elaborates on this.

> *"She is a distributor. She, you know she's not just one person in a team. There's four others, five others in the team and she wants everybody to have a say in things and she'll support where needed. She lifts you up as well, like, I say this purely cause like you guys have been here for a few years now but coming in like she's made us feel like we can actually contribute—like if new families come in we know about enrolments and like that makes us feel"*… [Babbling Brook, Teacher]

Whilst other conceptions of leadership were highlighted across the seven case studies these carried an emphasis on the collaborative or distributed nature of leadership. For example, Babbling Brook's leader also described herself as a *laissez-faire* leader, asserting "… and that's probably one of my downfalls is that I don't dictate to people" [Babbling Brook, DL]. Within this approach, there is the possibility of allowing teachers to contribute to leadership possibilities within the centre.

Not surprisingly, *Māori leadership* featured in the ECE services that worked within a kaupapa Māori framework. Here the emphasis is on the reciprocity between designated leaders and others in leadership.

> *"I am quite fortunate in my position that I am surrounded by a supportive team of kaiako [teacher] and whānau [family]. The skills and knowledge amongst the whānau extends enormously over many fields and professions and like many Māori examples of leadership, the strength of the leader is not solely based on the individual's skills and knowledge but on those of the collective and primarily on the collective working in unity for the benefit of the collective".* [Kōhanga Reo, DL]

Both the leader and teachers at the Kōhanga Reo shared a vision of a collective and collaborative kaupapa Māori leadership framework.

> *"But I suppose in terms of the leadership for us, as kaiwhakahaere [managers/assistant leaders], we've got to show that direction, and we've got to show that we understand, and have that knowledge to make those decisions, and if, if our staff have some kaupapa [topic for discussion] or take [issue], it's up to us to be able to advocate for them as well. So we're not only advocating for what we think, we're advocating for what our staff think, we're advocating for what our parents think, and absolutely and at the end of the day it's all for our tamariki. It's all about collaboration to make decisions". [Kōhanga Reo, Teacher*]

Consistent with a collaborative approach, the notion of children as leaders was also espoused by two teachers in their focus group interview:

> *"… I see the tamariki as the leaders of the centre, the tamariki are the leaders of our centre because I mean everything that we do here, revolves around them".*
>
> *"I think yeah, I totally agree, that we're the role models…. Yes, so I mean philosophically, we say the tamariki are the leaders"* [Kōhanga Reo, Teachers]

The leadership approaches, and thus the leadership culture adopted in each centre, were strongly influenced by the values and beliefs of their teachers and leaders, as well as by the philosophies and guiding principles underpinning their centres.

Developing positive outcomes for children through motivated and enthusiastic leaders was seen to be important:

> *"It's about making a difference in the lives of the children. In order to do that you need to make sure that you're doing things as well as you can. Therefore, you put in that much energy, as much energy as you've got. If you're that sort of person, (and I think that the team that we have here are) you want to do the best for the children, and for the centre. You know. So I think that leadership from the individual comes from a want, a need to do your best". [Pukeahu Preschool, DL]*

Working this way required ongoing support, encouragement and empowerment of the team to be their best, and to do their best. One teacher provided an example of this support in practice:

> *[Nanny] "pushes you to strive for the best and make sure that our practice is of high quality, so that our tamariki receive all that they can"* [Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Teacher].

Similarly, Pukeahu's leader talked of 'empowering' her team:

> *"[My] vision is to empower the Head Teachers to take on more leadership roles [to strengthen the leadership]. This includes having the Head Teacher lead their team of teacher' appraisals and [me] empowering each Head Teacher to discuss their PD with both teams."* [Pukeahu Preschool, DL]

A strong link to whanaungatanga (relationships) and manaakitanga (care, respect) was encouraged in the Mayfield Kindergarten and Kōhanga Reo case studies. At Tamariki o ngā Mātua and Pukeahu Preschool a culture of challenging and being challenged was evident in conjunction with whakamana (empowerment) and kotahitanga (unity). These values, beliefs and principles were clearly evident in discussions with participants about their centre's approaches to leadership practice.

b) Leadership within centre teams.

This second sub-theme is more specifically concerned with the way in which leadership was located within the centre team. The designated leader and focus group interviews provided evidence of the importance placed on having a culture of stability (Whānau Akomanga), trust (Whānau Akomanga, Liberty Kids), and positivity in their working environment (Babbling

Brook), where staff were empowered and trusted to take on, and/or step up into various roles and responsibilities based on individual strengths, interests and accountability.

> *"I will be going on maternity leave very shortly and a new process we are trialling is sharing the tumuaki [leadership] role amongst the pouwhakahaere [managers/room leaders]. [By] delegating certain tasks and duties of the tumuaki [leader] amongst the pouwhakahaere and focusing on specific skill sets, each pou contributes to the leadership team and the building on those."* [Kōhanga Reo, DL]

The setting of high expectations was valued.

> *"Kathryn has high expectations of everybody, and I think that's a really good thing because she's prepared to support you to reach them, and that's not like, not high expectations that, that are her expectations but that she believes you can do really, really well"* [Mayfield Kindergarten, Teacher]

Participants also valued opportunities to be innovative, creative and trial new or different ways of doing things (Liberty Kids, Mayfield Kindergarten, Babbling Brook). In essence, leadership within the case studies focused on working towards a shared vision and goals within a strengths-based collective culture. As Pukeahu's leader explained:

> *"For example, [name of staff member] is fully in charge of the [.....] curriculum. That doesn't mean that we're not coming up with ideas or anything but she makes sure it happens. Because then it just comes naturally, because everyone can be a leader. Anyone can be a leader within their passion. I definitely think that we work from people's strengths and give everybody a chance to be a leader in their own right."* [Pukeahu Preschool, DL]

Across the case study data the participating teachers spoke about how their leaders facilitated teamwork and collegial ways of working a common practice within the organisational culture of their centres. The most frequently mentioned words were collaboration (Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Kōhanga Reo, Liberty Kids, Mayfield Kindergarten), open communication (Kōhanga Reo, Liberty Kids, Mayfield Kindergarten), with "everyone having a say" (Babbling Brook), and collegiality (Kōhanga Reo). To sustain shared leadership team members were empowered to contribute based upon their knowledge, skills and strengths, where differences in strengths

and abilities were valued (Mayfield Kindergarten, Babbling Brook, Kōhanga Reo). The teachers appreciated those skills in their leaders, as evidenced by this teacher's comment:

> *"The key to her [Nanny] knowledge and her years of experience and abilities are what supports her in her ability to draw out the best in all of us and therefore make a place that keeps going from strength to strength"*. [Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Teacher]

Similarly, Nanny, the designated leader of that centre also considered these to be important attributes for effective and sustainable leadership:

> *"The key skill of a good leader is when they identify the skills, attributes and knowledge that others in the team have and enables each person to contribute to the tasks at hand".* [Tamariki o ngā Mātua, DL]

Whether they saw it as a form of distributed leadership, 'stepping up' or simply collaborative teamwork, collaboration amongst teams was a recurring theme across the case studies. One teacher explained it this way:

> *"But like we experienced last term [Teacher 3] was away but the kindergarten still ran well when [DL] wasn't here as well and we just, you all kind of just step up and [DL] enables us to have the responsibility to deal with you know if like if something's wrong, we know who to call, what to do, we know the routines and the structure of the day so we are capable of running well, yeah". [Babbling Brook, Teacher]*

Collective knowledge, skills and strengths (Kōhanga Reo, Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Whānau Akomanga) were also valued. This may have been as simple as "*So the girls know how to run day to day."* [Whānau Akomanga, DL] or taking shared responsibility, as advised by Tamariki o ngā Matua's leader:

> *So my advice is to trust your staff, to empower them to complete and to achieve and then to accept that reward of having that as a shared responsibility, knowing that everybody comes from a different angle and it's far better to have all the heads together than one little head alone – it's too big a job. [Tamariki o ngā Mātua, DL]*

The idea that leadership is a shared responsibility was not just in the mind of the leader at Tamariki o ngā Mātua; it was identified by one of the teachers too:

> *"We are all leaders in our own way. We all sort of have a role to play in the running of the centre. We've all got certain leadership roles that we do and I think because we've all got these strengths and interests, we've all got different things to add to the running of the centre and without one of us, or one of our strengths, it wouldn't be this way. I think in our own right we are all leaders, we just have different qualities. I mean Nanny's the overall manager but I don't think she she's the only leader"* [Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Teacher].

Te Kōhanga Reo's leader made a similar comment regarding her centre:

> *"In terms of Kaiako stepping up into the Pouwhakahaere position, we have for some years practised the same concept when the Pouwhakahaere is absent. The qualified staff will rotate the responsibility of stepping into that leadership role in the whare [house] for each day the Pou is absent".* [Kōhanga Reo, DL]

Sharing responsibility also meant accepting that delegation brings a different way of doing things:

> *"I think delegation's the key…And providing staff with opportunities to lead so being prepared for someone to do it their own way, yeah, and just learning that it might get done, but it might get done differently".* [Mayfield Kindergarten, DL].

Examination of how leadership worked within the case-study participants' teams progressed logically into the next sub-theme of developing a culture of growing leadership. Addressing how to build leadership capability, in part answers questions related to the main theme about the development an organisational leadership culture.

c) Developing a culture of growing leadership.

When outlining how they grew their leadership culture some participants emphasised the importance of developing their workplaces to encourage teams to share current knowledge, thinking and research, with opportunities to engage in robust reflective practice and critique (Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Babbling Brook, Liberty Kids, Mayfield Kindergarten). The leader at Liberty Kids noted how she had created a 'culture of curiosity' in the centre's teaching team.

> *"What I hoped for – curiousness, wrestling, embracing, rejecting – has happened. It's been a relatively easy culture of curiosity to create because I am a systems person and I have a good system, and I'm really passionate about this so I can energise the girls really well. Now they love what they get from the process, the feeling of being excited from the new thinking, so they are driving the process now" [Liberty Kids, DL].*

Teachers at Liberty Kids reiterated the designated leader's goals in their focus group interview:

> *"I find sometimes she won't give, she won't answer it. She will rephrase it back to get you to… or suggest a different angle to look at it* [Another teacher agrees]. *Yeah, when we approach her with something she gets us to sort of unpack it a bit more and look at it from different angles"* [Liberty Kids, Teacher].

> *"I remember* [sitting in one of her meetings]. *She [Louise] had a really good process, she was very clear [and said] 'well you might like to think about this. Go away and think about that and I want you to do that by the time you come back. I will expect that from you'. She has high expectations but I think they are clear, like really clear".* [Liberty Kids, Teacher].

The Liberty Kids leader did not see herself as needing to have the answers and could see sense in putting responsibility back on the teachers to address their own curiosities. Similarly, Babbling Brook's leader explained one of her systems for how they shared knowledge in the centre:

> *"We have a roster of people sharing ideas. So I don't, I don't take staff meetings. I participate like they do. So we have sharing of ideas around staff meetings and reviews. Everybody has a role to play, for example, with reviews. It's your job to come to the meeting with the review question and the data".* [Babbling Brook, DL]

An indicative comment from the Mayfield case study demonstrated the designated leader's commitment to tapping into the professionalism of her colleagues and in this way making space for their leadership:

I do try and encourage teachers to come to me with solutions, not just questions or issues, get them coming up with what they think is best practice or strategy to use. That way it's not me making all the decisions, which can get really tiring and stressful. I also feel that when teachers are given space to come up with their own ideas the team is more independent and not reliant on me making all the calls as I am not always at work, or if away, I want things to run smoothly [Mayfield Kindergarten, DL].

To further enable a culture of growing leadership, a collective approach to leadership is required, especially in times of change (Mayfield Kindergarten, Pukeahu Preschool, Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Kōhanga Reo, Whānau Akomanga, Babbling Brook, Liberty Kids). All of the seven participating case study centres articulated this notion of collectivity in one way or another. Teachers at Babbling Brook Kindergarten explained how a collective approach works for them:

"And we share the workload. Um, like we have a, um, what do you call it, a roster. We have an annual plan. With specific duties and tasks that need to be completed by somebody. At the beginning of the year we sit down and ask who needs to learn how the health and safety role works?" [Babbling Brook, Teacher 1]

"…It rotates so we all know what to do at any time because we've all dealt with it. And then at the end of the year or the beginning of next year we rub it all out and we've put in the new names for the next year. So it becomes someone else's responsibility." [Babbling Brook, Teacher 2]

Taking responsibility for ensuring good team morale and developing harmonious relationships were other cultural practices highlighted as vital aspects of organisational leadership for ensuring a positive centre ethos (Mayfield Kindergarten, Babbling Brook, Liberty Kids).

"My, I guess my, sometimes not my biggest worry but my biggest thing is to make sure everyone loves working here… 'Cause to me that's just super important cause I think when that's right they will teach well and therefore the children get great learning outcomes because you've got enthusiastic teachers who are well and happy and energised, so for me I think as the leader that's my key role…Because I want the teachers to teach and be; that's their key role. They shouldn't have to be looking after this or the team, well do we have our individual responsibilities for looking after team morale". [Mayfield Kindergarten, DL]

For Liberty Kids, ensuring a positive emotional climate and team culture was about keeping things in proportion and enjoying each other's company:

> *"Like it is quite a close knit culture, but we are also pushed to do the best that we can do. But then there is also like a very [strong], emphasis on having fun and relaxing together".* [Liberty Kids, Teacher]

Effective communication was also identified as being key to team morale and consequently, a successful organisational culture. When talking about her leader one teacher said:

> *"I've learnt a lot from how she does that, I was really afraid of that kind of critical honest communication, so I think one of the most important jobs is being able to keep the team well-oiled and functioning, and talking."* [Mayfield Kindergarten Teacher]

Another teacher highlighted specific aspects that she considered her leader did well in developing effective communication to maintain a positive emotional climate:

> *"I think she works hard at building a team that has the foundations of trust and respect of one another and for the children in our families but also she has confidentiality if you do need to go and speak to her yeah as well".* [Babbling Brook, Teacher].

Ironically, Babbling Brook Kindergarten's leader bemoaned the loss of trust in relation to an incident that occurred at the centre. We contend that this also served to emphasise the importance of trust in building a positive culture.

> *"I think probably the last three weeks have been the biggest low that I've had at [name of centre]…Trust being broken. But we worked through that. Everybody worked together and thought about our processes and how it worked and it finally came to light—it was a systems thing."* [Babbling Brook, DL]

Being proactive in initiating courageous conversations (Pukeahu Preschool, Mayfield Kindergarten, Babbling Brook) and managing conflict resolution (Mayfield Kindergarten) were further identified as key aspects leading to a safe centre environment and culture.

> … "*but sometimes I have to say well actually that's what's going to happen. Yeah, and the repercussions of that happening is not nice. The team, they don't like being told what to do. And I can understand why. We tend to talk things through so that we have come to the same decision. Like, it might take me four or five weeks of sowing a seed so that we work collectively as a team".* [Babbling Brook, DL]

Indicative comments about the value placed on the warm emotional climate provided by their leaders included:

> *"I'm grateful that Kathryn's the sort of leader she is. I've had times when I've been in a bit of a trough emotionally. Kathryn's supported me through that, and you know that really matters to me, in a no nonsense sort of a way, not wrap me in cotton wool but you know, do you need anything? , what can I do? O.K., well you just tell me if you do".* [Mayfield Kindergarten, Teacher]

> *"We're grateful for the leader she is, for the role that she has in all of our lives... she takes care of us, she takes really good care of us [not just] as teachers but as people. She's got high expectations but those high expectations are what drive us to be better teachers, better professionals, better people".* [Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Teacher]

> *"She's* [Designated Leader] *always open to hearing what we want, always is more open to us and [we can] share anything with her".* [Kōhanga Reo, Teacher]

The comments above point to how the leader retains a sense of 'keeping things together', or knowing when to disperse leadership to encourage shared thinking and to encourage a sense of collectivity but also to know when she must be seen to 'do' leadership.

Enlarging the Centre Team—the Influence of the Community on the Leadership Culture of Early Childhood Centres

Integral to the notion that the leadership culture plays a key role within the centre community was an understanding of partnerships and responsive and reciprocal relationships (Babbling Brook, Liberty Kids) with whānau, hapu, iwi and community (Kōhanga Reo, Mayfield

Kindergarten, Tamariki of ngā Mātua). Some participants identified how they often acted as lead liaison person and/or advocated for their children and families/whānau within the community (Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Mayfield Kindergarten, Kōhanga Reo). In regards to the leadership culture playing a role within the centre community, the Kōhanga Reo participants engaged in discussion about how leaders must advocate for change to ensure that the holistic needs of children are considered. Indications are that advocacy as a leadership practice expedites quality educational outcomes for children and the community as a whole. As stated by this leader:

> *"How a leader facilitates and supports professional development in others ensuring teachers are equipped with the knowledge they need to teach children, supports families and leads change".* [Tamariki o ngā Mātua, DL]

This leader summed up the views of all the participating case studies with her assertion that *"the centre is not my place, it's our place, it's our centre – we're part of a community"* [Babbling Brook, DL]. Their parent communities were mentioned by all the case studies. Indicative comments included:

> *"I find when you ask parents for help, that helps with their relationship building too…Cause they feel comfortable. So you might say oh could you do this for me and they go oh okay yeah, yeah. So it's amazing—when you actually put an expectation on some of them—how much they step up and then you've got them involved yeah. Hopefully they might take some of those ideas home and give it a go"…* [Mayfield Kindergarten, DL]

> *"I think it is imperative to take the time to listen to the parents and if I don't have time to talk to each and every one, at least acknowledging them is important. The same when they leave".* [Pukeahu Preschool, DL]

> *"Including parents does not impact on my role as a leader because that's what I want. I want families to be here. I want to have conversations with them, I want them to be part of this building, part of this place—this community that we're growing". [*Babbling Brook, DL]

> *"We've got the parents, we've got the teachers, we've got the trust, we've got the community and we've got community organisations that we work with and it's sort of*

like we become this community, you know, of learners and we all sort of, you know we take knowledge from everywhere…to reach everybody that's involved in the centre and work with them and hold positive relationships and that we all share our knowledge". [Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Teacher].

The data indicated that a number of factors contribute to the development of a sustainable leadership culture. Growing leadership capability within teams requires intentional leadership actions by the designated leader.

Congruent Leadership Practices

This section explores the designated leaders' espoused theories of action and their congruency with their actual leadership practice (theories-in-use), as perceived by their teaching teams. Thus, leadership practices are now reported from the perspective of congruency.

From the designated leaders' data (interviews and critical incident journals) about their 'espoused theories' of leadership action, it became evident through data analysis that overall what the designated leaders thought their leadership practice looked like, was actually supported by observation and talking with the teaching team. This demonstrates that (for the designated leaders in the research) they were not only able to 'talk the talk', but were also able to 'walk the walk'. An example of one leader's 'talking the talk' about sustainable leadership was:

"*I really try to delegate most of the jobs up. All that happens here because I really want, I want to be kind of replaceable. I don't want to have to be here. I want the place to run as well when I'm away as when I'm here".* [Mayfield Kindergarten, DL]

Similarly the following quote demonstrates 'walking the talk' in regard to sustainable leadership:

"Yeah, working on their goals together.Yep, giving them opportunities to take responsibility, e.g., whether it's through doing risk analysis for an excursion... I really want them to be doing all of that and I'll oversee it but I try and get them to step up and take responsibility"... [Mayfield Kindergarten, DL]

We detected three sub-themes that related to congruent practices. These were: expectations of leadership; dispositions of leadership; and professional learning and development.

a) Expectations of leadership.

The 'expectation of strong leadership' theme was found to be consistent, not only between the views of designated leaders and their teaching teams, but also between what was espoused by the designated leaders, and enacted by them in practice. For three case study centres, in particular, 'strong leadership' stood out as a dominant theme. The designated leaders were strong in their approaches and also expected it of their teams:

> *"You just got to have confidence in yourself and you've been given the job and it helps if people believe in you…that's a big thing…to think that you're in it for the right reason".* [Mayfield Kindergarten, DL]

However, the teaching teams also expected strong leadership from their leaders. As explained by one teacher:

> "*I think it's both collegial and collaborative, I think that we have robust discussion around things, I think that we don't always agree but we can agree to disagree and find a path forward, but at the same time Kathryn's prepared to make the final decision or do some of the hard, hard yards".* [Mayfield Kindergarten, Teacher]

The Pukeahu Preschool's teaching team reported in their focus group interview that *dependability* was key for them. Because they perceived their leader could be depended on to ensure the centre ran smoothly, they defined dependability as being reassuring, i.e., "just knowing that your leader of the team is the leader". They admired their leader for not being frightened of "taking the mantle of centre leadership".

Similar to Pukeahu Preschool's teaching team, the teachers at Liberty Kids also reported their designated leader was not afraid to "make the big calls" required, for example, representing team issues to the new corporately-run management. This representation involved speaking up for the team when financial decisions were going to be made that affected them directly. They recognised strong leadership in their designated leader, as she always "had your back", knew her staff "inside out", and always wanted the best for them. Although the Liberty Kids teaching team described their leader as having a very directive leadership style, they did not use the term 'directive' in a derogative way; rather they admired their leader's directness. They also considered their leader to be very experienced and knowledgeable, and a "big picture thinker".

This 'big picture thinking' was, in fact, evident across a number of the case study centres. The rationale for this was to prepare others within the team to take up leadership positions. The teachers at Mayfield Kindergarten believed that a *distributed leadership* approach best exemplified how others can work towards taking up that leadership responsibility. However, they considered that distributed leadership would not work successfully unless there was a strong leader who was prepared to take on the ultimate accountability and responsibility.

The Mayfield Kindergarten teachers expressed admiration for their designated leader for being in constant communication with them, and holding clear and high expectations of the teaching team. In a similar manner, the teachers at Tāmariki o nga Mātua described their designated leader as "quite assertive". In probable congruence, the designated leader of Tāmariki o nga Mātua was happy to refer to herself as "a stroppy person".

For the designated leader of Liberty Kids gaining the 'bigger picture' meant being a 'systems person'. She liked to have systems for everything; this was how she managed her "very hectic" role of managing a corporately owned centre. This leader had systems and processes for every aspect of running the centre, even if this meant she did not lead those systems and processes. They were, however, documented on the wall in her office and able to be referred to during her regular meetings with the head teachers, who were more directly responsible for enacting the processes and systems.

Similarly, the designated leader at Pukeahu Preschool reported the importance of having first-hand knowledge of all aspects of the centre and teaching. Whilst her ECE setting was much smaller than Liberty Kids, this leader had a parent management committee whereby each member had assigned roles and responsibilities, albeit with her clear oversight of this committee and its tasks.

Organisational oversight was very important for most of the designated leaders. However, the designated leaders of three case study centres (Mayfield Kindergarten, Pukeahu Preschool, and Liberty Kids) also stated it was their role to have overall responsibility for excellence of teaching and management of curriculum delivery in their ECE centres.

As mentioned previously, in addition to their belief in themselves as strong leaders, the designated leaders had strong expectations of their teams. For the Mayfield Kindergarten, this meant the delegation of roles and responsibilities. The designated leader at Liberty Kids believed that each teacher had clear roles and responsibilities, and had a very high expectation that they were to deliver on these.

Although the data revealed that 'strong leadership as an expectation' featured across all case study centres, it was a more dominant theme for four of the seven centres. While there was definite congruence around the expectations for strong leadership, the data analysis revealed the three other centres to be stronger in different areas, for example, *professional leadership and development of the team*. In one case study centre, the designated leader was also the centre owner, which possibly meant that her 'managerial' expectations held higher priority. For another case study centre, there was a much stronger discussion on *leadership as a cultural practice.*

This next section looks more specifically at dispositions of leadership that were demonstrated by the designated leaders of each of the case study centres.

b) Leadership dispositions.

Across the data, we noted a range of dispositional language relating to team morale being perceived as a key practice in supporting the culture of leadership. For example, being passionate (Liberty Kids, Pukeahu Preschool, Babbling Brook), energetic (Liberty Kids,

Mayfield Kindergarten, Pukeahu Preschool), enthusiastic (Mayfield Kindergarten), empathetic (Mayfield Kindergarten), curious (Liberty Kids), loyal (Whānau Akomanga), enabling voice (Babbling Brook), and mana and respect (Kōhanga Reo, Mayfield Kindergarten).

In this section, we discuss how we identified six dispositional ways of being leaders. These leadership dispositions are presented in table format below. Table 8 presents the collective approach undertaken for the data analyses, with no specific centre identifiers provided. It is important to note that the data was clearly spread across all of the seven case study centres (Tamariki o ngā Mātua; Pukeahu Preschool; Mayfield Kindergarten; Liberty Kids; Babbling Brook; Whānau Akomanga; and Kōhanga Reo). The data from phases two and three revealed six different types of leadership dispositions: (1) being a communicator; (2) being relationship focused; (3) being caring to others; (4) being supportive of the team; (5) being a leader of growth and change; and (6) being a critical friend.

Table 8: ***Dispositions of an Early Childhood Education Leader***

Korero tahi: **Being a communicator**	**Whanaungatanga:** **Being relationship focused**	**Manākitanga:** **Being caring to others**	**Kotahitanga:** **Being supportive of the team**	**Whakamana:** **Being a leader of growth and change**	**Hoa Arohaehae:** **Being a critical friend**
Questions Explains ideas/processes Shares knowledge Makes suggestions Provides instructions Seeks clarification Agrees to expectations	Passion and enjoyment of teaching children Inclusive in approach to children, families and communities Knows clients well, engaging in conversation about families and daily events	Takes care of team Respects team as people Warm nature Cares for people whom she leads Supportive Pastoral care of team – ensures everyone is happy Trustworthy	Collegial Encouragers Checks in with team Prioritises time to talk to team Strong leadership Clear leadership Professional Leader as overseer	Leads growth and change Identifies strengths in others Grows leadership and knowledge Guides Role models new initiatives Changes roles	Engages in critical conversations Challenges Willing to be challenged Inspires others Open and honest Straight talker Assertive Direct

Prioritises time to talk to parents Strength in verbal communication Open communication Practises reflective listening Acknowledges others Discussions	Advocates for staff, whānau and wellbeing of tamariki Aroha ki te tangata (love, respect for people)	Supportive Lifts you up Approachable Concerned	Ensures everyone's voice is heard Takes initiative Drives initiatives Ensures mana of the staff is maintained	Learns and improves on the role of being a leader	Likes to talk things through Wise manner Responsible Tenacity Ability to challenge staff in positive manner Encourager

c) Professional learning and development.

Since completing their original initial teaching qualification, only a few of the participants had studied for higher degree qualifications. In the qualitative interviews, they mostly reported undertaking further professional learning and development (PLD) that often had a specific pedagogical focus rather than being leadership orientated.

Most of the professional development specific to leadership occurred through service-led courses or external short courses rather than through in-depth PLD on leadership. Nevertheless, teachers and leaders used the professional development that was available and felt that this guided them as teachers and leaders.

On-the-job learning was viewed as one of the most important ways of learning to be a leader. However, in the same way that teachers were not aware of emergent leadership that occurred within their role as a teacher, they seemed also unaware of 'direct on-the-job' leadership learning. For example, both designated leaders and teachers were more likely to report there was 'direct on-the-job' leadership learning occurring when there was a formal 'second in command' type role held within the centre.

There was, however, clear evidence that PLD on leadership is valued. Many of the participants explained that the desire to partake in leadership PLD is driven by their centres' culture of

encouragement and empowerment to grow leaders. The majority of the case study centres explicitly discussed professional learning and development from a leadership perspective. For the remaining centres, whilst there was no explicit discussion of leadership professional development and learning, there appeared to be a stronger focus on leadership as a cultural practice and expectation. Two questions that are explored within this section are: (1) Why engage in leadership professional learning and development? and (2) What do leaders and their teams consider professional learning and development to be?

Conceptions of professional learning and development.

Generic professional learning and development was emphasised as a means of upskilling both the designated leader's and the team's knowledge and practice (Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Babbling Brook, Whānau Akomanga, Kōhanga Reo). The rationale provided was the opportunity to learn, and to gain and maintain, currency of early childhood education theory, thinking and practice. Whilst the research participants explained that being current enabled teachers and leaders to grow, they were viewing professional learning and development from a more generic perspective rather than from a specific leadership lens. It could be argued that to increase knowledge, apply new knowledge to practice and ultimately to enact change (Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Whānau Akoranga, Babbling Brook) can be interpreted as growing leadership capability. Nanny (Tamariki o ngā Mātua's designated leader) emphasised that professional learning and development is a critical factor for encouraging teachers to be their best, as both teachers and leaders, and both personally and professionally. The Kōhanga Reo focused on the te ao Māori valued concept of professional development of tuakana teina (teaching and learning for the same gender) and ako (teaching and learning from mixed gender) and the opportunities that this role reversal strategy has for growing leadership.

Current engagement in professional learning and development.

This next section focuses on the types of professional learning and development (PLD) that teachers and leaders engaged in. Further study to gain a higher qualification (Babbling Brook, Tamariki o ngā Mātua), attending ECE conferences and participating in one-off workshops (Babbling Brook, Tamariki o ngā Mātua,Whānau Akoranga) were identified as some key aspects of professional learning and development. Further to the finding that specific leadership PLD was not overly emphasised, the designated leader of Pukeahu Preschool

explained that professional learning occurred every day as a result of engaging in teaching. She reported that this everyday PLD is extended through the provision of in-house learning and development tailored to focus on the team's current strengths and interests. This perception was reiterated by Tamariki o ngā Mātua.

Critical reflection was highlighted as one key process contributing to professional learning and development (Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Whānau Akomanga, Babbling Brook, Kōhanga Reo, Liberty Kids). Participants explained how they engaged in critical reflection focusing on their pedagogical practice—both as individuals and as teams. Critical questioning included what happened, why it happened, why they acted or behaved in a specific way and what they would do differently next time, based on their professional learning from this process. Babbling Brook also highlighted the value of hosting student teachers on practicum experiences. The centre viewed these practicum experiences as valuable learning opportunities because of the focused critical reflection and thinking engaged in with the student teachers. These interactions encouraged teachers and leaders to question their practice and articulate their rationale and underpinning teaching and leadership values and beliefs.

Sharing knowledge and skills across the team and thus learning from, and with each other, was also a key point of discussion (Babbling Brook, Tamariki o ngā Mātua, Whānau Akomanaga, Liberty Kids). Babbling Brook created the opportunity for the whole team to attend a conference together and Whānau Akomanaga led their own professional development and extended this to leading workshops for other centres. The appraisal process was also identified as a further professional development strategy including the processes of goal setting, critical reflection, documenting learning and seeking and being responsive to constructive feedback (Tamariki o ngā Mātua). For Liberty Kids this collective appraisal process was a new initiative, of which the teachers stated that they benefitted from immensely.

This last section of the findings draws on the aspects of the designated leader's role that create tensions and thus can act as a limiting factor to enacting effective leadership.

Incongruent Leadership Practices

Whilst the previous discussion focused on the congruence (or consistency) within leadership practice (i.e., between the leaders' espoused theories and their theories-in-use), the focus in this section is on the incongruent behaviours and beliefs. For the purposes of complete anonymity, no case study identifiers are used in this section. However, the analyses are representative of all of the case study centres, in some way or another.

One tension identified in the designated leaders' practice related to working collaboratively as part of the teaching team, whilst also being accountable as a leader. It is hard for the designated leaders who, on the one hand, work alongside their teaching teams but then at times have to step up and "pull rank". One designated leader talked about this. She linked it to the notion of siblings within a family, and how at times she is just one of the siblings, but at other times, she has to 'step-up' and take on the role of 'big sis'. This leader reflected on how she saw herself as very much in this conflicting role, where 'big sis' has to make the call and the teacher or teaching team sometimes "just need to listen". The participating leaders were clearly aware of this incongruence in their practice.

Another struggle, or tension for designated leaders, involved the balance between their role to uphold the overall leadership of the centre, and their recognition of the need to allow for the growth of the leadership of the teaching team. For some of the designated leaders, this is not always an easy process. Having to 'let go' of responsibilities and provide the teaching team with opportunities to lead at times seemed like the practices they had worked hard at developing, were at risk. The relinquishing of responsibility quite often means that other members of the team will want to do things differently, and so for the designated leader it is about being prepared for someone to do it in a way that is different from their own.

A further example of incongruent practice identified by the designated leaders was the internal struggle between how the designated leader viewed themselves as a leader (and their articulation of this belief), and the 'leadership' practices that she had to enact. One of the designated leaders viewed herself as having a 'laissez-faire' leadership approach where she lets everyone do their own thing and does not "dictate to people", and yet on the other

hand she sees herself as an 'overseer', needing to be "always visible" and "monitoring what is happening". A contradiction was evident between the ideas this leader held regarding her practice and the way in which these practices were enacted. Interestingly however, whilst she saw herself as having a "laid back approach to leadership", this was not always what occurred in practice.

The designated leaders in the different case studies varied in regards to how much time they taught 'in ratio', and how much time they had dealing with the organisational tasks that were also a key aspect of their role. Whilst being 'in ratio' meant that they were part of the teaching team and had a good understanding of the children's learning and development, the designated leaders were often torn between their teaching duties and knowing that they had organisational commitments that also required their time. For one of the designated leaders she had to withdraw herself from her regular teaching duties because of the high level of organisational and managerial tasks required of her. She talked about the internal struggle and tension this caused for herself as she went through the challenge of "letting go and stepping back". The management aspect of the role was viewed by many of the designated leaders as 'a necessary evil', even though they also noted its contribution to the incongruence within their practice.

In summary, there were a number of tensions within the everyday role of the designated leader. Firstly the tension between being part of the teaching team, yet having to 'pull rank' when required. A second tension was between the designated leader knowing that they had to pass on the leadership to others and understanding that other people will do things differently. The final tension was the internal struggle some designated leaders faced between how they perceived themselves as a leader, and the 'leadership' practices they enacted. These tensions were identified by the participants as incongruent leadership practices.

Summary of the Cross-Case Analysis

This chapter provided contextual information about the seven case study centres and reported a full data analysis of the combined findings from the participating case study

centres. A well planned research design, pre-written interview questions, and templates for researcher observation, as well as designated leader's writing their critical incident reflections, meant validity occurred across the data collection process. The analysis of the individual case studies was also a guided process as the researchers came together on two separate occasions to analyse the case studies they researched.

Once the individual case studies were analysed two separate researchers performed a cross-case analysis, which was then cross checked against each other. A third researcher assisted with the final cross-case analysis process. The themes already identified by the original researchers were then narrowed down to three key areas: leadership as a cultural practice; congruent leadership practices, and incongruent leadership practices. Within the 'congruent leadership practices' section, three sub-themes emerged. In the cross-case analysis, 'an expectation of strong leadership' was found to be clearly evident, both from the perspective of the teaching team toward the designated leader, and from the designated leader themselves.

Dispositions of leadership were identified. A leadership dispositions table (see Table 8) was created, which drew directly from the data. The areas that the dispositions linked to are as follows: Being a communicator (Kōrero tahi); Being relationship focused (Whanaungatanga); Being caring to others (Manaakitanga); Being supportive of the team (Kotahitanga); Being a leader of growth and change (Whakamana); and Being a critical friend (Hoa Arohaehae). Participants used both the English and te reo Māori words in their interviews so we have included both translations here. These dispositions were not written in order of importance or frequency of mention; rather all of them were viewed as good descriptors of effective leadership.

The next sub-theme that emerged from the data was 'professional learning and development as a way of growing leadership capability and capacity'. Whilst the designated leaders and the teachers within the case study centres appeared to have attended limited leadership professional development opportunities, there was a general consensus among the participants that all professional development and learning is worthwhile, with the outcome being more informed leadership.

The last section of this chapter identified examples of incongruence between how leadership was perceived (i.e., espoused) and how it was enacted. The importance of identifying those tensions and contradictions faced within everyday practice was noted.

The next and final chapter these findings are linked back to the research question and to the literature in this field. Links will be made between the notion of congruent and incongruent leadership practice and concepts of 'theories-in-use' and 'espoused theories' (Argyris & Schön, 1974).

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

The *'Leaders Growing Leaders'* New Zealand research study is timely and relevant for three reasons: (1) increasing attention is being given to the importance of leadership as a key factor for driving quality in early childhood education; (2) there is a lack of emphasis on leadership and leadership development in the early childhood sector within Aotearoa New Zealand; and (3) there is a disjunction between leadership and management.

This chapter discusses the findings of the study to extend understanding of sustainable leadership development in early childhood settings. The research questions and objectives of the project are also discussed in the light of our findings and interpretations and within the context of existing literature. Following this, the significance of what we found and how it extends knowledge on this topic area is discussed in terms of practice, and/or extending ideas or theory. In particular, a leadership 'theories-in-action' framework that has unfolded from the study is introduced. Limitations of the study are presented as well as the issues that could be addressed through future research. Finally, recommendations grounded in the study are suggested.

The purpose of this study was to uncover how effective early childhood leaders support the leadership development of themselves and their teaching teams to sustain leadership development capacity in ECE settings within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand. By examining the 'theories-in-use' and 'espoused theories' of designated leaders a model/resource was generated to support leadership practice.

One key research question and four sub-questions guided this project. The overall question was: What leadership processes and structures do effective ECE leaders develop in their centres for the sustainability of the leadership culture?

The four sub-questions underpinning this question were:

1. What professional learning and leadership development do effective ECE leaders undertake and how has it affected change in leadership practice?
2. What leadership actions (pedagogical, team leadership, and organisational) do ECE leaders take in developing others as leaders?
3. What are the 'espoused theories' and 'theories-in-use' used by effective leaders?
4. How can the identification of leadership barriers build capability and capacity within the ECE setting?

To address the overall research question the four sub-questions are discussed first.

Impact of Professional Learning and Development

The initial survey (in Phase One) identified that the majority of respondents were proactive in seeking and undertaking general professional learning and development (PLD) opportunities in order to grow and sustain their currency of ECE theory and practice. Interestingly, staff in the forty plus age bracket were the least likely group to engage in further professional learning and development. Waniganayake, Cheeseman, Fenech, Hadley and Shepherd (2015) contend that working within early childhood services can sometimes feel professionally isolating for leaders; therefore PLD is necessary for: remaining up-to-date with new knowledge and skills; responding to changing policy and practice requirements; and not least, enhancing their own career development and advancement (Moss, 2004, as cited in Waniganayake et al., 2015).

Why the participants in the forty plus age group were least likely to engage in PLD is puzzling but probably the easiest finding to address, particularly given the consensus in the literature about the benefits of ongoing learning. For example, Robertson and Earl (2014) highlight the 'disposition to learn', that is., that "leaders see that learning *in* leadership and therefore leadership *as* learning is paramount to the effective leadership of change" (p. 9). In Robertson and Earl's study, the 'leader as learner' disposition was perceived as a journey comprising of: (1) self-awareness; (2) autonomous learning; (3) learning that is collective and social; and (4) problematising practice. This disposition to learn is perhaps what all leaders should aspire to.

On-the-job learning was acknowledged as a key critical factor contributing to an individual's leadership learning and development. This is supported in the literature (see Lovett, Dempster & Flückiger, 2015).

Furthermore the key role that leaders play in nurturing aspiring leaders as they work on-the-job implies that besides engaging in professional learning for their own self-development, leaders should also play a key role in identifying, assessing, and strategically planning to support their staff to engage in professional learning and development opportunities (Waniganayake et al., 2015). Earlier, Heikka and Waniganayake (2011) argued that teaching leadership skills to teachers is essential for not only their professional development but also for gaining a full grasp of how their organisations function. Lovett et al. (2015) concur, asserting that most systems-related knowledge is gained on-the-job.

The survey questionnaire invited participants to rank a range of attributes that they considered contributed to the sustainability of leadership within their ECE centre. The most frequently selected attributes related to recognition of the importance of being a life-long learner, a critical thinker, a proactive team member, and an experienced and reflective practitioner. This finding is supported by Robertson and Earl's earlier 2014 study. In addition, participants expressed the need for leadership to prioritise professionalism, relationships, and sociocultural practice in order for ECE leadership to be sustainable. Significant comparisons arose between these leadership attributes and the leadership dispositions of an ECE leader in the cross-case analysis. Key to this discussion is the ability of designated leaders, to lead growth and change. Thus 'big picture' thinking, visioning and forward planning were identified as necessary skills required by the leader. Being responsive, as a leader, to the children attending the ECE setting, their families, whānau and to the wider ECE community was also rated as a high priority, the implication being that this, in turn, enabled the centres to be responsive to their economic, political and sociocultural contexts at a micro, meso, exo and macro level (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Heikka and Waniganayake (2011) would support this finding, based on their assertion that "to be effective, distribution of pedagogical leadership has to be assessed against different aspects of leadership, including the separation of management and leadership functions" (p. 509).

In addition, effective leaders were deemed to require the ability to have and to grow leadership knowledge, to role model new initiatives in leadership practice and grow internal leadership practice both their own and that of the centre staff. Pedagogical leadership was also considered highly important as this area of leadership enabled centres to maintain currency of teaching and leadership knowledge and practice. Interestingly the overall administrative and financial performance indicators were considered a lower priority in relation to effective leadership. While it makes sense that the designated leaders valued pedagogical leadership, organisational leadership was also important. Some of the respondents worked in umbrella organisations and may not have perceived financial performance as their specific responsibility. Nevertheless, financial monitoring is crucial to the running of successful ECE services and for ensuring the delivery of sound pedagogical outcomes for their children. The tensions between pedagogical and managerial leadership will always have to be negotiated carefully.

In summary, the present study found that effective ECE leaders and teachers do undertake professional learning and development. Often it was not leadership orientated but rather had more of a pedagogical focus. The leaders and teachers acknowledged that professional learning and development contributed to change in practice, but not specifically leadership practice.

Leadership Actions for Developing Others as Leaders

The actions identified in the survey in terms of ECE leaders developing others as leaders encompassed pedagogical leadership, career development, conceptual, entrepreneurial and community leadership. Whilst the survey provided predetermined categories to rank the leadership actions, the qualitative data, in contrast, elicited more open-ended responses. The three categories of pedagogical, team, and organisational culture provided the framework to link the emerging themes from the research data to the original research question: What leadership actions (pedagogical, team leadership, and organisational) do ECE leaders take in developing others as leaders?

Centre structures and processes were used to analyse the three areas of leadership actions (i.e., pedagogical, team leadership, and organisational). Examples of centre structures included daily routines and practices, taking responsibility and role modelling, etcetera, but for the purposes of this research study, structures are described as the organisational or cultural leadership of the centre as a whole, rather than any single routine or process. Processes included the independent pedagogical/team leadership procedures that support the daily routine running of the centre. These processes included strategic planning, professional development, delegation and staffing requirements.

In their school-based study, Fairman and Mackenzie (2015) found that a collegial climate was an important condition supporting teacher leadership and school-wide improvement across most spheres of leadership action. This is possibly one of the reasons that contributed to more 'on-the-job' leadership learning that our participants referred to when developing others as leaders in their early childhood settings.

Leaders' Espoused Theories and Theories-in-Use

The seminal work of Argyris and Schön (1974) introduce the concept of 'theories of action', which guides and explains people's behaviour. Argyris and Schön (1974) describe two types of actions: 'espoused theories of action' and 'theories-in-use'. As discussed previously in the Methodology chapter, espoused theories are defined as the values and beliefs individuals *believe* they demonstrate and articulate in practice, whereas theories-in-use are the actions and behaviours that *actually* occur in practice (Argyris & Schön, 1974). Often people are unaware that their theories-in-use are not always congruent with the espoused theories to which they aspire. The most exciting finding from the present study was having the designated leaders' espoused theories confirmed in practice by their teaching teams.

Congruence.

The data on espoused theories and theories-in-use-emerged from the designated leader and teaching team interviews, critical incident reflections, observations and researcher field notes. The ECE teams in this study actively identified and discussed differences between

espoused beliefs and practices of leadership. In this way, opportunities were afforded for congruence to be noted between leadership 'theories-in-use' and 'espoused theories'.

The following quote from one designated leader provides a good example of her 'espoused theories'.

> *"My biggest thing is to make sure everyone loves working here...I think when that's right they will teach well and therefore the children get great learning outcomes because you've got enthusiastic teachers who are well and happy and energised, so for me I think as the leader that's my key role. Because I want to the teachers to teach and be...that's their key role".*

When describing her designated leader's leadership style one of the the teachers said:

> *"She's also very professional, in the way that, I think she keeps us safe within all of those policies and procedures and practices, and at the heart of all her decisions are what are best for the tamariki [children]. You know that's what we're here for and that's such a good firm foundation."*

These quotes provide evidence of the congruence between the leader's espoused theory and her theory-in-use, i.e., the values and beliefs that she demonstrated in practice in terms of putting the best interests of the children first.

Whilst emergent leadership was evident within the everyday role of an ECE teacher within the case studies, this research study also supports Reynolds and Cardno's (2008) assertion that those in positions of leadership are responsible for influencing and enacting change. For the teaching teams who felt that 'strong leadership as an expectation' was espoused and enacted, it was clear that these designated leaders were demonstrating 'taking responsibility for influencing and enacting change'. In this way, it can be seen that there is congruence between the designated leaders' espoused theories and theories-in-use (Argyris & Schön, 1974). The following diagram adapted from Argyris and Schön's work illustrates how this might have happened for our participants.

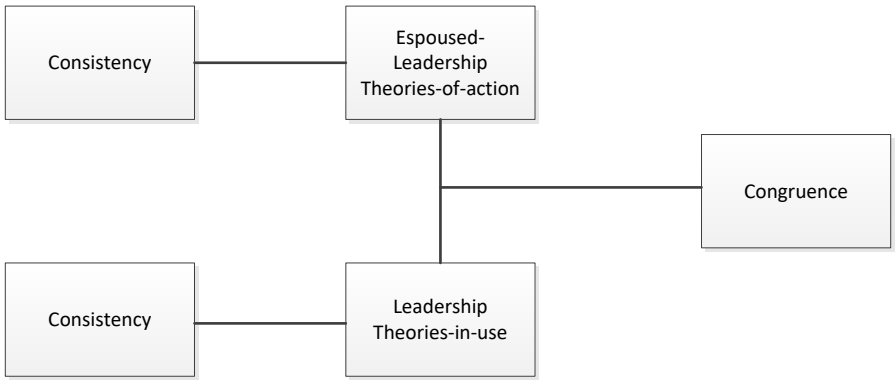

Figure 4. **Leadership Theories of Action: Congruence (adapted from Argyris & Schön, 1974, p.21)**

Incongruence.

One of the factors that influences a designated leader's inability to enact change is an incongruence between having leadership and management of the teaching and learning, yet with limited time due to their managerial tasks (Heikka, 2015; Hujala, 2004). Our findings also noted this as an area of incongruence. Some of the designated leaders they were often torn between their teaching duties and knowing that they had organisational commitments that also required their time. The management aspect of the role was viewed by some of the designated leaders as 'a necessary evil'.

It is reassuring to know for both the designated leaders and the teaching team that there is congruence between espoused values, and enacted leadership practice. Obviously, this was not something the designated leaders were aware of, so they were keen to see whether there indeed was congruence between their values and practice on completion of this research project.

The few areas of incongruence within the research were not between designated leaders but rather an individual struggle for the designated leaders themselves. Again, the following diagram adapted from Argyris and Schön's (1974) seminal work explains how the inconsistencies contribute to leaders' issues of incongruence.

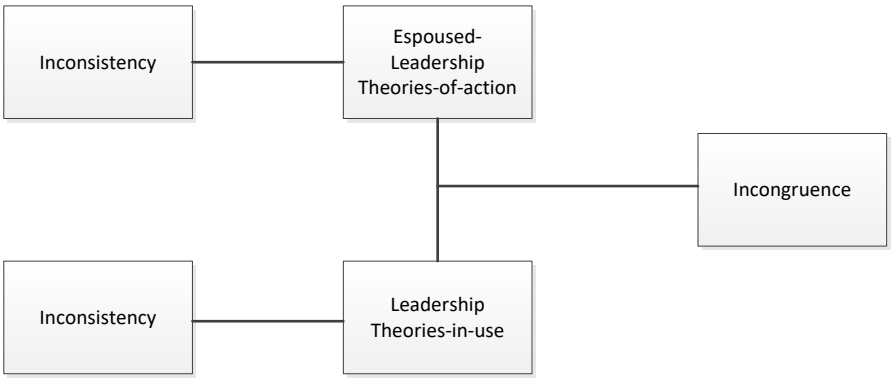

Figure 5. **Leadership Theories of Action: Incongruence (adapted from Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. 21)**

The areas of incongruence that designated leaders faced were: between working 'as part of the team' versus being the person others are accountable to; upholding the overall role of leadership of the team whilst still allowing others to come through and take on areas of leadership which they may perform in a different way to the designated leader; how leadership was articulated by designated leaders and then having to take on quite a different leadership role at times; and being in ratio whilst needing to attend to pressing organisational tasks as well.

Whilst some of these areas of incongruence were articulated overtly by the designated leaders, some of them emerged during the data analyses. This indicates that the designated leaders are not necessarily aware of all the areas of incongruence for their leadership practice, but also painfully aware of other areas. The 'being in ratio versus completing administrative tasks' dilemma was one area that the designated leaders were very aware of. It was found that those designated leaders who were able to ensure they were out of ratio for adequate periods of time during the day or week to complete tasks were not as burdened with this area of incongruence. However, for most of the designated leaders (apart from the corporately owned centre), this was a luxury the centre could not afford, and so the designated leaders 'stole time' whenever they could. Whilst there is no ready answer to a financial issue such as this, perhaps time to complete administrative tasks should either be managed by someone else or more adequately work-loaded for the designated leader.

Testing espoused theories of action and theories-of-use.

The research findings foregrounded compatibilities and contradictions of leaders' espoused theories and theories-in-use and the resulting influence on practice. Argyris and Schön's seminal model (1974) has provided an impetus for our study to progress this work. For example, Figure 6 presents their framework for testing individual theories of leadership within the cultural context of the centre as a whole. The terms within the framework are defined as:

- *Internal consistency* – An absence of self-contradiction between an understanding of the leadership beliefs and leadership practices that are occurring
- *Espoused leadership theories of action* – Internal beliefs about how leadership is enacted
- *Leadership theories-in-use* – How leadership is enacted
- *Congruence* – Consistency between espoused and enacted leadership
- *Action* – Leadership actions
- *Effectiveness* – evaluating the effectiveness of leadership actions
- *Value* – Valuing the behavioural world created by the theory
- *Behavioural world* – The leadership context of the organisation
- *Testability* – Evaluating through critical reflection whether what is believed to be occurring (leadership espoused theory) is congruent or incongruent with the enacted practice (leadership theories-in-use).

Within this model, the process of integrating leadership theory and practice is underpinned by an analysis of *espoused leadership theories of action* and *leadership theories-in-use*. The purpose of the process is to ascertain congruence or incongruence between internal beliefs about how leadership is enacted and how leadership is experienced. The aim is to gain *internal consistency* between understanding of leadership beliefs and the leadership practices that are occurring. Congruence between *espoused leadership theories of action* and *leadership theories-in-use* influence leadership *actions*, which in turn influence the leadership culture of the organisation. Through critical reflection and evaluation, *espoused leadership theories of action* and *leadership theories-in-use* are tested within the context of the

organisation. Reflective questions include: Are the theories in use and espoused theories internally consistent? Are they congruent? Are they testable? Are they effective? Do we value the worlds they create?

Figure 6 demonstrates two forms of action, depending on whether there is consistency or inconsistency between espoused theories and theories-in-use. If there is consistency between espoused theories and theories-in-use, this leads to congruence between the theory (espoused theory) and practice (theory-in-use).

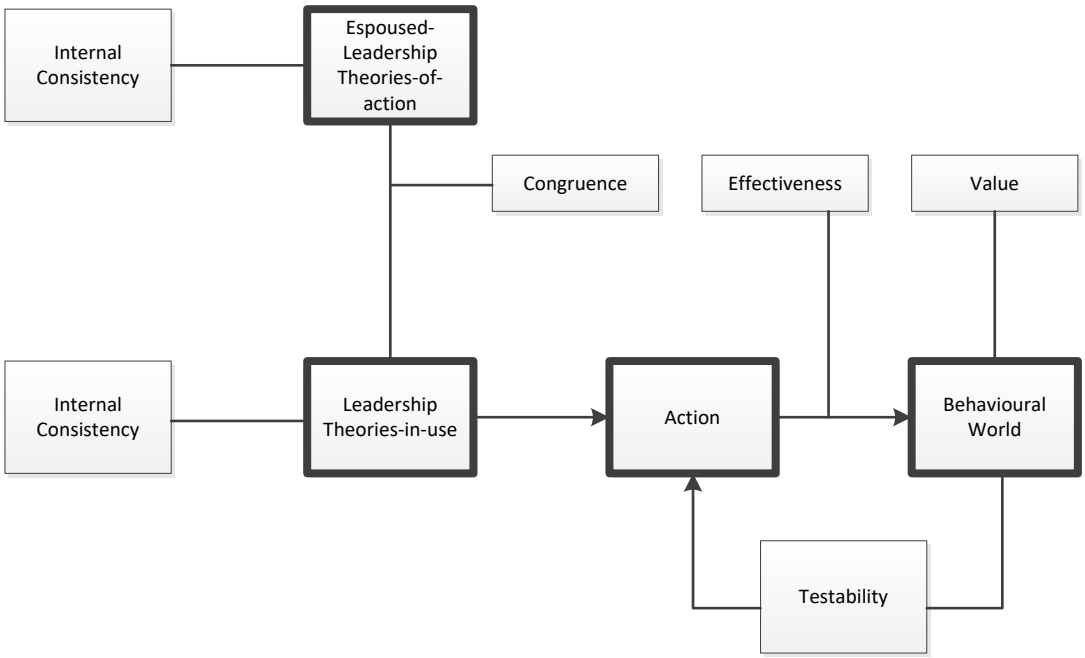

***Figure 6*. Bringing the Theory to Practice (adapted from Argyris & Schön, 1974, p. 21)**

We have adapted Argyris and Schön's framework to extend understanding of how the relationship between resultant learning influences future leadership actions. Further analysis enables ECE services to measure the effectiveness of leadership actions, and the value placed on the leadership context of the organisation.

Building Leadership Capability and Capacity

Findings from this study indicate that effective leaders can grow leadership by building leadership capability and capacity within the ECE setting. Clearly, the leadership of our participating leaders was valued, respected and helped to create a strong 'culture' within their different centres. At times, the theme of 'leadership culture' looked different within the separate case study centres; nevertheless, a culture of leadership was evident across all of them. It should be noted here that while the research team examined the way each leader promoted biculturalism and supported their teachers to be culturally responsive in their teaching of all children attending the centre, it should not be confused with the theme relating to the culture and ethos of centres, which is part of the organisational culture of each workplace setting.

Our data analysis uncovered a number of dispositions that the participants deemed necessary to facilitate the actions of leaders. These 'leadership dispositions' were evenly dispersed across all the case study centres. Similarly, the Education Review Office (2010) has identified factors that show effective leadership, i.e., a strong centre vision; professionalism, trust and unity amongst team members; inclusion of parents/whānau; integration of planning, assessment and practice; ongoing self-review; continual improvement of practice; together with implementation of sustainable teaching and learning practices. Fairman and Mackenzie's (2014) study outlined different strategies (e.g., sharing, modelling, coaching, collaborating and learning together, and advocating); professional dispositions and behaviours (e.g., honesty, and openness, reflection, respect, communication, encouragement, prodding and support), and supportive conditions (e. g., trust, safety, time/scheduling and support from administrators) employed by their participants when engaged in leadership activities. All of those strategies, dispositions and supportive conditions were identified by the participants in our study.

From this data emerged the findings to support our summation that effective leaders: demonstrate strong leadership; model pedagogical and organisational leadership; encourage designated leadership; promote critical inquiry; build confidence and competence; and vision sustainability. Designated and shared leadership approaches were discussed by many of the designated leaders in these case studies. Although not obviously evident in all of the ECE

centres, the theme of 'expectation of strong leadership' clearly emerged from data that unfolded from both a community owned and corporately owned ECE centre as well as one of the kindergartens.

Barriers

Our study found that those without a formal leadership title did tend to demonstrate a reluctance in viewing themselves as 'leaders'. Similar to our study, Fairman and Mackenzie's (2014) school-based study found their teachers only described leadership in terms of formal roles and did not view the leaderful work they undertook as constituting leadership. As posited by Fairman and Mackenzie, perhaps teachers are reluctant to take on leadership work because of the perception that it suggests a hierarchical relationship with their peers. Having said that, some of our participants (both designated leaders and teachers) did refer to the notion of 'distributed leadership', 'shared leadership' and 'everyone is a leader'. Nevertheless, the theme of 'leadership as a cultural practice' demonstrated emergent leadership practices are embedded within the practice of being an ECE teacher, but the teaching team do not necessarily recognise this as leadership.

According to Murray and McDowall Clark (2013), there has been a tendency to rely on business or school-based understandings of leadership, which has focused on positional leaders (e.g., school principals). Indications suggest that teachers are only accepted as pedagogical leaders when they are formally appointed with a leadership title (Colmer & Waniganayake, 2014; Heikka, 2013; Sergiovani, 1998). Titles such as 'Head Teacher', 'Director', 'Room/Team Leader' and 'Pedagogical Leader/Educational Leader' do matter, as found in Thomas and Nuttall's (2014) study when they stated that "positional leadership locates leadership within the practices permitted by virtue of holding a particular position" (p. 103). They further argue that discourses of leadership are what actually determine the identity of leaders, as found in their Australian context of new policy-driven and state mandated expectations of leadership, and where people in the recently appointed roles of 'Educational Leader' are now expected to lead the learning of the teachers as well as the children. Our findings support those of Fairman and Mackenzie (2014) in recommending the need for different conceptions of leadership and its terminology.

This part of the chapter has addressed findings and discussion in relation to the four subsidiary questions. The latter part of this chapter will describe our findings with respect to our overall question, which asked: What leadership processes and structures do effective ECE leaders develop in their centres for the sustainability of the leadership culture?

Limitations of the Study

A number of limitations are reported here. These relate to the selection process for determining effective leadership, difficulties with the use of emailing the questionnaire, and difficulties with recruitment processes for Māori and Pasifika centres.

The scope of the research questions was limited in that we set out to examine effective leadership and as a result, the selection criteria mandated that centres had to be rated 'well-placed' by New Zealand's Education Review Office. Further research might explore what could be done when effective leadership is not happening and could potentially include a change-based action research approach.

There were barriers to emailing a mass survey to all. The original email that the survey was sent out in was perhaps too 'word-heavy' and there were many forms for respondents to fill out. In addition, we had no control over who (if anyone) viewed the survey email sent to centres. An example of this is that it may only have gone as far as the centre's administration person. The survey questionnaire was attached to the email and asked for expressions of interest. Therefore not only did we get limited 'responses' to the survey, it also impacted on the number of centres expressing an interest to participate in Phases Two and Three of this research project. That said, seven case study centres was manageable for this project and although the nature of the study means the findings are not generalisable, the resource that has emerged from the findings will be of relevance to the education sector.

A commitment to support Māori educational aspirations aligns with the aims and plans articulated by the government through the Māori Education Strategy*, Ka Hikitia: Accelerating Success 2013-2017, Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners (Ministry of Education, 2011) and the Tertiary Education Strategy 2014-2019*. Similarly, ECNZ's commitment to support Pasifika aspirations is aligned with the aims and plans of the

Government's *Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017* (Ministry of Education, 2013). During the initial recruitment stage, no Kōhanga Reo or Pasifika centre indicated an interest to continue into the next phase of the research. Therefore, the research team had to use their own contacts to find these two types of centres to participate. The research team was pleased that one Kōhanga Reo could be successfully recruited through this form of networking. However, we were not so fortunate in terms of recruiting a Pasifika centre within our timeframe. Possibly the lack of interest was due to no face-to-face interaction in Phase One of this research. Further research is needed in this area.

Implications

The study identified a number of implications for leadership development and sustainability in early childhood education. These implications are now discussed in terms of practice and theory.

Implications for leadership practice.

1. Despite the literature suggesting that leadership in ECE is only recognised if someone holds a title, evidence from this study indicates that leadership can apply to a whole teaching team, not just the designated leader. While on-the-job leadership learning was the most frequently reported form of leadership, the participating leaders demonstrated how it is possible to actively grow leadership in others. Growing leadership capacity and capability might not be recognised as an overt action by the teaching team and it may not even appear to be something the designated leader explicitly sets out to do. But this study has shown the need for both leaders and their teaching teams to critically reflect and articulate their 'leadership practice' so that it become a more explicit part of their everyday professional practice.
2. A key finding within our project was the low number of participants who had undertaken any type of formal professional learning and development in leadership, and pertaining to early childhood education in particular. The designated leaders and their teaching teams did value other forms of PLD that they had been involved in (and sustained PLD relevant to early childhood education has its merits). Nevertheless, this

dearth of relevant PLD for leaders and aspiring ECE leaders needs to be confronted and addressed so that they are afforded the opportunity to engage in professional learning that develops leadership capability and capacity.

Implications for leadership theory.

1. This study confirms the effectiveness of using Grounded Theory as a theoretical framework. Within this study the perceptions of the participants grounded the research in the participating early childhood centres and shaped the development of themes and theory, which emerged from these perceptions. Using grounded theory the collected data were analysed and sorted towards the identification of a meaningful conceptual framework. Grounded theory combined with case study methodology was particularly useful when exploring the complex interactions between leaders and their teaching teams and the processes and structures underpinning practice. Learning from the participants "how to understand a process or situation" (Morse & Richards, 2002, p. 550) helped us to formulate the conceptual framework for leadership learning and development that emerged from the findings and justified our decision to employ a grounded theory approach. We therefore recommend this methodology for future research studies of a similar nature.
2. This research study adapted Argyris and Schön's (1974) notion of 'theories of action' to examine the congruence and incongruence between the designated leaders' *espoused leadership theories of action* and *leadership theories-in-use.* By identifying and making explicit the congruence and incongruence in leadership practice to guide the 'on-the-job' leadership learning so common in the ECE sector has implications for building leadership capacity and capability. Dalgıç and Bakioğlu (2014) confirm that reflecting on the incongruence in their leadership theories of action enables leaders to find answers for why they act in particular ways in certain situations and how they can develop their actions for the future.
3. By extending theory to inform practice we have developed, a resource grounded in the findings that emerged from this research study. The high level of congruence found between what the leaders said they valued (espoused leadership theories of

action), and the practices they enacted (leadership theories-in-use) underscores the value of making 'leadership practice' a more explicit part of what leaders and teachers reflect on and articulate within their everyday professional lives. This finding was the impetus for the framework resource that has emerged from the data. The resource with the working title: *Leadership theories-in-action framework: A continuous 'on-the-job' leadership professional learning and development approach* (see Appendix I) offers ECE leaders, aspiring leaders and their teaching teams a process of 'observation, discussion, reflection and analysis' to explore their leadership-theories-in-action within their workplace settings. Argyris (1999) discusses the importance of observation because "when you observe people's behaviour and try to come up with rules that would make sense of it […] you will quickly see that this espoused theory has very little to do with how they actually behave" (p. 131). We recommend that the *Leadership theories-in-action framework* be integrated into the self-review process mandated for all ECE services in Aotearoa New Zealand. As this suggested framework is a model of continuous 'on-the-job' leadership professional learning and development, we recommend that the process of regularly 'observing, discussing, reflecting and analysing' leadership theories-in-action occurs at least once or twice a year, e.g., when new people join the team, whether they are in designated leadership roles or not. Possibly this framework can also be used to reflect on any area of incongruence within ECE centre practice, not only leadership. As an evaluative framework, it also has implications for strengthening leadership capability and capacity across the wider education and business sectors.

Conclusion

This research project examined 'effective' leadership, and how sustainable leadership is grown and developed within ECE settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. The study extends understanding in this field by purposefully researching the structures and processes employed by various ECE providers for the sustainability of the leadership culture. The literature (both national and international) highlights the diversity within the ECE sector, and the influence this has on differing leadership practices (Colmer & Waniganayake, 2014; Stoll,

Fink & Earl, 2005; Thornton et al., 2009). The designated leaders within the case studies came from a variety teacher-led early childhood services: community based kindergartens and early childhood education centres, te kōhanga reo, a privately owned ECE setting, as well as a corporately owned ECE setting. However, the similarities across all the case study centres indicate that the type of ECE provider, i.e., community, private or corporately owned may not have as much influence on leadership practice as first thought.

The importance of 'leaders growing leaders' was one of the key reasons this research project was undertaken. There is consensus in the literature about the limited leadership professional learning and development for those in designated leadership positions (Aubrey, 2011; Davis, Kreig & Smith, 2014; Nupponen, 2006; Thornton, et al., 2009) and in most cases leadership development is limited to role modelling of others and on-the-job learning. The present research study adds to the literature in its finding that a very limited number of the designated leaders had undertaken any form of formal professional learning specific to leadership development.

This study has answered the call for the need for more research in ECE leadership from the perspective of Aotearoa New Zealand. It supports the findings of the Education Review Office (2010) that effective leaders in ECE are defined as people who are "inspirational, enthusiastic and innovative thinkers" and "manage change, motivate others to make change, and [have] a good awareness of pacing change that leads to improved quality" (p.4). However, as demonstrated in the findings of this study, effective leadership is not something that just occurs—leadership needs to be purposefully grown, developed and sustained across the ECE setting.

He aha te kai ō te rangatira? He kōrero, he kōrero, he kōrero

What is the food of the leader? It is knowledge. It is communication

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: ECE Leadership Development Survey

By beginning this survey, you acknowledge that you have read the information sheet (attached to the email that this survey link was in) and are giving your consent to agree to participate in this first phase of the research, with the knowledge that you are free to withdraw your participation at any time without penalty. Please note, that participation in this survey does not mean you have to participate in the following two phases of the research. However, we may invite you to participate in Phase two and three if you tick the box at the end of this survey, and provide your email details.

Section 1. Background Information

Please tick boxes that apply below:

1a. Are you:

Female ☐ Male ☐

1b. For demographic purposes, what ethnic group do you align with?

a) New Zealand European
b) Maori
c) Pasifika
d) Asian
e) European
f) Australian
g) Other?_____

1c. What is your age?

a) Less than 20 years
b) Between 20-29 years
c) Between 30-39 years
d) Between 40-49 years

e) Between 50-59 years
f) Over 59 years

1d. What length of time have you worked in the early childhood field, in general?

a) 0-2 years
b) 3-5 years
c) 6-10 years
d) 11-15 years
e) 16-20 years
f) Over 20 years

1e. In what type of early childhood setting do you work, now?

a. Kindergarten
b. Education and care centre
c. Te Kōhanga Reo
d. Pasifika
e. Montessori
f. Steiner
g. Other_____

1f. How long have you been in your current post?

a) 0-2 years
b) 3-5 years
c) 6-10 years
d) 11-15 years
e) 16-20 years
f) Over 20 years

1g. Can you describe the title of your present position?

a) Owner
b) Director
c) Manager
d) Person Responsible
e) Head of Centre
f) Team Leader
g) Laisison/Associate Teacher
h) Teacher
i) Student Teacher
j) Other (please state): ……..

1h. What age group was your initial training for?

a) Birth to 5 years
b) Birth to 8 years
c) Primary
d) Secondary
e) Other (please state) ……

1i. Since your original qualification, have you had any (other) training for working in ECE or not?

Yes ☐ No ☐

1j. If yes, can you say what additional training/qualifications you have received (include short courses, in-service training, degree/certificate/diploma courses, in-service training, degree/certificate/diploma courses) and say what area, for example, courses related specifically to leadership.

a) In-service professional development
b) Short courses
c) Advanced certificate (post graduate)
d) Advanced diploma (post graduate)
e) Master's degree
f) Other professional qualifications. Please state_____

Section 2. Leadership Development[1]

2a. What indicators of leadership potential would you identify as important in ECE professionals at the start of their career?

Rank the *top five* aspects in order of importance, with 1 as most important

Please use a ranking number once

a Dedication

b Willingness to work with others

c Attitude of life-long learning

d A variety of teaching experiences

e Constantly questions own practice

f Guides and mentors during professional experience

g Critically evaluates and tries new ideas and ways of working

h Other (please state) _____

_____

2b. Which aspects of the early childhood designated leader's main roles, responsibilities and functions do you regard as most important?

Rank the *top five* aspects in order of importance, with 1 as most important ranking

Please use a ranking number once

a. To describe and articulate a philosophy, values and vision

b. To ensure the delivery of a quality service

c. To engage in ongoing professional development and to encourage it in all staff

d. To be accountable to and act as an advocate for children, parents, staff, the profession and the general community

e. To engage in a collaborative and partnership style of leadership

f. To be sensitive and responsive to the need for change and manage change effectively

g. To adopt an entrepreneurial approach that is mindful of competition with others in the sector

h. Other (please state)

2c. What aspects of the early childhood leadership role would you say contribute most to the sustainability of leadership development in your institution?

		Very low 1	Low 2	Moderate 3	High 4	Very high 5
1	Community leadership (understanding and responding to day by day centre based issues and problems)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	Pedagogical leadership (relating research to teaching and learning practice)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	Administrative leadership (focusing on administrative and financial management)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4	Entrepreneurial leadership (vision, forward thinking, planning, taking risks)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5	Conceptual leadership	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

(vision to change in context of broader social policy shifts)					
6 Career development leadership (enabling practitioners to see progressive and fulfilling career paths)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7 Advocacy Leadership (represents children and whānau, brings to public attention and seeks to improve)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8 Performance-led leadership (emphasises efficiency, performance and technique practice)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9 Other (please state) _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

May we contact you to follow-up on your answers to this survey?

- Yes
- No

Please provide your name and email address below if you wish to be contacted:

Name: ----------

Email: ----------

If for any reason, you wish to withdraw from research participation please contact debbie.ryder@ecnz.ac.nz

Thank you for your time in completing this questionnaire.

Appendix B: Participant Expression of Interest Form

Research Project: Leaders Growing Leaders: Effective Early Childhood Leaders for Sustainable Leadership

Participant Expression of Interest Form

Thank you for taking the time to consider participation in this study, which aims to investigate how effective early childhood leaders support the leadership development of themselves and their teams to sustain leadership capacity in their ECE centres.

If you, as the designated leader, are eligible to participate in the research; that means the leader and all the administrative and teaching staff will be invited to participate in the study.

In order to be eligible to participate in the study the designated leader must meet the following criteria:

- Have pedagogical and administrative leadership responsibility
- Your centre ERO report must have a rating of either 'Very well placed – The next ERO review in four years'; or 'Well placed – The next ERO review in three years'
- You are implementing practices to grow leadership capacity (e.g., your own leadership development, growing others as leaders, and sustaining leadership culture, etc.) in the centre.
- You can secure release time for each member of your staff to attend all data collection processes. This data collection includes: one interview (per staff member) that will take up to one hour at a time; three days observations for the designated leader(shadowing sessions); and keeping a journal of critical incidents regarding leadership (A Leader's Journal of Critical Incidents) for a one month period.
- You need to be available for observation (designated leader) and/or interviews (designated leaders and other staff) between June 2015 and September 2015.
- Your centre is not currently engaged in in-depth and/or cluster Ministry of Education funded professional development.

If you believe you meet the above criteria please complete the following section.

1) Your name ……

2) Name of centre.....

3) Contact address of centre ……..

4) Contact phone number of centre ……

5) E-mail address ……

6) What sector of ECE is your centre situated in? (please tick)

☐ Education and Care Centre –community based

☐ Education and Care Centre –privately owned

☐ Free Kindergarten

☐ Māori Immersion Setting (please specify …….....)

☐ Pasifika ECE Centre (please specify …….....)

☐ Other (please specify …….....)

7) What is the capacity of your centre (number of children)?

…….

8) How many children are enrolled in your centre at the moment?

……

9) Please specify the number of staff working at your centre?

Teacher …….

Administrative staff ……..

Support staff ……..

10) Please describe your leadership position (i.e., I am the manager, I am the owner, I am the head teacher, I am the head teacher for the infants and toddlers...)

.....

.....

11) Why are you interested in participating in the study? Please explain briefly.

……

……

……

12) Why do you think your centre should be one of the cases in the project to make a contribution to ECE leadership research?

……

……

……

13) Which of your leadership development practices do you think will contribute to the project?

……

……

……

……

Thank you for completing this form. Please scan and email your expression of interest to debbie.ryder@ecnz.ac.nz by……. We will inform you of the outcome of your Expression of Interest by……

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us:

Debbie Ryder

(Project Leader)

Email: debbie.ryder@ecnz.ac.nz

Ph: 04 4719554

Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand

Appendix C: Information Sheet

Research Project: Leaders Growing Leaders: Effective Early Childhood Leaders for Sustainable Leadership

Information Sheet

Tēnā koe

Dear Participant,

We are undertaking a research project that investigates how effective early childhood leaders support the leadership development of themselves and their teams to sustain leadership capacity in their ECE centres. This research project has been approved by Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand (ECNZ)'s Research and Ethics Committee. The primary research participants are those leaders who have designated pedagogical and managerial responsibility for the learning programme (of both children and staff) in their early childhood centres. The research will also include participation by other centre staff.

If you agree to participate in the research project your team as a whole will take part in up to two interviews for up to one hour at a time and a series of observations (three full day shadowing sessions). First interviews with the designated leader will begin in June 2015, followed by interviews with the staff in August 2015 and shortly after that, followed by the three day observations of the designated leader. Data collection process is expected to be completed by September 2015. In addition, the designated leader will be asked to keep a journal of critical incidents regarding leadership (A Leader's Journal of Critical Incidents) for a period of one month.

The interviews and some of the observations will be audiotaped, transcribed and used as data in the research project. In addition, brief research notes will be made during each visit to the centre. You will be sent the interview transcript four weeks after the interview(s) for approval of its accuracy, and you will have two weeks to verify the data.

It is anticipated that participation in this research project will provide an opportunity for you and the others in your centre to reflect on your leadership development.

We do not anticipate any risks to you as a result of participating in this research project beyond the normal experience of everyday working life. Please note that your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw from the project at any time and/or withdraw your data from the project at any time prior to the data being analysed. Your name will not be used in the findings of the project nor will any identifying features of you or your centre appear in the findings. While we cannot ensure complete anonymity due to some very unique characteristics of the centres, every attempt will be made to protect your privacy. Participants will be asked to provide a pseudonym for themselves and no other identifiers that could be used to deduce the identity of participants will be reported in research publications. You will not be required to answer any questions you consider as personal, intrusive, or potentially distressing.

The findings of this project will be published by our Association as a report. We also anticipate publishing and disseminating our results at conferences, and in practitioner and academic journals. You will be invited to request copies of any publications arising from the project.

De-identified data from the project will be retained for up to five years and then destroyed. It will be stored in a locked storeroom in the National Office of Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand.

If at any time you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the project, you can contact the Project Leader, Debbie Ryder (ph: 04 471 9554, or email debbie.ryder@ecnz.ac.nz). You can also contact the research director, Dr Janis Carroll-Lind (ph. 0800CHILDCARE (0800-244532), or janis.carroll-lind@ecnz.ac.nz).

To be considered for participation in this study please complete the attached expression of interest form and scan and email to the Project Leader debbie.ryder@ecnz.ac.nz by……

Nāku noa, nā/

Yours sincerely

Debbie Ryder (Project Leader)

Appendix D.1: Consent Form for the Designated leader

This form is required to be filled out by the designated leader within the centre.

Research Project: Leaders Growing Leaders: Effective Early Childhood Leaders for Sustainable Leadership

Consent Form

☐ I have been given and have understood an explanation relating to the nature and purpose of this research project. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it.

☐ I understand that this data will be kept secure and only the researchers and the transcriber will have access to that data. I also understand that all data collected will be destroyed five years after the conclusion of the project.

☐ I have read the Information Sheet which I will keep for my records.

☐ I understand that agreeing to take part in this project means I will be interviewed on up to two occasions for up to one hour at a time, and that these interviews will be audio-taped and a transcription made for use in data analysis.

☐ I understand that there will be observations (three day shadowing sessions) of myself as part of the project and that these observation sessions will also be audio-taped or noted as field notes, although not necessarily transcribed. Each shadowing session will take between three to five hours.

☐ I understand that I will keep a journal of critical leadership incidents (A Leader's Journal of Critical Incidents) for a period of one month.

☐ I understand that I will receive a copy of the transcript of my interviews and will have two weeks to verify the data.

☐ I retain the right to withdraw some or all of this data prior to the data being analysed.

☐ I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from the project at any stage without penalty.

☐ I understand that while every attempt will be made to de-identify data reported in any outputs from the project, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed and that readers may be able to identify me through a process of deduction.

☐ I consent to data drawn from my interviews being used in related research publications and conference presentations. I would like to be invited to request a copy of any resultant publication.

Please sign the enclosed copy of this form and scan and email it to debbie.ryder@ecnz.ac.nz by…….. Thank you.

Name …… Date ……

Signature ……

Email address for copy of any publication ……

Appendix D.2: Consent Form for the Teaching Team

This form is required to be filled by the teaching staff within the centre

Research Project: Leaders Growing Leaders: Effective Early Childhood Leaders for Sustainable Leadership

Consent Form

☐ I have been given and have understood an explanation relating to the nature and purpose of this research project. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it.

☐ I understand that this data will be kept secure and only the researchers will have access to that data. I also understand that all the data collected will be destroyed five years after the conclusion of the project.

☐ I have read the Information Sheet which I will keep for my records.

☐ I understand that agreeing to take part in this project means I will be interviewed on up to two occasions for up to an hour at a time, and that these interviews will be audio-taped and a transcription made for use in data analysis.

☐ I understand that there will be observations (three full day shadowing sessions) of the designated leader as part of the project and that these observation sessions will also be audio-taped or noted as field notes, although not necessarily transcribed. Each shadowing session will take between three to five hours.

☐ I understand that I will receive a copy of the transcript of my interviews and will have two weeks to verify the data.

☐ I retain the right to withdraw some or all of this data prior to the data being analysed.

☐ I understand that my participation is voluntary and I can withdraw from the project at any stage without penalty.

☐ I understand that while every attempt will be made to de-identify data reported in any outputs from the project, absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed and that readers may be able to identify me through a process of deduction.

☐ I consent to data drawn from my interviews being used in related research publications and conference presentations. I would like to be invited to request a copy of any resultant publication.

Please sign the enclosed copy of this form and return it in the stamp-addressed envelope provided. Thank you.

Name ……. Date …….

Signature ……

Email address for copy of any publication ……

Appendix E1: Interview and Shadowing Observation Schedule

Example: Case 1: Centre Name, Location

Date	
Time	
Interview (I) OR Observation (O)	
Interviewer / Observer	
Interviewee / Observee	
Address of the Centre	
Transcriber	
Transcription Sent Date	
Transcription Return Date	
Transcript sent to Interviewee Date	
Feedback on Transcription Yes/No Date	

Appendix E2: Shadowing Guidelines for the Observers

As a researcher you will spend the agreed period of time observing the day to day work of a designated leader. This may involve a range of activities such as attending meetings, watching interactions with others etc.

1. The shadowing session should take between three to five hours. You should make this clear with your host when you are planning the shadowing sessions.
2. Provide the host with an outline of what to expect from the shadowing experience prior to the shadowing session taking place.
3. Observations (shadowing sessions) should be as unobtrusive as possible. The observer should not interrupt activities or ask questions during the time of the shadowing session.
4. The observer should follow the person being shadowed everywhere unless there is some indication that this action would not be appropriate.
5. Nonverbal communication should be avoided during the shadowing session.
6. Take notes during your observation (shadowing session). Reflecting on these notes following the experience will allow you to maximise your learning.
7. After the first shadowing session the participants should discuss the experience to determine if any adjustments are needed for the following shadowing sessions.
8. Show tact, discretion and awareness and if required withdraw from situations when circumstances deem it appropriate (for example, a student may just have requested a meeting to discuss something of a personal or private nature).
9. Maintain confidentiality at all times.

Appendix F1: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol—Designated Leader

Date:	**Time:**
Name and address of Centre:	
Interviewee:	
Interviewer:	

Just a few points before we begin….

As you are aware, the focus of this research project is on understanding how effective ECE leaders sustain leadership development in their centres. We are interested in exploring your perspectives, on your approaches to leadership development. This interview will last thirty minutes to an hour. We would like you to be as honest and open as you feel comfortable. Please be assured that we will make every effort to maintain confidentiality.

1. What is the title of your current position?
2. How would you describe the culture of this organisation (i.e., is it collegial, hierarchical, collaborative)?
3. What are your roles, responsibilities and functions as a leader?
4. What aspects of your roles, responsibilities and functions as an ECE leader do you regard as most important?
5. What kind of leadership processes and structures do you have in your centre?
6. How are decisions made in the centre?

7. Are there any leadership processes or structures in your centre that you think contribute to the sustainability of the leadership culture? Can you please explain this in detail?
8. What actions do you take for the on-going professional and leadership development of yourself?
9. What leadership actions do you take in developing the leadership capacity of the other staff? (strategies, leadership styles, communication)
10. What are the barriers to fulfilling your role as a leader and sustaining leadership capacity in your centre? (internal and external) How have these hindered?
11. What advice would you give to other ECE leaders?
12. Any other comments?

Appendix F2: Semi-Structured Interview Protocol—Teaching Staff

Date:	**Time:**
Name and address of Centre:	
Interviewee:	
Interviewer:	

Just a few points before we begin….

As you are aware, the focus of this research project is on understanding how effective ECE leaders sustain leadership development in their centres. We are interested in exploring your perspectives, as one of seven other leaders in different types of ECE centres, on your approaches to leadership development. This interview will last thirty minutes to an hour. We would like you to be as honest and open as you feel comfortable. Please be assured that we will make every effort to maintain confidentiality.

1. What is the title of your current position?
2. How would you describe the culture of this organisation (i.e., is it collegial, hierarchical, collaborative)?
3. How are decisions made in your centre?
4. Who do you see as the leader of your centre? Why do you think so?
5. What are the roles, responsibilities and functions of the designated leader?
6. What kind of leadership processes and structures do you have in your centre?
7. In what ways do the leadership processes or structures in your centre contribute to the sustainability of the leadership culture?

8. What actions do you take for the on-going professional learning and leadership development of yourself?
9. Do you get support from your designated leader for your professional and leadership development? How does it work?
10. What leadership actions does your designated leader take in developing the other staff as leaders? (strategies, leadership styles, communication)
11. What do you think are the barriers for your designated leader and the other staff to sustain leadership capacity in your centre? (e.g., barriers caused by the designated leader, other stakeholders, policies, priorities etc.)

Appendix G. A Leader's Journal of Critical Incidents

Please keep a journal of critical leadership moments, incidents, experiences or activities that arise in your day to day practice. The specific incidents can be either positive or negative. Please first set the scene by describing in detail what happened, then identify any particular leadership knowledge, skills and/or theories you are aware of using in relation to these incidents. Also note down any other comments that relate to your interpretation, analysis and meaning making about the incident.

Setting the Scene **What did you notice?** **What happened? (date, time, location, ongoing activities, those involved and context)**	**Reflection-in-action** **How did you respond?** **How did you feel? What were you thinking?** **What leadership knowledge, skills and/or theory were you aware of using (Think about previous experiences, research , reading and/or professional training)**	**Any additional comments:**

*Tool adapted from Aubrey, C. (2011). *Leading and Managing in the Early Years* (p. 163). London: SAGE. Copyright 2011 by Carol Aubrey.

Appendix H: Transcriber Confidentiality Agreement

LEADERS GROWING LEADERS:

EFFECTIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERS FOR SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP

TRANSCRIBER CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I ..... (Full Name - printed) agree to transcribe the tapes provided to me. I understand that in agreeing to assist with this research project that I must keep all information confidential.

Please tick each box that applies

Yes	No	
☐	☐	I agree to keep confidential all the information provided to me including the names of the participants, their centres and people/children in them.

Yes	No	
☐	☐	I will not make any copies of the transcripts or keep any record of them, other than those required for the project.

Signature: ..... **Date:** .....

Appendix I: Leadership Theories-in-Action Framework

Leadership-theories-in-action framework: A Continuous 'on-the-job' leadership professional learning and development approach for leaders and teaching teams

This leadership professional development framework offers ECE leaders, aspiring leaders and teaching teams, a process of 'observation, discussion, reflection and analysis' to explore their leadership 'theories-in-action' within their ECE setting

***Step one*: Observation** - observe 'leadership-theories-in-use' within the team. Use the 'dispositions of an early childhood education leader' table (below) to help identify leadership-theories-in-use:

Korero tahi: **Being a communicator**	**Whanaungatanga:** **Being relationship focused**	**Manākitanga:** **Being caring to others**	**Kotahitanga:** **Being supportive of the team**	**Whakamana:** **Being a leader of growth and change**	**Hoa Arohaehae:** **Being a critical friend**
Questions Explains ideas/processes Shares knowledge Makes suggestions Provides instructions	Passion and enjoyment of teaching of children Inclusive in approach to children, families and communities Knows clients well, engaging in	Takes care of team Respects team as people Warm nature Cares for people whom she leads Supportive	Collegial Encouragers Checks in with team Prioritises time to talk to team Strong leadership	Leads growth and change Identifies strengths in others Grows leadership and knowledge Guides	Engages in critical conversations Challenges Willing to be challenged Inspires others Open and honest

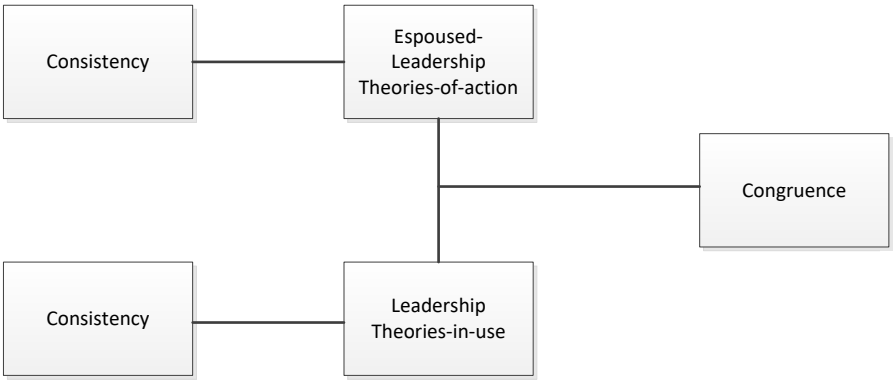
Seeks clarification Agrees to expectations Prioritises time to talk to parents Strength in verbal communication Open communication Practises reflective listening Acknowledges others Discussions	conversation about families and daily events Advocates for staff, whānau and wellbeing of tamariki Aroha ki te tangata (love, respect for people)	Pastoral care of team – ensures everyone is happy Trustworthy Supportive Lifts you up Approachable Concerned	Clear leadership Professional Leader as overseer Ensures everyone's voice is heard Takes initiative Drives initiatives Ensures mana of the staff is maintained	Role models new initiatives Changes roles Learns and improve on the role of being a leader	Straight talker Assertive Direct Likes to talk things through Wise manner Responsible Tenacity Ability to challenge staff in positive manner Encourager

***Step two*: Discussion** – In your team meeting discuss (and document) everyone's 'espoused-leadership-theories'

***Step three*: Reflect** – Critically reflect as a team and make the 'espoused-leadership-theories' and 'leadership-theories-in-use' explicit.

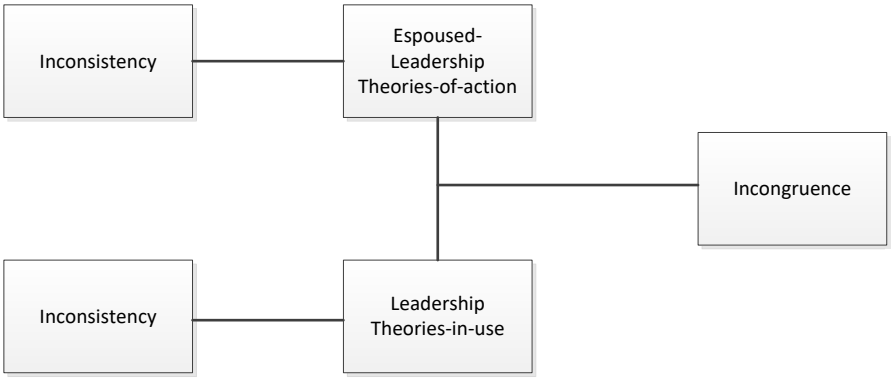
***Step four*: Analyse** – Critically analyse any incongruences between 'espoused-leadership-theories' and 'leadership-theories-in-use' that exists within the centre practice. If you find that all of your centre's leadership values (espoused theory) and actions (theory-in-use) are in congruence, then you have completed the 'leadership-theories-in-use' process as below:

Framework for Congruent Leadership Theories of Action



Step five: Take action – It will be more than likely that there is some level of incongruence between how leadership is espoused and enacted within your centre. Therefore, your current thinking on incongruent values and actions will look more like this next diagram:

Framework for Incongruent Leadership Theories of Action

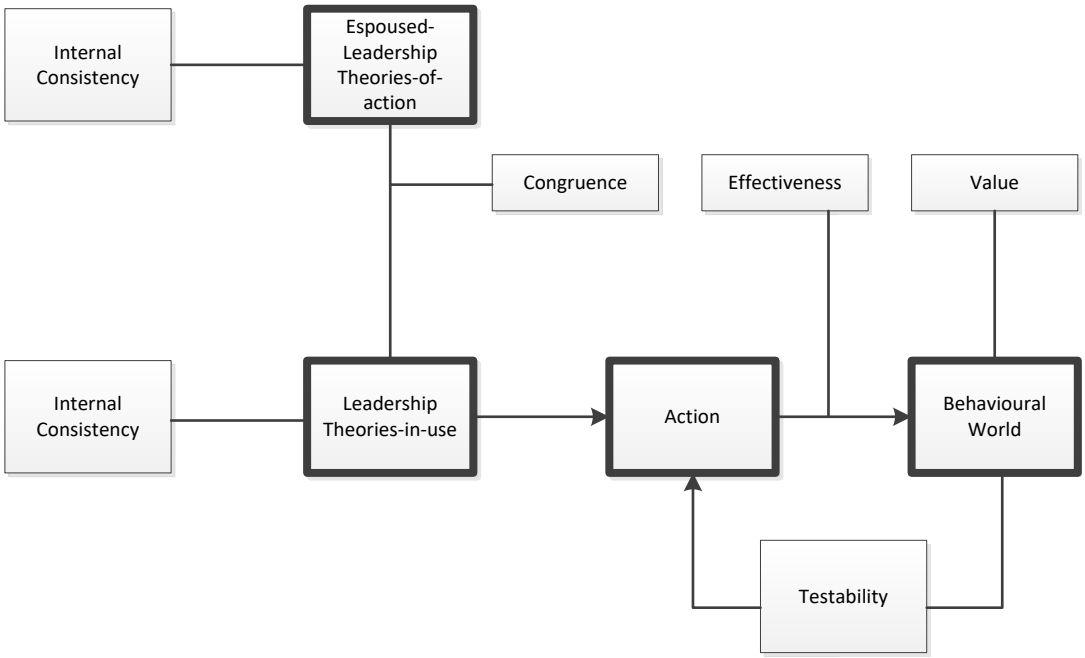


Next steps for analysing incongruent leadership practices

Having identified the area of incongruence within the leadership of the centre, you repeat the process again, this time looking specifically at the area or areas of incongruence. It is recommended that you look at one area of incongruence at a time.

- *Step one (repeated) - observe* the specific area of leadership incongruence within the team. Use the 'dispositions of an early childhood education leader' table again, this time looking at dispositions that best fit the area of incongruence.
- *Step two (repeated) – discuss* within team meeting (and document) everyone's 'espoused-leadership-theories' specifically to do with the area of leadership incongruence.
- *Step three (repeated) – Critically reflect* as a team and make the 'espoused-leadership-theories' and 'leadership-theories-in-use' explicit – this time just about the one area of leadership incongruence
- *Step four (repeated) – Critically analyse* the incongruences between 'espoused-leadership-theories' and 'leadership-theories-in-use'. Now that everyone is aware of the incongruence, has it changed since it was last observed? Has it now become an 'effective' leadership practice? What 'value' does the leadership practice hold now? Has the 'behaviour' that surrounded the (previously incongruent) leadership practice, changed? If so, reflect together on why that may be. If you can now identify congruence in the leadership behaviour you will have seen to have worked through this process as below:

Leadership Theories of Action Framework: Bringing the Theory to Practice



As this is a model of continuous 'on-the-job' leadership professional learning and development, it is to the team's advantage to regularly be 'observing, discussing, reflecting and analysing their leadership-theories-in-action within their team. It is recommended that this is done at least once or twice a year, and when new people join the team, whether they are in designated leadership roles or not. It is proposed that this framework can also be used for any area of incongruence within ECE centre practice, not only leadership. This evaluative framework could be adapted to be used across the education and business sectors, to strengthen leadership capability and capacity.

Reference: Leadership Theories of Action and Theories-in-Use models have adapted from:

Argyris, C. & Schön, D. (1974). *Theory in practice. Increasing professional effectiveness*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.