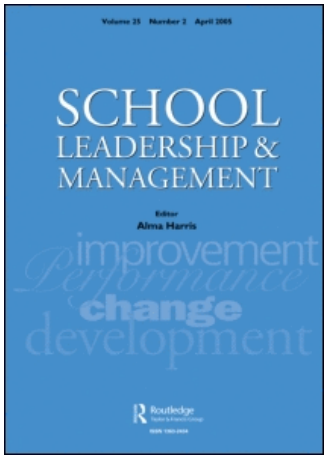

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Bureaucratic Control or Professional Autonomy?: performance management in New Zealand schools

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Bureaucratic Control or Professional Autonomy?: performance management in New Zealand schools

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ABSTRACT *Since 1997 appraisal has been a mandated requirement of New Zealand schools. While the management of teacher performance is not new, schools are increasingly being faced with difficult and complex decisions regarding accountability mechanisms for teacher performance. Moreover, in a climate of school self-management the potential exists for tensions between bureaucratic systems and the professional autonomy of teachers to surface. This article reports on research conducted in 2001 that investigated teachers' perceptions of the bureaucratic and professional approaches to performance management in their schools. In a climate of increasing control of teachers' work and professional activities by the State, results from recent research indicate that school managers have adopted a professional approach to the appraisal of staff. Moreover the involvement of teachers in developing school-level appraisal systems is pinpointed as fundamental to the long-term success of appraisal in New Zealand schools.*

Introduction

Like many other Western countries, educational administration in New Zealand was subject to widespread systemic reform in the late 1980s. Capper and Munro (1990) have argued that a major factor in the call for reform was the high level of public dissatisfaction with teachers and their professional work. Subsequently, incorporated into the reform agenda was the development of systems to appraise teachers and their performance. It was not so much the concept of appraisal that the government

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determined was needed but a systematic way to evaluate teacher performance to ensure that incompetent teachers did not continue to teach (Fidler 1995).

As a direct result of these reforms the introduction of site-based management devolved responsibility and accountability for teacher performance to the school level. Since 1997 schools' individual boards of trustees and principals have been required to have in place performance management systems and personnel policies to promote and sustain high levels of staff performance (Ministry of Education 1999a). Significantly, this increasing legislative and regulatory framework has prompted schools to manage their performance management systems in bureaucratic ways (Fitzgerald 2001; Gunter 1999; Piggot-Irvine 2000). Tensions have surfaced as schools have been simultaneously faced with the dual challenge of bureaucratic accountability and recognition of the developmental aspects of teacher appraisal (Gunter 2002; Middlewood & Cardno 2001). Inevitably terms such as performance appraisal, attestation, registration and professional development have become an integral part of the professional language, professional work and professional expectations of teachers in New Zealand schools. Yet ways in which schools have developed systems to meet increasing bureaucratic demands have differed.

While guidelines issued to schools suggested that boards of trustees (the governing body) were required to 'develop and implement personnel and industrial policies within policy and procedural guidelines' (Ministry of Education 1997: 3), the reality was that boards devolved this responsibility to school managers. This devolution of responsibility and accountability has not only occurred *to* schools but also *within* schools. In terms of performance management for example, core activities such as interviewing, observation, report writing and review have been located as one of the responsibilities of middle managers in New Zealand schools.

Policy rhetoric has indicated that the primary purpose of appraisal was to provide 'a positive framework for improving the quality of teaching and learning' and that performance management systems were designed to be 'flexible', 'appropriate' within a 'minimum quality assurance and accountability framework' (Ministry of Education 1997: 1). A direct consequence of this espoused belief was that appraisers would act as neutral agents of policy. As the research reported on in this article indicates, teachers who acted as appraisers undertook their responsibilities seriously. More specifically, the core appraisal work was carried out by middle managers in schools; that is those teachers with responsibilities for teams of teachers and who were given management units (MUs) plus a small salary increment or allowance to recognise and recompense them for a range of additional duties (Fitzgerald 2000). Schools are allocated management units based primarily on their roll size and these management units are distributed to those who undertake management responsibilities. A teacher who holds a head of department (HoD) role in a smaller department (for example History, Music or Art) may have one or two units whereas an HoD of a larger department (Science, English or Mathematics) may hold three of four management units. The current salary rate per unit is NZ$2750 and will increase with the new salary round in 2002 (New Zealand Post Primary Teachers' Association 1999).

Appraisers were required to complete a number of activities such as:

- The development of written statements of performance expectations in consultation with the teacher;
- The identification and written specification of development objectives and indication of professional support needed to meet these expectations;
- A formal observation of the appraisee's teaching;
- At least two formal meetings (setting objectives and annual review of objectives); and
- The completion of a formal appraisal report that was prepared and discussed in consultation with the teacher and lodged with the principal (Ministry of Education 1997: 5).

A further way in which performance management in general and teacher appraisal specifically was subjected to tighter control was through the introduction of the 1999 *Professional Standards* which were articulated as 'part of the Government's strategy for developing and maintaining high quality teaching and leadership in schools and improving learning outcomes for students' (Ministry of Education 1999: 5). These standards described the key elements of teacher performance and provided 'a base for assessing teachers' progress in relation to pay progression, competency and professional development' (Ministry of Education 1999: 4). The intention of government was unequivocal. Its explicit intention was to establish 'a stronger link between performance and remuneration' (Ministry of Education 1999: 5) with the integration of these standards into existing performance management systems. The potential for an erosion of the professional partnership between teachers was thus created and a new relationship based on formal line management emerged (Bennett 1999).

While most teachers have acknowledged that some form of appraisal is necessary (Fitzgerald 2001), it is the increasing level of bureaucratic control on teachers' professional work and activities by central government within a decentralised system that is inherently problematic. A further difficulty is that the *Professional Standards* detail the minimum competencies that a teacher must display and there are a number of areas in which a teacher's performance might be evaluated depending on whether s/he is a beginning classroom teacher, classroom teacher, experienced classroom teacher or management unit holder (Ministry of Education 1999). What is not clear however is how decisions are made as to which standard is applied to which situation and at which particular point in time. More significantly, neither the policy nor the guidelines provide suggestions as to how these competencies might be identified and how these standards might be incorporated into a performance management system.

It is our contention that this regulated and bureaucratic system has placed teacher-appraisers (and middle managers in particular) in a contradictory relationship with their colleagues. On the one hand, as teachers they have continued to work in a collaborative, collegial and supportive way with their professional colleagues yet on the other hand, as appraisers, they have been required to adopt a hierarchical stance to ensure that an objective and performance-driven performance manage-

ment system was implemented. This therefore has contributed to the bureaucratisation of the profession of teaching and teachers' professional work.

Performance Management and the Bureaucratisation of Teaching

The implementation of performance management policies and processes in New Zealand schools has been a political reaction to public calls for the identification and regulation of teacher performance and teacher accountability (Mathias & Jones 1989). In the 1990s these concerns heightened and consequently a number of statutory mechanisms were introduced to provide a regulatory framework to assess, evaluate and appraise teacher performance in a public way. Since 1997 teachers have been *assessed* to determine whether they meet criteria for registration, *evaluated* against a set of professional standards to judge competence, *attested* for salary increments and *appraised* to review performance. That is, there is an increasingly bureaucratic system of assessment, evaluation, attestation, review and appraisal that surveys and controls the professional work of teachers in a variety of ways for a variety of purposes. Such a system however fails to take into account the complexity of teachers' professional work as Middlewood and Cardno (2001) have argued. The net effect of these systemic changes has been the creation of a bureaucracy of performance management within the bureaucratised profession of teaching.

This view is not necessarily new. It has been suggested that the performance management system that has been mandated for New Zealand schools is derived from a bureaucratic model of control and accountability that empowers managers with control over the practice of teaching (McNeil 1981; O'Neill 1997). In this model, the professional voices of teachers are not easily heard. As suggested by Ker (1992) bureaucratic forms of appraisal are primarily concerned with managers ensuring that teachers are complying with their requirements, and consequently this significantly prolaterianises teachers' professional lives. It is our contention that the practice of teaching has undergone increasing external control through legislation and reform, and the forms and means of teacher evaluation are a significant part of that control (Carter 1997; Densmore 1987; Piggot-Irvine 2000; Smyth & Shacklock 1998). This is what we refer to as 'the bureaucratisation of teaching'.

In the bureaucratic organisation and management of schools, Darling-Hammond (1990: 27) suggests that:

> Schools are agents of government that can be administered by hierarchical decision-making and controls. Policies are made at the top of the system and handed down to administrators who translate them into rules and procedures. Teachers follow the rules and procedures (class schedules, curricula, textbooks, rules for promotion and assignment of students, etc.), and students are processed according to them.

In this model of schooling, teachers are required to perform designated tasks, and thus a performance management system is needed to evaluate their performance. The above description further implies that appraisal and performance management are hierarchical, and that the teaching role is narrowly defined in line with a conception of teaching as a form of labour (Haertel 1991; Winter 1989).

There are a number of issues that make a bureaucratic model untenable for developing and sustaining a healthy school climate, and specifically for the appraisal of teachers. Teachers who are reflective practitioners thrive on collaboration, knowledge sharing, collegiality, freedom, self-efficacy, professional practice and democracy. These ideals are the antithesis of bureaucracy that depends on individualism, hierarchy, competition, rewards and sanctions, secrecy, compliance, accountability and procedures (Darling-Hammond 1990; Rizvi 1989; Wildy & Wallace 1998). As educational reforms are increasingly being motivated by economic factors with concerns for international competitiveness, schools and education are being bureaucratised (Carter 1997). This has been to the disadvantage of teachers and their students.

The promotion of teacher professionalism does not negate the need for teachers to be accountable for their practice. The issue is more who they are accountable *to*, and *who controls* the standards, practices and procedures that make-up their professional accountability (Darling-Hammond 1990). Given the professional nature of teaching and teachers' work, it is not inconceivable to suggest that teachers should appraise and monitor themselves (Carr & Kemmis 1986; O'Hanlon 1993). This therefore leads to the suggestion that teachers should genuinely undertake their professional responsibility and proactively monitor (and censure) their own profession. To this end, it would be appropriate for teachers to establish a professional body to deal with the professional issues of teaching, particularly as their practice is being significantly impinged upon by legislated reform (Sullivan 1999). To date, this has not occurred in New Zealand.

If there were a genuine respect for teachers' professionalism, they could then appraise their work collegially as a 'community of professional colleagues' in their particular school site (Brownie 1993: 35). They could thus be accountable to each other and, in the process, develop useful and meaningful knowledge about what it means to be a teacher in their particular context (Wildy & Wallace 1998). There is considerable support for the view that greater teacher professionalism, and all that this entails, is indeed the key for improving teaching and educational provision (Darling-Hammond 1990; Labaree 1992; Sullivan 1999). If this is so, then there is a moral obligation to promote and sustain a professional conception and culture of teaching that is perceived, enacted and appraised as thoughtful, reflective practice.

As we have argued, the bureaucratic nature of the present teacher performance management policies and processes in New Zealand schools ignores the affective dimension of teaching, and therefore creates tension and anxiety for teachers and principals as they try to reconcile conflicting demands in their practice. Because appraisal involves analysis and change, it will often involve emotion as teachers come to terms with issues of self-efficacy and public perception of their practice (Credlin 1999). Indeed, there is research and anecdotal data to suggest that the implementation of performance management has created pressure and anxiety for teachers and principals (Cardno & Piggot-Irvine 1997; Credlin 1999; Duncan 1999; McLellan & Ramsey 1993).

Appraisal is often a threatening process, even for those who value and promote its benefits (Townsend 1995). The sense of suspicion and anxiety is greater in a hierarchical system where a superior is evaluating a teacher's work for bureaucratic purposes (Darling-Hammond *et al.* 1983). In their research Gitlin and Smyth (1989) reported that teachers were apprehensive about appraisal, and were particularly fearful of not measuring up to external demands. Recent research conducted to ascertain teacher perceptions of appraisal in New Zealand schools which is detailed in this article, provides evidence that points to a heightened professional response to appraisal if teachers are systematically and collegially involved in the development *and* implementation of appraisal policies and processes.

The Study

In 2001 a postal questionnaire designed to explore teachers' perceptions of appraisal was distributed to primary and secondary school teachers in the eastern and western Bay of Plenty area of New Zealand. The questionnaire consisted of 37 items. Section A contained 11 were tick-box questions that collected demographic data about the participants. These were designed to provide a picture of the respondents according to:

- gender;
- type of school (primary, intermediate, secondary);
- years teaching; and
- number of management units.

Section B asked eight questions that required closed responses about school-level appraisal systems such as:

1. Have you had any formal professional development with regard to appraisal?
2. Has this professional development occurred within the past two years?

The next two questions required likert scale responses (1 = not aware of the Ministry of Education requirements, 5 = aware of all Ministry of Education requirements). These questions were:

1. Are you aware of the Ministry of Education's requirements for teachers with regard to professional development and the setting of objectives?
2. Are you aware of the Ministry of Education's requirements for teachers with regard to the *Professional Standards?*

The remainder of questions in Section B again asked for specific responses to the following questions:

3. Are you appraised by a teacher with management responsibilities?
4. Are the criteria for your appraisal set by others?
5. Are you involved in the school's review of the appraisal process?
6. How many times are you formally appraised during the year?

Section C contained a list of 26 statements that required likert scale responses

TABLE I. Bureaucratic and professional approaches to appraisal

Statement	Bureaucratic (B) or Professional (P) approaches
Appraisal affirms and values my work as a teacher.	P
Appraisal determines whether I am competent to teach.	B
Appraisal determines whether I move up the pay scale or not.	B
Appraisal helps me be a more effective teacher.	P
Appraisal informs my professional development.	P
Appraisal is a continuous and on-going process.	P
Appraisal is about checking if I conform to the *Professional Standards*.	B
Appraisal is about evaluating how I do my tasks at school.	B
Appraisal is about making conclusive judgments about my teaching performance	B
Appraisal is an objective process.	B
Appraisal is for monitoring my teaching performance.	B
I am anxious about my appraisal.	B
I am comfortable sharing my work with others in appraisal.	P
I direct my own appraisal.	P
I feel my professionalism is undermined by appraisal requirements.	B
I feel supported in my appraisal.	P
I find appraisal impersonal.	B
I have found that trust is central in my appraisal.	P
I have sufficient time to carry out my appraisal.	B
In my appraisal, my teaching practice is considered in a holistic manner.	P
My appraisal is a collaborative, collegial process.	P
My appraisal is an individualistic process.	B
My appraisal is an open and transparent process	P
My appraisal process is based on personal self-review.	P
My appraisal supports reflective practice.	P
The people involved with my appraisal understand me.	P

(1 = strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree). These statements focused on characteristics of the bureaucratic (B) and the professional (P) approaches to teacher appraisal as identified by Grootenboer (2000). These statements are reproduced as Table I.

Findings from this research study are presented and discussed in this section in three segments. Initially the general results of the data are presented and reviewed to give an overall picture of the research findings. Second, the significant correlations between items are briefly presented. Finally, the most significant section details the between-groups analysis of variances (ANOVAs) based on two different demographic factors, namely the number of management units (MUs) held by the participant and the degree to which they were involved in the review of the school's appraisal systems. Respective one-way analysis of variance tests were used for each of these respective independent variables to determine if the number of management units or involvement in the appraisal review process were statistically significant factors that contributed to teachers' perception of appraisal.

In total, 456 questionnaires were distributed and 268 responses were received; that is, a response rate of 58.7%. The demographic data indicated that:

- There were 204 (76.1%) female and 64 (23.8%) male respondents;
- 60 (59.7%) were primary (elementary) school teachers and 108 (40.2%) identified themselves as secondary school teachers;
- 41 (52.6%) of the participants had at least one management unit; and
- 37 teachers (51.1%) had participated in some form of formal professional development with regard to the professional practice of appraisal.

Empirical evidence from this research study indicated that responses to the questionnaire differed according to whether teachers had management responsibilities and management units (MUs) and were directly involved in the school review process. Three groups of teachers were identified:

- Those with no management units (that is, classroom teachers) who were labelled Group U0;
- Those with one management unit who were labelled Group U1; and
- Those with two or more management units and labelled Group U2.

As well, there were three further groups identified according to their level of involvement with the school review process:

- Group R0 indicated that they were 'not involved';
- Group R1 indicated that they were 'moderately/sometimes involved'; and
- Group R2 indicated that they were 'significantly involved'.

Data generated by these groups were compared using one-way between-groups analysis of variances (ANOVAs) to identify significant differences. All data were tested at the $p < 0.05$ level and then subsequently compared using the Tukey HSD test so that groups where the statistical difference occurred could be identified. To interpret the relative magnitude of any differences between group means, the effect size was calculated using eta squared and interpreted using the following guidelines, 0.01 = small effect; 0.06 = moderate effect; and 0.14 = large effect (Pallant 2001). These findings are displayed below in Table II and Table III respectively.

TABLE II. Management units (ANOVA results)

Descriptor	Groups	F	Sig.	Tukey M	Tukey SD	Effect size
Awareness of Ministry requirements with regard to *Professional Standards*	U2 v U0, U2 v U1	6.938	0.001			0.053
	U2			4.19	0.840	
	U1			3.67	1.100	moderate
	U0			3.58	1.123	difference

TABLE III. Summary of the ANOVA results for the management unit groups with regard to the likert-scale items

Likert Scale Statements	F	Sig.	U2 M	U1 M	U0 M	Effect
1. I have sufficient time to carry out my appraisal (B)	5.684	0.004	3.18		3.94	0.042
2. Appraisal is for monitoring my teaching performance (B)	3.984	0.020	3.57		4.10	0.031
3. My appraisal is an open and transparent process (P)	3.648	0.027	4.53		4.05	0.028

Data indicate that a statistically significant difference existed [$F(2, 249) = 6.930$, $p = 0.001$] in school managers' (Groups U1 and U2) awareness of the Ministry of Education requirements with regard to the *Professional Standards*. The effect size was 0.053 that equates to a moderate difference in mean scores between groups. Post-hoc comparisons using the Tukey HSD indicate that the mean scores for Group U2 ($M = 4.19$, $SD = 0.053$) were significantly different from both Group U0 ($M = 3.58$, $SD = 1.123$) and Group U1 ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.100$) respectively. Group U0 did not differ significantly from Group U1. These findings clearly indicate that those with two or more management units were more aware of Ministry of Education requirements with regard to the *Professional Standards* than those who had no management units (Group U0).

As indicated earlier, the second part of the questionnaire asked teachers to respond to a set of statements that explored the bureaucratic and professional approaches to appraisal. Within the list of 26 items, there were statistical differences in responses to three specific statements between those teachers who had two or more management units (U2) and those who had no management units (U0). These findings are displayed below in Table III in order of effect size.

These results indicate a statistically significant difference [$F(2,257) = 5.684$, $p = 0.004$] in the responses of the U2 group ($M = 3.18$) and the U0 group ($M = 3.94$) to the statement concerning time to complete their appraisal. Further, there was a statistically significant difference [$F(2,253) = 3.984$, $p = 0.020$] in the responses of the U2 group ($M = 3.57$) and the U0 group ($M = 4.10$) to the statement: 'appraisal is for monitoring my teaching performance'. Finally, there was a statistically significant difference [$F(2,254) = 3.648$, $p = 0.027$] in their perception of appraisal as 'an open and transparent process' (U2 $M = 4.53$, U0 $M = 4.05$).

These findings indicate that those with MUs are:

- less likely to think they have sufficient time for appraisal:
- less likely to view appraisal as a tool for monitoring teaching performance; and
- more likely to see appraisal as an open and transparent process than their colleagues with no management units or management responsibilities.

TABLE IV. Involvement in school review of appraisal (ANOVA results)

Descriptor	Groups	F	Sig.	Tukey M	Tukey SD	Effect size
Awareness of Ministry requirements with regard to professional development objectives	R2 v R0	5.162	0.006			0.041
	R0				3.30	1.147
	R2			3.81	0.929	small to moderate difference
Awareness of Ministry requirements with regard to *Professional Standards*	R2 v R0, R2 v R1	9.317	0.000			0.070
	R0			3.52	1.137	
	R1			3.67	0.985	moderate
	R2			4.17	1.123	difference

For those teachers who had been involved in the review of their school appraisal practices, (R0 = not involved; R1 = sometimes involved; R2 = significantly involved) there was a significant difference in responses according to level of involvement. These results are produced as Table IV.

As Table IV indicates, for those involved in a school review of appraisal (Groups R1, R2) there was a statistically significant difference in terms of the scale scores that related to their awareness of the Ministry requirements with regard to professional development objectives [$F(2,244) = 5.162$, $p = 0.006$] and *Professional Standards* [$F(2,248) = 9.317$, $p < 0.001$]. That is, those teachers who were involved in the review of their school's appraisal process were significantly more aware of the Ministry of Education requirements for professional development and the *Professional Standards* than those who were not involved (Group R0).

For 11 likert-scale responses to items in the questionnaire that asked respondents to respond to a number of statements there was a statistically significant difference between those teachers who were significantly involved with the appraisal review process (R2) and those who were not involved (R0). For two of these items in particular (statements 10 & 11) there was also a statistically significant difference between those significantly involved in the review process (R2), those moderately involved (R1) and those who were not involved (R0). Results for the 11 items are ranked according to the effect size in Table V.

Furthermore, these findings point to the conclusion that those who are more directly involved with the review of the school appraisal process are more likely to agree with all of the statements in Table V than those who are not involved in the review process.

Discussion

In general, the participants perceived their practice as being consistent with a professional approach to appraisal. The items that received the highest support

TABLE V. Summary of the ANOVA results for the appraisal review process groups with regard to the likert-scale items

Likert Scale Statements	F	Sig.	R2 M	R1 M	R0 M	Effect
1. Appraisal informs my professional development (P)	9.552	0.000	4.50		3.71	0.072
2. Appraisal is a continuous and on-going process (P)	9.343	0.000	5.00	4.86	4.26	0.069
3. My appraisal supports reflective practice (P)	5.969	0.003	4.59		3.98	0.045
4. Appraisal affirms and values my work as a teacher (P)	5.570	0.004	4.42		3.80	0.042
5. My appraisal process is based on personal self-review (P)	5.088	0.007	4.44		3.87	0.039
6. Appraisal determines whether I am competent to teach (B)	5.033	0.007	3.97		3.35	0.038
7. Appraisal is an objective process (B)	4.435	0.013	3.91		3.30	0.035
8. In my appraisal, my teaching practice is considered in a holistic manner (P)	4.297	0.015	4.29		3.66	0.033
9. Appraisal helps me be a more effective teacher (P)	4.114	0.017	4.25		3.69	0.031
10. Appraisal is about evaluating how I do my tasks at school (B)	4.069	0.018	4.27	3.70	3.81	0.031
11. Appraisal determines whether I move up the pay scale or not (B)	3.533	0.031		3.58	2.92	0.028

(mean >4.25) were all related to the professional approach to appraisal, and the items that were supported the least (mean <2.80) were all related to possible negative effects of a bureaucratic approach. The data revealed the strongest agreement with statements such as; 'I am comfortable sharing my work with others in appraisal', and 'Appraisal is a continuous and on-going process'. Furthermore, items that focused on the personal and affective dimension of appraisal were also well supported indicating that teachers valued the support, trust and collaboration of their professional colleagues. However, one result that stood out was the strong agreement (mean = 4.22) with the statement 'Appraisal is about checking if I conform to the *Professional Standards*'. This indicated that the teachers who participated in this research study while well aware of the bureaucratic requirements of

the Ministry of Education were simultaneously able to view appraisal in a professional manner.

Second, the correlation coefficients were calculated between all of the likert-scale items and there were substantial relationships (Burns 2000) between:

- appraisal helping a teacher be more effective and informing their professional development ($r = 0.6457$); and
- their practice being considered in a holistic manner and being undertaken with a collaborative and collegial process ($r = 0.6331$).

Appraisal that supported reflective practice had significantly more correlations over 0.5 than any other item. There were substantial relationships with nine other items, all of which were characteristics of a professional approach, rather than a bureaucratic one.

Overall the participants have portrayed their perceived practice of appraisal as one that is aligned to a professional approach. This is despite working within external and mandatory requirements that attempt to codify a professional approach with bureaucratic reasoning. It seems that teachers are indeed able to act as professional leaders though the Ministry requirements imply that they are not able to do so.

Central to this professional approach to appraisal is the common thread of supporting reflective practice, which has clear links to developing teachers so that the quality of learning and teaching is enhanced. Viewing the teacher holistically, rather than in a narrow technicist way is dependent on the quality of relationships formed between teachers through a collaborative and collegial culture. Because this type of culture is fundamental to the professional approach of appraisal then we need to question if the suggested hierarchical approach is the best one for developing effective teachers.

Those who have less management responsibility in this hierarchy, view their appraisal process as less transparent and open than those who most likely appraise them. They are more likely to position their appraisal process as a means for monitoring their teaching performance and are less likely to be aware of all of the Ministry's guidelines. However those who have this extra management responsibility are less likely to have sufficient time to effectively enact their school's appraisal process. Subsequently their appraisal process may revert to a minimalist approach that emphasises checklists at the expense of a more time-intensive professional approach.

While most teachers indicated that they were aware of Ministry of Education requirements for the conduct and reporting of performance appraisal, the level at which teachers were involved in appraisal policy development and review indicated a significant difference across the two sectors. 66% of all primary school respondents had been involved in their school self-review of its appraisal process compared with 31% of all secondary participants.

Within the current national environment, schools that are making a positive difference with regard to effective appraisal are those who directly involve their staff in the self-review of their appraisal process. Teachers who are empowered in this

way, are more likely to have a thorough awareness of the Ministry requirements with regard to setting professional development objectives and appraising against the professional standards. They also gave a significantly higher positive response to 11 out of the 26 likert-scale responses, seven of which were representative of a professional approach, and four of a bureaucratic approach. This duality of higher responses is expected because of the higher level of awareness of Ministry requirements.

Conclusion

Performance appraisal is a way in which teachers in New Zealand schools can reflect on and improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Teachers' professional work does not lend itself to bureaucratic control and any systemic attempt to appraise, evaluate or assess this work that is determined to be routine or ritualistic (Darling-Hammond 1990) can be counterproductive. While this study clearly indicates that teachers want to be accountable for their professional work, their direct and continued involvement in the development, implementation and review of any performance management process is critical to its success and longevity.

These findings support work similarly undertaken by Middlewood (2001) who argued for an integrated and managed approach to performance appraisal that necessarily involved and fully engaged all teachers. A salutary note from Ingvarson (2001: 163) echoes the findings of this New Zealand study: 'schemes [of teacher appraisal] often fail to enlist teacher ownership … and fail to build mechanisms whereby responsibilities for the teacher evaluation system is shared by the profession'.

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