Aspiring Towards Principalship: A Pacific Island Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The percentage of Pacific Islanders (PIs) appointed as principals in New Zealand schools increased from 0.6% in 1998 to 0.9% in 2004 (Ministry of Education, 2005); the current figure is 1.1%. The total number of principals in primary and secondary schools in 2004 was 2,700. This research study investigated the conditions surrounding the low number of PIs working towards principalship positions and the impact these conditions have had on their decision making. It involved interviews with one assistant and seven deputy principals (AP/DPs) who were Pacific Islanders, in Auckland schools.

The themes isolated from the literature were:

- Minority group experiences and representation in educational leadership;
- Pathway and career development towards principalship;
- Succession planning and leadership development;
- Qualities and competencies required for principalship; and
- Barriers faced by aspiring principals.

These themes guided the development of an interview schedule.

An interpretative framework was adopted because it allows and reveals the way people develop their own views of reality within themselves through their social interactions with others. This interpretative view of reality was appropriate for this research as there was very limited knowledge on PI AP/DPs in New Zealand. The primary source of data was generated using structured interviews. From the findings of this study I have concluded that the very low number of PI AP/DPs progressing towards principalship will continue unless they are assisted and supported to overcome two overwhelming sets of conditions that act as barriers towards their aspirations for higher roles. These are personal and systemic conditions. From the conclusions it is recommended that PIs should engage in ongoing studies in leadership development programmes to counter personal conditions, and that research be undertaken on how

the PI community can be more supportive of aspiring PI leaders in schools. It is also recommended that a PI-specific programme for principals be developed, together with a study of successful PI leaders in principalship roles in New Zealand to learn more of their experiences.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.01   *Introduction*

My name is Enosa Auva'a and I am a Pacific Islander. I have been the principal of an Auckland primary school since 1991. I was thus in a unique position to engage the PI community in a study that focused on their views about the low number of PI assistant principals (APs) and deputy principals (DPs) working towards principalship in New Zealand schools. My involvement with the PI community in the areas of family and educational support, cultural and sporting activities, church and government agencies and advisory bodies, and my own position as principal afforded me the credibility to engage the PI community in this study.

1.02   *Rationale for the Study*

Since the 1989 education reforms, the number of PI principals has been minimal in primary, intermediate and secondary schools in New Zealand. From 0.6% in 1998, the number of PIs in principalship positions had grown by 2004 to only 0.9% of the total number of principals, 2700, in New Zealand schools (Ministry of Education, 2005). Currently one child in ten is PI, a ratio projected to rise to one in five by 2051. Auckland has 66.7% of the total New Zealand PI population (Ministry of Education, 2004). From these simple statistics, it can be seen that the percentage of PI principals, currently 1.1%, is significantly under-representative of the current demographic data.

Studies by Haberman (2000), McKenley & Gordon, (2002) and Bush, Glover, Sood, Cardno, Moloi, Protgeiter and Tangie (2004) identified conditions surrounding the low level participation of ethnic minority groups within the educational leadership setting that this research will explore to gain understanding of the phenomenon. The McKenley &

Gordon, (2002) research study also found minority leader achievements were not recognised by colleagues and authorities. In New Zealand, there is scarce information about PI AP/DPs wishing to become principals. PI leadership at principalship level is not sufficiently modelled for PI children. The gulf between the number of PI principals and the student population will increase if there is not a determined effort to address the current trend of an extremely low number of PI AP/DPs aspiring toward leadership in New Zealand schools. Therefore, because I believe that PI representation at principalship level is of immediate concern, this investigation seeks to understand why this current gap exists.

This research investigated conditions and factors, reasonings and explanations of why there are so few PI principals in New Zealand schools. The participants of this study were PI teachers working as AP/DPs in primary and intermediate schools in the Auckland area.

1.03   *Participant Group*

The decision to invite PI participants only in the research was deliberately made because I wanted the research to provide a PI perspective. As a practising PI principal, I wanted to discover their reasonings and explanations for the low number of PI principals and factors impacting their decision making in becoming school principals.

With the phenomenon of a steadily growing PI population, I wanted to explore whether there should be a corresponding ratio of PI principals appointed to match this trend and the benefits, if any, which would be gained if there were more PI principals appointed to New Zealand schools.

1.04   *Pacific Islanders (PIs) in Principal Positions*

The low number of PIs in principalship positions is a phenomenon highlighted by a lack of knowledge and understanding. There exists no study of PI leadership in New Zealand schools, in particular of those at AP/DP and those in principalship positions.

I investigated the perceptions and attitudes of PIs employed in AP/DP positions, factors and issues impacting their decision making towards promotions and explored expectations and barriers surrounding these perceptions and attitudes.

There is a limited body of knowledge about the low number of PI AP/DPs applying for principalship roles. This research will add and extend this knowledge.

1.05 *Research Aims*

To examine the conditions that surround the very low number of PI AP/DPs applying for principalships in NZ schools.

To determine the impact these conditions have on PI AP/DP decision making on becoming a principal.

To investigate factors impacting PI AP/DP decision making in applying for principalship.

1.06 *Research Questions*

What are the conditions that surround the incidence of the very low number of PI AP/DPs seeking principal roles in NZ?

What impact do these conditions have on PI AP/DP decision making for promotion?

What factors impact the decision of PI AP/DPs to apply for promotion?

1.07 *Thesis Organisation*

This thesis is divided into six chapters, highlighting various aspects of this research.

Chapter One provides an introduction to the researcher and his credibility for the undertaking of the study within the PI community. An explanation of the rationale for the study and the involvement of PI participants only

are provided. The research aims and questions guiding this research are identified.

Chapter Two isolates five themes from the Literature Review to assist the exploration of this phenomenon. The themes isolated from the literature include minority group experiences and representation in educational leadership; pathway and leadership development to principalship; qualities and competencies required for principalship; succession planning; and barriers faced by aspiring principals.

Chapter Three outlines the methodology and research method used in the research. A rationale for the methodology is described and discussed. Justification for the use of the structured interview approach for data gathering is also discussed. The steps undertaken to analyse the data are documented, and the ethical consideration inherent in all aspects of this research, the trustworthiness of the data, its reliability, validity and practice, are examined.

Chapter Four presents the findings generated from structured interviews with the eight participants of this study. A description of the respondents who took part in the study is provided, followed by a description of the data according to categories represented in the interview questions.

Chapter Five discusses the significant findings from data gathered throughout this investigation. The discussion is developed under the five themes identified in the literature review.

Chapter Six, the final chapter of this study, presents the process used in this investigation and highlights its significant findings. Recommendations are made to encourage further investigation for the progression to full leadership of PI AP/DPs within the system. Limitations to the study are included and discussed.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.01 *Introduction*

To assist our understanding of why there is such a low number of PI AP/DPs aspiring towards principalship in New Zealand schools, I explored the literature with reference to the themes below to determine whether they can provide an explanation for this phenomenon.

The themes isolated from the literature are:

- Minority group experiences and representation in educational leadership;
- Pathway and career development towards principalship;
- Succession planning and leadership development;
- Qualities and competencies required for principalship; and
- Barriers faced by those seeking principalship.

2.02 *Minority Group Experiences and Representation in Educational Leadership.*

PI representation at principalship level in schools is low, a trend that will continue if there is not a critical mass of PIs aspiring towards educational leadership. A logical starting point for developing such a critical mass would be those PIs already employed as AP/DPs in primary, intermediate and secondary schools.

I have explored the work of Haberman (2000), McKenley & Gordon (2002), and Bush et al (2004), to learn how their studies may assist this investigation.

Haberman's (2000) research into the teacher education programme set up in Milwaukee to attract African-Americans into teaching, provides some understanding of the conditions surrounding the incidence of the low number of African American teachers in the area. There was a need to attract minority teachers to Milwaukee Public Schools because of the

increase in the minority student population. The authorities in Milwaukee wanted teaching staff to become more representative of the student population. The programme was in its tenth year of operation when Haberman's research took place. The research objectives were to ascertain whether the recruitment and retention of minority teachers had been successful and how well the trainees were performing. In both instances it was found to be very successful.

The programme succeeded in increasing the number of minority teachers in the area and closed the gap between the number of students and teachers from minority groups. The success of the programme appeared to reflect the support provided by the system to the participants of the programme through good mentoring practices by outstanding teachers in the area and the recognition by the Milwaukee community of the important contribution minority stakeholders could make.

Understanding the conditions that increased the number of quality minority teachers in the Milwaukee area may assist this investigation into the small number of PI AP/DPs wanting to progress towards principalship in New Zealand. The approach taken at Milwaukee to increase the number of minority teachers has merits that are worth considering in this research, in particular the success of the programme to address the ratio of minority professional staff to the minority student population.

McKenley & Gordon's (2002) research for the National College for School Leadership (NCSL), in Nottingham, England, examined methods of increasing the participation of minority ethnic groups in senior leadership positions. The research aims were to generate knowledge and understanding of the challenges faced by minority groups aspiring to senior leadership status and to assess whether there were specific issues that faced minority groups that should be considered in the promotion of effective leadership.

The research in England found that minority groups in senior leadership positions add their rich cultural heritage to the well-being of the school and in the process play a unique role in transforming educational opportunities. This finding is worth considering in this study. However, the small number of PI principals means that New Zealand would not benefit from PIs sharing their cultural heritage and the opportunity for educational opportunities at principal level would also be very limited. Embracing knowledge from PI AP/DPs will assist in providing a solution to the incidence of a low number of PI principals.

The McKenley & Gordon (2002) research study also found that minority leaders' achievements were not recognised by colleagues and authorities. In New Zealand, very little is known about PI AP/DPs becoming principals or breaking the "glass and concrete ceiling" (Davidson, 1997). This research may be the catalyst for recognising PI leaders appointed to principal positions as leaders breaking the glass and concrete ceiling in education. McKenley & Gordon's (2002) findings on minority leadership in England suggest very clearly the benefits that are gained by enhancing the participation of minority groups in senior leadership.

Further findings in McKenley & Gordon's (2002) research suggest that school leaders from minority groups felt a high level of personal pressure in being "pioneers" in school leadership and that they were too closely observed and scrutinised by their peers. In some cases it was found that they were professionally abused and attacked by their colleagues. Gaining insights into PI AP/DPs moving towards principalship may provide us with greater understanding of some of the factors impacting PI consideration of a principal's role.

The third research that is pertinent for this study was that by Bush, et al., 2004), also commissioned by the NCSL and carried out at the University

of Lincoln. The research investigated the identification and development as well as the support given to black and minority ethnic (BME) leaders in England. The report identified barriers experienced by BME leaders in their aspiration toward higher roles and how they were able to overcome these barriers and progress to senior and middle leadership positions. The research was structured using a literature review, a survey of BME leaders in state schools, and interviews with the BME leaders.

The literature review focused on four issues: first, context and culture; second, identity, aspiration and development; third, career development and leadership; and fourth, leadership development. The literature review highlighted teachers from a BME background as being less likely to be promoted to leadership positions than white teachers Powney, Wilson & Hall, (2003); that BME teacher promotion and progress were very much determined and influenced by the family and community; they succeeded despite barriers confronting them and were perceived as "pioneers". The conditions experienced by BME aspirants may assist our explanation and understanding of the factors impacting PI candidates' decision making about applying or not applying for principalship.

In the interview and survey phases of the (Bush et al., 2004) research, it was found that minority groups were under-represented in the teacher/pupil ratio, that teachers from a BME background had far more empathy for minority groups than their white counterparts, suggesting that "BME leaders have an advantage because of their ability to empathise with pupils from ethnic minorities but a disadvantage in that career progress is perceived to be more difficult for them than white leaders" (p. 71). An understanding of these findings on BME may assist in explaining the low number of PI AP/DPs moving toward principalship roles in New Zealand.

These three studies by Haberman (2000), McKenley et al. (2002) and Bush et al. (2004) have identified conditions and themes surrounding the low level participation of ethnic minority groups within the educational leadership setting. The studies have been particularly helpful in identifying the themes for this research and should contribute to the limited body of knowledge now available in New Zealand, where, for example, little is known about the value of minority participation in the education sector, particularly at principalship level. The experiences of BME teachers in England and African-American teachers in Milwaukee, suggest there would be benefits to New Zealand in involving minority groups at principalship level.

The three studies explored in this study have demonstrated the importance of generating knowledge and understanding about the challenges that are faced by ethnic minority groups in their aspirations to hold leadership positions. There is limited knowledge about minority groups' participation in leadership roles in New Zealand schools. This research will contribute to closing this gap of knowledge and may be useful in promoting further research surrounding the PI community.

2.03 *Pathway and Career Development*

The natural pathway towards principalship is a direct move from an AP/DP position (James & Whiting, 1998; Draper & McMichael, 1998). There is no literature about the extent to which PI AP/DPs seeking principalship in New Zealand are undertaking leadership development programmes. PIs working as AP/DPs need relevant leadership development to encourage them to become principals. Leadership development is about enabling people to lead others Bush et al. (2004). It is broader than programmes of activity or intervention. It concerns the way in which attitudes are fostered, action empowered, and the learning organisation stimulated Frost, Durrant & Holden (2000).

According to Harris, Muijs & Crawford (2003b) in their literature review for the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) on assistant and deputy principals, school leaders from an ethnic minority group faced personal and professional challenges in their aspiration to higher roles in schools. They found that AP/DPs from ethnic minority groups had to work harder towards their goals and more often than their white peers. They were less likely to be encouraged to apply for promotion to senior roles than their white counterparts and they were also less satisfied with teaching as a career, leaving it after five years of service, on average. The report suggests that to attract people from an ethnic minority background into leadership: "There needs to be an acknowledgement of the difficulties they face and specific introductory and support programmes for those who are considering career moves" (p.4) as well as "More research into the particular development needs of these groups is required to ensure that future provision is relevant, appropriate and ultimately effective" (p.4).

These findings are useful in this research for they provide specific conditions that may be experienced by PI AP/DPs looking to become principals. Seeking to understand the reasons for the small number of PI principals involves gaining further understanding about the conditions surrounding PI AP/DPs and their hopes for leadership.

Harris et al. (2003b) also highlighted the barriers faced by minority groups in what was termed "ghettoisation" of job opportunities where jobs for minority groups were attainable only in high ethnic minority population areas rather than the "leafy white suburbs". Furthermore it was found that minority groups were at a disadvantage to progression because they did not have a "network" of encouragement to rely on for job prospects compared to their white peers. As there is no empirical study of PI AP/DP experiences in the New Zealand literature, this research should be of benefit in generating knowledge and understanding of this minority group, thereby augmenting the limited body of knowledge surrounding PI leadership.

According to Gronn (1999) and Gunter, McGregor & Gunter (2001) there are four phases to a leadership career. These include the formation stage that occurs from childhood to adulthood; the accession stage where the person is preparing to be become a leader; the incumbency stage where the person is developing maturity in the role as a result of the experience; and finally the divestiture stage which is the relinquishing of the leader role. For this research, understanding the conditions in the accession stages may lead to better understanding of this phenomenon. On the other hand, exploring the conditions surrounding the success of PIs in current principalship (incumbency stage) should also advance our knowledge specific to the phenomenon.

2.04 *Succession Planning and Leadership Development*

Succession planning and leadership development ensure availability of a continuous pool of quality candidates for principal roles. PI AP/DPs desiring leadership will form part of this pool if there is planning to meet their needs to achieve higher roles including that of becoming a principal (Lacey, 2002). According to (d'Arbon, Duigan & Duncan, 2001), succession planning and leadership development have become areas of great interest for researchers and academic planners as they respond to an impending shortage of persons applying for principal positions of any cultural group.

Succession planning

Lacey (2002) suggested that leadership aspiration would be encouraged and application rates for principal positions increase when succession planning was in place. Succession planning is defined as a deliberate and systematic effort made by an organisation to identify, develop, and retain individuals with a range of leadership competencies, who are capable of implementing current and future goals of the organisation. Effective succession planning provides the developmental experiences for potential employees and is based on agreed principles between the employer and

employee; it is active at all levels of the organisation (Leibman, Bruer & Maki, 1996). It provides the development of future leaders and the retention of current leaders (Friedman, Hatch & Walker, 1998).

Leadership development

In a study by Hargreaves, Moore, Bryman, & White, (2003) on principal succession and sustainability it is found that, the quality of school leadership is a significant influence in developing school directions, character and school improvement Crucial to the success of a school, leadership development involves increasing the number of leaders and enhancing and expanding their capabilities and competencies as professionals. It establishes objectives and strategies to ensure a continuous pipeline of leaders within the organisation; it identifies potential talented personnel and guides them towards leadership positions within the profession; it addresses issues in a planned means at a point of entry and exit at a school; it reflects on the past, current and future of the school; and understands the environmental factors that may impact and affect a school in principalship change.

Pyke's (2002) study of Catholic schools in Australia found that they would have been run by non-Catholic principals had it not been for a deliberate leadership development programme to enable Catholics to become principals in Catholic schools.

Hargreaves at el. (2003) report on leadership development concluded with a need to plan succession if it is to be meaningful for training people into specific roles.

The work by Pyke (2002) and Hargreaves et al. (2003) reveals that minority groups gain significantly from organised leadership development and succession planning

2.05   *Qualities and Competencies of a School Principal*

There is no minimum qualification requirement before applying for a principal position in New Zealand schools. A person can become a principal by demonstrating competencies, knowledge and experience to undertake the role of school principal (Ministry of Education, 1998). The professional standard for principals was introduced in 1990 with the view that schools would have the opportunity to be led and managed by high quality professional leaders. A report by the Education Review Office (ERO) in 1996 on professional leadership in primary schools concluded that an effective school was led by an effective leader.

The development of a principal is connected to the notion of socialisation referred to by Merton (1968) and Hart (1993) as the process essential to gaining the skills and dispositions necessary to learn new roles. Hart (1993) and Schein (1990) identified two elements of this process as professional and organisational. First, professional socialisation teaches a person the skills and dispositions necessary to belong to a particular profession: for example, a school teacher, an administrator or school principal (Duke, Isaacson, Sagor, & Schmuck, 1984; Greenfield, 1985). Secondly, organisational socialisation focuses on learning the skills, knowledge, and dispositions for functioning in a particular social system such as a school (Parkay, Currie, & Rhodes, 1992; Schein, 1990).

2.06 *Barriers Faced by Aspiring Principals*

The lack of a clear role definition for an AP/DP is a barrier towards achieving principalship. While the position of AP/DP does provide training and development opportunities for prospective principals Harris et al.(2003b) reveal that the experience of being a deputy or assistant principal is not always helpful preparation for headship because of the lack of direct leadership experience encountered in that role. The leadership potential of AP/DPs in many schools is not being fully realised or exploited and their leadership capabilities are not being developed in the role. There is no targeted professional development and leadership

development for AP/DPs and they are often not given the support in their roles by the principal and they feel less confident to progress to principalship.

The main role of an AP/DP according to Harris et al. (2003) is to ensure stability and order in the school; it is a maintenance function rather than one of development. The degree to which they are given leadership responsibility is highly dependent on the principal. Clarity of what is expected of the AP/DP may assist greater movement from AP/DP to principalship.

Barriers towards principalship surround the conditions impacting decision making. Lacey (2002) reported that teachers' decisions to apply for principals' positions were influenced largely by a variety of factors including reward as incentive or disincentive; teachers' perceptions of the principals' satisfaction on the job; personal qualities such as trustworthiness, good communication skills, gender and ethnicity; and the organisation's succession planning processes. For minority groups, according to McKenley & Gordon's (2002) research on minority ethnic groups in England, it was the lack of network and support as well as that of confidence within the system.

2.07   Conclusion

In this chapter I have identified five themes isolated from the Literature Review to provide an explanation of the incidence of the very low number of PI AP/DPs aspiring to principalship. The factors contributing to the barriers for achieving principalship by PI AP/DPs have been discussed under those themes. Research in England on black minority ethnic (BME) groups and African-Americans in the United States are used to gain insight appropriate to the understanding of this phenomenon.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

3.01 *Introduction*

This chapter outlines the methodology and research method used in the research. A rationale for the selected methodology is described and discussed. Justification on the use of the structured interview approach for gathering the data is provided, together with the steps undertaken to analyse the data. Finally the ethical consideration inherent in all aspects of this research is outlined covering such elements as the trustworthiness of the data, reliability, validity and practice.

3.02 *Methodology Employed in this Research-Qualitative Research*

The aim of methodology is to describe and analyse the methods used in the research; it identifies the resources required and the limitations of those resources (Kaplan, 1973). Methodology is concerned with the process of inquiry that assists understanding**.**

An interpretative framework was adopted for this project because it illustrates the way people develop their own views of reality through their social interactions with others (Sarantakos, 2005). This interpretative view of reality is appropriate for this research as there is very limited knowledge and information on PI AP/DPs seeking principalship in New Zealand. The primary source of data was generated using the structured interview approach.

An interpretive framework also encapsulates the view that people create their own understanding and system of meaning in their desire to make sense of the world in which they live (Sarantakos, 2005). People are not passive in this process, but rather are actively engaged in the construction

of their own understandings, an epistemology referred to as constructivism (Flick, 1992).

This is a qualitative study, seeking an explanation and description of the topic from the subject of this research (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). The primary source of data was the experiences and perception, meaning and understanding (Mason, 2000) of the PI participants about the topic. The use of interviews to gauge people's feelings and reasoning processes validates the use of the interpretive framework for this research.

This study is interpretative as it is concerned with making sense of subjective meanings by PI AP/DP perceptions and views about the low number of PIs looking for principalship in New Zealand schools. It explores the construction of their interpretation and their social reality. It focuses on "intersubjectivity" where meaning is created through the way we live in society.

This approach was appropriate for the research because the researcher was trying to understand a phenomenon that had "very little research" (Creswell, 2002, p. 22). The approach was culturally acceptable for the PI participants who preferred to talk "talanoa", an appropriate form of engagement with openness and transparency. This approach also assisted the researcher to identify important issues during discussion and seek clarity of these issues during the interviewing process.

Qualitative methodology emphasises words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. It emphasises an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and research, in which the emphasis is placed on the generation of theories (Bryman, 2004). Qualitative methodologies are referred to as an interpretivist and constructivist approach according to Razik and Swanson (2001) or the post positivist approach according to Tolich and Davidson (1999).

Husen (1997) supports this approach as appropriate for giving voice to those whose views are rarely heard. This research study involves a minority ethnic group referred to in statistics as the "other" (Brooking, 2007). There is very limited knowledge about the PI community involvement with AP/DP in schools. This research explores knowledge discovered and would generate further knowledge and understanding where explanation about the phenomenon could be made (Lincoln & Guba, 2000).

Qualitative methodology is an empowering approach for both participants and researcher. Understanding the participants' views of the phenomenon requires a flexible and holistic approach that encourages them to talk. The flexible nature of the approach ensured the researcher was also playing an important part in encouraging the participants; also it allowed for reinterpretation and reshaping of the problem that may lead to some causal explanation of the phenomenon (Howe, 1997).

The qualitative approach was ideally suited for this study because it gave priority to understanding and explanation of the participants' points of view. The methodology supported the holistic and interpretive understanding imperative of this research. The information was gathered from people's reasonings, perceptions and personal experiences. Their own account helped explain the phenomenon subjectively (Howe, 1997). It allowed the research to be unconstrained by traditional and conservative restraints of research practice whilst meeting the conventions of formal, systematic research.

Essential to the research was trust and honesty between the researcher and participants. This was achieved through clear communication and keeping the participants informed about the research (Bishop & Glynn, 1999).

Finally, the personal experience of the researcher as a PI school principal was a factor in choosing the qualitative approach for this research. The researcher's experience as a practising principal assisted with personal engagement with the participants and added confidence to their willingness to speak out about the phenomenon under investigation.

3.03 *Data Collection and Analysis*

To achieve the aims of the research and allow for the qualitative approach to be applied, the structured interview approach was selected as the instrument for investigation. This approach had the potential to collect in-depth information and aided the researcher in seeking specific information (guided by previous research). This structured approach (rather than an open narrative approach) was appropriate in gaining such information.

This method was appropriate also because the topic itself is potentially sensitive. The researcher would benefit from working in a structured approach that was open to seeking further questions and clarification from participants (Hinds, 2000).   The structured interview approach required the administration of an interview schedule. The objective was for all interviewees to be given the same questions in the same context, and receive the same stimuli as others. Interviewees were read the questions in the order printed in the schedule (Appendix D).

The structured interview focused on twenty-two pre-determined questions that were asked in the order set by the researcher. This element of "standardisation" according to (Bryman, 2004) is a feature of the structured interview that keeps both participants and researcher focused on the topic. It was one of the reasons influencing the researcher's decision to select the structured interview approach. The questions were forwarded to the participants before the scheduled interview to enable them to prepare for the interview. A set of explanations (where necessary) was

prepared for each question to avoid the researcher giving varying explanations of the questions to the participants. Undertaking structured interviews was also an advantage for this new researcher as it disciplined that person to focus on the topic (Hinds 2000).

The research involved generating knowledge and understanding from talk and conversation between the PI participants and the researcher, and constructing knowledge from human experiences and points of view. This approach generated in-depth information that the researcher was hoping to achieve (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2004). The disadvantage of the structured interview was that it is "prone to subjectivity and bias on the part of the interviewer" (Cohen et al. 2004, p. 269).

The data were captured through the tape recording of interviews and then transcribed. In addition, the researcher took notes during the interviews. Prior to each interview the researcher tested the equipment used to make sure it was working properly. Blank tapes were already placed in the tape recorder so that on arrival the researcher's only responsibility was to find a power supply. The participants provided the researcher with full use of an office or classroom that was free of interferences and disturbances.

Selection of the participants for this study was constrained by the availability of PI AP/DPs in the Auckland region. The selection criteria for the choosing of the participants included willingness to participate, availability of the participants, and being of PI origin. The primary concern was finding a sample of twenty PI participants working in AP/DP positions. The researcher's initial contacts provided the researcher with further names as potential participants for the research project (snowball effect).

The participants were contacted initially by telephone to establish their interest in the project. Those interested received further calls to organise a

time and place for interviews. Most of these were at the participants' places of work with two held at the researcher's office. Interviews were held for one and a half to two hours. Recorded interviews were handed to a transcriber following each interview.

3.04 *Interviews*

Structured interview is one of many forms of interviews employed by social researchers aimed at minimising the variables that may occur in the process of data gathering between the researcher and the interviewees (Bryman, 2004). For an "infant" researcher this provided confidence in the data gathering process and enhanced the reliability, accuracy and consistency of the information gathered.

The aim of the interviewer in a structured interview is "to elicit from the interviewees all manner of information: interviewees' own behaviour or that of others; attitudes; norms; beliefs; and values" (Bryman, 2004) p109. For this particular research this was important with the limited information available on PIs in AP/DP positions. The questions were open ended; according to De Vaus (1990) this form of questioning is best suited for interviews as it does not pre-empt responses and allows for subjective meaning to be expressed.

Prior to the commencement of the interview, each participant was further informed of the purpose of the research, verbally and in written form (Appendix A). All concerns or questions about the research were discussed with the researcher. Consent (Appendix B) to participate was obtained from the participants voluntarily. This process was consistent with Christian's (2000) idea of voluntary participation.

3.05 *Analysis and Design*

Data analysis started in an informal manner as the researcher listened to and absorbed the stories and views of the participants. This informal analysis continued after the interview, listening to the recording before it was transcribed to ensure key perceptions and experiences were accurately captured.

Listening to the transcribed interview with hard text on hand provided familiarity with its content before it was analysed systematically and sequentially (Krueger & Casey, 2000) in three stages. The first stage included identifying the categories (themes) into which the raw data were sorted and summarised; the second stage was the coding of the data to the categories; and the third drew conclusions from the responses by checking on similarities and differences (Bouma, 1993).

Questions in the schedule were grouped under each category allowing for better management of the data during this early stage of data management. Several attempts were made at summarising the raw data into categories. This process proved to be significant as it provided the researcher with greater understanding of the data content and assisted greatly in his discernment of the various themes isolated in the Literature Review. The themes identified in the Literature Review enabled the researcher to engage the data in a meaningful process particularly when the questions were merged under each category.

3.06 *Validity and Reliability*

A quality research study is measured on its reliability and validity (Bryman, 2004). It is important because people are the main instrument for gathering data in a qualitative mode of inquiry, and consequently the findings reported are the interpretations of reality that have been accessed directly through the research participant's observation and interviewing.

Validity represents the merit of the assumption made from research data gathered (McMillan & Wergin, 1998) and whether or not the research instruments measure or describe what was intended (Bush, 2002; Tolich & Davidson, 2003). Elements considered for addressing the validity of a research may include honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved; the participants approach and the extent of triangulation and the objectivity of the researcher Cohen et al., (2004).

For this research, validity is best summed up in the notion of its trustworthiness and authenticity. The concepts of trustworthiness and authenticiticy in qualitative research are addressed in three aspects: internal validity, external validity and reliability (Bryman, 2004).

Internal validity relates to the credibility and authenticity of the research findings and is dependent on the manner in which the research was conducted (Keeves, 1997). It seeks to demonstrate that the explanations of a particular event or data produced from a research can be sustained by the data (Cohen et al, 2004). Hammersley (1992) suggests that internal validity for qualitative data requires attention to plausibility and credibility, the kind of evidence required for a claim being made and the clarity on the kind of claim being made. For this study the following strategies were used to enhance the internal validity of the research findings.

A form of triangulation was used. First, the researcher pre-tested and trialled the interview process to reduce error during interviews (Tolich & Davidson, 2003). After each interview the researcher checked the transcript with the field notes taken during the discussion, a process which enabled the researcher to check the understanding of the participants. The final strategy was to have participants check and verify their own returned transcripts, and sign them before passing them back to the researcher.

External validity refers to the degree to which the results can be generalised to a wider group or similar situation (Bush, 2002; Cohen et al., 2004; Tolich & Davidson 2003; Keeves, 1997). While generalisation is a problematic concept in qualitative research, this research acknowledges Scholdfield's (1992) suggestion that it is important to provide a clear, detailed and in-depth description so that others can decide the extent to which the findings from one piece of research are generalisable to another situation.

Reliability is concerned with issues of consistency of measures. Like validity, reliability is also problematic in qualitative research. because people have varying interpretations of reality, making it impossible to take repeated measures to ascertain reliability as is done when using the quantitative approach (Merriam, 1998).

Recognising the problematic nature of reliability, this concept in this research can be viewed in terms of the consistency between the findings and data gathered. To enhance the consistency of this project, the researcher had examined the literature and identified very clearly the themes to be investigated relevant to the research questions. The selection and description of the participants have also been explained. The researcher's approach to explain the project clearly to the readers has contributed to the enhancement of the reliability of the research (Merriam, 1998).

The trustworthiness and authenticity of the data are central to the credibility of the researcher. Trustworthiness is the component that ensures that the researcher's methods have actually investigated what the researcher intended (Kvale, 1989; Merriam, 1998). For this study the researcher maintained reflection through each step throughout the research process. Authenticity, on the other hand, is that aspect of

research that ensures that the information gathered is genuine-as in the returning of the interview transcripts to each participant for checking and signing. The process of authenticating this research began with the examination of each research question to ensure they were indeed probing for the intended information (Appendix D).

3.07 *Ethical Considerations*

Ethical approval for this research was granted by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee (UREC) on 15th December, 2006. Code of behaviour in educational research is extremely complex and subtle and can frequently place researchers in moral predicaments which may appear irresolvable. One such dilemma is that which requires the researchers to strike a balance between the demand placed on the researcher's pursuit of truth and the potential threat on their subject's rights and values. (Bryman, 2004).

The ethics of this project concern respect for the dignity and privacy of those people who are the subjects of the research (Pring, 2000), the careful and accurate pursuit of the truth, and finally the right of society to be informed (Cohen et al 2004). Respect for the dignity and privacy of the participants and protecting their anonymity and confidentiality (Coleman & Briggs, 2002) are the ethical principles guiding this research. It is important that the participants feel that their views, personalities, characters, status, families and culture are not harmed, invaded nor undermined during this research Cohen et al. (2004).

The participants who had accepted the invitation to be involved in the project acknowledged the value and worth of undertaking this research (Wilkinson, 2001). The researcher was aware that his relationship with some of the participants could influence the interview and the decision on content analyses, as well as the presentation of findings. The taping of interviews lessened the possibility of contaminating the findings with the

researcher's personal thoughts (Bertrand, Brown & Ward, 1992). For a research to be trustworthy, ethical standards and appropriate procedures and behaviour need to be in place. Ethical considerations arising before, during and after the research were accommodated for in the research preparation (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992).

There are five principles highlighted by literature as underpinning ethical conduct in education. They include doing no harm to participants, voluntary participation, informed consent, avoidance of deceit, and confidentiality (Tolich & Davidson, 2003).

The participants were informed throughout each step of their involvement in the research. At the first point of contact, the researcher had outlined to the participants its topic and purpose. The anticipated processes were explained clearly so that the participants would be aware of the expectations of their involvement (Beiger & Gerlach, 1996)

Informed consent was the best way to avoid causing the participants any harm at any stage during the research or resulting from its final findings. While Snook (1999) suggested that it is not always possible to achieve total informed consent, the researcher was able to achieve the level of consent achieved by providing the participants with full information related to the research from the initial point of contact.
The participants were assured that their identities and other sources referred to in the content of the study would be kept confidential and their interview tapes and transcripts would be securely stored.

3.08 *Conclusion*
This chapter has outlined the methodology and research method used in the research. The rationale for the methodology is described and discussed. An explanation and justification has been provided on the data gathering approach. The steps undertaken to analyse the data are

documented. Finally the ethical consideration inherent in all aspect of this research and the trustworthiness of the data as well as the reliability, validity and practice are examined.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

4.01 *Introduction*

The eight participants in this study were Pacific Islanders (PIs) and included seven deputy principals (DPs) and one assistant principal (AP). The decision to invite only PI participants enabled the research to reflect a Pacific Island perspective. As a practising PI principal, the researcher wanted to discover from the PI community themselves, their reasonings and explanations for the low number of PI principals in New Zealand schools.

The researcher also wanted to discover factors influencing their decision making on applying for principal positions. With the phenomenon of a steadily growing PI school population, the researcher wanted to explore the attitude and perceptions of PIs in AP/DP roles as they relate to the ratio imbalance of PI principals to the PI student population.

This chapter presents the findings generated from structured interviews with the eight participants of this study. A description of the respondents who took part in the study is provided, followed by a description of the data under categories of findings represented in the interview questions.

4.02 *Participants' Profile*

There were eight participants involved in the interviews: seven deputy principals and one assistant principal. Two participants had been DP for ten and more years, five for three to five years, and one, the AP had been in her role for two years. Five were aged forty to fifty, two thirty to forty and one over fifty. There was no database for PIs working in AP/DPs positions in New Zealand. The participants were identified by ringing schools and asking whether their AP/DP were of PI origin. When the first

participant was found she was able to refer me to another one and this continued for the rest of the participants. All participants were telephoned by the researcher to seek their interest in the project. When interest was confirmed, a time was established for the researcher to visit them at work or a location of their choice. Two participants volunteered to come to the researchers' office for their interviews while the rest were undertaken at their place of work. All interviews were in closed rooms. Before each interview, the researcher presented the participants the interview schedule (Appendix D) and provided further information about the research topic.

Gender

There were seven females and one male participant. Six female participants were DPs and one an AP, while the male participant was working as a DP.

Ethnicity

Six participants were Samoan and two were of Niuean descent. Of these, only two were born in Samoa; the others were New Zealand-born.

School Experiences

Five DP participants worked in Decile 1 schools with school rolls exceeding 500 students. The majority of the students in these schools were of PI background. Three participants (two DPs and one AP) were in Decile 5 schools with rolls between 300 to 400 students. These schools were also predominantly PI students. One female DP had been in her current position for fourteen years and one for ten years. The male DP had been in his role for eight years. The rest of the participants had been employed in their current positions between one to three years. Seven participants were employed in primary schools and one at intermediate school. All had progressed to their positions in the same school. One had returned to a higher role in a previous school.

Qualifications

Seven participants had gained Bachelor of Education degrees, one had a post graduate diploma, and one had a Master of Education degree.

4.03   *Interview Schedule*

Twenty-two questions were prepared on the interview schedule (Appendix D) which was given to the participants at the start of each interview together with a further explanation of the project as indicated in the initial contact by telephone. The data related to the questions are summarised under the categories shown below in Table 1: Summary of Data and Categories.

Table 1: Summary of data and categories

Categories	Questions in Interview Schedule
Career Progress	**Numbers 1,5**
Professional leadership and management experience	**Numbers 2,9**
Becoming a principal	**Numbers 3,4,10,11,12**
Factors - encouraging and discouraging	**Numbers 6,7,8**
Professional development	**Numbers1,3,14,19,20**
Pacific Island issues	**Numbers 15,16,17,18,21**

4.04   *Category One: Career Progress*

Question 1: Could you outline your career progress to your current position?

Question 5: Have you got a plan or a pathway for your career? Is becoming a principal part of that plan?

Seven participants held DP positions and one an AP.

Question one asked the participants to outline their career progress to their current position.

All participants followed similar career progress to their current positions, starting as permanent scale A teachers, moving to senior teachers and then to AP/DPs.

Question five asked the participants whether they had a plan for their career and whether being a principal was part of that plan.

Six participants said that they had plans for their career and that being a principal was not part of the plan, two said they did not. When pressed why principalship was not part of their career plan, they spoke about the significant factors that had influenced their decisions to overlook principalship as a career move. These factors are summarised under the heading "Factors impacting decision making". They included a lack of experience; a lack of qualifications; a lack of confidence; a lack of knowledge about the principal's role; personal values; lack of encouragement by peers; and not being at the right place at the right time.

4.05 *Factors impacting decision making*

Lack of Experience

One teacher had not applied for any principalship, speaking of her lack of experience: *"Why should I apply for that job, I can't do it, I have not had enough experience."* Her approach to principalship was conditioned by not having experience before making an application.

One teacher who had applied for a principal's job said, after being unsuccessful in an interview: *"I don't think I expected to get the job because of my experience and I think that's one thing I don't have ..."* She acknowledged specifically her lack of experience in leadership pedagogy which is an essential for a principal's appointment: *"I don't have the*

research knowledge … that's where my learning has to be, it is making the connections to research base because that's what people look to."

Lack of qualifications

One teacher had not applied for a principal's job because: *"When I looked at my qualification it was not appropriate for making an application for a principal's position".* However, she felt her skills matched the profile of the position.

Another teacher who also had not applied for a principal's position because of her lack of qualification said: *"There are lots of things that I know I need to do first like I need to look at qualification and finish off my degree. Academic qualification is what's going to drive a lot of boards."* The two teachers' decision making about progression to higher roles was determined by their qualification status.

Lack of personal confidence

Two teachers had the opportunity to apply for DPs positions within their schools but their lack of confidence prevented them from making applications.

Lack of knowledge about the principal's role

One teacher had applied for a principal position and had hoped to reach the interview stage. She was not interviewed and upon reflection concluded: *"There are things I guess in the role of the principal that I need to glue up on."*

Lack of confidence in the appointment process

One teacher had been short listed for several principal positions. He was upset at just missing out *"by a thread"* on one occasion. He *"couldn't see himself running or interested to run for a job"* anymore. He was discouraged with the make up of the appointment panel, feeling that it

should have consisted of the local school community. He believed the panel had a different perception of him because he was a Pacific Islander.

Personal Values and Beliefs

One teacher believed that her appointment as DP was a godly appointment: *"It was for me. I just had to wait to see if that was really what He wanted."*

Another teacher left a permanent teaching position because she felt she was doing the job of a senior manager without due recognition. She said: *"I knew in my heart I was doing the work of an AP/DP."* She resigned her role and was appointed DP of another school after applying unsuccessfully for a principalship job.

One teacher was appointed AP and DP of the same school. Her appointment to those positions was, she believed *"God's calling"* in her life. She had not applied for a principal job but did have the experience of acting principal for two terms in the same school.

Encouragement by peers and family

Three participants accredited their successful applications for AP/DP positions to the encouragement received from their families and peers, and believed this would apply in their seeking higher positions such as principal, One said; *"Another senior teacher encouraged me to put my application for the DPs job."* One was encouraged by her sister-in-law and family to apply for a vacant job in her school, recalling: *"I'm here because my sister in law sent like hundreds of email.* According to the other teacher her peers were significant in her decision making: *"I was actually pressured into applying for this job (DP). Go for the DP position because basically you're doing what you're going to do anyway."*

Being at the right place at the right time

Seven participants of this study appear to have been appointed to their current roles by being at the school at the right time (coincidence) rather

than on merit. One teacher recognised that her appointment may have been a result of being at the right place at the right time. *"I fell into this relieving job as a senior teacher and while I was at that school the AP job came up and I was appointed and then the DP fell ill and I was put in acting DP's the DP passed away and our principal restructured … so I was the DP, and here I am today."*

One teacher returned from overseas and found relief work in the local school; she was appointed a senior teacher. *"I was offered a job as a permanent teacher but I did not want to be a permanent teacher, I left to do relieving at another school and was offered another permanent position, the principal said to me you either take the permanent senior teacher job or you won't have a job and that's how I got to be senior teacher."* She moved on to another school and was asked: *"… if I would do an acting AP job and I said I will only do it for a term"; when* the AP role did become vacant she was appointed. The DP left and she filled the acting DP position before being permanently appointed. She acted also as principal for one term while the principal was on sabbatical leave.

One teacher, who had not applied for a principal's job spoke about being at the right place and right time after she was appointed senior manager of the school. Her principal said: *"You were doing the job and I wanted to actually pay you for what you were actually doing but now that you you're officially being a team leader I can actually pay you for that."*

The career progress of all the participants of this study followed similar pathways with six having plans for their careers. Six had not considered principalship as a career option with only three making applications for principals' positions. The participants identified several factors affecting their decision making for higher roles. They were the lack of leadership experience, lack of network, and being a PI applicant as barriers to achieving higher promotion in schools. The majority appear to be appointed to their current positions by "being at the right place and the

right time". The participants were next questioned about their involvement in professional leadership and management.

4.06 *Category Two: Professional Leadership and Management Experiences*

Question 2: Explain your experiences in professional leadership roles and administrative and management roles.

Question 9: Tell us about your experience as the AP/DP of your school; what did you do?

Question two asked the participants to explain their experiences in professional leadership roles, and management roles.

All eight participants identified similar practices undertaken in professional leadership roles and administrative and management roles. These practices are set out in Table 2: Leadership and Administrative/ Management experiences. There are two sections in the table; section one relates to leadership experiences while section two relates to management experiences.

Table 2: Leadership and administrative/management experiences

Section 1	Section 2
Leadership experiences	**Management Experiences**
Performing my role as AP/DP	*Day to day management*
Leading professional development	*Staff management*
Curriculum leader	*Timetabling*
Day-to-day management	*Performing acting roles*
Leading staff meeting	
Delegating staff jobs	
Performing acting roles	
Mentoring syndicate leaders	

Question 9 asked the participants to talk about their roles as AP/DPs. All participants provided a range of practices which are summarised in Table 3: Roles of the assistant and deputy principals. These roles provided the training for leadership, administrative and management practices for aspiring PI principals, and are elaborated under Summary of Leadership Experiences.

Table 3: Roles of the assistant and deputy principal

Assessing teacher strengths (appraisal)

Leading syndicates

Induction programme for beginning teachers (BT)

Special education needs co-ordinator

Behaviour management supervision

Enrolling students

Working with the principal

Day- to-day management

Director of curriculum

Leading professional development

Looking after junior and senior school

Checking teacher registration

Working with parent development

4.07 *Summary of Leadership Experiences*

Performing the role of an AP/DP

All the participants gained considerable leadership experiences and management roles in performing their roles as AP/DPs. Two were offered extended experiences in acting principal's roles for one and two terms respectively.

Leading professional development

All the participants experienced the leading of a school professional development programme.

One teacher saw her role as: *"Upskilling staff and encouraging everyone else to complete their degree or diploma"*. She was convinced that her role as the professional leader was: *"to give opportunities to all the teachers to have that experience and find out what the latest was in curriculum"*. Her own professional development was conducted on the job with her principal who *"allowed me to work alongside him at every opportunity ... he actually coached me without me realising ... whether it was property, finance, decision making"*. The principal provided the encouragement for her to consider applying for principalship because she *"was able to ask questions and ask him to explain* his role *without feeling a bit thick about things"*.

One teacher spoke of wanting to lead and influence change and learn in her role; as DP, she led the *"curriculum drive in literacy"* in her school.

Another teacher's experience in a professional development was: "... *keeping an eye on the staff professional development,* in particular *"what is happening in the classrooms across the school"*. Her role was to mentor syndicate leaders and provide support to her team by being a good listener, understanding staff concerns and advocating their issues with the principal.

Curriculum leader and Director of curriculum

All participants held curriculum leadership responsibilities.

One was keen to: "... *be seen as leading the learning and driving curriculum"*. She facilitated Ministry of Education student improvement initiative in her clusters of schools. Another teacher was: " ... *in charge of health and PE curriculum and looking after those new teachers ... I was one of the lead teachers for the draft English curriculum ... I'm in charge of assessment and professional development."* Two identified their roles as: *"Director of Curriculum."* Their roles were to supervise all development related to the curriculum delivery.

Job delegation

All the participants experienced "delegating jobs" in joint exercises with their principals. One had authorisation to delegate jobs in his job description, speaking of the need for staff to be leaders in their schools: "To *me leadership is a role that needs to be played by everybody in an organisation,*" and *"so I delegate jobs to all staff to make sure I empower them."* Another felt it was important for her to lead by example because *"if I didn't do it, it was going to pull apart."* She was reluctant to delegate because of her fear *"that jobs were not going to be done properly."*

Mentoring syndicate leaders

One participant of the study stated that her role was: *"to mentor team leaders/syndicate leaders ... keep an eye on what's happening within their teams ... I go to their team meeting ... where I'm their support person listening to what's going on. I praise them, sit them down and work out their goals. Any issues they have they come to me and then I might take the issue further with the principal."*

At home

One expressed the important contribution of her home environment and her involvement in community activities as training ground for leadership and management; *"... as any Samoan I started from home .... women's fellowship, church fellowships, school choir."*

Ministry of Education initiatives

Three participants acknowledged the impact of being part of Ministry of Education initiatives in developing their leadership and management skills, yet all three participants had applied unsuccessfully for principalship positions.

4.08 *Summary of Management Experience*

Day-to-day school activities

All eight participants manage their schools when their principal is away.
Two participants were appointed to acting principal's positions for one and
two terms respectively. One said that being a DP provided her the
experience of managing people on a daily basis and enabled her to perform
"the role of a professional leader". Another was given the job of managing
the school on a daily basis upon his appointment as DP: *"I was given a job
description of managing the school ... so I run all the activities* and
everything to do with the school ... timetabling ... relievers ..." One teacher
experienced daily management when she: *"deputised for the principal, so
that anytime she's not present then I take her role over ... it's the nuts and
bolts of running a school. It's keeping an eye on the staff with their
professional development and in classroom activities. Parent management
is a major role of being a principal."*

Staff meetings

All eight participants experienced taking full staff meetings and syndicate
meetings in their schools. Two participants had the opportunity to lead
professional development meetings of AP/DPs in their local clusters.

Induction programme

Two participants were responsible for inducting beginning teachers (BTs)
in their schools. Six had experienced working with BTs as part of the
school organisation.

All participants should have regarded their positions as AP/DP training
grounds for developing the leadership and management skills required to
become a school principal. The AP/DP role facilitated and promoted
leadership and management experience in a range of areas including
leading a professional development programme, acting principal when the

principal was away and managing staff and daily school activities. The AP/DP role should have provided the experience to develop the confidence to consider principalship as a career option. The question of whether they wanted to become a principal and why they felt they were ready for principalship is presented next.

4.09 *Category Three: Becoming a School Principal*

Question 3: Do you want to become a school principal?

Question 4: Have you applied for a principal's position?

Question 10: Explain what you think are the qualities required to become a school principal?

Question 11: Why do you think you are ready to become a school principal?

Question 12: Why do you think you are not ready for principalship roles?

Question three asked the participants whether they wanted to become principals.

Five participants said they wanted to become principals while two said no. One was not sure. When pressed to explain why they wanted to become principals, participants provided a variety of factors that impacted their decision making. These factors are summarised under Factors impacting decision making to apply or not apply for principalships.

4.10 *Factors impacting decision making*

Personal conviction

One teacher was motivated to become a principal of a *"huge school"* as she was convinced she would influence the children to have the *"best education, best understanding and the best for families"*. Another was convinced that she would become a principal early in her career and applied for a principal position saying: *"I think I was BT and I said right okay, six years and I'm going to be a principal ... Oh I know I can do that."*

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Financial reward

One had initially not wanted to become a principal but upon accepting an acting principal role found she was earning more money and wanted to become a principal: *"but I'll tell you when I did the acting role its really good money I might say yes, and I know I can do it."*

Appointment process

One participant had been short-listed for several principal's positions. He wanted to become a principal of a school predominantly of Pacific Island students. He felt his *"Pacific Island perspective"* and birth would appeal to these particular schools**.** He was particularly discouraged by the reception he received from the appointment committee and their body language because he was a Pacific Island applicant; *"... the only reason why I think I'm not ready is the process that I went through, it really put me off, that is the only thing that put me off when I went through interview I feel I was unfairly treated by the appointment panel but hey at the end of the day it's the call of the Board of Trustees and those consultancy people."*

Qualification

There were two participants of this study that identified their lack of qualification as a major factor in their decision making whether to consider making an application for a principal's position. One said: *"I think I have so much to learn but there are things that I don't know."* While another: *"I'm not ready because I really don't have the passion to go out and do any further study yet but I know that's part and parcel of extra studies."*

Life and Professional experiences

Five participants decided against making application for principalship because they considered they had insufficient professional experiences and life experiences to lead schools. One said: *"I had not done enough in my lifetime, in my career ... in management."* Another one was not ready for

the long hours principals were working: *" it looks a lot of work and paper work and the ongoing saga that goes on in school."*

Question four asked the participants whether they had applied for a principal's position; three had applied and five had not.

Question ten asked the participants what they thought were the qualities required to become a school principal.

Five participants said: *"being a people person";* three said: *"having a right heart and right place for you"*; two said: *"having experience, love learning or being a learner and being a systems organiser".*

Several participants identified a range of personal qualities such as *"good communication, good interpersonal skills, and self confidence"*. These qualities are summarised under Qualities required of a school principal.

4.11 *Qualities Required of a School Principal.*

Being a people person

Five said: *"being a people person"*. Two said: *"you have to be a real people's person"*. One said you have to *"basically have people's skills, being able to articulate the plan of the school, culture vision, being able to take that vision and turn it into a consultation process with the staff, board and community."*

Having a right heart and a right place for you

Three agreed that having the *"right heart'* was a significant factor of becoming a principal.

One said: *"... you have to have the right heart"* while another: *"…have to be a teacher at heart"*.

A visionary nature

Three stated the importance of having a vision to become a principal.

One said: *"you have to have some idea of where you want to take the ship."* another: *"you have to have* big *dream for the school."*

Personal qualities

Three participants said principal applicants required a range of personal qualities to achieve principalship. They include: "*Love of teaching and learning, effective communicator, good use of information and technological skills, sound knowledge of school communities and organisation'*".

Question eleven asked the participants why they thought they were ready for principalship.

Six said they "*had experience*"; four said "*knowledge*"; three felt "*they were doing the principal's job already*"; three said "*they were ready to become principals of multicultural schools*" and "*had passion*". Two said "*they were visionary*", and "*they love the children*", "*were confident*", "*ready to make a change*", and "*had heart*". These factors are summarised under Readiness to Become a Principal.

4.12   *Readiness to Become a Principal.*

Experience

Six participants said they were ready to become principals because of their experience. Their experiences ranged from leading a professional development programme, leading a curriculum subject, organising day to day management in the absence of the principal, leading staff meetings and syndicate teams. All six participants acted as principals when their principals were away. Two acted as principal for two terms.

Vision and Confidence in Professional Knowledge

Four said they had the knowledge to become principals. One said "*I have sat in this job (DP) for so long and I've crafted the job that I could take the*

knowledge I've got and transfer it in a school." One believed in his *"ability to run school, to administer and manage people"* as well *"as oversee vision and where the school's going to head and the achievement of students".* Two believed they had *"vision".*

Multicultural schools only

Three participants agreed they were ready to become principals of multicultural schools. One said: *"I would never ever touch anything but a multicultural school,"* expressing her teaching passion.

Question 12 asked participants why they thought they were not ready for principalship roles.

Four said *"there was so much learning to do and work," "they lacked property, financial and legal management experience to become principals,"* Three *"were content and satisfied".* One said: *"I had had enough because of my age"* and two *"did not have the passion to become principals."* These factors are summarised under: Why we are not Ready for Principalship.

4.13   *Why we are not Ready for Principalship*

Workload and lack of knowledge

Four said they were not ready to become principals because they could not sustain the learning and workload they had observed their principals going through. They said: *"I have so much to learn and things I don't know," " there is so much administration stuff that a principal has to do like property stuff...like trustees and boards,"* and *"I'm still getting my head around the DP role."*

Lack of training in property, finance and legal Management

Four participants said they lacked training in property, financial and legal management. One said: *"yeah the financial matters and stuff and administration stuff that a principal has to do like property stuff … like*

trustees and boards;" another one said: *"you have to have some understanding of property and finance."*

Contentment and satisfaction

Three said they were contented and satisfied with their jobs. They said: *"I had had enough because of my age," "I love what I do here, I don't have any aspirations to actually go out and run my own school because I think what I get here satisfies the needs I've go;."* and *" It's really whether I want to do it and balance it with my lifestyle."*

Appointment process

One participant was having second thoughts on applying for principalship because of his experience with the appointment process: *"I did apply for four jobs ... short listed and was interviewed for three jobs ... was interviewed twice for one job. I turned up for my interview (second interview) on Sunday morning ... I was one hundred percent I will get the job ... On Monday night I was told they gave it to some else The successful candidate was a non PI who came from outside the areas."*

Five participants wanted to become principals with three applying for principalship positions. They acknowledged their AP/DP roles as important factors towards building their confidence in decision making about higher roles including becoming a principal. Participants who had not applied for principalship acknowledged the following factors as significantly influencing their confidence in decision making for higher roles: professional knowledge, interpersonal skills, and people management skills. These factors are now presented.

4.14 *Category Four: Factors influencing decision making*

Question 6: What factors had encouraged you to apply for principalship?

Question 7: Who encouraged you and supported you to apply for

principalship?

Question 8 What factors had discouraged you from applying for

principalship?

Question six asked the participants to talk about the factors that encouraged them to apply for principalship.

Three participants applied for principalships and agreed with the following factors as encouraging them to make applications: *"principal, family and their own personal reflection."*

Two said *"PI background and experience"* for schools with predominantly PI students and one believed *"he could make a difference being a principal in a school with predominantly PI students."* One participant's decision to apply for pincipalship was influenced by her level of *"professional knowledge and stories by PI principals, encouragement by the parent community and confidence in her personal skills"*. A summary of the factors influencing decision making follows.

4.15 *Summary of the Factors Influencing Decision Making*

Family and Personal reflection

Three participants agreed that the *"principal, family and personal reflection'* were the most influential factors in their decision making to apply for principalship. One referring to family and personal reflection:

"I talked first to my husband ... and then I thought I'm going to go and talk to my principal ... and then I got her affirmation ... and my children;" upon reflection, after attending an AP/DP meeting, noted: *"I was looking at the other people who were going on to principal leadership, you know I started to question and think about being a principal."* Another teacher wanted to become a principal based on personal conviction: *"I believed in making a difference for learning of our (PI) student ... I know I can make a*

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difference." and *"first and foremost it's my family, my wife and my children, my current principal, my colleagues and my friend."*

One reflecting on her journey as a teacher and her drive to become a principal: *"It's my confidence in myself and the knowledge I've gathered all these years."*

PI background and Experience

Two said having a *"PI background and experience were important factors"* in their decision to apply for principalship. A PI principal understands the *"expectations of our parents particularly from a Samoan perspective and this is the focus I have and that is the factor that contributed to my wanting to become a principal … "*

Appointment process

One felt discouraged when he turned up for an interview for a principal position and saw the appointment panel. It was not reflective of the schools demographic and as he puts it: *"The school is dominantly PI and you see the panel is made up of people you perceive shouldn't be there … to me its really unfair … they should be people that have their children in that school and they know what their children want."* The position was won by a non-PI candidate. He felt at the interview that *"being a PI person had reduced the opportunity for him to become a principal."*

Lack of personal confidence and preparation

One participant feared people finding out that she had applied for a principal job. She was particularly fearful of other candidates; as she puts it: *"when you hear about people from ERO and the Ministry that are asked to apply for a position."* She feared also her lack of *"professional knowledge and being visionary and limited experience."*

Question seven asked the participants about those who encouraged and supported them to apply.

Three participants applied and five had not applied for a principal's position. The three participants who applied for principalship were unanimous in their response: *"principal and the family"'* while the five participants who had not applied for principalship said: *"principal and peers."*

Question eight asked the participants about the factors discouraging them from applying for principalship.

The three participants who applied identified their lack of knowledge about the principal's role; the appointment panel perception of a PI candidate; their knowledge of other applicants applying for the same position; their feeling of being perceived as inadequate by others in the profession and their lack of experience.

Three participants in the study applied for principalship. Their decision making was influenced by a range of factors including: families and their principal; their personal reflection; stories from other PI principals and their school community; lack of knowledge about the principal's role; the appointment process; their fear of other applicants; their own feeling of inadequacy to be a principal; being a Pacific Island applicant and their lack of experience.

In the next category the participants were asked a range of questions about their preparation to become a principal.

4.16 *Category Five: Professional Development*

Question 13: What professional development have you had to prepare for
           principalship?

Question 14: What preparation might you need in order to prepare you for
           principalship?

Question 19: Do you think a programme for aspiring principals would help
           PIs achieve principalship?

Question 20: What could such a programme be?

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Question 13 asked the participants about professional development they had undertaken to prepare for principalship.

All eight participants said: *"attending courses and working with senior management teams"*; seven participants *"attended workshops and engaged in professional discussions"*; six *"conferences, principal forums and working in acting roles";* five *"supervising a professional development."* four *"mentoring teachers."* Two were completing degrees, two were working with private consultants on appraisals. A summary of the range of professional development attended by the participants is provided in Summary of Professional development.

4.17   *Summary of Professional Development*

Attending courses and working with senior management

One attended courses mainly to do with *"people management"* and *"applied it to what I do with the team leaders"*. One spoke about the quality of the course and believed that *"course of any professional development that you do has to match the needs of what your school is."*

One spoke of attending *"management courses for three days"* that were very helpful in her development as a syndicate leader. One travelled to Australia for a *"leadership course looking at middle management."*

One explained she had *"taken courses all along after I set foot into this school".*

Question 14 asked participants about what they thought was the preparation they might need for principalship.

All participants said: *"attending courses and conferences'"*; seven said: *"hearing other peoples success stories"* and *"performing acting roles"* with three identifying *"developing network and understanding of budget and*

government agencies". A summary of the participants' perception of preparation to become a principal follows.

4.18 *Perception of preparation to become a principal*

People stories and acting roles

Seven perceived that preparation for a principal role started from: *"hearing other people's success stories and performing acting roles"*. One suggested: *"to learn from other principals. I wanted to learn from the mistakes that they had made ... I like to hear all the things that I need to do."* One of the value of acting roles to understand the role of principal: *"to work and see how much of a principal day or week is actually spent on stuff to do with learning and stuff to do with management."* One felt the best preparation for him was the confidence within him: *"I know at the moment I'm ready for it."*

Developing networks

Three participants identified: *"developing networking and understanding of budget and government agencies"*. One spoke of the confidence generated by *"knowing that you've got a support network around you, like knowing who to call on, you know who to ring about staffing ... so knowing that's out there is also part of it (preparation)."*

Knowledge of government agencies and finance

Three participants said: *" ... developing understanding of budgets and government agencies"*. One felt his confidence growing by understanding *"how to budget the school finances so that it won't go into deficit or overdraft ... knowing how to work with Ministry people ... the side that normally looks at property and all those bits and pieces."* One acted as principal for a term and regarded finance and ministry's legal compliances essential knowledge for a principal: *"I think you'd have more confidence*

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stepping into the role knowing about SUE reports (finance) and I still don't know enough about compliance for building and all that."

Question 19 asked participants whether they thought having a programme for intending PI principals would help PIs achieve their goals. Seven participants said "*yes*". One said "no." A summary of a programme for aspiring PI principals follows.

4.19 *Summary of the Programme for Aspiring PI principals*

Seven participants said a PI specific programme is required.

One was adamant that a programme was essential: *"Absolutely ... I think that's what the key is. I think there is a lot of PI people sitting in management and not moving, I mean I know of one person who has applied for how many jobs and is used to receiving these letters ... I'm sorry to inform you ... and it gets to a place where their friends have to pick them off the floor ... you start to realise there's something against them out there and I think if we can have a group, or more than a network, where we could meet and talk about those issues ... there is power in many ... when you're by yourself ... a bit like that land issue this week."* Another referred to a specific PI culture of learning as a need for having a PI programme available: *"I think it would be more of a bonus ... I mean not to say that that the conferences and courses I have attended is not good, they're good, but within a setting of learning ... you know when you're (referring to a PI group) you do learn better."* One participant referred to a PI learning style *"Yes definitely. Again it's catering for the style of the PI people in those positions where there's something there that you don't find the way the other groups work ... .it's that collegiality there its not competitive, its not pretty much into get out there and show yes I can do this ... a lot of PIs still tend to work in that collegial environment. It's like there's a silent component of it where we don't talk about it but we know that this is how it is."*

One refers to PI uniqueness *"as the way we do things"* and suggested the need of role models for the PI community: *"reason to be there (principal)"*.

Question 20 asked the participants what such programme would include. Seven said: *"PI principals share their experiences and understanding of Ministry of Education requirements"* while five *"learn about the principal job and prepare for application."* Three wanted PI *"principals to lead the programme"*.

A summary of the suggested content for a PI a programme follows.

4.20   *Content of a PI programme*:

PI principals' success stories

Seven wanted to hear from PI principals who had achieved in the system. They said: *"I liked to hear about you (referring to the researcher) your processes like what you did to become a principal;"* would like to hear from *"PI principals who are in the role. How they got there. What are they doing now and what do they enjoy about their job."*

Preparation for the appointment process

One would like support by *"PI principals to help aspiring PIs with preparation of their applications,"* and *"How you answer questions and giving guidance to DPs"*.

PI principals lead the programme

One made the point for PI principals leading the programme: *" ... we need one or two people to start driving it ... there are heaps of people in middle management."*

A significant contributor to the confidence of PI AP/DPs was determined by the level of professional development they had experienced. These included attending courses and conferences; attending principals' forums

and discussions; supervising a professional development programme; and undertaking further studies in degrees and diploma programmes. Seven of the eight participants suggested that PIs need a specific programme to meet their own unique needs. The programme would recognise PIs as unique learners; PIs would do better within their own surroundings; the need to increase the number of PI candidates for principalship positions; PI-specific issues would be best addressed by PIs themselves. These PI issues present the final category of this interview.

4.21 *Category Six: Pacific Island Issues*

Question 15: The number of PI principals in New Zealand is less than 1% of the total amount of principals in New Zealand; what do you think about this statistic?

Question 16: What is special about being a PI that may be of value to New Zealand schools?

Question 17: In your view how do you think the PI community perceive PI principals?

Question 18: Do you think being a PI is a barrier to principalship?

Question 21: Do you see yourself as a role model for other PI teachers with potential principalship?

Question 15 asked the participants their views on the low number of PI principals in New Zealand schools.

All the participants *were not surprised*. When pressed to justify their reactions, a wide range of factors were provided and these are summarised in Reaction and Justification to the statistics below.

4.22 *Reactions and Justification to the Statistics:*

One would like more PI principals; however, *"I wouldn't want more if they were not good ones"* and *"not just token appointment because we've got a lot of PI kids."* Another one was not surprised because of the attitude and

nature of a being a PI. The biggest barrier for PIs is ourselves: *"we come from a background that, the best doesn't necessarily mean it's the one at the top and our people are quite comfortable with letting everybody else get the flak for it or get the glory for it and we are quite happy to let that happen."* One was also not surprised as she reflected on her own attitude of *not "wanting to be a principal"*. One was *"outrageous"* and *"concerned"* with the statistic because she *"has seen so many amazing Pasifika people in education"* who had been unsuccessful in gaining job promotion. She herself had personally *"encouraged PIs to become principals"* but "some *of them just don't want to.*" She asked *"are they not getting jobs because they are Pasifika?"* One felt the statistic was *"quite low and not balanced,"* and *"will continue to be because there is no programme of identifying potential PIs and encouraging them towards principalship."* Another one said: *"that's terrible and ridiculous when one considers the number of Pacific students in schools; we need more PI people in principal roles, not just a few of them but more in areas where PI population is higher"* and *"We need more role models for Pacific students and community"*. Two said: *"no good when you look at the statistics with the number of Pacific children in New Zealand."*

Question 16 asked the participants what is special about being a PI that may be of value to New Zealand schools. All participants said: *"PI leaders have better connection with PI communities"*; seven said: *" a person of experience with PI communities had more empathy toward PIs"*; five agreed that: *"PI leaders have better management of PI learners and PI students have natural respect for PI leaders and PI leaders have a better rapport with PI students and they provided role models for PIs and have their own PI leadership style appropriate to PIs.* Three agreed *"that a PI leader can contribute to solving PI-specific problems."* A summary of what is special about being PI and its value to New Zealand schools follows.

4.23 *Summary: What is special about being PI and its value to New Zealand?*

Better connection with PI communities.

One said "*the Pasifika children have this natural respect for all Pasifika teachers, there is something we do have that children connect with straight away.*" Another one spoke of the PI experience with the PI community that connects them with it: "we *can use our language and knowledge of PI community that may not be commonsense or logical to people of other races.*" One talked of a PI "*bringing a different perspective to education in New Zealand; we bring in our culture and upbringing that contribute to the way we learn and the way we do things; we identify with cultures of school with the way they've been brought upon in their families , the discipline and respect.*"

Greater empathy with the PI community

One referred to a PI community as having more empathy for PIs: "*you would definitely have empathy ... I'm not putting down palagi but you would have empathy, there's room for flexibility because you would have to know a little bit about your culture.*"

Question seventeen asked the participants' views on PI community perception of PI principals.

Seven said: "*the PI community held principals in high regard,*" three said: '*PI community are more comfortable with a PI principal;* '"one said the "*PI community expect a lot more from their PI principal*" and 'is *more ruthless towards the PI principal.*"

Question eighteen asked the participants whether being a PI is a barrier towards principalship.

All eight participants said: "*yes*". A summary of being a PI is a barrier is provided.

4.24 *Being a PI is a Barrier to principalship*

Community attitude

One reflected on her experience: *"even now just having someone visit me in my classroom, come to my European teacher aide, so I must have been the parent helper or I must have been the teacher aide and not saying that he was embarrassed afterwards but he was palagi (European). But you would have an Island parent come and if they don't know us they would probably walk to the teacher aid or palagi teacher as well without knowing so lots of perceptions there."* Another one was adamant her skin colour was a barrier.

Professional Attitude

One experience: *" I wanted to go down my career as becoming an AP, I approached my DP (European) there it was like " oh you know , you're not just ready" and that really put me off and I just thought, no!, you are not going to keep me where you want me to be - do you know what I mean, and that's how I thought I thought Nah, we can make a difference and so that is one of the reasons I had to leave, me it was like - you stay there and that's the perception I got - I'm not good enough, I was actually down after that, and I picked myself up and I just thought nah, I hate to say it but you know, New Zealand is a great country but there is that element what's that word yeah racism - there is and you see it, I see it in people's faces when I turn up to the AP/DP meetings - you feel like you're just a tokenism."*

Harder for a PI

One concluded from her experience as an experienced DP: *"Unless you are going into a community that is very much PI, you've got to work harder in order to prove you can actually match your white peers. Board of Trustees perceive PI teachers as different from white teachers."*

Inadequate network and resources

One reflected on his journey, having applied unsuccessfully for three jobs; his aspiration would be advantaged by: *"guide from people like you (referring to the researcher) what sort of question likely to be in interviews and how you answer them, your appearance for example grooming yourself up."* He referred to the struggle of getting referees and professional guidance to essential application processes.

Institutional racism

One said: *"there is still institutionalised racism. I am a lot more aware now only because … you have more of a global view and so you can see it in teaching."* She had spent considerable time overseas before returning to New Zealand and while it is *"not a barrier for her, it's a barrier for other PIs."*

Pacific Cultural Perspective

One said that a PI perspective is a barrier for PIs themselves. She talked of the cultural attitude of a PI: she called it: *"our biggest hill"* that *"we come from background, the best doesn't necessarily mean it's the one at the top."* Another teacher alluded to this attitude as *"being a humble PI"*, and talked about the cultural barrier from *"family and community."* Community have the expectation that being a PI meant expecting you to behave like your own community; like doing things *"the Niuean way or the Samoan way"*.

Question twenty one asked the participants whether they see themselves as role models for other PI teachers wanting to achieve principalship. Six said they were *"not sure"* while two said *"no"*.

The response to the statistics did not surprise the participants. They identified a range of factors that significantly influenced their decision making and progress toward being a principal. The findings presented in

the seven categories outlined in this chapter will now be discussed in the next .

DISCUSSION

5.0 *Introduction*

This chapter discusses the key findings from data gathered and analysed in the study. The discussion will be developed under the five themes identified in the literature review:

- Minority group experiences and representation in educational leadership;
- Pathway and career development for principalship;
- Succession planning and leadership development;
- Barriers faced by aspiring principals and silent voice;
- Qualities and competences required for principalship and leadership development.

5.01 *Minority Group Experiences and Representation in Educational Leadership*

From 1998 to 2004 the percentage of PI principals had grown from 0.6% to 0.9% of the total number of principals in primary and secondary schools (Ministry of Education, 2005). Currently one child in every ten is PI, with the projection that the number will rise to one in five by 2051 (Ministry of Education, 2004). From these statistics, it can be seen that the number of PI principals is significantly under-representative of the current demographic data.

The participants identified the need for more PI involvement at principalship level to match the demographic data. Haberman's (2000) research in Milwaukee found that the teacher education programme to attract African-Americans into the profession successfully bridged the gap

between the minority teachers and minority students in that area. The success of the programme reflected the determination of the system to engage minority stakeholders in leadership positions. The approach taken in Milwaukee has merits that are worth considering in New Zealand if an increase of PI AP/DPs achieving principalship is to be a reality. The participants' reactions to the statistics that PI children in schools will be 21.2% of all the children in New Zealand (ERO, 2000) the number rising to one in five by 2051 (Ministry of Education, 2004) were: *The statistic is quite low and they're not balanced,"* and *"It's ridiculous, according to our number, the population of our people and the rapid growth of our young people"*.

For Pacific Islanders to participate in principalship level leadership the system must address the small number of PIs that are working in AP/DP positions. A critical mass of PI AP/DPs is required to increase their number moving into higher roles. It is the view of all the participants that a specific programme for PI AP/DPs is required to develop this mass even if initially only to consider thinking about becoming a principal. Harris et al. (2003b) literature review on ethnic minority groups found that people of minority groups face far more problems and difficulties in their moving on to higher roles, and a programme specific to their needs should be developed if their career goals were to be realised. Participant support for a PI-specific programme for principalship was overwhelming. They said: *"Absolutely why not. I think that's what the key is. I think there is lot PI persons sitting in middle management not moving," "I think it would be a bit of a bonus - you learn better;" "Yes definitely. Again it is catering for the style of the PI people in those positions;" "there has to be a programme targeted for PIs doing the way we do things;" 'yes I think there should be ..."* and *"Certainly that would be my call if I'm still here to support it."*

Pacific Islanders in principals' positions are not being modelled for PI children. Bariso (2001) found that minority groups need to have more of their own in higher roles as a confidence booster in their application for those higher roles. This trend of only a few PI appointed principals will continue as long as there is an equally small number of PIs applying. A determined effort to address the problem is required.

There is no research and literature specific to PI representations at AP/DP level in New Zealand. The incidence of so few PI AP/DPs progressing towards principalship is a phenomenon that highlights the lack of knowledge and understanding about the attitudes of PIs towards principalship. There is no database on current PI AP/DPs and we do not know whether or not they are suitable or willing principal candidates. The lack of data reflects a lack of knowledge and consideration for a plan to promote them. The importance of PI representation is not reflected in data report presentations but appears only as "other" (Brooking 2007). Official data should be reflective of the importance of PIs in the education landscape.

To gain insights into the low PI representation at the principalship level and higher roles in schools, an understanding of PI AP/DPs was investigated during this study using structured interviews. Research and literature reviewed from the UK on Black Minority Ethnic heritage groups as well as studies on African - Americans in the USA, were also used to gain an understanding of the phenomenon. The literature and studies in the UK and the US concluded that the progression of minority groups towards higher roles was hindered by a range of factors of which some were of systemic in nature and others related to personal circumstances. These factors, together with the responses by the participants from the interviews are now considered.

Lack of confidence

A lack of confidence was identified by six of the participants as a significant influence in their decision making about applying for higher roles including that of becoming a school principal. This had been influenced by a lack of confidence both with the system and in their ability to manage themselves within it.

The career pathway of a PI AP/DP appears, from this study, to be influenced by a mixture of personal and systemic factors. For example, the personal commitment toward studies is one for which the participant is responsible; if undertaken it might create the confidence to apply for a higher role like the principal. On the other hand, the lack of knowledge about the principal's role is a systemic factor that discourages decision making about possible career progress.

Six participants of this study had plans for their careers, but becoming a principal was not part of them. The personal and systematic influences are indicated by the following: one said *"absolutely I do have a plan but only if it was God's plan for my life;"* on the other hand: *" yes I have a plan but there are things in the principal's role that I have to learn."* One spoke *"of her pathway being a lot stronger than it had been in previous years but I am content with my current role."*

The participants felt they needed to be treated uniquely as Pacific Islanders. Their circumstances were not the same as those of non-PIs. The treatment of PIs progressing to higher roles should reflect this unique character. It should also acknowledge that a PI must struggle to achieve higher roles within the system because of race, gender, beliefs and values. Harris et al. (2003) state that "there needs to be acknowledgement of the difficulties they (minority group) face" (p.4), in their aspirations toward higher roles. PIs need to feel confident that the system values them as PIs. The idea of having a PI-managed programme should not be perceived as a

separatist initiative but should be recognised as supporting the uniqueness of being a PI. The participants of this study have voiced a strong view of resolving this trend by suggesting targeting current PI AP/DPs to plan their career towards principalship. This approach would help close the gap between PI leaders and PI students in New Zealand schools.

Having little or no experience in a leadership role was a significant concern in undermining the confidence of the participants of this study's decision making about principalship: One said: *"I expected at least an interview, I don't think I expected I would get the job because of my experience and that's one of the things I don't have."*
This factor was identified by Harris et al (2003) in a survey of 400 deputy principals in Australia where it was reported that DPs needed much stronger experience in leadership roles to lead innovation and change within the school before moving into principalship roles.

The roles performed by eight AP/DPs in this study were maintenance oriented roles that lacked leadership experience for confidence building. Where leadership experience is available to aspiring leaders, their confidence grew, they became satisfied and were highly likely to apply for higher roles because they were confident about themselves (Chen, Blendinger & McGrath, 2000).

The three participants who applied unsuccessfully for principalship positions appear to have lacked the required leadership experience. Their capabilities and competencies were not developed and until they were this would be a barrier to future application. The system, through the work of school principals, should provide this leadership for their AP/DPs.

The participants lacked the confidence to consider higher roles because they perceived their qualifications to be not up to the standard required for application. However all the participants were qualified with bachelor degrees and one had a Master of Education degree. There is no qualification requirement in appointing a school principal in New Zealand schools (Cardno, 2003). Most New Zealand principals had learnt to be principals on the job with the support of their own network of friends and other principals (ERO, 1996). Lack of self confidence, not the assumption of qualification, was the overwhelming issue for the participants of this research; the participants' lack of confidence, in the system could be attributed to their socialisation experiences. The notion of socialisation is referred to by Merton (1968) and Hart (1993) as the process essential to gaining the skills and dispositions necessary to learn new roles. Perhaps the school's professional development programme may not have been effective and sufficient to provide the skills required for developing their confidence to aspire towards higher roles in the system.

Research by McKenley & Gordon (2002) on black and minority ethnic (BME) heritage groups in the UK with qualifications similar to those of their white colleagues found that those from BME groups lag behind the whites in getting white collar professional and management jobs. The reasons offered for this "lag" were prejudice and discrimination; the difference in lifestyle and educational experience; and the perception that minority groups had less appropriate experience and skills than their equivalent white colleagues.

The participants' needs to be principals should have informed their preparation for achieving this higher role, but this was not the case. Studies by Morrison & Van Glinow (1990) found minority groups were disadvantaged in the way they were treated in the system. Two participants expressed concerns about prejudices and discriminations within the system:

" I hate to say it, I mean NZ is a great country but there is that element of racism - there is!, and you see it, I mean I turn up for AP/DP meeting and yeah I felt it, you know in talking to and trying to make conversation with people;" and *"I think there is still institutionalised racism. I am a lot more aware now, not that you look for it but you have a more global view and so you can see it;"* and "*intimidated by colleagues, being treated as a form of tokenism and required only for an acknowledgement gesture rather"*.

The participants' responses in this study were as much about their silent voice and politeness than about their own real experiences. The participants' responses reflected their upbringing of being respectful. They did not talk about their achievement because this might sound like boasting and preferring others to talk about them. They were happy to share their successes but were not so forward to share their struggles. McKenley & Gordon (2002) alludes to such expression as "silent", likely to be demonstrated by people of minority background who are reluctant to share openly their experiences against the status quo.

The challenge for the participants of this study is to resolve their personal issues before considering career promotion. The difficulty with this scenario is that their personal issues are issues also of the system in which they operate. The slow change in career development theories does not take into account race and ethnicity as factors of slow change (McKenley & Gordon, 2003).

Lack of support for Assistant Principal and Deputy Principal

A finding of this study was the lack of support provided for PI AP/DPs to become principals. The significant contributor to this situation was the principal and associated leaders in their schools. For an AP/DP wishing to move upward there is much reliance on the feedback provided by the principal. The reliance on the report and recommendation of a principal is an issue for further study. Just how much influence a principal should

have on a person's career needs close examination and further debate. As Greenfield (1985) suggests, the relationship is not neutral and principals can dominate the relationship. For the participants of this study and especially the ones who applied unsuccessfully for principalship, a supportive principal would have nurtured their motivation and confidence toward their aspiration for senior leadership roles; this was not the case. While the lack of support from the principals was a significant factor in the study, a bigger hurdle to overcome was institutional racism and racial discrimination that exist within the system.

A review of the literature carried out for the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) by Harris et al. (2003b) identified that the experience of being an AP/DP had not always helped AP/DPs to become principals.

Two participants of this research acknowledged contentment with their jobs; however, they did reveal that being a PI presented substantial personal and professional challenges in their decision to apply for higher role positions. This is identified by McKenley & Gordon (2002) who found that minority leaders were not recognised for their achievements by colleagues and authorities. Of the three participants of the study who applied unsuccessfully for principalship, two experienced racial discrimination during the appointment process. One felt so strongly about the treatment he received that he was no longer interested in applying for a principalship position. He felt that the appointment panel had disadvantaged his application because of their opinion of him as a PI applicant rather than on merit of what he could offer. His drive toward principalship was severely hindered by the system.

Institutional racism and racial discrimination

The career progress of PI AP/DPs is hindered by institutional racism and racial discrimination within the system. McKenley & Gordon's (2002) study of ethnic minority groups in the UK discovered that people from minority groups encountered adversity and challenges in their progress towards for leadership roles because of who they are. Harris at al (2003)

also reported that "a recent USA review of ethnic minority teachers suggests that they face specific barriers to recruitment and advancement" (p.13).

The challenge faced by PIs in recruitment and promotion will require a collective effort to resolve by the individual and the system. The study by Harris et al. (2003) on the promotion of teachers in UK schools found that black teachers were less likely to be encouraged to apply for promotion to senior roles than their white colleagues and were more likely to be told to teach subjects for which they were neither trained nor qualified. McKenley & Gordon (2002) found that people coming from minority groups were disadvantaged in British society and there was a higher level of discrimination felt by those from minority groups seeking promotion. During interviews many of the participants of this study were reluctant to say anything (silent voice) that suggests they were treated unfairly in the system fearing they could be perceived as unable to cope in the system. They did not want to be singled out for special provisions and privileges and risk tagging of tokenism PI in their positions. The problem here was that the PIs in this research appear to have formed their own strategies to cope with their ill treatment and accepted that others should do the same.

Further research into the experiences of PI teachers in schools may provide insights that could be helpful to policy makers in addressing the issue of PI aspiration and career progression and provide further understanding of the reasons for the low incidence of PI principalship in New Zealand schools.

5.02   *Pathways and Career Development*

Career development and career change for the participants of this study were shaped by the following factors: personal conviction that they could make a difference; the support and approval of close friends and their own

families; their personal level of confidence and their perception of the barriers within the system. The barriers to career progress appear to be a consequence of their socialisation experience. Socialisation is defined as all the experiences associated with an individual as they work towards an aspired role (Leithwood, 1994). The experiences of an individual are a powerful driver in reaching a goal (Nicholson, 1984). The barriers to career progress are discussed in the following section.

Lack of motivation during socialisation experiences

The PI AP/DPs in this study were not motivated to consider applying for principal positions during their socialisation experience. Three participants had applied unsuccessfully; their socialisation experiences included a combination of leadership and management experiences. Leadership experiences included being a curriculum leader, leading a professional development programme and providing mentoring and guidance to syndicates and younger teachers. Management experiences included taking staff meetings and managing timetables and day to day relievers at school. The principal and senior leaders of schools were significant subjects in the participants' level of socialisation experiences.

There is limited knowledge about the socialisation experiences of AP/DPs in New Zealand. A study in this area may assist our understanding of the low number of PI AP/DPs seeking principalship. Enhancing their motivation would increase this number. Perhaps the finding by Harris et al. (2003b) may provide an answer to the lack of principal applicants amongst the participants of this study. These authors found that the experience of a candidate from an AP/DP position was not always helpful in preparing candidates for headship because they lacked direct leadership experience. These participants have acknowledged the lack of leadership experience in their socialisation experience. If a pool of competent principals is to be created, potential candidates should be motivated to consider principalship as a career path. In 2007 the Ministry

of Education set up an Aspiring Principals' Design Group to consider a pilot programme for principals in New Zealand to be implemented in 2008. This would go a long way to motivate current AP/DPs to consider principalship as a career move.

Lack of promotion of the Principal status

The principal's role is the natural next step for those in AP/DP positions (Draper & McMichael, 1998), yet there was no evidence from this study that this possibility was communicated to the participants. There was very little information available on principalship as a career option. The participants regarded their AP/DP roles as training grounds for principalship; however, this had not provided the necessary impetus and motivation. Harris et al. (2003b) in their research on the professional support provided to AP/DPs in the UK reported that the level was insufficient to motivate them to become principals. With little research available on the role of AP/DPs in New Zealand, the participants' stories and experiences of this study should help our understanding of the low number of PI principals. Principal status is not recognised as a position worth striving for by the participants of this study. They perceive being a principal as too much work and very stressful, a view that must be changed.

Lack of networking opportunity

Harris et al. (2003b) was clear that gaining promotion in a career depended largely on the network of the subject within the system. Mckenley & Gordon (2002) reported that minority groups were at a disadvantage because they did not have the network of encouragement to rely on for job prospects compared to their white peers. This investigation found a lack of networking by PI AP/DPs wanting to achieve promotion in the system. The participants referred to network as the support in the appointment process including application preparation; engaging referees; discussing advertisements; writing application letters; developing

presentations; personal presentation of themselves; and availability of support from the time a decision was made to apply. The three participants of this research who were unsuccessful in their application for principalship had wished this was available when they were putting together their applications.

One said *"I would love my CV to be looked at ... I think maybe my CV was a little bit overwhelming,"* as well as *"preparations and understanding of budget and knowing working with the ministry"*.

According to Harris et al. (2003a), leaders from ethnic minority groups face more personal and professional challenges than their white colleagues in acting on their aspirations towards higher positions, These authors concluded that ethnic minority groups had to work harder and were allowed to fail more than their white peers. This report also suggests that to attract people from an ethnic minority background into leadership:

> There needs to be an acknowledgement of the difficulties they face and specific introductory and support programmes for those who are considering career move ... More research into the particular development needs of these groups is required to ensure future provision is relevant, appropriate and ultimately effective (p.4).

The participants of this research did not have the network of support for principalship roles bolstering the confidence to act and make decisions. For the participants of this study this would have increased their decision making. One concluded that: *"If I do apply for the next job I would probably be asking another principal or someone else and say hey you come and support me in my interview on this job and I think the network needs to be established."*

Lack of a coherent professional development

Harris et al. (2003b) in their work on BME heritage groups in the UK found:

> There needs to be an acknowledgement of the difficulties they face and specific introductory and support programmes for those who are considering career move ... more research into the particular development needs of these groups is required to ensure future provision is relevant, appropriate and ultimately effective. (p.4)

For the participants of this study there is a need for a targeted professional development on leadership if they are to progress to higher roles in schools. Much support is required to remove barriers at pre and post appointment for minority groups. The participants of this study had encountered less support and greater barriers in their journey to their current positions. The professional development provided lacked direction in guiding them toward principalship or higher level positions. The system should ensure that those considering principal positions are provided accessibility to specifically targeted professional development programmes that direct their path to achieving higher roles. The initiative by the Ministry of Education in a pilot programme for principals, to start in 2008, is a positive step.

The participants were involved in a range of professional development including leading a professional development; attending principals' forum; conferences and courses. The three in this study applying for principalship may indicate the relevancy of professional development on offer to prepare PI AP/DPs for potential principalship. The programme may not be providing the confidence to consider principalship. It is recommended that research be undertaken into Pasifika leadership needs and that these needs are related to leadership development, to support the provision of relevant professional development.

5.03 *Barriers Faced by Principal Applicants*

It is widely accepted that gender and ethnicity can prove to be covert barriers to promotion within a wide range of professional fields. Principal applicants from minority groups face barriers of exclusion internally and externally in promotion and employment prospects (Bariso, 2001). A finding in this research was the participants' lack of confidence to move on beyond AP/DP. Factors contributing to this were gender, race and the attitude of both the professional and social community.

Gender, ethnicity and community attitudes

Participants of this study were adamant that being a PI was a barrier for achieving promotion in higher roles in schools. They said *"When I look around and I think that our prisons are full of PIs, there is a perception out there that there are lots of prisoners out there that are Pasifika,"* and *"I hate to say … NZ is a great country but there is element of racism … I see it in people's faces when I turn up to my AP/DP meetings;"* and *"unless you are going into a community that is very much PI … you've just got to work a little bit more harder in order to prove that you can actually match your peers."*

This could be compared to the finding by Davidson (1997) on the concept of the "glass ceiling" for white women aspiring to higher roles. Davidson identified that women found it really hard to break into leadership roles dominated by males. Those women who progressed through to leadership positions were said to have broken through the glass ceiling and were accredited as role models for other women. To break through the glass ceiling women had to overcome male dominated attitudes and perceptions such as that females were not as good as males, that females were intimidated and uncomfortable in leadership roles. Davidson (1997) also coined the concept of "concrete ceiling" which referred to minority women aspiring to leadership roles. The point is, it is much easier for a white

woman to progress than it is for a minority woman with the same aspiration. The concept of concrete ceiling in Davidson's report would suggest that PI females seeking principalship would find it almost impossible to achieve. It is one thing being a female but another to being a PI female.

Community attitudes were also a barrier towards PI principalship. The McKenley and Gordon (2002) study found minority groups faced racism, tokenism and discrimination factors discouraging their decision making about the possibility of becoming a principal. One participant recalled a visitor in her classroom:

"Even now just having someone visit me in my classroom, come in to my European teacher aide, so I must have been a parent helper ... he was embarrassed afterwards but he was palagi. But you would have an Island parent come and if they don't know us they would probably walk to the teacher aide or the palagi teacher aide or the palagi teacher as well without knowing ... so lots of perceptions there. Interesting yes."

One participant of this research had encountered this racist attitude during an interview for a principal role. He felt disadvantaged by the appointment process during the interview stage, first with the composition of the panel and secondly, by the appointment panel's attitude towards him because he was a Pacific Islander. He said about the process:

> *It's the process that discourages me. How people perceive you, it is probably because of the colour of your skin and the ethnic you are bringing to the panel. When you go into an interview for a predominantly PI school and then you see people that you perceive should not be there because I think people who should be there should be people who have their children at that school and they know what their children want. I walked into the interview as a Pacific Islander; I think their perception is I am not as good as someone's that's waiting outside (white candidate).*

The experiences of the participants of this research suggest PIs must overcome external exclusion on a personal basis and in the system. External exclusion is defined by Bariso (2001) as occurring because of the lack of role models, personal negative experience and perceived racism.

A lack of aspiration and early planning of careers

Individual career decisions and aspiration are influenced by many factors including work motivation, values and career planning. These factors are influenced by personal and organisational factors (Lacey, 2002).

The lack of aspiration and planning by the participants of this study in their careers was a significant barrier to higher roles. They stated they had plans for their career; however, their progression appeared to be more a result of being at the right place at the right time, rather than a planned programme. The career pathways of the participants were on an ad hoc basis. There was no evidence of the interviewees having a career plan although they said they had such plans.

A study by Mclean (1992) on the aspirations of Tasmanian teachers found that teachers were seeking promotion because of the new challenge that would bring them. All had achieved promotion in the same school and appeared content with the challenges experienced in their current positions. Seven participants of this study had also achieved promotions at the same school. The goals of six of the participants seemed to peak at the AP/DP level rather than becoming a principal. If this is the general aspiration of PIs then the low number of PI principals in New Zealand may be explained to some extent. On the other hand, if the hopes of PIs can be challenged to make principalship the ultimate aim, then by giving consideration to personal and organisational factors related to the achievement of career goals (including a targeted leadership development programme) the low incidence of PI principals can be addressed. The participants of this study wanted a programme specific to their needs as PIs. When asked *"Do you think a programme for achieving PI*

principalship would help PIs achieve this?" all replied in the affirmative. A PI-specific programme would recognise the special character of a Pacific Islander and would likely motivate them to aspire to higher roles. Increasing PI candidates' motivation is a positive step when one considers the possibility of an increase in the pool of quality applicants for principalship.

A lack of PI role models

The lack of PI role models in principalship impact and influence decision making about becoming a principal for candidates from minority groups. The number of PI principals in New Zealand is unknown, the group recognised in statistics only as "others" (Brooking, 2007). The number is so small that the view of aspirants could be that becoming a principal is so hard to attain that they do not consider it as a career goal. This is an issue faced by minority groups and impacts on the way their aspirations are determined.

The lack of PI principal role models will remain if there is not an increase of PI AP/DPs moving to become principals. The participants in this research would have valued the opportunity to hear stories of successful PI principals, their effort, work and the process they had followed in achieving principalship. They said:

> *I like to hear about your process like why did you want to become a principal ... Because sometimes when you share those experiences, someone else can connect. I think I would listen to a principal who is PI and I would listen hard, I would listen if the principal has done things in the school. I would have liked guide from people like you on how to answer questions, what the panels would be looking for., I would like to hear from PI principals in the role. How they got there. What are they doing now? What do they enjoy about their job?*

The last barrier that is not often discussed but was a significant finding in this research was that of the silent voice. PIs working as AP/DPs face

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significant barriers to their progress including that of becoming a principal. These barriers are identified in this research in the following areas: gender and race; a lack of planning; and the small number of PI role models in principalship.

Silent Voice

The participants of this study were reluctant to share openly their experiences. This is a phenomenon that McKenley & Gordon (2002) allude to as silent with people of minority background. They are reluctant to share openly their experiences when these run contrary to the experiences of the majority.

There is insufficient empirical data that is currently available about PI teachers' experiences in New Zealand. However, a continual reminder of this silent voice is represented powerfully for PIs seeking to be leaders in the way that official statistical data about this group is subsumed within the category of other ethnic group (Brooking, 2007). Considering that PI students represent the third highest ethnic group of students in New Zealand schools, it is recommended that educational data collected by the Ministry of Education reflect PI as a specific representative group, in relation to statistics about leadership of schools.

5.04 *Qualities and Competencies Required for Principalship*

Hargreves et al. (2003) the school principals role in setting the direction of a successful school. The quality of a school leader significantly influences school improvement, shapes its character and direction. Effective leadership development programmes leading to principalship would ensure the availability of quality candidates for the principal's role. School leadership strongly affects student learning (Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004) and their abilities are central to the task of building schools that promote powerful teaching and learning for all students. A finding of this research was the exposure of PIs to only a

limited range of professional development experiences, in particular those of leadership development.

5.05 *Professional Development Experiences*

The professional development experiences of the participants may have contributed to the lack of confidence to consider principal positions. This is reflected in the number (three out of eight) of participants applying for that position. Participants experienced a wide range of personal and professional development but this had very little impact on building their leadership and management skills. In New Zealand the qualities and competencies for principal are identified in the Principal Professional Standards (Ministry of Education, 1999). The standards include professional leadership; relationship management; financial and asset management; and statutory and regulatory management. It appears the participants of this research had been exposed to a surface level of understanding rather than the deeper level that would enable them to step into the role of school principal. The level of professional development experienced by the research participants appears to be on an adhoc arrangement rather than a deliberate attempt to grow the leadership skills to becoming a principal. The professional development experienced had not been systematically coordinated to prepare candidates towards principalship.

Ongoing research into the nature of a leadership development programme that would move PI AP/DPs toward principalship must be developed if the system is to create a pool of PI applicants for principal roles.

5.06 *Pacific Island-specific Programme for Aspiring Principals*

A key finding of this study was for a PI-specific programme to be set up for PIs aiming for principalship. The participants wanted their specific needs to be addressed. Underpinning this wish was the acknowledgement of their uniqueness as Pacific Islanders. The participants of the study were unanimous that there are issues specific to Pacific teachers that impact

their achievement of principalship. Their exclusion resulting from this uniqueness needed to be addressed if they were to aspire to higher roles. PIs need to feel as equally treated and confident as those of the dominant culture. A PI-specific programme would provide an alternative way, and pathways, to a leadership development for a group that is already disadvantaged because of race and ethnic heritage McKenley & Gordon (2002). Seven participants of this study were adamant that this would be a way forward in establishing a pool of PI leaders wanting to achieve principalship. A review of literature on minority group AP/DPs by Harris et al. (2003b) on the aspiration and the career progression of AP/DPs in the UK found that being a school leader from an ethnic minority group presented significant personal and professional challenges. It suggested the need to acknowledge the problems that ethnic minority leaders face in professional progression and that an introductory specific programme was recommended as an initial step in supporting their aspiration. The point highlighted by the PI participants of this research was that their needs for career progression were not met by the ad hoc professional development experience. The participants were reluctant to criticise programmes they attended because this would be an admission of their failure in overcoming the system in which they operate. The participants said:

> *You start to realise there's something against them out there and I think if we could meet and talk about those issues ... there is more power in many than when you're by yourself, It's catering for the style of PI people ... there something there you don't find the way the other group work, It's like there is a silent component of it where we don't talk about it but we know that this is how it is.*

A targeted programme for PIs would develop the quality of talented PIs and widen the pool of candidates for principalship roles.

A PI's cultural upbringing creates a huge challenge to becoming a principal. Their concept of respect for your elders, having a humble attitude, being polite and serving others, extended family responsibilities

and the value of church, impact the way PIs live. These values are not always about promotion yet they act as factors forming a barrier for PI AP/DPs wanting to become principals. A specific programme about developing strategies to manage themselves personally and the system is recommended. See the following table: *Factors that act as barriers*:

Table 4: Factors that act as barriers

System Barriers	Coping strategies
• Ethnicity prejudices	Silent voice - no application
• Non-representative appointment panels	No application to jobs
• Lack of system–wide professional development for AP/DP	Accept things as they are-no application
• Lack of role models	No application for jobs
• Principal not providing support	No application for jobs
Personal Barriers	**Coping Strategies**
• Lack of confidence	Do more studies
• Community not offering support	Avoid applying for jobs
• lack of network	No application for jobs

The participants of this study unanimously supported the establishment of a PI programme to address their personal needs and the barriers within the system that are faced by aspiring PIs, So although silent they advocated a programme to change things.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to discuss findings from a research project to explain the incidence of the currently very small number of PI AP/DPs

achieving principalship in New Zealand schools. Following the themes identified in the literature review together with the interviewees' responses in structured interviews in this study, it was found that PI decision making and aspiration are influence by several conditions that have been synthesised in two broad categories. These conditions are expressed under two headings: Systemic conditions and Personal conditions.

CHAPTER SIX

6.01 *Conclusion and Recommendations*

The final chapter highlights key findings of the study in order to draw conclusions. Recommendations are made and limitations of the study are identified to provide the basis for further research in this area.

This study sets out to investigate conditions and factors, reasonings and explanations why there are few PI AP/DPs seeking to be principals in New Zealand schools. All the participants of this study were PI teachers who were employed as Assistant or Deputy Principals (AP/DPs) in primary and intermediate schools. The decision to invite PI-only participants was to provide a PI perspective that was important to me as a practising PI principal. With the phenomenon of a steadily growing PI population, I wanted to explore why there was not a correspondingly increasing ratio of PI principals appointed to match this trend.

To establish an explanation related to the research problem, I investigated the perceptions and attitudes of PIs in AP/DP positions in primary and intermediate schools, the factors and conditions impacting their decision making about gaining higher roles including becoming a principal and explored the barriers surrounding their hopes and achievements of principalship.

The study was designed to meet the following aims.
1. To examine conditions that surround the very low number of PI AP/DPs seeking principalship.
2. To determine what impact these conditions have in PI AP/DP decision making for higher roles in New Zealand schools.

3. To investigate factors impacting PI AP/DP decisions to apply for principalship in New Zealand schools.

The research was guided by the following questions.

1. What are the conditions that surround the low number of PI AP/DP seeking principalship in New Zealand schools?
2. What impact do these conditions have in PI (AP/DP) decision making regarding higher roles in New Zealand schools?
3. What factors might encourage PI (AP/DP) decisions to apply for promotion to principalship in New Zealand schools?

6.02   *Conclusions of this Research*

A conclusion of this research is that there are two factors overwhelming PI AP/DPs hopes of principalship and in their pursuit of higher roles in schools. They are systemic conditions and personal conditions. In addition, it is concluded that these two major factors interact to create a continuous set of barriers for PI AP/DPs seeking to become principals, as indicated in the diagram below.

Figure 1: Interaction of systemic and personal conditions

Systemic conditions

Support -   PI role models- Institutional
racism   Socialisation -   Discrimination
Professional development

Leadership skills

Professional network

Silent voice   Gender   Ethnicity

Qualification

Personal conditions
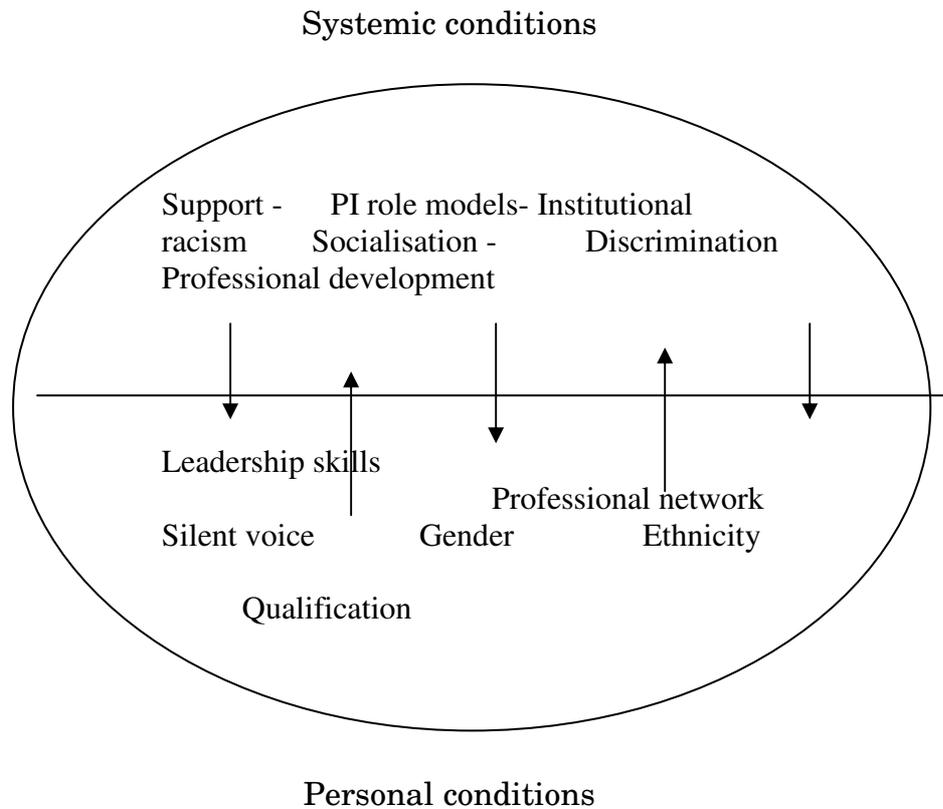
Systemic conditions reinforce personal conditions to reduce confidence, and personal conditions contribute to system conditions that support advancement, for example the lack of role models and networks to support advancement.

6.03 *Systemic Conditions*

A lack of support for AP/DPs

A major finding in the study was the lack of support provided by the principal and associated leaders for PI AP/DPs seeking to become principals, this significantly contributing to principalship not being part of the plan for most of the AP/DPs in this study. Three participants made unsuccessful applications for a principal's role.

Minority groups, according to McKenley and Gordon (2002) do need significant support to progress in employment opportunities because of the special challenges they face.

Institutional racism and racial discrimination

Another finding in the career progress of the PI participants was institutional racism and racial discrimination within the system.

One said about her experience: " *I hate to say it, I mean NZ is a great country but there is that element of racism - there is ! and you see it, I mean I turn up for an AP/DP meeting and yeah I felt it, you know in talking to and trying to make conversation with people.*" One reflected whether being PI was a barrier saying "*I think there is still institutionalised racism. I am a lot more aware now, not that you look for it but you have a more global view and so you can see it.*"

The experiences of some of the participants of this study resemble the findings by McKenley and Gordon (2002) in their study of ethnic minority groups in the UK. It was found that people from minority groups would encounter adversity and challenges because of who they are. Harris et al.(2003a) also reported that "a recent USA review of ethnic minority teachers suggests that they face specific barriers to recruitment and advancement" (p.13).

Lack of motivation in socialisation experience

A further finding in this study was the lack of motivation by PI AP/DPs in their socialisation experiences to drive them towards principalship positions. According to Harris et al. (2003a) the role of the AP/DP had not always been helpful in preparing candidates for principalship duties. While the principal's role should be the natural stepping stone for those in an AP/DP position (Draper & McMichael, 1998), there was no evidence in the investigation that this was promoted to the participants of this study. The participant's drive seemed to peak at the AP/DP role rather than aiming for a principal role.

Lack of a coherent professional development toward principalship

Another significant finding was the lack of a targeted professional development for PIs towards leadership, in particular principalship. A review of literature by Harris et al. (2003b) on the career progression of AP/DPs in the UK suggests the need to acknowledge the problems that ethnic minority candidates face in professional progression. It is suggested that an introductory specific programme be recommended as an initial step in supporting their goals. A specific programme for PIs would develop a pool of quality, talented, PIs for principalship roles. A specific professional development towards PI principalship would provide further quality leadership development, for a group that is already disadvantaged because of race and ethnic heritage McKenley & Gordon (2002). There was no data available of PI AP/DPs in New Zealand. It is recommended that educational data should reflect PIs as a representative group, rather than clustering this information as other which is the case in data reported by Brooking (2007).

Lack of PI role models in principalship

A substantial finding in the research was that there was too small a number of PI principals to provide leadership models. Bariso (2001) found that minority groups need to have more of their own in high roles so that they can know that it is indeed possible to achieve those roles. In New Zealand there is no such data on PI principals and PI teachers are not exposed to role models. This is external exclusion. By 2051 it is expected that PI children in schools will reach 21.2% of all the school children in New Zealand (ERO, 2000). The gap between PI principals and the PI population will worsen if there is not a determined effort to address the current trend of an extremely low number of PI principals in our schools.

It is recommended that research be held into PI leadership in schools at principal level to examine their stories and how they may assist our understanding of PI AP/DP principals in New Zealand schools.

6.04 *Personal Conditions*

The participants lacked confidence in leadership skills, qualifications and knowledge.

A significant finding in the career progress of the participants of this study was their lack of confidence in themselves. One talked about this lack of confidence when she recalled her feelings as she considered applying for a DP position: *"Why should I apply for that (DP vacancy) I can't do it, I had not had enough experience."* One applied for a principal position and recalled: *"I don't think I expected to get the job because of my experience and I think that's one of the things that I think I don't have. I guess my learning has to be making connections to research because that's what people look at".*

The participants lacked the professional networks within the system

Another factor impacting the career opportunities and promotion for PIs in AP/DP positions was the lack of professional networking within the system. According to Harris et al. (2003) a network is significant to achieving potential job promotion and this is a challenge faced by minority groups towards promotion: "there needs to be an acknowledgement of the difficulties they face and specific introductory and support programmes for those who are considering a career move" (p4). They also suggest that more research be undertaken on the development needs of ethnic minorities, particularly their leadership needs: "More research into the particular development needs of these groups is required to ensure future provision is relevant, appropriate and ultimately effective" (p.4).

Gender and ethnicity were a barrier toward higher roles

A significant finding in the investigation was that being a PI and of a minority group were barriers to gaining higher roles in schools. McKenley and Gordon's (2002) study on minority groups found they faced discrimination in their aspiration, to higher roles. One participant who applied unsuccessfully for a principals' position, recalled the response she received from an *"all white management team"* when she approached the DP about progressing to management: *"Oh you know you're not ready and that really put me off and I just thought, no, you are not going to keep me where you want me to be, I thought nah, I can make a difference and so that is one of the reasons I had to leave."*

Seven of the eight participants of this study were women who claimed that it was difficult to move on to higher roles because of their gender. This is indicated in the work of Davidson (1997) with the concepts of glass ceiling and concrete ceiling. The glass ceiling reflected the difficulties women in general found in their aspiration to leadership roles and the concrete ceiling referred to the particular difficulties for minority women.

Silent voice

A significant finding from the investigation was participants' cautious expression of their experiences. They were happy to share their successes but were not so forward in sharing their struggles: "intimidated by their professional colleagues, being treated as a form of tokenism and required only for an acknowledgement gesture rather"

 McKenley & Gordon (2002) allude to such expression as silent, likely to be demonstrated by people of minority backgrounds who are reluctant to share openly their experiences against the status quo.

6.05   *Recommendations*

There are two specific actions and research recommended for further development resulting from the findings of this investigation.

Action 1

It is recommended that a specific professional development programme for PI AP/DPs be established in New Zealand. The programme will assist them to manage personal issues of institutional racism and racial discrimination while consideration is given to their achieving principalship status. Research by McKenley and Gordon (2002) on BME heritage applicants concur that school leaders from the ethnic minority group would find it personally and professionally challenging to make progress towards their career. This action would support movement of PI AP/DPs towards higher roles.

Research 1

It is further recommended that research on PI leaders in schools, especially those in principalship positions, be undertaken with the objective of examining their stories and experiences to see how they may provide insight to the aspiration of PI AP/DPs. This would be my next study.

Action 2

It is recommended that PI AP/DPs wishing to move further into leadership continue to undertake ongoing professional development.

Research 2

It is recommended that research be undertaken on the role of PI community leaders (trustees of school boards) in supporting PI leaders towards principalship positions.

6.06   Suggestions for Research

It is recommended that research be carried out on the role of the principals in encouraging and preparing principal applicants and the

impact this role has on decision making. What would happen if the person does not get on well with the principal? As Greenfield (1985) suggests, the relationship is not neutral and the principals can dominate the relationship. Alma, Muijs and Crawford, (2003) found that the experience of candidates from AP/DP positions was not always helpful in preparing candidates for headship.

It is recommended that a career pathway towards principlaship be clearly outlined for future leaders.

It is recommended that research be carried out on the provision of professional development responsible for creating a critical mass of aspiring principals in the system. The system must ensure that hopeful principals are provided accessibility to quality professional development programme appropriate and relevant to principalship.

It is recommended that the quality of educational data on PIs should reflect PIs as a representative group.

6.07   Limitations of this study

This study is limited by the decision to engage PI-only participants to be part of the study. It is further limited by the decision to seek PIs who were working in the Auckland region since there is no database of PI AP/DPs in New Zealand schools. The researcher's own network and knowledge of the PI community was relied upon to identify PIs in AP/DP positions working in the Auckland area. The lack of a database of PI teachers in New Zealand schools and the selection of participants from only the Auckland region limits understanding of PIs to a particular region whereas it would be invaluable to know the experiences of PIs working in other regions in New Zealand and make a comparison of their perceptions and views. It would also have expanded the study to draw on the views of non-PI

AP/DPs and principals regarding what they perceived to be leadership barriers.

The study is also limited by the sample which was determined by the researcher for a specific purpose (purposive sampling). The researcher had planned to interview twenty participants but with no database available it was difficult to ascertain whether there were twenty AP/DPs in New Zealand let alone twenty in the chosen area for selection. Once the first participant was contacted, the participants themselves became a source for contacting other participants (snowball sampling). The researcher found after several interviews that the interviewees were expressing similar views and therefore made the decision to settle on eight participants rather than the twenty planned for, for the purpose of the research. This is termed "saturation" in relation to qualitative data gathering

6.08 *Conclusion*

This final chapter has brought together the findings and conclusions of this investigation. From the results of this study I have concluded that PI AP/DPs aiming for principal roles encounter overwhelmingly two sets of conditions that act as barriers to achieving this. Systemic conditions include a lack of support; institutional racism and discrimination; lack of motivation during socialisation experience; a lack of career plan in professional development; and a lack of PI role models. Personal conditions include a lack of confidence; a lack of professional network; impact of gender and ethnicity; silent voice.

To counter personal factors, PIs working in AP/DP positions should engage in ongoing studies preferably in leadership development areas.

It is recommended that research be undertaken on how the PI community can be more supportive of PIs achieving leadership in schools.

To counter systemic factors it is recommended that a PI-specific programme for encouraging PI AP/DPs be developed. It is also

recommended that research be undertaken of PI leaders already succeeding in principalship roles in New Zealand to evaluate and utilise their experiences to encourage and promote PIs to principal and leadership roles.

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APPENDIX A

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

<u>**INFORMATION SHEET**</u>

ASPIRING TOWARDS PRINCIPALSHIP:
A Pacific Island Perspective.

Research Ethics Requirements for a
Master of Educational Leadership and Management **Thesis.**

Date

Dear

My name is Enosa Auva'a and I am currently enrolled in the ***Master of Educational Management*** degree in the School of Education at Unitec New Zealand and seek your help in meeting the requirements of research for a Thesis course which forms a substantial part of this degree.

The overall aim of my research is to explore the conditions, reasons and factors contributing to the small number of Pacific Islanders (PIs) appointed to principals' positions in primary and secondary schools in New Zealand.

I also aim to :

- To examine conditions that surround the incidence of very few PIs in principal role in New Zealand schools.
- To determine what impact these conditions have in PIs in assistant and deputy principals (AP/DP) decisions to apply for promotion to principalship in New Zealand schools.
- To investigate what factors might encourage PI AP/DP decisions to apply for promotion to principalship in New Zealand schools.

I would greatly appreciate your assistance with this research. Your participation would involve me interviewing you for one to one and a half hours. I would like to tape record our interview which will be transcribed following our interview. You will be sent a copy of the transcript two weeks after the interview for final approval.

Neither you nor your organisation will be identified in the Thesis. Upon completion of the thesis I will provide you with a written summary of my findings. I believe this research will benefit Pacific Island teachers particularly those aspiring to principlaship roles in New Zealand schools.

I hope that you will give me permission to interview you as part of this research. When we meet I will ask you, at the start of thre interview, to complete a formal Consent Form. If you have any queries about the research, you may contact my principal supervisor who is Professor Carol Cardno at UNITEC Institute of Technology, Phone 815 4311, email ccardno@unitec.ac.nz.

Yours sincerely

Enosa Auva'a

Researcher

71 Beach Road

Papakura

09-298-7535

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER:

This study has been approved by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee
for 2006/2007. If you have any complaints or reservations about the
ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through
the Secretary (Ph: 09 815-4321 ext 7248). Any issues you raise will be
treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of
the outcome.

APPENDIX B

Unitec
NEW ZEALAND
Te Whare Wānanga o Wairaka

RESEARCH PARTICPANT CONSENT FORM

Project Title:

ASPIRING TOWARDS PRINCIPALSHIP:

A Pacific Island Perspective.

I have been given and have understood an explanation of the above–mentioned research project. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered. I understand that neither my name nor the name of my organisation will be used in any public report. I understand that I may withdraw information and/or my involvement for this project without penalty of any sort up to two weeks after sighting and verifying the transcript of the structured interview.

RESEARCH

PARTICIPANT...

I agree to take part in this project.

Name: _____

Signature : _____

Date :

_____

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 721

This study has been approved by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee for 2006/2007.
If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you
may contact the Committee through the Secretary (Ph: 09 815-4321 ext 7248). Any
issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be
informed of the outcome.

APPENDIX C

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

<u>**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**</u>

ASPIRING TOWARDS PRINCIPALSHIP:

A Pacific Island Perspective.

Interviewee name   _____

Date   _____

Current position   _____

Years in position   _____

Gender   F   M

Type of School   Primary   Intermediate   Secondary

Teaching Experiences: Primary _____ (years)

                                   Intermediate _____ (years)

                                   Secondary _____ (years)

Ethnicity _____

Contact Details   **Email**   _____

    Phone _____

Decile rating   **1**   **2**   **3**   **4**   **5**   **6**   **7**   **8**

    9   **10**

Other factors of note:

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONS

1. Could you outline your career progress to your current position?

2. Explain your experiences in professional leadership roles and administrative and management roles?

3. Do you want to become a school principal?

4. Have you applied for a principals' position?

5. Have you got a plan or a pathway for your career-Is becoming a principal part of the plan?

6. What factors had encouraged you to apply for principalship?

7. Who encouraged and supported you to apply for principalship?

8. What factors had discouraged you from applying for principalship?

9. Tell us about your experience as the AP/DP of your school what did you do?

10. Explain what you think are the qualities required to become of a school principal?

11   Why do you think you are ready to become a school principal?

12   Why do you think you are not ready for principalship roles?

13   What professional development have you had to prepare for principalship?

14   What preparation might you need in order to prepare you for principalship?

15   The number of PI principals in New Zealand is less than 1% of the total number of principals in New Zealand- what do you think about this statistic ?

16   What is special about being a PI that may be of value to New Zealand Schools?

17   In your view how you think the PI community perceive PI principals?

18   Do you think being PI is a barrier to principalship?

19   Do you think a programme for aspiring PI principals would   help PI achieve principalship?

20   What could such a programme include?

21   Do you see yourself as role model for other potential PI teachers aspiring to principalship?

22   Is there anything else you want to say?