



Integrating values in the New Zealand Curriculum: Teaching and learning strategies and their impact

TRLI grant holders: Dr Ross Notman, Director, Centre for Educational Leadership and Administration, University of Otago

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Introduction

The research question for this study of values implementation is: What has been the impact of the values statement in the New Zealand Curriculum (2007) on teaching and learning? This question is of significance in New Zealand curriculum development as no research has yet investigated the impact of the values component on teaching and learning practices since the inception of the new Curriculum.

Aims

The proposed research project aims to explore:

- Further evidence in the national and international literature regarding the processes and impact of values implementation in schools
- How two intermediate and two secondary schools integrate values into their curriculum programmes. Data will be gathered using documentary analysis and teacher surveys of school-wide actions such as each school's educational philosophy, organisational structures, curriculum planning, pedagogical practice in the classroom, monitoring processes, teacher-student relationships, and information communicated to students and parents.
- The impact of values implementation in four schools and how students have demonstrated their abilities to produce values-based outcomes. Data will be gathered using focus group interviewing of students and teachers, and a personalised learning log kept by individual students.

Why is this research important?

Currently, there are gaps in our knowledge about values development in New Zealand schools. We do not have a national picture of values implementation in schools, particularly intermediate and secondary schools. We do not know what teachers, curriculum leaders and principals believe and know about values implementation in the new Curriculum, nor do we know about the impact of current values implementation strategies on students' learning. This research project is designed to address this knowledge gap by investigating values implementation in a small sample of schools, and by communicating the research findings to a wider New Zealand practitioner audience.

What we plan to do

Data

In order to present a rich contextual picture of four cases, quantitative data will be collected from a structured survey of approximately 135 teachers across four school sites only. This survey will comprise a Likert scale assessment of the importance of items in the new Curriculum statements about values and desired outcomes, together with a series of open-ended questions about teachers' perceptions of values implementation in their school.

In addition, qualitative data will be collected from multiple sources: documentary sources; semi-structured, face-to-face interviews with school leaders; focus group interviews of students and teachers; and a values learning log completed by students.

Analysis

Quantitative survey data will be scanned and coded using quantitative software programmes, and the two investigators will check a random sample of the quantitative data as a reliability check. Qualitative data collected from all forms of interview will be transcribed and checked for accuracy by the participants. Likewise, data from school documentation and the student learning logs will be recorded and coded thematically using a process of constant comparative analysis.

Our partners:

Associate investigator: Dr Darrell Latham, University of Otago

Teacher researchers:

Kelly McGregor, Year 6 teacher, Balmacewen Intermediate
Patrice Connor, Year 7 Dean, Tahuna Normal Intermediate
Helen Angus, Assistant Principal, Queens High School
Jeremy Scott, Year 10 Teacher, Kaikorai Valley College



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