

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the major themes related to the research questions found in the social work supervision and new public management literature.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section discusses social work supervision in terms of its evolution, recent research, approaches and models. The second section discusses the new public management literature in terms of: its origins; the New Zealand model of new public management; the literature critiquing new public management; and the effect of new public management on professional social service supervision. The chapter's conclusion summarises the main points and examines the implications of these points for this study.

Professional Social Work Supervision

Within the field of professional supervision in the social services there is an extensive, established body of literature (Bennie, 1995). Authors from Great Britain and the United States of America dominate this literature with the significant authors being Kadushin (1976; 1992a), Munson (1979; 1993), Shulman (1993; 1995), Middleman et al. (1985), Hawkins et al. (1989), Morrison (1993) and Brown et al. (1996). Kadushin's (1992a) *Supervision in Social Work*, (Third Edition), is generally recognised as the leading text, both locally and internationally (Payne, 1994; Bennie, 1995). In New Zealand there is a developing tradition of literature which has been strongly influenced by the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers and the New Zealand Social Work Training Council (Bennie, 1995).

What Is Professional Social Work Supervision?

The literature offers a plethora of definitions. Rich (1993: 137) points out that "no single definition or theory exists by which to describe its meaning, methods or purpose uniformly." That said, within the literature Kadushin's (1992) definition is argued to be the most comprehensive, and is used by a number of authors as the starting point for their own attempts at offering a definition (Brown et al., 1996; Bennie, 1995; Shulman, 1993; 1995). Kadushin (1992: 22-23) defines social work supervision in the following

terms:

The supervisor is an agency administrative-staff member to whom authority is delegated to direct, coordinate, enhance the on-the-job performance of the supervisees for whose work he is held accountable. In implementing this responsibility, the supervisor performs administrative, educational and supportive functions in interaction with the supervisee in the context of a positive relationship.

The supervisor's ultimate objective is to deliver to agency clients the best possible service, both quantitatively and qualitatively, in accordance with agency policies and procedures. Supervisors do not directly offer service to the client but they do indirectly affect the level of service offered through their impact on the direct service supervisees.

This definition emphasises that supervision occurs within an agency context, and it recognises that supervision has a place in both agency management and structure. Essentially, the three functions of supervision- namely; administration, education and support- reinforce that the supervisor is the bridge between management and the professional. The objective of the best possible service to clients emphasises that supervision is a quality control process and the indirect service element highlights that the supervisors role is akin to that of a coach who prepares, observes, shares in, guides and assists (from the metaphorical side-lines) the supervisee in their work. Shulman (1993; 1995) adds to Kadushin's definition through reference to the supervisor's role as a mediator between the management and professionals.

Within New Zealand, professional social work supervision is defined by the national social workers Association (NZASW, 1998b: 1) as follows:

Supervision is a process in which the supervisor enables, guides, and facilitates the social worker(s) in meeting certain organisational, professional and personal objectives. These objectives are competency; accountable practice; continuing professional development and education; and personal support.

The local definition's emphasis differs from that of Kadushin (1992a) in that it constructs supervision in terms of a professional relationship that takes place within both an organisational and professional context. Kadushin (1992a), on the other hand,

emphasises that supervision is a professional relationship that takes place within an organisational context.

The Evolution of Social Work Supervision

The international literature reviewed, argues that social work supervision is as old as social work itself, and that the history of supervision is inseparable from the history of practice theory (Tsui, 1997a; 1997b; Munson, 1993). Nevertheless, the literature indicates that two important factors have shaped the development of social work supervision: namely, the practice environment and the process of social work professionalisation (Munson, 1993; Tsui, 1997b; Brashears, 1995). These two factors have been most apparent in the shifts in emphasis between the administrative and professional aspects of social work supervision during its history (Kadushin, 1992a; Munson, 1993; Tsui, 1997b).

The origins of social work supervision are unclear, (Munson, 1993). Munson (1993) speculates that it was most likely based on a model of supervision developed in England by the medical profession, a model which was subsequently exported to America. Whilst this argument seems plausible, there appears to be little in the recorded history to support it. The early history of supervision can be traced back to the Charity Organisation Societies Movement, which began in Buffalo, New York, USA in 1878 (Kadushin, 1992a; Munson, 1993; Tsui, 1997b). The supervision itself involved the paid agents of this movement being supervised as part of their apprenticeship (Munson, 1993). The extent to which this supervision included both administrative and professional aspects is debated (Munson, 1993). Tsui (1997b) covers this debate well and asserts that the supervision began with an administrative emphasis because the first visitors of the Charity Movement were the employers, who were untrained volunteers from the upper class and were not supervised. These employers recruited paid agents towards the turn of the century from the middle and working classes. They then provided administrative supervision to the paid agents as a means of maintaining accountability (Tsui, 1997b). When a number of paid agents were established, Tsui (1997b) argues, the professional aspects (namely education and support) began to be addressed as the paid agents implemented an apprenticeship approach.

In 1898, the first recorded social work training course was offered by the New York Charity Organisation Society. This course marked the beginning of agency-based education and training, and evolved in 1904 into the New York School of Philanthropy.

This school later developed into the first school of social work- the Columbia University School of Social Work (Kadushin, 1992a), with the first course in supervision being offered in 1911 (Kadushin, 1992a; Tsui, 1997b).

In the 1920s, social work training moved from the agencies to universities. As a result of this move, the professional aspects of supervision were further promoted as supervision became viewed as an educational process for learning social work practice (Munson, 1993; Tsui, 1997b). The viewing of supervision as an educational process also contributed to the development of the individual conference as the primary mode of delivery (Munson, 1993; Tsui, 1997b). From the 1920's onwards a social work supervision literature base began to develop. Kadushin (1992a:11) emphasises this point by stating that thirty-five articles on social work supervision were published between 1920 and 1945 by the *Family Casework* (now *Social Casework*) journal. In 1936, the first book on social work supervision, *Supervision in Social Casework*, written by Virginia Robinson, was published (Kadushin, 1992a). In this book, supervision was defined as “an education process” (Tsui, 1997b: 194).

The emergence of the professional aspects of social work supervision, through an increased emphasis on education, was further assisted by the integration of psychoanalytic theory into social work practice from the 1930s to the 1950s. This integration resulted in practice theory having a significant influence in supervision, and the led to the rise of the notion that supervision was a “parallel process” of casework (Tsui, 1997b; Munson, 1993; Kadushin, 1992a).

Tsui (1997b: 195) argues that the next major historical theme was the debate from 1956 to the 1970's between “interminable supervision and autonomous practice”. This debate arose from the increasing professionalisation of social work, and the view espoused that a social worker's professional status was compromised by interminable supervision (Tsui, 1997b). One result of this debate was that a trend began to develop away from interminable supervision to a defined period of supervised practice which was then followed by autonomous practice (Munson, 1993). This debate also arguably gave rise to the concept of consultation in social work, and the view that the autonomous practitioner would consult in particular cases, rather than have an ongoing supervision relationship (Kadushin, 1977).

It appears that as the professional aspects of social work supervision reached their apex, that the profession's desire for professional legitimisation resulted in the devaluing of the professional aspects of supervision.

Kadushin (1992a: 14) argues that in the 1970s two further factors emerged. The first was an increased preoccupation with accountability due to the fiscal constraints of publicly funded agencies' and the beginnings of the shift from Keynesian-based demand economics to the economics of laissez-faire (Easton, 1997; O'Donoghue, 1998a). The natural result of this factor was an increased emphasis on administrative supervision. The second factor was the discovery of burnout, which emphasised the importance of the supportive aspects of supervision (Kadushin, 1992a). The type of supervision that these two factors brought to the fore in the period immediately prior to the new managerial era, was one focused on administrative accountability and support of the worker, rather than directly upon professional practice.

Since the 1980s the international literature highlights that accountability has had an emphasis in social work supervision (Tsui, 1997b; Munson, 1993; Morrison, 1993, Kadushin, 1992a; Coulshed, 1990; Glastonbury et al., 1987; Bamford, 1982). This emphasis reflects the effect that new managerialism has had on the social services and social work supervision. Initially this emphasis appeared to increase the dominance of the managerial aspects of supervision over the professional aspects (Kadushin, 1992a; Payne; 1994; Tsui, 1997b). The reaction to this managerial emphasis, however, has led to the professional aspects of supervision becoming reasserted in the literature, as social work practitioners and academics have tried to redress the balance. Bunker et al. (1988:xi) reflected this reassertion of the professional aspects, when they made the following statement that linked the supervisor's role to both the management system and professional practice:

We view the role of the supervisor as imbedded within both the management system and the professional practice system, as a key element in each and as an essential link between the two systems.

Generally, the reassertion of the professional aspects of social work has occurred through the social work profession's reemphasis on social work supervision. One example of this was the publication of a book titled *Interactional Supervision* (Shulman, 1993) by the National Association of Social Workers in the United States of America. This reemphasis is also evident in the volume of recently published literature (Kadushin, 1992a; Munson, 1993; Shulman, 1993; Morrison, 1993; Brown et al., 1996; Hughes et al., 1997; O'Donoghue, 1998a). A strong theme present in this literature, is the argument that supervision, through its interactional focus (which

includes the interactions between the practice setting, the client, the social worker, the supervisor, the agency and its context), provides professional process accountability through the medium of reflective practice (Munson, 1993; Shulman, 1993; 1995; Rich, 1993; Van Kessel et al., 1993; Tsui et al., 1997). The reassertion has been further supported by the establishment of *The Clinical Supervisor* Journal in 1983, and by the conceptualisation of the phenomena of Clinical Social Work Supervision by Munson (1993). The strongest assertion of the professional aspects of social work supervision was made by Brashears (1995), who argued that a false dichotomy had been created between social work practice and supervision, and that supervision is social work practice and needs to be reconceptualised in this way.

The Evolution in New Zealand

Compared with the international literature, the published literature reviewed in New Zealand is somewhat brief and recent. This literature, however, like the international literature, reveals how supervision in Aotearoa New Zealand has been shaped by the professionalisation of social work and the changing social environment.

The recorded history of social work supervision initially reveals an educational focus. This focus is evident in the 1966 report of the first supervision in social work course in the *New Zealand Social Worker* (NZASW, 1966), and the publication of a collection of papers as a monograph shortly afterwards (NZASW, 1972). Bracey (1978a) appears to mark a change in emphasis, with his paper tending to emphasise accountability and a lack of both published material and research in the area of supervision in New Zealand. Bracey's (1978a) paper is also notable because he attempts to introduce themes from the international literature into the local setting. This is particularly emphasised by Bracey's (1978b) book review of Kadushin's (1976) first edition of *Supervision in Social Work*.

In the 1980s the local published literature reveals a return to the professional and educational focus. Read (1983) outlined how her personal views about supervision had changed as a result of her study towards a Certificate in Social Service Supervision and the New Zealand Social Work Training Council (NZSWTC) published their *Supervision Resource Package* (NZSWTC, 1985). This package was comprehensive and contained a position paper, development planners, an extensive bibliography, and a brief outline of practice models from a number of practice settings. Included in the practice models, were a bicultural model and a feminist model. These inclusions appear

to be the first formal recognition of the influence that culture and gender have in social work supervision. It also reflects the changes that had occurred within the profession and society during this period (Shannon, 1991; Cheyne et al., 1997). Towards the end of the 1980s, the issue of low levels of professionalisation amongst social workers and its effect on the professional aspects of supervision was raised. The particular concerns identified were an increasing identification by social workers with their agencies, and an emphasis on administrative supervision. The implications of these concerns were the erosion of social workers' professional identity, professional development, and critical reflection on social work practice (Taverner, 1989; Blake-Palmer et al., 1989).

In the early to mid 1990s, the literature has focused on reclaiming the professional aspects of supervision in the new managerial environment, which did not seem to value, understand, recognise and support it (Young, 1993; Beddoe et al., 1994; Cockburn, 1994; Bennie, 1995). Amongst this literature, Volume VI, Numbers 5/6 of *Social Work Review*, and the annotated bibliography of local and international supervision literature since 1985, written by Bennie (1995), stand out. Towards the end of this decade it appears that a new era for professional social work supervision is emerging in New Zealand (Beddoe, 1997a). This new era appears to be characterised by both agencies and the profession developing policies on supervision, tertiary education providers offering diploma programmes, and a renewed interest in the process of supervision, particularly in relation to culture and gender (Beddoe, 1997b; O'Donoghue, 1998a).

Research Since 1970

Thirty research articles on social work supervision were published in international journals between 1970 and 1995 (Tsui 1997a). The focus of these 30 studies ranges from basic descriptive studies, through to studies on eight specific supervisory issues: namely; functions, context, structure and authority, relationship, styles and skills, job satisfaction, training of supervisors and gender issues (Tsui, 1997a). Twenty-eight of the research studies reviewed by Tsui (1997a) were cross-sectional sample surveys. The only exceptions were Harkness et al. (1991) who conducted an experiment, and Melichercik (1984) who conducted an in-depth study in which 60 supervisors used daily logs to record their activities over a one-week period. Tsui (1997a: 48) bemoans the heavy quantitative emphasis of social work supervision research, and argues that it reflects "that the development of empirical research on social work supervision is still in

the embryonic stage". He argues strongly that future research should include qualitative research methods.

The local research reflects this embryonic stage, with only four research studies having been completed. Three of these studies were Masters theses, whilst the fourth was an unpublished paper.

The first study (Bowden, 1980) was based upon interviews with 15 senior social workers from the Department of Social Welfare. The thesis examined the position of senior social workers in the Department of Social Welfare and found that whilst they experienced satisfaction in the performance of their task, they also, had difficulty balancing agency requirements with those of their supervisees.

The second study Bracey (1981) was an exploratory and descriptive study of casework supervision in the probation service. The methodology employed involved the use of a structured questionnaire, which was completed by 68 probation staff. The major findings of this study were that: (a) casework supervision was not rated highly by basic grade and senior staff; (b) the ideas and beliefs about supervision were idiosyncratic, and that differing supervisory experiences led to a lack of uniformity or consistency in the participants' responses; and (c) most field staff were unfamiliar with the probation service's policy statement on casework supervision (Bracey, 1981: 118-119). Bracey (1981:118) identified that a major problem encountered in his study was "to abstract supervision from the context in which it was practised or experienced." In this regard, Bracey (1981: 118) recommended that more research was needed into casework supervision and organisation, particularly in state social work organisations.

The third study was Drew's (1987) thesis. Drew (1987:148) argued that social work supervision was a political activity constructed from the ideological perspectives of those involved. Drew (1987) used Habermas' theory to explore how social work supervision was a political activity formed from different cognitive interests and conditioned by the capitalist welfare state. He identified three models of social work supervision, namely- the apprenticeship, the professional, and the radical. The radical model was described as explicitly political, whereas the other two were implicitly political and maintained the capitalist welfare state. Drew (1987:145) asserted that supervision in New Zealand was based in both the apprenticeship and the professional models of supervision, and argued for an alternative form of supervision. This assertion was based upon a previous case study which involved interviews with forty-five social workers employed by the then Auckland Area Health Board (Drew, 1987).

The fourth study, by Young (1993) canvassed the perspectives of five supervisors and two social workers from the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Service, on supervision in child protection work. This paper found that consistently available and supportive supervision was absolutely fundamental to effective child protection social work (Young, 1993). Young (1993) drew attention to the environment in which supervision was practised, by highlighting the lack of priority assigned to the supervision needs of social workers. Young (1993) also found that the environment did not facilitate or recognise the importance of supervision.

Approaches and Models of Social Work Supervision

The majority of literature published on social work supervision is devoted to approaches or models of supervision (Tsui, 1997a; 1997b). Munson (1993: 21) asserts that there has been a proliferation of approaches and models of supervision in recent times, which is due to a practice theory explosion whereby over 130 different theories of social work practice are competing for use. One result of this theory explosion and the proliferation of supervision models and approaches, has been a call for a moratorium on new supervision models (Rich, 1993).

Within the literature a number of classifications have been made of the various types of approaches and models (Tsui et al., 1997; Rich, 1993). Two of these classification systems appear to capture the themes found in the literature. The first system is that of Tsui et al. (1997: 187) which argues that supervision models or approaches focus on one or a combination of the following five elements: (a) practice theory; (b) the structures and functions of supervision; (c) the structure of the agency; (d) the interactional process between the supervisor and supervisee; and (e) feminist partnership approaches. The second system, that of Payne (1994), is more simplistic and conceptualises supervision approaches on a continuum, with managerial approaches at one end and professional approaches at the other. Payne (1994: 44) argued that in social work supervision, either the managerial or the professional aspect is dominant. Payne (1994: 44) also asserts that authors generally distinguish between the two aspects, but differ in their emphasis and in the importance of each aspect.

New Public Management

Changes both internationally and within New Zealand since the early 1980s by governments in the way they run public organisations has led to the emergence of the phenomenon of “New Public Management” (Boston et al., 1991; 1996). New public management is the successor to what was previously called public administration. As a term, new public management refers to the location and the nature of management activity. The location of public management is within government or state organisations in what is now called the public sector. Recognition is given to the fact that public sector management takes place within a political context and political constraints, that also involves both management within the organisations and the management of the public sector as a whole (Boston et al., 1991; 1996). The management activity aspect of new public management relates to “the optimal utilisation of resources towards desired results; that is, the creation of things of value” (Boston et al., 1996: viii).

Origins of New Public Management:

New public management, or new managerialism, derives its roots from the late nineteenth century work of Frederick Taylor, who founded the scientific management movement which became known as Taylorism (Boston et al., 1991; 1996). The phenomenon of new public management (also known as neo-Taylorism) resurfaced in the 1980s, and had significant influence on the public service in a number of liberal democratic western countries, particularly Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada (Pollitt, 1990; Ginsberg and Keys, 1995). These countries also embraced “New Right” or “Anti-collectivist neo-liberal ideology” in a quest for the holy grail of a smarter and smaller state sector (Boston et al., 1991; 1996).

The arrival of the new public management in Aotearoa/New Zealand came in the form of two significant pieces of legislation, namely the State Sector Act 1988, and the Public Finance Act 1989. Both pieces of legislation were significantly shaped by earlier Treasury documents -*Economic Management* and *Government Management* (Treasury, 1984; 1987; Walsh, 1991).

Walsh (1991: 52-80) argued that the State Sector Act 1988 was driven by

managerialist concerns, which sought to import private sector management practices into the public service, in order to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. It also clarified the roles and powers of Ministers and heads of departments, and in so doing, placed the chief executives of departments on short-term contracts, thereby making them no longer permanent employees of their respective departments. The State Sector Act also made the chief executive the employer of all departmental employees.

The Public Finance Act 1989 allowed organisations to free up capital investments, and changed financing from the national vote to departmental budgets. It also shifted accountability from inputs to outputs, i.e., from the resources used in producing outputs, to the goods and services that the agencies produced. The result of the changes initiated by these two pieces of legislation, was the radical restructuring of the public service from a service provided for the public by the state, to a sector of business controlled and managed by the state (Boston et al., 1991; 1996; O'Donoghue, 1994).

The New Zealand Model of New Public Management

The new public management model permeates the organisational culture of public sector agencies and provides the context within which professional supervision in public social service agencies is conducted. A body of literature has developed in New Zealand related to the phenomenon of new public management (Boston et al., 1991; 1996; Boston, 1995; Kelsey, 1993; Easton, 1997). This literature examines and critiques the New Zealand model in terms of its theoretical underpinnings, and its impact upon the public provided services.

New public management is based on the belief that management is generic, and its principles can be applied to public business, as well as private business (Boston et al., 1991; 1996; Easton, 1997). This notion has resulted in the view that a capable manager is able to manage any agency, be it private or public (Easton, 1997). The central features or doctrines of new public management are well summarised by Boston et al. (1996:26), and are outlined in a slightly adapted form below:

- a) a belief that there are no differences in management between the public and private sectors and public organisations can and should be managed in the same manner that private organisations are;
- b) a change in direction and emphasis from process accountability (i.e. from input controls and bureaucratic procedures such as the

- public service manual and internal control) to accountability for results (i.e. quantifiable outputs such as the percentage of court orders complied with and performance targets such as less than one percent variance on budget);
- c) a distinct emphasis on management rather than policy, with a particular stress on management skills in preference to professional skills;
 - d) the devolution of management responsibility and the resultant development of improved reporting, monitoring and accountability mechanisms;
 - e) the break-up of large bureaucratic organisations into separate stand-alone agencies, (e.g. the Department of Justice into the Department for Courts, Department of Corrections and Ministry of Justice) in particular the separation of the commercial from the non-commercial functions, policy advice from delivery and regulatory functions and purchasing from providing functions;
 - f) a predisposition towards private provision, contestability, and the contract management for most publicly funded services;
 - g) a change from relational to classical modes of contracting (i.e. from long-term and poorly specified contracts to very explicit and tightly specified shorter-term contracts);
 - h) the imitation and importation of private sector management practices such as the use of short-term labour contracts, the development of strategic plans and corporate plans, performance agreements and mission statements, the introduction of performance-linked remuneration systems, the development of new management information systems, and an increased concern about corporate image;
 - i) a clear preference for monetary incentives, (such as bonus payments) rather than non monetary incentives, such as ethics, ethos and status; and
 - j) an emphasis on cost reduction, efficiency and cutback management.

The chief feature of new managerialism, is its concern with control (Pollitt, 1990)

primarily, the detailed control of measurable activity through the quantification of outputs, planning tools, performance agreements and rewards. Control is also maintained through the deregulation of the employment relationship with managers exerting greater control over the conditions and performance of individual employees (Pollitt, 1990).

Boston et al. (1996) argue that the New Zealand model is more complex than managerialist doctrines. Their argument is that these doctrines were only a part of the New Zealand model, which in turn was part of a broader plan of economic, social, and political reform, aimed at improving the nation's economic performance (Boston et al., 1996: 2-15). It is argued that the plan was the result of an alignment between economic pressure and political opportunity, an ideological shift to the "Right", the quest for increased political control over the public service, and the application of specific brands of administrative and economic theories (Boston et al., 1996). The particular theories that were identified as influential were public choice theory, organisational economics, and managerialism (Boston et al., 1991; 1996).

Critique of New Public Management

Authors providing critiques of new public management generally do so from two perspectives. The first perspective focuses on new public management's achievements in terms of improving the reported efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector. The second perspective critiques the new public management's theoretical underpinnings and the effects of its rigorous application.

Improved Efficiency and Effectiveness

Proponents of the New Zealand model of new public management emphasise the coherence and rigour of the reforms together with the improved financial management performance of the public service (Scott, 1993). The literature also emphasises New Zealand's standing in the international community as world leader in the area of reinventing government and public sector reform, with particular emphasis placed on the *World Competitiveness Report* (1993), which ranked New Zealand first for its quality of government (Boston et al., 1996: 3). The highest praise for the New Zealand public management model has come from Osborne et al. (1993: 330) who state that:

New Zealand has gone the farthest along the entrepreneurial path...In one fell swoop, New Zealand did away with its old civil service, freeing

department managers to negotiate their own contract with employees. It eliminated regulations that inhibited competition in both private and public sectors - forcing government-owned business...into more competitive markets. And it adopted a budget system focused on performance ...and an accrual accounting system modelled on business accounting.

Within New Zealand, the Logan Review (Logan, 1991) endorsed the reforms and the public management approach. Scott (1993:3) argued strongly against critiques which denigrated the importation of private sector management practices on the basis that the “management reforms are about organising resources efficiently to achieve clearly specified objectives.”

The critics who challenge the notion of improved efficiency and effectiveness of the new managerial reforms, claim that the reforms only give the appearance of improved efficiency and effectiveness through the use of targeted output definitions and accrual accountancy. These critics argue that the social outcomes resulting from the management reforms and the social policy which supports them, have resulted in: increasing poverty; continuing unemployment; significant social problems; less access for people of limited financial means to essential health services; as well as less support for families in need (Shannon, 1991; Boston et al., 1992; Kelsey, 1993; O’ Brien et al., 1993; Cheyne et al., 1997; Easton, 1997).

The Theory and its Application

The literature critiquing the theoretical underpinnings of new public management argues that the theories are not congruent with the nature, ethics and ethos of the public service (Boston et al., 1991; 1996; Kelsey, 1993). The literature also asserts that the application of these theories has resulted in a public production culture in which outcomes are secondary to outputs (Garwood, 1994; Gregory, 1995).

Public choice theory, agency theory, transaction-cost economics and managerialism, are identified in the literature as underpinning the New Zealand model of new public management (Boston et al., 1991; 1996; Kelsey, 1993; Cheyne et al., 1997). As stated previously, the context in which the New Zealand model developed was one imbued with “neo-liberal” or “New Right” ideology (George and Wilding, 1985; Kelsey, 1993; Cheyne et al., 1997). The core social values of neo-liberal thought

are identified as freedom (in the sense of freedom from coercion), individualism, and inequality (George and Wilding, 1985). Neo-liberals seek to reduce the role the state has in the lives of people on the basis that they believe that state provision of services should be limited to those deemed to be essential for the maintenance of the free market (such as the police and the military). State provision of other “non essential services” is viewed as reducing individuals freedom to choose (Upton, 1987: 22-38). Essentially this ideology conflicts with the public service’s traditional values of the public interest, service to the community, justice, fairness, impartiality and equity (Martin, 1991). The nature of this conflict in values becomes even more apparent in the specific theories that underpin new public management.

Cheyne et al. (1997: 86) describe public choice theory as the “libertarian critique of government”. Public choice theory views individuals as opportunistic and prone to self-interest seeking and argues for the individual’s freedom of choice (Boston et al., 1991; 1996).

Agency theory (which is closely related to public choice theory) asserts that social and political life can be understood as a series of contracts or agreed relationships, where one party, known as the principal, enters into exchanges with another, known as the agent. Agency theory also assumes that individuals are self-interested (Boston et al., 1991; 1996; Kelsey, 1993).

Transaction-cost economics is primarily about minimising transaction costs related to production, or in other words, reducing overheads (Boston et al., 1991; 1996). Like agency theory, transaction-cost economics views principals and agents as self-interest seeking. It also involves a mechanism whereby the comparative cost of planning and completing a task can be worked out as if the task were completed by public or privately contracted provision (Boston et al., 1996).

The final theory is that of new managerialism or neo-Taylorism. As discussed above, new managerialism is based on the presumption that there is an activity called management which can be applied to any context through the application of a set of generic principles (Boston et al., 1996; Easton, 1997). This presumption leads to the belief that the same principles that apply to run a private business such as a brewery are applicable to running a public organisation such as the Department of Corrections. Easton (1997) highlights the extremes of this approach when he discussed the appointment of a brewery manager to the position of chief executive officer of New Zealand’s largest hospital.

These four theories emphasise a change in the ethos of the public service from one focused on civic responsibility, to one focused on managerial accountability for outputs (Boston et al., 1996; Martin, 1991). The implications of this ethos include the development of a “get it done” production culture in which significant critique and ethical questions are not given due consideration (Boston et al., 1996; Martin, 1991). A clear example of this according to Easton (1997), was the health reforms that took place in 1993.

The impact of these theories upon the public service has been considerable, and has resulted in changes in the language used in public policy, as well as the manner in which issues of public management are constructed, defined and critiqued (Boston et al., 1996; Easton, 1997). Gregory (1995: 56-77) argues that the New Zealand model imposed a public production culture on the differing cultures of the public service. He asserts that this culture is incompatible with a number of the differing cultures present in the public service – cultures he crudely identifies as procedural, coping, and craft cultures. Gregory (1995: 59) identified the Community Probation Service as a coping culture in which the outputs and outcomes are not observable, and the work is indirectly observable. This culture differs markedly from a production culture in which both outputs and outcomes are observable and the work itself is directly observable (Gregory 1995:66). According to Gregory (1995:71), the imposition of a production culture upon other cultures leads to low morale and the increased likelihood of personal and official corruption, because “more public officials may be expected to behave as if they were untrustworthy, self-seeking, opportunistic, morally hazardous and adversely selected neo-Taylorites.”

Garwood (1994) also argues against the imposition of the production culture upon the public service. He asserts (Garwood, 1994: 63) that the preoccupation with output production does not necessarily result in the desired outcomes espoused by government. The effect of new public management's preoccupation with output production rather than the wider achievement of outcomes, has led, in Garwood's view, to public servants being separated from the public they serve, in favour of the purchaser who is now viewed as the primary customer.

The New Zealand model of new public management also does not recognise that the private and public sectors differ in terms of the use of political power, accountability, context, performance measures, risk management and interdependencies (Boston et al., 1991; 1996; Kelsey, 1993). Rather, it attempts to import private business

management practises into the delivery of government policy (Boston et al., 1991; 1996). The literature indicates, however, that the governance and management structures of the public sector do differ markedly from those of private sector businesses, particularly in terms of political influence, the use of coercive power, multiple interdependencies and accountabilities, public scrutiny and constitutional authority (Boston et al., 1996 ; Gregory, 1995).

Two examples of the differences between private and public sector management were the Jeffrey Chapman and the Perry Cameron affairs. The former involved Mr Chapman (a former Auditor-General) resigning because he owed \$156,753 in unauthorised personal expenses to the Audit Office. The Serious Fraud Office subsequently charged Mr Chapman with fraud. Boston et al. (1996: 331) noted that the then State Services Commissioner was, “very mindful of threats to ethical principles and to citizen’s trust in government”. Boston et al. (1996:332) also stated that the Commissioner was reported to have commented in regard to the “Chapman affair” that “there isn’t any doubt there is a cost for [improved management in the public sector] and the price is the old ethic.”

The second matter, the Perry Cameron affair, involved Mr Cameron, a former Chief Executive of the Department of Internal Affairs, resigning over a conflict with the Minister concerning a personnel matter- (namely, the appointment of Frank Sharp who was responsible for cost overruns on the infamous house at the Ohakea airforce base). This example emphasised the extent that politicians may influence the day to day running of the public service. It also stressed that public sector managers are required to deal with the political as well as the managerial ramifications of their decisions (Boston et al., 1996; Boston, 1994).

The above examples not only emphasise that both the public and private sectors differ markedly, but rather that the differences have a critical impact upon the management of the public service, the use of public power and the implementation of public policy. It is on this basis that it is argued that the public sector should not follow the pattern of private sector management structures. Rather, the public sector should develop its own management and governance structures which are characteristic of the culture within which it operates (Boston et al., 1991; 1996; Gregory, 1995). In essence, the argument is that the principles underpinning new public management do not address the complexities of political philosophy, administrative theory and constitutional law, nor do they recognise and take seriously the difference in cultures between the private

sector and the public sector (Boston et al., 1996; Gregory, 1995).

The Effect on Professional Social Service Supervision

The changes heralded by new public management have had significant impact upon professional supervision. Hughes et al.(1997: 7) describe the context under which supervision takes place as the “turbulent environment in which the tensions between needs and resources, and creative and destructive accountability come to the fore”. Essentially, the changes have resulted in economic concerns dominating social concerns, with fiscal restraints determining the response to social problems (O’Brien et al., 1993; Munson, 1993; 1998; Brown et al., 1996; Cheyne, et al., 1997). Locally, public social services have been deconstructed and replaced by a business model in which generic managers run social service agencies like private sector businesses and where management theory tends to dominate and influence social work and other professional theories (Cockburn, 1994; Payne, 1994; Boston, 1996; Easton, 1997). Beddoe et al.(1994: 20) poignantly expresses the effects of these changes in the following statement:

Most social service organisations have experienced a decade of major change with much public and political scrutiny. It can be argued that this scrutiny plus the drive for greater accountability in state funded organisations has led to a concentration of types of organisational cultures... Social Service Organisations in NZ are simultaneously operating both bureaucratic and crisis cultures. There is a striving for efficiency, consistency, and tightly focused task orientation which is constantly undermined by staff shortages, managerial change, political interference, intensified public scrutiny and other internal and external threats

In this context the literature argues that new managerialism has caused an increased emphasis on the managerial aspects of social service supervision to the detriment of the professional aspects (Kadushin, 1992; Munson, 1993; 1998; Cockburn, 1994; Payne, 1994; Beddoe et al., 1994; Beddoe, 1997b). This shift in emphasis has promoted reductionist practice with supervision in some cases being reduced to a checklist based approach (Beddoe, 1997a; 1997b).

Local critiques of the managerial emphasis in supervision argue that in professional social work supervision the notion of best professional practice is a prerequisite for the achievement of the best possible client outcomes (Beddoe et al., 1994; Cockburn, 1994). It is further argued that best professional practice is derived from social work practice theory rather than from management theory (Cockburn, 1994).

Future of Professional Supervision

The effect of new managerialism upon professional supervision has raised discussion in the literature about the future of professional supervision (Payne, 1994; Bennie, 1995; Munson, 1993; 1998). This discussion tends to indicate that in the new managerial environment the future of social work supervision seems uncertain, particularly, since the profession finds its knowledge and skill base devalued by other professions, particularly business management (Beddoe et al., 1994; Cockburn, 1994; Payne, 1994; Brown et al., 1996; Munson, 1998). Furthermore, the dominance of the cost control model places supervision in a vulnerable position because it is considered by generic managers not to be an essential step in the output production process. The result of this perspective is that supervision is viewed as an overhead or extra that they can't afford (Hughes et al., 1997; Ellis, 1998; Munson, 1998). Munson (1993:18) particularly highlights this issue when he argues that management's "recent emphasis has focussed on decreasing costs by eliminating supervision".

Payne (1994) is the only author who directly speculates about the future of social work supervision. He paints three possible futures for social work supervision. The first sees the separation of the professional and managerial aspects as the result of a professional revival. In this future, the profession reclaims supervision as central to social work practice. Payne (1994) argues that central to this revival is the need for an approach that enables supervisors to access the detailed process interactions between the social worker and clients.

The second future sees a reconciliation of the professional and the managerial aspects through the vehicle of quality assurance. This future essentially involves social service management being reclaimed by social work practitioners who can reconcile the quality movement with social work practice theory.

The third portrays a complete rejection of the professional aspects of supervision resulting in supervision being reduced to managerial supervision. The prospect of this

future sees the social work profession reduced to technocrats who adhere solely to agency policies and procedures without question. Supervision in this future would be based on achievement of output targets and adherence to procedure (Payne, 1994).

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to discuss the major themes related to the research question found in the social work supervision and new public management literature.

The social work supervision literature revealed a significant body of literature that dates back to 1920. This literature indicates that the social work practice environment and the process of social work professionalisation, have shaped the evolution of supervision, with shifts in emphasis occurring between the administrative and professional aspects of supervision. The recent literature indicates that the administrative aspects of supervision have dominated, to the detriment of the professional aspects, which arguably seem to be beginning its resurgence. The literature reviewed also indicated that social work supervision research was at an embryonic stage and in need of studies that include qualitative research methods (Tsui, 1997a). The final theme that emerged from the literature reviewed, was the proliferation of approaches and models of supervision.

The new public management literature revealed its origins in the scientific management (Taylorism) movement of the late 19th century. It also outlined the link between new public management and “neo-liberal” or “New Right” ideology. The State Sector Act, 1988, and the Public Finance Act, 1989, were identified as introducing new public management to New Zealand as part of a broader social and economic reform package. Critiques of new managerialism were discussed from the perspectives of its improved efficiency and effectiveness, and its theoretical underpinnings. The claims of improved efficiency and effectiveness found in the literature seemed to be made on the basis of accrual accounting and task completion, rather than on any improvement in social outcomes or social well-being. On the other hand, the discussion of the theoretical underpinnings indicated that theories were not congruent with the nature, ethos and ethics of the public service and had resulted in a production culture, which had not resulted in improved outcomes. This discussion also indicated that the new public management model did not adequately address the political environment in which public sector management occurs.

The final theme discussed was the impact of new public management on

professional social service supervision. This discussion revealed that new public management had resulted in an emphasis on managerial aspects of supervision to the detriment of the professional aspects. This discussion also indicated that the future of professional social work supervision in this environment was uncertain.

The implications of these matters for this thesis are that they together-with Chapters 3 and 4, set the scene for the participants' perspectives which will be examined in the three empirical chapters (Chapters 5,6 and 7). They also indicate that professional social service supervision cannot be investigated separately from the environment within which it is constructed and practised (Bracey, 1981). In terms of the research design, the key implication which arises from the lack of previous qualitative studies and studies in this subject area, is that of exploring new and uncharted terrain with few reference points. The final implication relates to the interpretation of data, and in this regard the literature review provides the foundation for the sensitising concepts described in Chapter 4.