

A Phenomenological Narrative Inquiry into How People
Chose Their Career in Environmental Planning

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Abstract

Planning is concerned with people and places, giving consideration to environmental, social, and economic issues. Planning aims to meet current needs and to anticipate future issues, enabling people and societies to thrive. At its core, planning is about problem solving. It is a profession which influences nearly every area of our lives: water, housing, food, transportation, the natural environment, and pollution. It is a challenging profession involving strategy, innovation and creativity. The heightened recognition of climate change illustrates the critical role planning plays in communities and the future. Yet despite the dynamic, and urgent challenges within this work, the profession is experiencing a skill shortage. This study brings together the fields of career development and human resources at their point of intersection, the world of work and the issue of future skills.

The study investigates how people came to work in the field of environmental planning, and how others could be informed and encouraged into this work. Using a narrative methodology, the research explores the lived experience of four participants: how they came to their career in planning, and their thoughts on informing others. The influences are explored with reference to the Systems Theory Framework of Patton and McMahon (1999).

Key findings to emerge were the influence of social context on career choice, and the relationship between an interest in the natural environment and planning. Values of fairness, social justice and 'doing good' were shown to connect with this work. The role of chance is also prevalent. A lack of awareness and negative perceptions about this profession were evidenced. The findings confirm that careers are social constructs, with parents, teachers, location and socio-economic status being key determinants for the four participants. The findings revealed that the contribution of planning to society needs to be more widely known. Findings also indicated a responsibility on those in the workforce to open the eyes of the next generation to the possibilities which exist in the world of work. Increased awareness, understanding, motivation, and aspirations result from employer engagement, with this engagement also contributing to the development of talent pipelines. The study argues that it is time to revolutionize the way the future generation connects with the world of work.

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

18 January 2021

Ethics Approval

This research was approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics committee (AUTEC) on 16 March 2020, AUTEC reference number 20/56. For a copy of this approval please see Appendix A.

Acknowledgements

I wish to begin by acknowledging my parents, Nan and Bob, both of whom have passed on. You brought me up to value education and to be disciplined in my endeavours, for which I truly thank you. I wish you were here to see the completion of this Master's journey.

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Finally, I wish to include a whakataukī which I feel encapsulates my journey in tertiary studies, over many years, and a number of family challenges and locations.

Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei

Translated this means: Seek the treasure you value most dearly: if you bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain. This whakataukī is about aiming high, for what is truly valuable; it is a call to be persistent and to not let obstacles stop you from reaching your goal.

Chapter 1 Introduction

“Life.... is filled with narrative fragments,living and telling, reliving and retelling, the stories of the experiences that make up people’s lives, both individual and social... Narrative inquiry is stories lived and told.” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 16 & 20)

My personal narrative

As this dissertation is positioned in the field of career development using a narrative inquiry methodology, it is fitting for me to begin with my own narrative and career journey. I grew up in a major New Zealand city with both parents and an older brother. I lived all my schooling years in the same location, meaning family life was fairly stable in that regard. Neither of my parents completed university qualifications, although both were very intelligent and had wide ranging interests. Either the socio-economic status of their family, or the fabric of society at that time, influenced their career directions. My father completed a few accountancy papers at night school in the 1950’s while employed in a Government Department, and my mother worked as an Associate of a High Court Judge. Although I achieved strong academic grades, and the 1980’s was a period where more career options were opening to females than previously, I had no idea about what career or study I wanted to pursue. I do not recall experiencing career education or help with this at school and my parents seemed unable to offer relevant advice or guidance. After completing Year 13, I took a gap year, which turned into two years, as I hoped to find inspiration for my career. Given I was good at public speaking and debating, and had a wide range of interests and abilities, (music, sport, social sciences, performing arts) friends and relatives encouraged me to enter primary teacher training. My father encouraged me to undertake university level study in conjunction with the teacher training. A number of times I contemplated leaving this pathway, however, with a personality trait of being a ‘completer’ I stuck at it, and after 4 years gained a Diploma in Teaching and a Bachelor of Arts. I shaped my BA to have a focus on Vocational Guidance. I taught for two years, gained my teacher registration, and in the third year was actively looking for career options outside of teaching, feeling it was not the career for me. I won a position as a junior manager and trainer in a large corporate, and began further tertiary study in human resources (HR), later shifting into their HR department. With hindsight I can see

how my own experience of making career decisions and not feeling good about the fit, contributed to my interest in how people learnt about and chose their careers. While on parental leave from my corporate HR role I shifted into career work via contracting as a transition consultant and assisting with career advising at a local secondary school. This work utilized my background and knowledge in HR and education and my interest in the processes. I felt a fit with this work. Due to family responsibilities and needing to maintain paid employment at that time, I was unable to undertake tertiary study in career development. As a dual-career couple we have subsequently shifted within NZ and overseas, both volunteering, and for remunerated employment. My career has encompassed time in HR and career development, while also being the primary care-giving parent. Over the following years I did complete further tertiary study; a graduate diploma in Business in HR Management, and much later, post graduate study in career development, with this dissertation being the culmination of a Masters.

Context of the problem

Today you can barely open a newspaper or read online news, without reading about issues which relate to the work of a planner. The issues are at the forefront of most current debates: the housing crisis, the quality of drinking water, the impact of climate change, flooding, urban development, transport congestion, regeneration, land and food production, biodiversity, sustainability, water usage in primary industries as well as other businesses, air and water pollution and the swim-ability of rivers and beaches, just to name a few. Planners engage with these very issues and make policy and planning decisions which affect the way we live now, as well as in the future. Planners play an important role in tackling the problems which confront us, in a way which will preserve our environment. Figure 1 shows that the rate of growth in advertised planning jobs is higher than all vacancies.

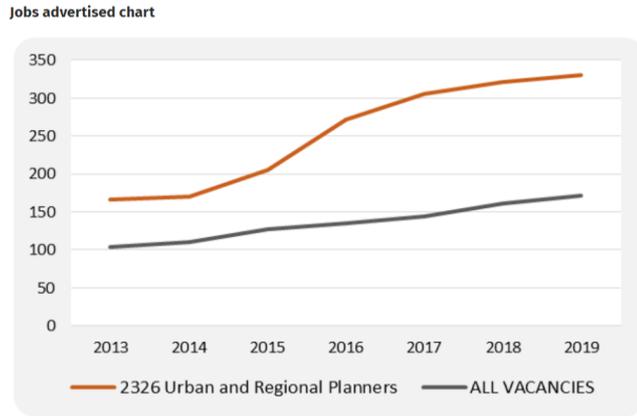
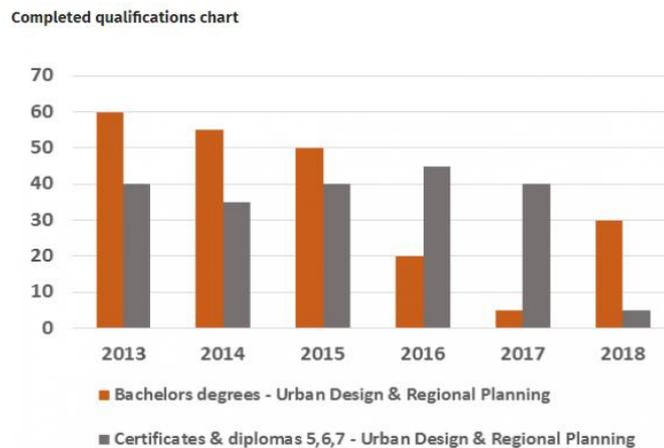


Figure 1: Growth in advertised planning jobs

Graph created by Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

<https://occupationoutlook.mbie.govt.nz/construction-and-infrastructure/urban-planners/>

Within planning there is a growing range of careers available, in NZ and around the world; and opportunities are forecast to grow (Cayford, 2018; NZPI., 2019; O’Callahan & Sweetman, 2006; Owen, 2001; Sinclair, 2019; Thomas, 2017). Yet while opportunities abound, there has not been an increase in people entering the profession. Figure 2 shows the pattern of decline in the number of completed qualifications in the field of planning. After consecutive years of decline for completed bachelor’s degrees (the specific planning under graduate degree offered at NZ Universities), 2018 did see a rise, however, overall, the completion of qualifications in this field is in decline.



Source: Ministry of Education

Figure 2: Completed planning qualifications

Graph created by Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

<https://occupationoutlook.mbie.govt.nz/construction-and-infrastructure/urban-planners/>

Without greater numbers of people coming into the profession to match the increased work, there is, and will continue to be, a shortage of skilled people (Thomas, 2017). In the near future shortages could become critical, impacting the work which manages our environmental issues. Furthermore, there is the additional impact of changing demographics and an aging population (Killeen, 1996b). With increasing numbers of qualified people reaching retirement (NZ Statistics Department, 2017) there is an increased impact on the skills needed. While not having exact data for NZ, data from the UK for Town planning illustrates this issue, and shows a similar situation to NZ. The figure shows a projected workforce growth of 7.2% plus likely retirements requiring a 56.9% replacement of the current workforce.



Figure 3: Projected workforce change for Town planning officers in the UK

Source: Careerometer, LMI for All. <https://www.lmiforall.org.uk/> Reprinted with permission.

My lived experience of the problem

During 2017-2019 while working as a human resources practitioner within NZ Local Government, I experienced first-hand the increasing need for urban and regional planners, along with a shortage of qualified and experienced people in this profession, which led to difficulties recruiting for these roles. This shortage was acknowledged by recruitment firms who confirmed the difficulty and challenges of filling these vacancies

across NZ, given the limited supply of people and the growth in demand across the industry. Occupation Outlook identifies that “prospects are good for urban planners, due to a growth in the number of positions available and the supply of new graduates” (Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment, 2019 (Occupation Outlook banner)) which indicates that supply is not keeping up with the demand. Furthermore, with the increasing priority on managing our natural resources and environments, increased attention being given to issues surrounding climate change, and discussions in the political arena regarding changes to the Resource Management Act (RMA), this need is only going to intensify.

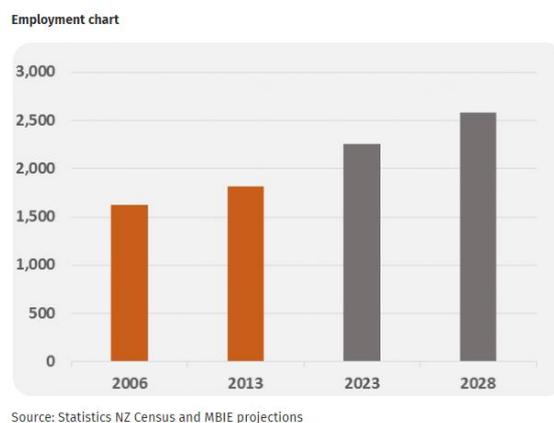


Figure 4: Projected growth in employment in planning

Graph created by Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

(<https://occupationoutlook.mbie.govt.nz/construction-and-infrastructure/urban-planners/>)

From my background in career development I suspected that this shortage may be due to the career being relatively unknown. As an HR practitioner I understood the importance of having a talent pipeline, i.e. a ready pool of potential candidates who are skilled and experienced, who are able to fill the vacancies and competently perform the work. This is particularly important given that demand for planning work is increasing and that this skill set is core to the work done by Local Governments for our communities and environment. I decided to bring these two worlds together; career development and human resources, and to conduct an inquiry into this situation. I morphed my partially completed post grad career development diploma, into a Master’s Degree. I am aware that my personal experiences have led to my interest in this topic and that this will influence my research. I discuss this in more detail later in Chapter One. I often reflect on my own lack of knowledge and awareness

about the world of work, and the lack of opportunities when I was at school to connect with employers and industry. I wonder too how my own career choices and journey may have been better informed, and I consider the lost potential of those other opportunities had I known about them. My passion to help others who find themselves in this same predicament continues to grow, as does my desire to see people learn about the interesting work of environmental planners. It is my hope that this study may contribute in some way to both these issues coming into greater focus.

The purpose and significance of this study

There is a current skill shortage in the field of environmental planning. This is significant due to the growing importance and necessity for countries across the world to grapple with issues such as population growth, food security, transport emissions and other pollutants, and the overall impact of human activity on the planet (NZPI., 2019; O'Callahan & Sweetman, 2006; Taylor, 2019). The purpose of this study is to explore how those working in the field of environmental planning came to this work, in an effort to understand how others could be informed and encouraged to enter this field. It is acknowledged in literature that work and careers are rapidly changing in the 21st century. Research has identified that a gap exists in regards to awareness and knowledge of the new opportunities; in the future generation, and their spheres of influence such as parents and teachers. It is possible this has contributed to the current skills gaps which exist across some industries (Mann, Massey, Glover, Kashefpakdel, & Dawkins, 2013). I was interested in examining how those who currently work in this field learnt about the profession and came to enter the field, as a way to bring new information and insight to this problem. Exploring how a small group of people came to choose their career in environmental planning may provide useful insights and could contribute towards addressing the current talent shortage. Furthermore, there may be learning which could influence the growth of a future pipeline for this, and other work areas, which are relatively unknown.

This small qualitative study underpinned by an interpretive paradigm, examines the career choice of four planners, utilizing a narrative inquiry. Through hearing their stories, I hope to make sense of how they learnt about this work, and, using career

theory frameworks, to explore and make sense of how they account for their choice of the planning profession.

The research questions are

1. How have people who work in environmental planning come to work in this field?
2. How do they think others could be informed and encouraged into this work?

This research was undertaken in 2020 during the worldwide pandemic of Covid-19, which created complicating factors in commencing and completing the research. With the disruption to the social and economic climate in New Zealand and around the world caused by Covid-19, and the impact on the employment market regionally, nationally and globally, Covid-19 will undoubtedly change the landscape of work and career for many people, worldwide, making any research into career development especially relevant. Given the current priority on climate change, the shortage of skilled people who facilitate and work with policies which manage our environment, could have significant implications. These shortages may impact the quality and timeliness of decisions, which in turn has the potential to impact our lives, livelihoods, communities, and the environment in an ongoing way. It is therefore timely to be examining this profession and field of work, considering how the problem of skill supply may be addressed. Interestingly, skill demand and supply in urban planning was identified as a key public concern for NZ in a recent Productivity Commissioner inquiry, reinforcing the significance of exploring this topic (New Zealand Productivity Commission, 2017).

Terminology and definitions

Establishing an understanding of terminology is paramount for clarity. For the purpose of this study I use definitions from the Ministry of Education, Career Education and Guidance in NZ schools (Ministry of Education, 2009). I outline these below.

Career is a holistic term embracing the “sequence and variety of work roles, paid and unpaid, that a person undertakes throughout a lifetime” and embraces “life roles in the home and the community, leisure activities, work, learning and life”(Ministry of

Education, 2009, p. 6). "Career education consists of planned, progressive learning experiences that help students develop career management competencies that will assist them to manage their lives. Career education includes elements that stand alone and elements that are part of regular classroom teaching" (Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 6). Career guidance are those "individualized interactions which help students move from a general understanding of life and work, to a specific understanding of the life, learning and work options that are open to them" (Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 6). "Career management competencies are the understandings, skills and attitudes that people use to develop and manage their careers" (Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 6)

An additional relevant definition for this dissertation is that of influence, which I define as an experience, individual, event, circumstance, or any other life experience that a participant perceives as a factor in the development of their interest or career choice.

Structure of the dissertation

The study is in the style of a narrative inquiry. The dissertation consists of six chapters and while primarily following a conventional research report, in order to add interest for the readers, I chose to include creative visualizations to represent my interpretation of each participant's career influences.

Chapter One

Chapter One has presented an introduction to the research topic using the researcher's personal narrative. It outlines the context of the problem, the researcher's lived experience of the problem, and the purpose and significance of the study.

Chapter Two

Chapter Two presents the literature review in two parts. Firstly, an examination of career theory literature, and secondly, literature from the planning profession relating to careers. The complexity of the career decision making process in the 21st century is discussed and this chapter examines the social context of careers with the lens of

Patton and McMaho's Systems Theory Framework. The role, value and impact of employer contributions in the career process, for both individual and social benefit, is illustrated.

Chapter Three

Chapter Three describes the research positioning, the methodology, the choices about the design of the study, data collection methods and data analysis. Narrative inquiry is outlined and shown to be a particularly suitable method for this topic, enabling the participant to bring their 'voice' as the teller of their stories, sharing how they have navigated their journey, and the emphasis they give to significant elements. The chapter concludes with a brief portion on the ethical considerations involved in such research.

Chapter Four

Chapter Four presents the findings of the research by way of a narrative for each participant; being a summary of their journey as shared with me the researcher. I interpret the influences and their journey to planning, giving each narrative a title and a visual representation.

Chapter Five

Chapter Five discusses the common findings and themes which emerged from the participants' stories. The notion is presented that values of fairness, social good (Thomas, 2017) social justice and 'environmental concern' (Wright & Wyatt, 2008) contribute to decisions to enter this profession. Using the lens of the Systems Theory Framework, the influences from within the individual system, their social system and the environmental-societal system are identified, along with the interaction of these systems. The chapter concludes with suggestions for further research and recommendations for the profession.

Chapter Six

Chapter Six presents the conclusion of the research, noting the limitations of the research given the size of the study and the researchers' position in the study.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Career journeys are the product of the personal and social influences of our life journey, across time (past, present and future), opportunities, and chance events. These are collectively embedded in the holistic culture in which we are born and live.

Introduction and structure of the literature review

This literature review will be separated into two focus areas; career theory, and secondly, literature from the planning profession relevant to a career in planning. Career theory identifies the key influences on career decision making and the role of career education and guidance to inform and support career decisions. The Systems Theory Framework (STF) of Patton and McMahon (1999), with its concepts of interdependency and recursiveness, provides a scaffold to explore these influences. Knowledge of the world of work and the influence of socio-economic status are noted as being salient. Employer engagement in career education is shown to be significant, contributing to the formation of 'social, cultural and human capital' which assists transitions into employment (Mann & Percy, 2014; Sen, 1995; Stanley & Mann, 2014) and addresses issues of inequity (Staunton, 2019). Internationally it has been recognised that knowledge about the labour market and awareness of personal potential contributes to equitable outcomes. "It is neither equitable or efficient for students to move through education with blinkered views of both the breadth of the labour market and their own potential" (Mann et al., 2019, p. 6). Both these matters are addressed in this section of the literature review, showing how career education and guidance are able to contribute to better outcomes.

The second focus area is the context for this study; careers within the planning profession. This section of the literature review synthesizes the small body of research which currently exists on this topic. The focus is on what planning entails and the contribution it makes to society. Career literature identifies values as being a contributing factor in career choice (Hardy, 1990; Patton & McMahon, 1999) and for that reason this is explored in this section. A connection between the work and specific values has been found to exist in environmental science and management (Christie, Miller, & Kirkhope, 2013; Wright & Wyatt, 2008). Values relevant to the field of

environmental planning are those of 'social good' (Bayer, Frank, & Valerius, 2010; Thomas, 2017) fairness and social justice (Christensen, 2017).

Justification for the study

The rising demand for planners and the current and predicted skill shortage within the planning profession, as outlined in Chapter One, is what led to this research and is what makes it timely. There is a scarcity of research in NZ as to what led people into their career in planning, therefore knowledge gleaned from this study could add to this body of knowledge and support this current situation. Career theory shows that awareness of current and future employment opportunities assists with making informed choices in regard to training and employment. Human resource practitioners are cognisant of the need to develop a talent pipeline, i.e. create a pool of people who have the requisite skills and interest for the work (Deen, 2015; U.S Chamber of Commerce Foundation (USCCF) Center for Education and Workforce, 2014). Rapid changes in the labour market means there is an increased need for quality career education and guidance, both during the years of formal education, and extending beyond formal schooling (OECD, 2000). This will enable people to be aware of opportunities and to have an accurate perception of the work. Exploring what underpins this issue for planning, and how best to address it, was a compelling reason for this study. While career may be considered as being personal to the individual, careers are social phenomenon in that our work and being employed, contributes not only to individual wellbeing, but also to the wellbeing of the family, society, the communities in which we live, and to the economic success of the country (Gunz, Mayrhofer, & Tolbert, 2011). Informing and inspiring the next generation by contributing to career education, could be viewed as a corporate responsibility for industry and employers, and this activity may contribute to growing the wider talent pipeline (Vet Record Careers, 2019), currently much needed in the planning profession.

Part One: Career Theory

Introduction

Career theory is informed by psychology, sociology, economics and business management, both pure and applied (Collin & Young, 1986). Psychology contributes to

a deeper understanding of the individual and how they are shaped by experiences, and to understanding 'self-efficacy', the belief in one's personal capability to perform specific actions (Bandura, 1977a, 1977c; Reddan, 2015). Economics draws our attention to the importance of careers and employment in economic terms; the economic contribution made by 'being employed', contributing to the productivity and economic gains of society and country. Economics also recognises the cost to the country of unemployment. Economics and business regard people in work as being the human resources of business activities (Inkson, Dries, & Arnold, 2007), significant to this study given the context is one of human resource shortages in the field of environmental planning. Sociology focuses on the social setting as an influence on career choice (Giddens, 1984; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2002) and how work and employment contribute to the betterment of the individual, the family, the community and society (Kashefpakdel & Percy, 2016). Sociology considers issues of work and equity (Kalleberg & Sorenson, 1979), and the *sociological impact* on individuals and society of being unemployed or 'underemployed' (Kossen & McIlveen, 2018; McIlveen, 2018). From a sociological perspective, the social system contributes '*social capital*' (Adler & Kwon, 2002; Granovetter, 1973; Winch, 2000; Zhang, Liu, Loi, Lau, & Ngo, 2010) to the process and context of careers. This range of perspectives enriches the understanding of the complex system which is 'career', with its impact on both individuals and society. Education, information, and guidance in the formal setting of education is discussed through literature, illustrating the importance of increasing the awareness of opportunities and knowledge about the world of work, along with skilled support to navigate this journey in these complex times.

Career decision making and career management competencies

Early career theory (Holland, 1959; Parsons, 1909) and approaches to individual career management advice, focused on matching people to work using a 'trait – factor' approach (Betz, Fitzgerald, & Hill, 1989; Patton & McMahon, 2014). Today with the world of work and labour markets changing rapidly, and with jobs disappearing and new work evolving, the volume of work and information is increasing and changing (Patrick & Polvere, 2015; Vaughan & Boyd, 2005) limiting the suitability of this approach, and heightening the need for research in the area of career development.

Rapid change also means it is critical to understand the world of work and develop skills to access and evaluate information, and cope with change.

Understanding decision making of individuals draws from theoretical models in the 1950s, and signals a rational, cognitive process. Seldom is decision making an instantaneous event, as people accumulate information over time, which permits a series of decisions or tentative decisions to be made (Law, 1996a). Furthermore, decisions are not entirely rational or cognitive. Models of decision making include the acquisition of information, a way of processing and evaluating the information, and a method for arriving at a choice. Sometimes tools are used, and frequently intuition is drawn on to make the decision (Law, 1996a). Career decisions require gathering information, processing and evaluating, and a method for arriving at a decision. With vast amounts of information and increasing options, the process is increasingly complex and spans a longer time period with “milling and churning” (Vaughan, 2003, p. 8) and recurrent transitions (Jasman & McIlveen, 2011; Mann et al., 2019; Mann & Huddleston, 2015; OECD, 2000; Patton & McMahon, 2014; Vaughan, 2003). Gone are the days of a single transition from schooling into an occupation or organisation where one remains for the duration of their working life. Nowadays people create their own sense of self and identity through their education, learning and employment over their lifetime (Savickas, 2012; Stokes & Wyn, 2007). Teaching career decision making skills has been identified as an essential part of a career education programme, inclusive of accessing information, undertaking self-appraisal, setting goals, and making action plans (Holman, 2014; UK Government, 2018; Vuorinen & Sampson Jr, 2014). There is an increased need to understand the changing nature of the world of work in order to navigate one’s way.

Career skills and career management competencies for the 21st century have been defined internationally by career specialists, and integrated into the NZ Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2009). These include managing change and transitions, and maintaining flexibility in order to maintain employability (McIlveen, 2018; Vaughan & Roberts, 2007). Knowing how work has, and will continue to change, will help people best position themselves for future opportunities (Chalmers, 2020; OECD, 2019a, 2019b). Navigating the impact of chance and random life events is increasingly important (McMahon & Patton, 2006; Pryor & Bright, 2003; Vaughan, 2003) and today,

flexibility and adaptability is required in order to maintain employability (Collin & Young, 2000), more so than in previous eras. The need for adaptability has been witnessed with the onset of Covid-19 this year, and the associated disruption to employment and industries.

There has been little research in New Zealand to assess how well informed our young people are in regards to trends, emerging fields, future growth areas, the impact of technology on future opportunities, and options for training and employment, although this has occurred at the global level (World Economic Forum, 2016, 2018). With greater complexity comes an increased need for effective careers provision, enriched by authentic relevant insights into the labour market. “It is absolutely apparent that if we want to do anything to make transitions into an increasingly complex working world easier for young people, it is essential that high quality careers information, advice, and guidance is available” (Mann & Huddleston, 2015, p. 3).

Reports by the NZ Ministry of Education (2018), Treasury (2019), and very recently, the Productivity Commission (2020), outline findings and make recommendations for policy related to career programmes, with the intention of contributing to better outcomes for employment and to make improvements at the economic and societal level. The NZ Productivity Commission points to the importance of quality careers information, advice and guidance, saying this is “an important lubricant of a dynamic and responsive labour market” (New Zealand Productivity Commission, 2020, p. 71). Careers information, along with learners’ own confidence and self-belief, as determinants of individuals’ education, training and career choices, is acknowledged. Pertinent to this study, the report illustrates how individuals shape the supply of skills. Government financial policy is also a determining factor of skill supply.

individual choices shape the long-term supply of skills across the economy and affect the income gains and other outcomes people achieve from investing in tertiary education and training.....well-informed choices by individual learners should be a key driver of where government tertiary education spending is directed (New Zealand Productivity Commission, 2020, p. 74)

Exploring opportunities –skills, information and experiences

People need an awareness about the opportunities which exist and accurate information in order to make informed decisions (Chalmers, 2020; McIntosh & Yates, 2019, p. 11). Knowledge about the ‘world of work’ is therefore a key component in career decision making, which Patton & McMahon (1999) position within the Individual system. The ability to access accurate information about work options extends across a working lifetime, however it is during the years of formal education where the opportunity exists for structured career education to build skills and competencies in career decision making capability; how to access information, how to sift, evaluate, compare, and to come to tentative decisions (Jones & Mann, 2014; Law, 1996a; Mann, Kashefpakdel, & Iredale, 2017; Savickas, 2012). Connecting employers to the next generation is one avenue for the transfer of reliable and accurate information, and these connections also raise awareness to opportunities (Education and Employers, 2019; Mann & Dawkins, 2014; Stanley & Mann, 2014; A.G. Watts, 2008, 2010, 2014). Intentional teaching of career management competencies: “developing self-awareness, exploring opportunities, and deciding and acting” (Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 7) will strengthen employment outcomes.

There is limited research in NZ regarding the benefits of employers connecting with the next generation, however secondary students were found to value opportunities to make visits outside of school to learn about work, with a desire expressed for more information and connections with the world of work during junior secondary years before making subject choices for NCEA (Basham, 2011). Recent international studies support that opportunities to connect with employers are vital both to attain accurate information and to establish broader and more realistic ideas about the work for all ages (Aspden et al., 2015; Mann et al., 2019; Tertiary Education Commission, 2020).

The role of employers as contributors to effective career education

Literature shows the wide range of benefits when employers connect with students, which extend beyond gaining access to trustworthy information as discussed above (Percy, Rehill, Chambers, & Kashefpakdel, 2019). These connections give insights and clarity which help young people confirm choices (Mann, 2012), they encourage a positive attitude to school, (Kashefpakdel, Mann, & Schleicher, 2016), and enhance

employment outcomes both in terms of lifting wage premiums (Kashefpakdel & Percy, 2016; Kemple & Willner, 2008; Mann, Kashefpakdel, Rehill, & Huddleston, 2017) and in reducing numbers of those Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) (Jones & Mann, 2014). Connections with employers can contribute to social, cultural and human capital, and compensate for these deficiencies (Mann, Percy, & Kashefpakdel, 2018; Sen, 1995). Giving primary school age children the chance to hear about jobs from volunteers has excited them about the subjects they are learning (Percy et al., 2019) and improved attitudes and aspirations (Mann, Kashefpakdel, & Iredale, 2017). Research shows that career ideas and opinions are formed early (Field, Hoeckel, Kis, & Kuczera, 2010; OECD, 2019b; Tertiary Education Commission, 2020). When looking at the challenges and opportunities presented by the Fourth industrial revolution, “a new era that builds and extends the impact of digitization in new and unanticipated ways” (Davis, 2016 para. 2), the OECD concluded that the skills mismatch observed in the labour market has its roots in primary school (OECD, 2019b). Furthermore, studies have shown that children develop gender and social stereotypes in regards to employment as young as six years of age (Education and Employers, 2019; Tertiary Education Commission, 2020) and that employer engagement can challenge these stereotypes. Aspirations are raised when students learn about the range of jobs and career routes, and there can be a profound impact on motivation at school and the future direction of their lives (Percy et al., 2019) at all ages. There is a strong case for employer connections, and for these to be developed in the primary school years (Hughes, Mann, Barnes, Baldauf, & McKeown, 2016).

The role of career guidance

While accurate and up to date information is important, the value and contribution of supported career guidance is increasingly acknowledged (Bimrose, 2020; Galliot & Graham, 2015; Holman, 2014). Without support to evaluate information and opportunities and support when making tentative career decisions, the structure of society can unknowingly be replicated (Staunton, 2019). The capacity to evaluate options is influenced by self-efficacy and one’s ‘agentive’ capabilities; the ability to evaluate information and opportunities against one’s own capability, a belief in one’s ability to attain the required level, and belief in ability to make decisions regarding careers. Differences exist between people in regard to self-efficacy, agentive ability

and their ability to assess their level of competence, with people often 'over' or 'under' projecting their capability (Kruger & Dunning, 2000). Social cognitive career theory posits that self-efficacy and agentic ability is more important in explaining career choice than is interests, values and abilities (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). Those who lack agentic capabilities, or who rely on parents with low skill, may miss potential career opportunities. Supported career guidance is able to mitigate the impact of this and other aspects of socio economic structuration (Giddens, 1984), cultural or societal norms, as well as stereotypes which may relate to gender and age, amongst others. Furthermore, career guidance can contribute to accessing opportunities outside of geographical regions and socio-economic status, both of which in turn may assist with social mobility and mitigating social equity issues (Hooley, Matheson, & Watts, 2014). Research in Australia by Galliot and Graham is perhaps reflective of NZ. This shows the contribution of career guidance to mitigating indecisiveness and overcoming a lack of cultural capital in lower socio-economic status young people through creating networking opportunities (Galliot & Graham, 2015).

The social context of career decision making and the Systems Theory Framework

“Individuals are relational and construct their sense of self in relation to those around them” (Mann & Percy, 2014, p. 248)

Early career theorists such as Super (1957), Holland (1959, 1973, 1985), and Schein (1993), focused on the individual. Psychodynamic theorists were interested in motives, i.e. what moved people to act, with career theorists interested in motivations for career choice and where these stemmed from (Killeen, 1996a). The rise of social learning theory in psychology influenced career development theory, advancing that interests and abilities were shaped by opportunities, and that values were shaped by upbringing and cultural values (Hansen, 1997). It is now recognised that the social context of the individual has a significant influence on careers and career decisions, and that careers are a social phenomenon (Blustein et al., 2002; Duffy & Dik, 2009; Krumboltz, 1979; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2000; Mitchell & Krumboltz, 1990) in that they are formed in a substantial way by social interactions. The STF by Patton and McMahon also acknowledges that careers are social constructs, and illustrates the complex context for career decision making, identifying the multiplicity of elements

which are influential on career decisions. The STF represents the complex interrelationships of the many influences on careers using three systems; the Individual, the Social, and the Environmental-societal system, with the elements within each system interconnecting and influencing the other (Patton & McMahon, 2014).

Individual system: This system consists of attributes, gender, age, interests and values along with other factors. It is positioned at the centre of the system. Social learning theory recognises that these elements are shaped by the social system of the individual.

Social System: The main influences on career decisions have been shown to stem from people's social system; parents, teachers, and family friends (Kidd & Watts, 1996; Mann, Kashefpakdel, Rehill, et al., 2017; Phillips, 2015). The education and occupation of parents, their expectations, the size of the family, birth order, the school climate, the size and type of community, all shape the expectations and aspirations of the individual (Alloway, Dalley, Patterson, Walker, & Lenoy, 2004; Blustein et al., 2002; Palmer & Cochran, 1988; Vondracek, Lerner, & Schulenberg, 1983). Teachers and formal education play a significant role in subject and career choices, elements which also shape career decisions (Dick & Rallis, 1991; Kidd & Watts, 1996). The career process is dynamic and reiterative, and the prominence of different influences changes across time, and operate in combination with the influences from earlier years (Patton & McMahon, 2006; Shafer, 2014; Vaughan & Gardiner, 2007). One of the few studies in NZ exploring the role of career education and guidance in NZ schools supported that career decisions are made in the context of the social setting, affirming the main influences on career decisions to be parents, family friends, peers, school culture and upbringing, understanding and expectations around work and education, social economic status, and their experiences of work (Basham, 2011).

Environmental–societal System: The physical place and the period in which people live has a significant influence on careers. Population demographics, Government policy, technology, globalization, the economic climate, socio-economic status, as well as the historical trends and the fabric of society, all shape career decisions. Geographical location and the ability to shift are also noted as determiners of opportunities (Hooley, Marriott, Watts, & Coiffait, 2012; Langley, Hooley, & Bertuchi, 2014; Patton &

McMahon, 2006). The fabric of society has changed over time, resulting in vastly different labour market demographics today than in previous generations. More women are in the workforce than before, and people are working longer (Furlong & Cartmel, 1997). Gender stereotypes about work roles are changing, with recent marketing campaigns encouraging females to train in trades (BCITO., n.d). Higher proportions of people are engaging in tertiary study (Mann & Huddleston, 2015) resulting from changing expectations about work (Vaughan, Roberts, & Gardiner, 2006) assisted by political decisions and policies. Government agendas and policies, such as the reforms in NZ during the 1980's and 1990's pushing for a free market economy, influence the type of work available and the levels of funding for training, both of which also affect accessibility and supply. The 21st century has seen rapid technological developments which also influence work and career opportunities. The influence of the economic climate on work and career has been witnessed across history; from the great depression in the early 1930's, the global financial crisis in 2008-2010, through to our current global pandemic Covid-19, which is predicted to significantly shape work opportunities more than anything in the past 100 years (International Monetary Fund, 2020; World Economic Forum, 2020).

Socio-economic status is an element of this wider environmental–societal system, and is particularly salient given the impact this has in regards to accessibility for training and study and the resultant impact on opportunities. The socio economic situation of an individual may either enable or limit opportunity, and the notion of structuration (Giddens, 1984) may exclude any element of choice (Bimrose, 2020; Granovetter, 2005). Giddens (1984) notes that this structuration can and does contribute to the replication of inequities in our societies, and there is a need for Government policy to mitigate these influences (Hooley et al., 2014; Patrick & Polvere, 2015). Quality career guidance has the potential to enable individuals to develop and pursue opportunities outside of this structuration, contributing to mitigating disadvantage (Patrick & Polvere, 2015) and increasing social mobility (Hooley et al., 2014). Furthermore, as capability to assess and evaluate options differs between people, along with the resultant impact on choices and outcomes, there is potential for career education and guidance to achieve greater social equity (Hooley et al., 2014; Staunton, 2019; Sultana, 2014; A.G. Watts, 2008). Literature has shown the impact of career programmes on

lower socio economic groups when connections with employers is combined with guidance (Hanson, Vigurs, Moore, Everitt, & Clark, 2019; Holman, 2014; A.G. Watts, 2014). Furthermore, connections with employers has been shown to assist in compensating for social capital deficits (Mann et al., 2018) and contributing to overcoming inequity.

Conclusion Part one

Through key literature this section has given an overview of career theory, and looked at career education and the benefits of career guidance. The Systems Theory Framework has been used as a scaffold to understand the complexity of career decision making. A fast paced and rapidly changing world means change is more frequent and transitions are more complex (Mann & Huddleston, 2015; Vaughan, 2003, 2005). With this increasing complexity there is an increased need for improved career processes to support people to make successful, and often multiple transitions into employment, at any age and stage, maintaining employability, and to realize the best outcomes for individuals, and for society. Benefits of employers engaging with the next generation has been demonstrated, with this engagement shown to also be beneficial to business, industry and employers in regards to growing talent pipelines. Career management competencies are able to contribute to labour market participation, and literature has shown that career guidance to support decisions can mitigate inequity being unknowingly replicated.

While engaging with employers is included in the NZ curriculum, (Year 7 – 13), research shows the importance of this beginning earlier. Giving all children, regardless of gender and social background, the same chance to meet professionals in a variety of fields is the key to widening their view of the world of work (Chalmers, 2020; OECD, 2019b).

The contextual area of this study is the planning profession. The next section of the literature review depicts the context of this profession and considers literature relevant to careers within this profession. The purpose is to understand the career theory within this specific context, and to learn what is already known about how people came to work in this field.

Part Two: The Planning profession

Introduction - What we know about planning

Planning is concerned with the future and shaping the nature of places. Planning is the “theory and practice of making good, interrelated decisions about the natural environment, working landscapes, public health and the built environment” (Daniels, 2009, p. 178). Planners, “attempt to anticipate the future and recommend strategies to help cities thrive as the future unfolds” (Bayer et al., 2010, p. 13). They focus on both built and natural environments with the work contributing to effective management of the natural landscapes and resources. Planning consists of three main branches; Design of urban spaces, Land Use, and Policy. All three branches consider sustainable and compatible land use, the impact on the environment, and the natural changes occurring in the environment. Planning touches everybody’s lives (Bayer et al., 2010).

Planning is a young profession, relatively small and often unknown by people other than planners (Bayer et al., 2010; Owen, 2001). Figure 5 is a timeline created to depict the development of this profession (Tomkins, 2020a).

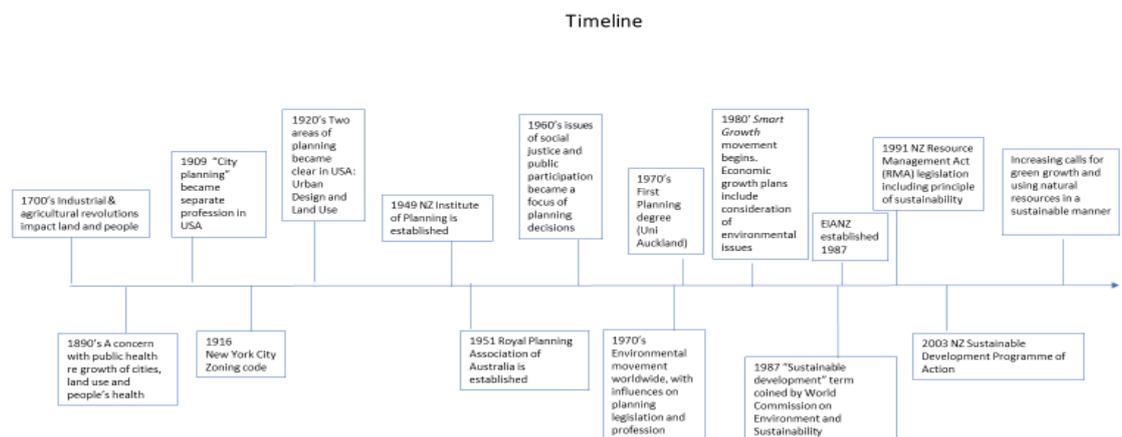


Figure 5: Timeline for the planning profession

Tomkins,H. 2020. [The evolution of the planning profession depicted as a timeline]

The term Urban and Regional planning tends to be the main or 'umbrella' term within the profession, and in university courses. Urban and Regional planning encompasses the wide range of urban, city, environment and resource management roles with literature typically using the generic term 'planning'. I chose to specify 'environmental planning' over planning, given the word 'planning' tends to bring to mind town planning or city design, rather than environmental issues. Environmental planning work also incorporates consents, development or regulatory planning, given that the work requires adherence to regulatory statutes to manage the environment in which we live and work. There is limited research about planners and what led them to their careers which may be because it is small and relatively young profession. In this regards my study is contributing to the body of knowledge on this topic.

An examination of planning literature related to careers

Planning literature related to careers from Australia and USA was able to be sourced. This literature identified a clear need to raise awareness of the work and the profession along with the opportunities in the field (Thomas, 2017). It also identified a need to address misconceptions and negative perceptions (Owen, 2001) and to work to develop a talent pipeline in order to avoid a critical skill shortage given the growth in the sector. The fact that this profession remains largely unknown to much of its future membership base was highlighted (Owen, 2001).

Relevant studies have a future supply mindset, note the skill shortage, and outline a need for a strategic approach in order to ensure the future supply and quality of planners (O'Callahan & Sweetman, 2006; Owen, 2001; Thomas, 2017). An active promotion of the career in order to raise the awareness of a career in planning is recognised (Owen, 2001), with Owen putting a call out to the Australian Institute, university planning schools, and individuals who work in the profession, to take an active role in the marketing of planning, recognising that people cannot choose something that they do not know exists. In particular, in 2001 Owen challenged Australian employers specifically to get involved in career education in order to address the lack of accurate knowledge and to avoid misconceptions. She gave specific ideas in order to ensure that planning is 'out there in the competitive career market' (Owen, 2001, p. 62).

There is a low professional profile of planning within the wider community, and public awareness, information and education about environmental positions is not strong (Thomas, 2017; Thomas & Day, 2012). While planning issues appear in the media and public domain on a daily basis, there is a weak connection of these issues being those of the planning profession. It has been noted that for many the profession is unknown, and often where known, a negative image of the profession exists (Christie et al., 2013; Dredge & Coiacetto, 2006). Misconceptions of a 'planner' as being someone involved only with town planning, is acknowledged, as is the concept of this misconception impacting on interest in choosing the profession (Owen, 2001). Increasing awareness and knowledge of this profession and what it does, could potentially assist people choosing this career (Dredge & Coiacetto, 2006; Thomas, 2017). An increased awareness and profile can be achieved by those who are in this work contributing to career education (Dredge & Coiacetto, 2006; O'Callahan & Sweetman, 2006; Owen, 2001).

An Australian study focused on obtaining insights in order to develop future talent pipelines in this profession, seeking to "identify the sources of information and inspiration that may prompt prospective students to choose planning as a course of study and a career option" (Dredge & Coiacetto, 2006, p. 27). The researchers were interested in first year university student's knowledge of, and attitudes towards planning. Other studies have focused on the expectation of growth within the environment industry in the coming decades, driven partly by carbon legislation, and with concerns regarding the skill shortages to fill these roles (Christie et al., 2013). Findings in planning literature illustrate that without intentional development of the talent pipeline the sector will be under prepared to attract and retain employees (Christie et al., 2013; Thomas, 2017). Planning literature relevant to careers identifies influencing factors which align with those in the STF; a person's demographic and social situation, their parents, teachers/professors, work experiences, economic status, the influence of the media, and their values (Thomas, 2017).

Studies in environmental science and environmental management also contribute potential insights into environmental planning. These studies found that those who came to this work had a love of the outdoors (Christie et al., 2013, p. 156), particularly outdoor activities such as surfing, along with the influence of parents and home life

(Christie et al., 2013, p. 149). In seeking to create a profile to facilitate growing interest and potential candidates for environmental management, they identified a desire to improve the world, make a positive contribution, save the planet and to contribute to the community. Demonstrating '*environmental concern*' was seen to be a necessary factor for choosing a career as an environmental scientist (Wright & Wyatt, 2008). I suspect a love of the outdoors and '*environmental concern*' may also be true for those who chose a career in environmental planning. Environmental events, such as local environmental disasters, viewing movies or experiencing climate change, and experiences in the natural environment during childhood and adolescence, were also contributing influences on people coming to the career of environmental science.

How values may contribute to people choosing planning

The link between planning work and values has been noted, showing that planning attracts those who value improving how people live, and who care about the natural environment. Baum, writing in 1997, found that students who chose planning generally had altruistic motives and sought to "make the world a better place" (Dredge & Coiacetto, 2006, pp. 27-28), with similar findings identified in more recent studies (Christie et al., 2013) where students who were interested in this profession expressed a desire to help create a better world, and were passionate and committed individuals. Thomas also found that students who were interested in the environmental profession were influenced by "doing good for society or the environment" (2017, p. 115) with this being the most important influence on their decision. Thomas felt that these findings may provide directions for how the environmental profession, and higher education programmes could be represented. Two American studies identify that particular values are given expression through working in planning. These being social justice (Christensen, 2017), along with valuing democracy, social participation and solving inequality (Fainstein, 2014).

Conclusion Part Two

Planning focuses on both the natural and built environments, and the work touches all aspects of how we live, safe guarding the future through problem solving. However, as a relatively young profession, it is not well known. People have come to planning due to their interests, or their values, or both. Interests include connecting people and

places, city design, land use, or policy. Those who work in planning typically value fairness and justice, demonstrate environmental concern, or value making a difference for the betterment of society.

With the current skill shortage in this profession the work of planners and how this work contributes to society, needs to be more widely known. Furthermore, it could be beneficial for awareness to be raised regarding the employment opportunities which exist given the growth in opportunities. There has been very little research into career paths or the influence on career decisions in the profession of planning in NZ or internationally. It is a gap worthy of further study given the increasing demand for planners, the range of work opportunities, and the chance to be at the forefront of key policy decisions for NZ in these times of growing environmental concern and legislation; being part of the solution. This research may contribute in a small way to this body of knowledge.

Chapter 3 Methodology and Research Design

"Humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and socially lead storied lives. The study of narrative, therefore, is the study of the ways humans experience the world." (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2)

Introduction

The objectives of this study were to hear how people came to work in the field of environmental planning, to understand their lived experience, and to learn how they thought others could be informed and encouraged into this line of work. I chose a qualitative research design and methodology to support the intentions of the study believing this would supply rich data in order to capture the complexities of their experience. Within the qualitative methodology I chose a narrative approach as I felt a story telling approach would support the study of a journey 'over time' and would facilitate an examination of their lived experiences. This chapter outlines and provides rationale for the research design and methods, and links these to the paradigms and methodologies that underpin my research. The first section explains my research positioning and my reflexivity, and the second section my methodology, including an explanation of narrative inquiry. This is followed by my processes for recruitment, data collection and data analysis. The final section of this chapter outlines the ethical considerations which are inherent in qualitative research.

Research positioning and researcher reflexivity

Research, is the "opportunity to investigate an area of interest from a particular perspective" (Clough & Nutbrown, 2012, p. 3).

My research positioning is a phenomenological, narrative inquiry. Phenomenology in social research is interested in uncovering the perceptions and experiences of research participants (Hammond & Wellington 2012). I wanted to understand the significance and the meaning my participants attributed to their experiences and how this contributed to them entering the planning profession. I was aware that as the researcher my biography, values, knowledge, assumptions and experience, shape or inform the research (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2017). I therefore acknowledge that I approach this topic from the basis of my own experiences; as a career practitioner and human resources professional, and that due to these interests, the questions I

asked, what I attended to at interview, and how I analysed the data, were all influenced by who I am and my theoretical frameworks (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). I also acknowledge that it is my intentionality as a researcher which “defines the starting and stopping points”(Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 416). Being the sole researcher, interpretation on the collected data was informed by what I believe (ontology) and my epistemology (my view of the world and knowledge). I recognise too that I am ‘in the research’ in the way that I listen, attend, interpret, question and therefore shape the interview and the data collected. My position resonates with Burawoy, who said “the data I gathered was very much contingent on who I was” (Burawoy, 1998, p. 11). The more the participant can be central to the exchange, the more their intent, rather than the researchers, can be uppermost, and the better the quality of the research (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994). I believed that an invitation to tell their story would give the participants this centrality in a greater way than would a structured interview.

As a researcher collecting data, I am also ‘in’ the research. This has an impact on the participants given the centrality of the relationship between researcher and participant, an impact which can shape what is shared and the meaning of what is told (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Given this I endeavoured to employ ‘reflexivity’ (“Reflexivity,” n.d.) examining my feelings, reactions and motives, both when conducting the interviews for the collection of data, and when undertaking the data analysis. It is appropriate as a researcher to explicitly state beliefs which may shape the research. I believe that decisions about careers are the result of a complex combination of many factors; those within the individual themselves - skills, abilities, interest, values and their knowledge about the world of work, and those from their social context. I also believe that social and environmental–societal context can enable opportunities or act as a restriction. This is inclusive of the influence of the political and historical period in which the person lives (Patton & McMahon, 1999). As a researcher, I too have been shaped by my experiences, with the associated social and cultural conventions, and the era in which I live.

Methodology

My research methodology was qualitative as I believed this would best support the aims of my study. Collecting qualitative data involves interpretation because descriptive data is subjective, with the descriptions being as the participant recalls, perceives, interprets and re-tells them. This subjectivity of knowing (O'Toole & Beckett, 2013) is a criticism of qualitative research, in that the descriptions are filtered and meaning has been attributed by the person. O'Toole and Beckett posit that "all description is already perceptual" (2013, p. 38) and Denzin & Lincoln explain that "reality can never be captured, I only know it through representations" (2005, p. 5). Within the qualitative research paradigm, I chose to use a narrative inquiry, which relies heavily on recollection and description as people share their lived experiences.

Introduction to narrative inquiry

The term narrative comes from the verb to 'narrate', which is to tell a story in detail, and with story-telling being at the core of many cultures and a natural everyday expression of life (Clandinin & Connelly, 1989) I liked the authenticity of this approach. Narrative inquiry involves collecting the experiences of individuals by way of stories, with researcher and participant discussing the meaning. Narrative inquiry generates rich, thick (Cooper & Hughes, 2015) holistic data, and is the best way of representing and understanding experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I felt this approach would achieve both a holistic and thematic view of the topic. Narrative is often used in social science research (Miles & Jozefowicz-Simbeni, 2010) and I saw it had potential to elicit the influences on their journey and career decisions. I predicted that hearing their personal journey through their own stories would give the wider context of their life experiences and positioning, and was preferable to gathering responses to structured questions. Through this narrative approach I sought reports from participants on key events, people, decisions and complicating factors; what may have enabled or limited them, and explore the influence of their social and wider socio-economic contextual systems. Narrative inquiry also compliments my topic and belief that career decisions are made in a wider context; one grounded in the social and cultural setting. Storytelling enables hearing about lived experiences and influences within the cultural and social context (Lewis & Ardney, 2014). According to Cohen et al., narrative shows

the lived experience and the “subjective landscapes” (Cohen et al., 2017, p. 664). Narratives, are “powerful, human and integrated, truly qualitative” (Cohen et al., 2017, p. 665).

However, with narrative the stories shared and the meaning created are retrospective. This both enables the participant to see the stories within the context of their journey and means their interpretation may be different now as to how it actually was at the time of the experience. It is not uncommon for meaning to be altered from this new position ‘with hindsight’ and a wider perspective. The value of narrative is not that it is ‘correct’, but that meaning is made retrospectively of the experience, by the participant. The interviews were an exploration of my participants lived experiences and their reflection about how these experiences had influenced their coming to environmental planning.

Recruitment of participants

Given this was a narrative inquiry, I chose to interview a small group of four participants in order to enable in-depth engagement and keep the size of the project manageable in accordance with a 60 point dissertation. I purposively sought those who currently worked in this field, inviting them to share their journey with me. It is entirely appropriate to select participants from whom you can learn the most based on the required characteristics of the population being studied and the objective of the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

My sample group were to come from the population of planners who were degree qualified. I was particularly interested in hearing from people who had come to the profession in the last 15 years, for recency of experience in transitions and pathways; from school to tertiary study, and to employment. Holding NZ Planning Institute professional membership or one of the accredited degrees, was not a requirement for participation. This was in recognition that many people work in environmental planning without holding professional membership, and finding people with the appropriate degree or suitable experience enabling professional membership, could have increased the difficulty of finding participants. The basis of participation was that they held a tertiary qualification (Bachelors / Masters) in either Arts, Social Science, Science, Applied Science, or a specific Bachelor’s Degree, or Master in Planning, or a

Post Grad Certificate or Diploma in Environmental Studies (degrees and courses at NZ Universities in planning are titled slightly differently, including Resource, Environment, Management, or Planning in the title). I sought to have both male and female participants. I connected with the senior planning manager at the regional council, who I knew was very well connected in this field, and from there I emailed and phoned specific planning managers in the local council and local private companies asking to meet and share about my research with a view to finding participants from their teams. It took a while to get participants as just at this time Covid-19 Level 4 lockdown occurred, which meant people were shifting, and adjusting to, working from home and juggling family life. I benefited from the snowball effect, whereby participants connected me with other contacts. My participants were all within the 26 – 35 age range, and although the research would now be conducted fully online due to lockdown and they could have come from anywhere in NZ, the participants were all local to my region.

Data collection

The interviews were conducted using Zoom within a four week period, between 22 May and 23 June, 2020. I recorded the interview exchange and then either transcribed these myself or had them transcribed. My participants were using Zoom for their work and were familiar with this approach, however this virtual medium may have influenced the level of ease participants felt relating to me and sharing their story.

Data collection methods

Each participant was invited to attend a one to one Zoom interview of approximately 45 - 60 minutes, with a request to undertake two pre-ordinate analytical tasks ahead of this meeting to help prepare them for the interaction; a Chronology Table, sent to me ahead of our meeting, and secondly, to consider and select images to bring and discuss at the interview. While this may sit outside the traditional narrative life story approach, my focus was more a slice of their life story and these activities provided a framework for the participants to begin their recollections within the context of coming to their career, and the activities gave structure to the interview. I sought data collection methods which would facilitate the telling of stories, with a sense of time and place, because these are important aspects of career journeys and are elements

within the STF career framework, which was to guide my data analysis. In addition I intentionally sought to be creative in my data collection methods with the belief that increasing the opportunities for participants to tell their stories and to engage in the process in creative ways would increase their voice in the research, which in turn would enhance the research findings (Gilmore, 2014). Furthermore, I thought using creative approaches in the gathering and presentation of my findings could increase the interest and level of engagement by readers. The rationale and approach for each data collection method is given below.

Visual images: I asked participants to bring an image which was representative of their experience, or would help them share their thoughts, experiences and feelings about their journey into planning. Considering which image (s) to bring required prior thought and self-assessment, making connections between the image, what it meant to them, and how it embodied something of their story and context. The data came from the conversations the images elicited, as opposed to the image themselves. Images, posits Allen (2012) can “elicit memories, feelings and increase the participants comfort and level of talking, and they have the potential to capture and generate qualitatively different data” (p. 241).

Life Chronology table: Participants were asked to make notes ahead of our interview using a life chronology table (See Appendix B), similar to a life history or annal, but limited to a segment of their life, and with the focus being memories they felt were relevant to their journey into planning. Creating annals and chronicles begins the process of recollection of experiences and is a “way to scaffold their oral histories” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 420). This activity helped link events and people to both a period and place in their lives, both being relevant to my study (Elliott, 2012).

Semi structured interview/s. I chose a semi structured approach for two key reasons: this would give an element of focus for me as a novice researcher, and be open ended to enable space for participants to share their journey. The interview began with me inviting them to discuss and explain the visuals and what they represented, followed by an invitation to talk about what they had written in the chronology table. I developed an interview format of 4 questions to support further dialogue, (Appendix B) intending to use the same for each participant. In order to be responsive to their

stories I also used prompt questions to uncover meanings the participants attached to their storied experiences. Responding in this way meant each interview was different and that the prepared questions were not always used or needed. The interviews consisted of an initial 45 - 60 minute interview, and a follow up 15 minute interview to validate my narratives and interpretations. At the primary interview I asked questions to elicit more stories, sought to clarify the meanings of the relevant aspects of the answers, interpreted throughout the interview, and attempted to verify my own interpretations of the subject's answers in the course of the interview, all being 'quality criteria' (Kavle, as cited in Cohen etc al., 2017, p 520). The subsequent member check interview looked at the created narrative, description, and were a way to check that my interpretations and visualizations were fair and representative (Creswell, 2002).

Data analysis

I made field notes immediately after each interview, capturing my thoughts about dominant ideas, experiences, people and sentiments from the interview exchange, reflecting also on my thoughts and actions during the exchange. Once the interviews were transcribed (self or external) I critically examined the transcripts looking for themes and similar experiences, as well as noticing the unique individual differences. Upon seeing the quantity of the data collected I made the decision to use Nvivo data analysis software to help me manage the process. My approach to analysis was a combination of reflective thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) qualitative coding, and narrative analysis.

Reflective thematic analysis and coding

After completing and transcribing the first two interviews I developed initial codes, created a code book to ensure consistency, (Appendix E) and began coding to identify themes and issues. To ensure rigor and trustworthiness of the process, I discussed this with my Supervisor, and made some modifications. I conducted the second two interviews and coded these. I revisited the first two transcripts and re-coded (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I was aware that I had come to the interviews with a possible theory regarding an interest in climate change and a connection with planning.

Creation of a narrative, title and representative diagram

To be true to narrative inquiry I wanted to keep each story as a holistic unit. I read the transcript for each participant holistically, looking at their context and influences, viewing the text as a whole to understand the overall influences and meaning for each participant. Viewing their story in this manner meant that the interdependency of the influences could be understood and the narrative for each individual respectfully created (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). We make sense of the world in fundamental ways, through the stories that we tell. We pick out things which are relevant, and which mean something to us. My participants were sharing their chosen stories and making sense of their journey to planning. The way in which they retold their stories also gave insight into the wider context of each participant (Atkinson & Delamont, 2006; Emden, 1998). As individuals we are a product of our experiences, the social and cultural context of our lives (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). I considered the storied text, looking to understand the experiences of the participant, and created a narrative for each participant (Meyer, 2018). While traditional narrative inquirers focus on how people reflect and create their story (Labov & Waletzky, 1967; Leiblich, 1998), considering the form and function of the narrative in a literary way, I chose not to analyse in this manner given the life stories in my study were smaller slices and the focus was interpretation and meaning of their lived experience in regards to their career. Choosing to depict their story with a title and a representative visualization helped me identify the key influences across their journey.

Data analysis with reference to the systems theory framework

From the outset it was my intention to consider these phenomena within the context of the landmark career literature of Patton and McMahon and their Systems Theory Framework (Patton & McMahon, 1999). Using this framework, I planned to examine and discuss the key influences of my participants with reference to the three systems: the individual, their social system, and the environmental-societal system, fully aware however, that it was not possible to comment on each element in the STF. My own experiences as a career practitioner and my philosophies regarding the influences on people's career decisions, contributed to my selection of this framework. Using the STF enabled the recognition of the contexts and processes that influence people in regard to career decision making, the interactions and interconnectedness of the systems,

and the effects of chance, change over time, and recursiveness. During interviews and while conducting my analysis, I noted the interconnectedness and the interplay of the three systems. In each narrative I paid close attention to the influence of such factors as geographic location, historical period, and political structures. Through using this approach, I was able to identify emerging phenomena and themes in reference to STF, which are discussed in Chapter Five. The STF has been used by other researchers in the career field which substantiates its value (Bridgstock, 2007; Byrne, 2007; Tsui, Lee, Hui, Chun, & Chan, 2019).

Ethical considerations

Qualitative research involves gathering data from and about people which intrudes into people's lives in a greater way than quantitative research (Hammersley & Traianou, 2012) and raises ethical issues when conducting the research. Further ethical considerations exist when participants are known to the researcher, particularly if there is an employment relationship and there could be issues of power imbalance. One of my participants had been an employee where I had previously worked and being considered junior to me may have raised issues of power imbalance as it not for the fact that I had recently left that employer. To mitigate any concerns for this person, I highlighted confidentiality and was explicit that there was no connection between this research and his employer or employment. Another was also known to me, also through having worked at the same employer at the same time in previous years, however we had not worked together in any way, and both now worked elsewhere. Key ethical principles required by AUTEK include: Informed and voluntary consent, to do no harm, and to ensure confidentiality.

Informed, voluntary consent, and confidentiality

I provided, via email, an introductory letter in combination with a detailed Participant Information sheet (see Appendix C) which outlined the purpose of the study, the nature of the research process, anticipated benefits, privacy assurance, and contact information. Participants were given the opportunity to ask further questions and were required to sign a Consent Form (see Appendix D) ahead of the meeting, acknowledging the interview would be recorded. There was no form of coercion or payment, however I did give each participant a small koha (gift) as a token of my

appreciation of their time. They were informed of confidentiality, and that they would not be identified in the write up of findings. They were made aware on the Information sheet, and during the study, that a small possibility did exist that they could be identified given the small size of the group and the closeness of the planning community. Member checks validated their comfort with my interpretation, depiction and level of anonymity.

Do no harm

The Participant Information sheet outlined the potential for any discomfort. By including activities for guided reflective thought ahead of our meeting, I felt this would minimize any apprehension by the participant at the interview, therefore minimizing emotional risk. Given that people were being asked to recall past experiences there was potential for discomfort. Completing an activity ahead of our meeting meant they would be able to choose which stories to share; and this would contribute to them being better prepared mentally and emotionally to share their stories. In this manner, if there had been painful elements in their journey, perhaps this opportunity to process ahead of the interview would minimize any unintended harm from the process of recalling and sharing their life events. Lastly, I felt that by reflecting and completing the activities they would come to a greater understanding of the purpose of the research, and if this did cause them any concern, they could withdraw.

Respect and power imbalance

The outbreak of Covid-19 and the lock down during the period of my research required additional consideration and levels of care, respect and sensitivity in regard to scheduling meetings and during the conversations. I reminded each participant that our interview would be audio recorded and later transcribed for the purpose of analysis, as per the information sheet. I also informed them that the notes they made on the chronology table would be collected as research data. While there was no formal working relationship which would contribute to a power imbalance between myself and any of my participants, the researcher, or interviewer, can be revered by the participant, which therefore creates unequal power (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I chose methods which would give more centrality to the participant (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994) and facilitate us being equals in dialogue (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the methodology and research design decisions I made in order to support my research aim of learning how people came to work in the field of planning. I have shown why I felt a narrative inquiry was the most appropriate way to enable me to learn about and understand the recalled phenomena in the context of my participants life experience. I sought to give them the central position in the interview, using a semi structured interview approach to elicit stories, as opposed to responding to a structured set of questions. I believe the purpose of my study was clear to my participants; to hear and learn from their journey. By asking them how they thought others could be informed about this work and be encouraged to enter this field, they understood that my research was interested in discovering opportunities which may facilitate a talent pipeline for this work, and potentially contribute to addressing the skill shortage.

In narrative, researchers “describe the lives of individuals, collect and tell stories about people’s lives and write narratives of individual experiences” (Creswell, 2002, p. 512). The background I bring to this inquiry, and my theoretical framework, act as my ‘lens’ and, as Mertz and Anfara explain, “one’s theoretical framework both reveals and conceals meaning and understanding” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 88). To be fully transparent as the researcher, I constructed a narrative of my own experience which I presented in Chapter One, because “it is here that we deal with the questions of who we are as a researcher in the field, and who we are in the texts we write” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1994, p. 418). Clandinin and Connelly outline experience, story and the method of narrative:

If we accept that one of the basic human forms of experience of the world is as storyand if, further, we take the view that the storied quality of experience is both unconsciously re-storied in life, and consciously re-storied, retold and relived through processes of reflection, then the rudiments of method are born in the phenomenon of narrative (Clandinin & Connelly, 1989, p. 2).

Chapter 4 Findings - presented by narratives

Introduction

This purpose of this chapter is to share the findings from my semi structured interviews. My primary research question “How have people who work in environmental planning come to work in this field?” guided the methodology of the narrative interview encouraging participants to share stories about their lived experiences within the context of the influences on their journey to planning.

As part of ‘sense making’ of the lived experiences shared, I created a title for each narrative and created a visualization to conceptualize the phenomena influencing their coming to this work. Both the title and visualization are therefore my interpretation of the stories they shared with me and the emphasis which I felt they conveyed.

The final question during our interview related to my second research question:

“How do they think others could be informed and encouraged into this work?”

The findings for this follow each narrative. Firstly, I present a short piece on my self-awareness and reflexivity as the researcher constructed from my field notes, followed by a brief context of the four participants.

Reflexivity as researcher in the interview

I met with each participant via Zoom, during, or just after the first Covid-19 lockdown. All were working from home using Zoom frequently. As a narrative inquiry researcher, I was aware of providing sufficient temporal space to enable flow in the telling of their stories. One participant did not supply the chronology table ahead of our meeting which meant I lacked any orientating information and therefore needed to attend very closely to what they were saying. Probing questions to further explore significant people or experiences could only come from what she shared verbally. Interestingly this interview was the longest. When probing with another participant about their schooling experience, I realize my knowledge of this location shaped both the way I asked the question and my motivation for probing further, this being an example of

how, as a researcher, I influenced the research. My personal interest in people, places, and experiences, both around career development and planning, will have also influenced the questions I asked, what I attended to, and potentially what I then saw as significant. Two participants appeared to struggle with the concept of bringing images to share and sought more clarity on this, which I interpreted as being a preference for the concrete over creative. This assumption was indirectly challenged when one participant stated they were more comfortable with ambiguity than the defined. On another occasion I suggested an interpretation regarding an aspect of their journey, which was quickly dismissed as incorrect.

Context and presentation of each participant (with pseudonym)

Angela: Female, 26 – 30 years. Grew up in a regional location, an only child, with both parents at home. Angela attended state schools to the completion of Year 13. We did not know each other. Angela completed the chronology table in a detailed way, returning this to me ahead of our meeting. She came with four images to share and spoke enthusiastically about the significance of each. Two related to physical geography; landscapes and processes, while two were more the built environment – a map and a city plan. (She spoke fast, laughed often, and used “fascinating” a number of times when explaining her story, which I felt spoke to her engaged personality.) Speaking eagerly and freely she required minimal prompting. My interpretation of this participant and her story, is that of an enthusiastic and passionate person with clarity of thinking, and a sense of both achievement and pride in the work she does in the field of planning.

Beth: Female, 30 – 34 years. Grew up on a large property on the outskirts of a South Island university city, the youngest of three children in a “*middle class family*”, with both parents at home. She attended a co-ed catholic college, completing Year 13 in six subjects; three Sciences, Geography English and Maths (This is noted given six subjects is unusual, and furthermore, being at a Catholic school, this required an exemption from the compulsory Religious studies). We did not know each other however we knew of each other. While Beth did not bring images nor return the table, she shared a metaphor of significance to her. She used somewhat emotive vocabulary “*confronting, sad, upsetting, heart-breaking*” which I felt gave insight into her commitment to do

good in the world. As her stories unfolded, they demonstrated her passion regarding the ways her work in planning had contributed to improve people's lives and livelihoods.

Cathy: Female, 30 – 34 years. Grew up in a rapidly growing area on the outskirts of a main North Island city, the youngest of two children raised by both parents who *“valued education over everything”*. She was not known to me. Cathy completed and returned the chronology table ahead of our interview, beginning with the period 10 – 15 years. She did not bring images. Cathy spoke evenly, clearly and used rich, expressive vocabulary; *“charisma, demeanour, two-way flow, public-private fence, legislative requirement, getting on board the sustainability bandwagon”*. She described herself as being *“proactive”*.

David: Male, aged 30 – 34 years. Grew up in a small regional location, the middle child of three raised by both parents. Dad was a farmer and mum a travel agent. This person was known to me through previous work. David made notes in each period of the chronology table and returned to me ahead of our interview. While not having images, he shared a favourite quote about planning. David said he loved the Master of Planning programme, and that he had *“found what I came to uni for”*

The narratives

Angela's story: The significance of people, places and breadth of interest.

I interpreted the key elements of significance in Angela's story to be breadth of interest, and the influence of people and places. Key people of influence in her experiences were an Aunt, parents, and specific teachers. There was a strong sense of the role played by the geographical location of where she grew up. Angela talked about her breadth of interest and she conveyed a sense that planning was something which was both wide and narrow. I chose a funnel with the key elements depicted as balls tumbling together until the field of planning became apparent. (Balls of people, places and interests.) Angela described her journey to planning as being meandering.

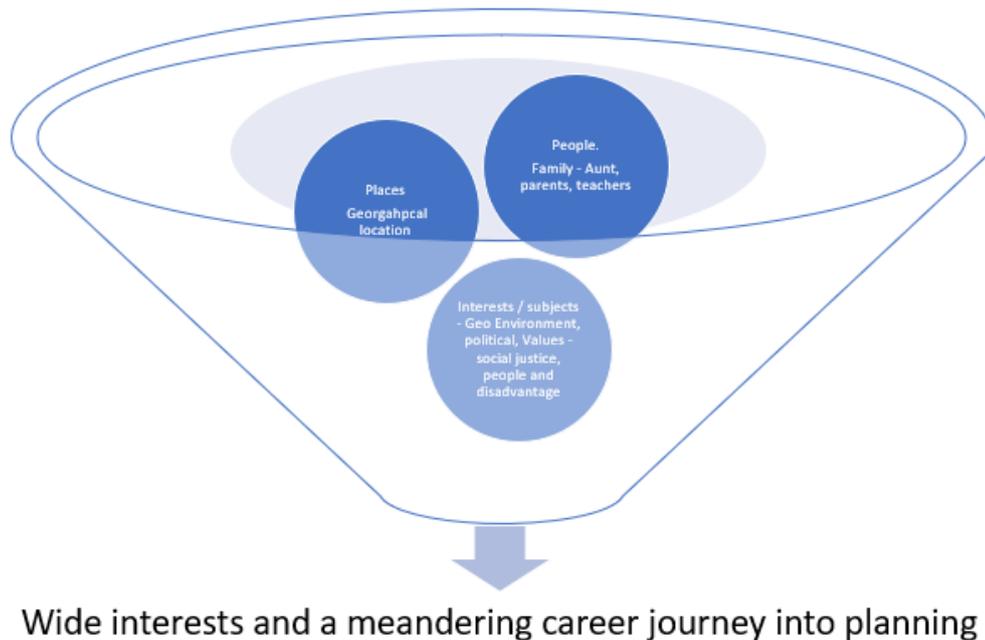


Figure 6: Visualization of Angela's story

Angela's interest in the environment and natural processes was facilitated by the geographical location of where she grew up. *"I remember school field trips to interesting locations, even in primary school our teacher showed us things in our natural environment around us, it was really cool"* Two of the images she spoke to were about natural processes and human interaction with locations, explaining her interest in both human and physical geography.

we learnt ...the coastal processes that developed the Mount Maunganui tombolo... I remember learning in Geography about the Ohope Spit - it's a process of accretion & the longshore drift bringing all the sand down and I thought it was really interesting how everyone's like 'oh it's a beautiful place, let's build on it' and then it eroded horribly.

I love graphs, I love maps, I love environmental issues, you know I just find natural processes fascinating. I loved both human and natural geography, I don't have a preference between the two. I am particularly interested in the human – environment interactions, both negative and positive, and think it is fascinating how humans can affect things negatively and then intervene to make it better.

The influence of secondary school teachers and an Aunt shaped her subject choices at tertiary level and her career choice. *"My favourite subject at secondary school was Geography. I had an excellent geography teacher who made geography 'cool' and a desirable or valuable subject"*. About her influential Aunt Angela narrates:

A particular Aunty was very influential in my life, from a young age and continuing to this day. She was interested in environmental, economic and political issues, discussing these topics with me. She was very plugged into the news. Lefty green bent things were often the topic of conversation and I think this helped form my political ideas and my interest in climate change issues and environment.

Angela reflected on her career and her lack of awareness around careers. She recalled that her school careers experiences were minimal, and on the whole had not been helpful. *"I didn't know what I wanted to do and I wasn't really aware of what was out there"* and *"I don't recall anyone coming to talk to us"*.

Angela's discourse shifted, and I sensed some frustration, when she talked about her wide range of interests, and her academic ability. I noted that she felt this had in fact made her career decision harder. She also stated she had no awareness about planning.

... I'm not particularly great at one particular area, there's never been like one thing that grabbed my interest, like 'that's what I want to do'. I'm quite a generalist, passably good and interested in most things but not being great at one particular area, which meant that I did not have a clear sense of direction for my career as I liked most things. I didn't have any awareness of planning as a profession at school or going to University.

As Angela reflected on what inspired her to go on to tertiary study, she again alluded to having academic ability. I sensed within her a desire to fulfil her potential which at this point in her story related to obtaining a university qualification.

During my gap year I realized that I was smart, and that I wanted to work with people who you could have a conversation with about the tough questions. I realized I did want to go to University, whereas before I wasn't sure.

Angela chose her fields of study based on her interests in people and the environment, and what she had enjoyed at secondary school.

I chose a BA because it is flexible and you can do what you want. I chose religious studies because it is so inextricably linked to human history and I thought it was fascinating to learn about different cultures and their beliefs and how it shapes their worldview, which is almost like human geography and since I liked that at school and I was good at it, I added that too.

Angela discussed several factors which were pivotal in her journey. Upon graduating she worked in central Government, also undertaking post graduate study in commerce and public policy. She was getting disillusioned and thought local Government might function differently; that being a bit closer to the issues might have more impact. About this time her Aunt encouraged her to consider environmental planning. Soon after it just so happened that a suitable role was advertised in her hometown, and she won it. She was trained by a planner (qualified via a planning degree) and felt she explained the work clearly. Angela reflected on all that she brought to planning, whilst not having a specific planning qualification, and how she found planning interesting.

I have broad interests and have studied a range of things, and I think that's a real strength as a planner, to have that broad interest in many things, to have an awareness of the different drivers, whether it is natural processes or political or economic. I think being a generalist is a strength in planning because you need to be across every single kind of issue, and understand the reports and be able to explain them. It's very interesting to be the central focus point of bringing all those things together.

When inquiring into her values and motivations, she responded about fairness and issues of disadvantage, making a specific reference to her interest in fairness and justice for Māori.

My values are very much around fairness, both in terms of people and the environment. I've always maintained quite a strong interest in climate change issues. I'm also interested in demographic fairness and how disadvantaged some people are in comparison to others. Segments of society are really disadvantaged and it's not fair. I am interested in fairness to Māori processes, even though I'm not Māori myself, but I want to give them the justice that they deserve.

Angela felt the only barrier for her had been “*ignorance*” about what was available career wise, included a lack of awareness about planning, “*there isn't much of a presence about this*”. Reflecting further regarding not knowing about the planning degree, she shared “*I don't know if doing such a narrow degree would have been me, or been beneficial to the work I do*”. When asked how she thought others could be informed and encouraged into this work she was clear that it would be by “*talking to kids and raising awareness of the work, the profession and the programmes of study*”. She said she would be happy to volunteer and go out with Waikato University

...into local schools or job expos, or open days, in order to have a really good planning presence there. I think this is best aimed at Year 12 and 13, and to those students who take geography.

Beth's story: Weaving a solution of social and environmental justice.



Figure 7: Image of weaving a solution

Tomkins, H. 2020. [Created and photographed to illustrate the participant metaphor]

I perceived social and environmental justice as core to who Beth has come to be, and therefore positioned this at the centre of the visualization. Expectations, values, family, locations, interests and experiences are positioned equally around this core. Her story illustrated the way unique experiences and locations had contributed both to her coming to planning, and finding her fit.

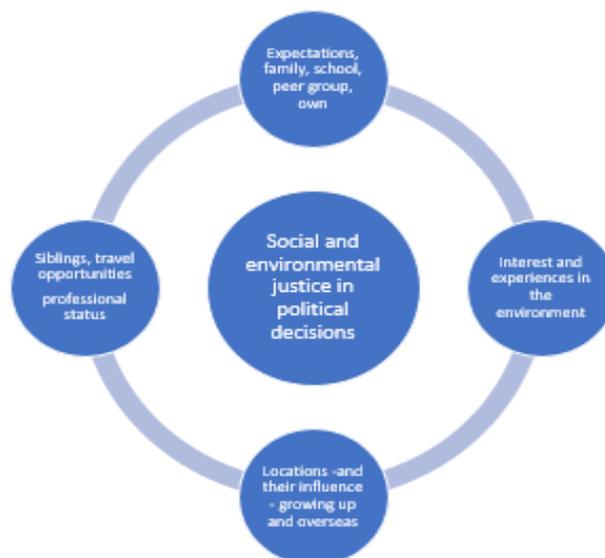


Figure 8: Visualization for Beth

Beth grew up living on a property on the edge of the city. She began her story acknowledging that her interests were largely as a result of her experiences in

childhood. *"I really enjoyed geography and sciences at school and always had a keen interest in the environment because I was outdoors all the time riding my horse in the forest trails".* From a young age Beth was clear that she definitely wanted to be in a professional industry, largely because she saw her older sister and brother living in London working in offices and traveling and getting work wherever they went. *"I looked up to that and I definitely knew I wanted a job where I could travel and get work".*

The link between interests and subject choice was evident in that Beth enjoyed the subjects of sciences and geography, which relate to the environment. While not sure what she wanted to pursue at university, she indicated that she knew about planning because her sister had undertaken this course, noting clearly however, that they had different areas of interest; hers being science while for her sister it was the social sciences.

I just finished my first degree and I definitely wasn't ready to go and work, so I just enrolled in planning because it was something I could do to fill in a year. My sister was a planner so I knew that I was onto a good thing if I did something similar.

Beth spoke passionately and fluently for a fairly lengthy period of time when talking about her experiences with Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA). She reflected that what she saw occurring in Vanuatu in regards to poor planning controls and the resultant impact of this on people and their livelihoods, were the main things that influenced her to go back and finish her Master in Planning.

I could see that there were some really unfortunate things happening and I knew that there was a profession whose role it was to actually stop such unfortunate things that are irreversible. You know, things that aren't sustainable and actually have a massive impact on people's livelihoods.

Her language illustrated a sentiment of fairness, both for people and the environment, although she did not use these words. Issues of development, land use and ownership, as well as preservation, were evident. Beth explained how planning is the strategic avenue to achieve fairness and outcomes which were for the greater good, and that most people do not realize that this is what planning is about. These sentiments are illustrated in this narrated piece, which embodies many of the key ideas shared.

I found it quite confronting that in such a short amount of time land can just be gone out of public hands and developed in a way that just can't be reversed. It made me feel really sad that countries like New Zealand and Australia haven't been able to help in any way, by building the capacity of governments to do something strategic to stop it. Being involved like this means you are working towards something that's for the greater good, and that's basically a critical part of being a planner, and no one that's not a planner can see that. So that's why most people don't like planners, they don't have a real understanding of what it is that planners do. But that's what I like about the profession, that even though the day-to-day grind is just like any other job, a year later, you can look back and be like, 'hey, that was really good that we stopped that from happening'.

Her lived experience included graduating at a time when work opportunities were shrinking given the Global Financial Crisis (GFC). This created a need to shift overseas in order to find work, which meant she was exposed to interesting planning work in Australia. These experiences in turn contributed to subsequent work and her fairly quick progression into senior roles. Again, she expressed sentiment of how decisions made by planners affect people's lives. *"That was really kind of sad, and obviously a huge deal as more than 5000 people lived in that town. These are the real things you are part of as a planner, you're really affecting people's lives"*.

Beth shared a metaphor of planners being like Magpies. *"They swoop across different disciplines and jurisdictions. Picking up relevant information, and bringing it all together from different disciplines. They weave it all together"*. She continued to explain that as a planner she felt that she was weaving a solution.

you are weaving a solution by incorporating a lot of different disciplines such as Urban design and Engineering and building and traffic management. Like the magpie you're picking and choosing all the important things that you learn from each discipline, and you're weaving it into a coherent solution, which affects people's lives.

Beth felt planners were *"specialist generalists"*. She went on to comment about the need for recognition of what planners contribute, having previously shared her thoughts that people did not understand what it was that planners did. I perceived a sentiment of the profession being unknown and undervalued. *"I feel it's important that planners are recognised for what we contribute"*.

Suggestions from Beth regarding how others could be informed and encouraged into this work were primarily around informing people about what planners do and engaging in a practical way at the school level.

We need kids to get to understand what planners do and to know that it is a practical industry. Maybe include something in the social studies curriculum, perhaps some kind of a project which would give them interaction with planners and what we do. Maybe when we notify the city plan we could ask for their input and they could be part of a real planning process. It would be fun and I think cool to go out to schools, if we had the resources to do it.

Beth also felt it was important people knew that planners could work overseas and that the experience counts when you come home. This reflected what had “sealed the deal” for her in coming to this profession. She explained, “if more people knew about the opportunities to work in different areas and in different countries, I think that would be exciting because in many ways it’s in our culture to travel.”

Cathy’s story: The profession which improves how people live in the world.

My interpretation was that four aspects of her life – interests, values, personality and an enjoyment of problem solving, all came together in the profession of planning; akin to the centre of the overlapping circles in the Venn diagram, or as if it were the sweet spot. I noted the role of chance in her story, and a focus on the built environment.

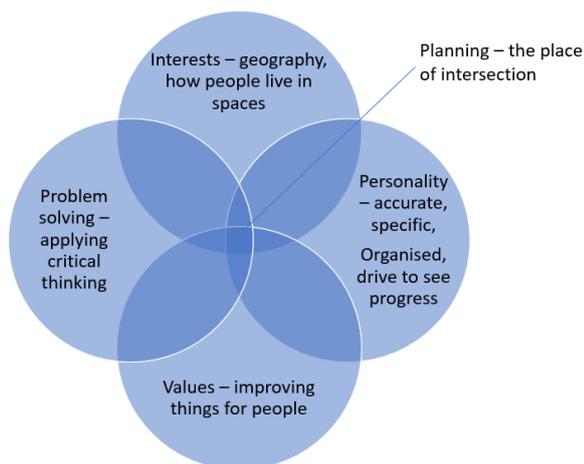


Figure 9: Visualization for Cathy

Cathy shared about her interest and ability in geography, particularly the human side of geography, and the influence of her teacher who made geography “cool and, in my memory, that it was something valuable and worth knowing”. This continued into her

choice for university study, although only after a set-back altered her intended pathway to physiotherapy.

Since I enjoyed geography at school, I switched to a BA in Geography. I am most interested in human geography, placing humans at the forefront rather than anything else, rather than the pure scientific or the economic side of geography. I see that people are so important in how the world operates.

Cathy experienced a “pivotal event in the middle of the last year of my BA”. While home for the holiday break and having dinner with her parents and their friend, he asked her what her plans were after university. She narrates the episode.

I said I didn't know. He knew someone who had just finished their Masters in planning and had got work straight away. They had enjoyed the course because it was a good balance between the theoretical and the practical, which appealed to me. Even though I was at studying at Otago I don't think I had heard of the Master in planning.

Cathy identified that her strongest interest was about people and the built environment, and that she liked “the real world and the strategic”. Her best grades were in urban planning. When I asked about her values she quickly answered “improving things for people”. She illustrated this with a recollection “I remember when the Tsunami happened and at the time thinking ‘why didn't we do better to protect those people? Why can't we do better?’ ”

There was a strong sense of professionalism in my interview with Cathy, evidenced in the way she presented herself and her story. She described her working relationships with other professionals such as engineers and architects, and noted that this profession was not talked about in the same way as the professions of doctors and engineers were. This professional sentiment also came through in her thoughts about the planning profession, where with clarity and conviction, and a sense of sadness, she outlined that planning had an image problem, yet it “actually shaped society” and was a “very respectable career”.

I think that many parents think planning is stuffy, backwards, and maybe even hinders things, and I imagine they potentially would discourage their children from entering planning. Yet it's actually a meaningful and important way that we can shape society.

With the GFC coinciding with her graduating, Cathy moved to Australia in order to find work. She noted that other class peers stayed in NZ and did not find work, with some being “lost” to the profession which was “a sad scenario” When reflecting on her career journey she commented that she felt there had been times of “sheer luck”.

Cathy has moved from planning into construction project management, “where I can see the work happening in front of me”. While she is no longer in planning work per se, her work is closely related, becoming a specialist in the project management of ‘green buildings’ which “links my interest in the built environment with issues of sustainability for the environment”.

In responding to the second research question, Cathy spoke with conviction saying that students and teachers needed to be told about this work. She was firm in her opinion that we needed to leverage the interest which currently exists amongst high school students about climate change and other environmental issues.

I would say that to encourage people into this work you need to get into schools and tell students and teachers about this work. When I went through high school there was no talk of what a town planner was, and there was no concept in the teacher’s mind that there was even a career in that sort of thing. I also think you need to leverage the interest which currently exists amongst high school students in getting these issues on the political agenda, someone needs to tell these young impressionable kids that all the stuff that they are learning about the environment and about climate change and that you’re striking about to make sure that climate change is on the political agenda, well you can actually make that a career and this is how.

David’s story: A love of the outdoors leads to solving community issues.

For David, his love of the outdoors combined with his interest in geography and politics, led him to planning, where he has found his fit solving community issues. I note here that he felt chance played a large role in this journey.

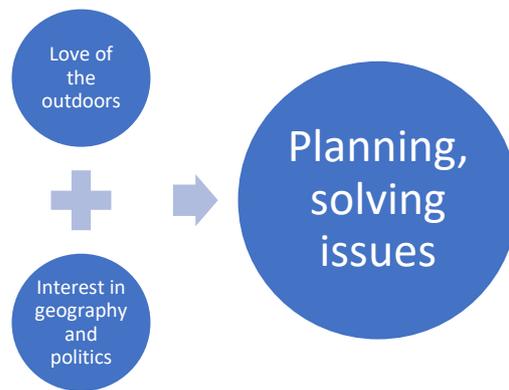


Figure 10: Visualization for David

David's narrative strongly featured his love of the outdoors, *"I loved being outside having adventures, both land and sea based; fishing, building huts, I was a real outdoors boy"*. He spoke about the role his parents played in terms of the outdoor activities and the environment.

We went camping as a family and had beach holidays and went overseas a few times as a family later on. My parents always promoted the outdoors, they are quite environmentally focused and interested in those sorts of things. I loved rugby and surfing.

His interests in the natural environment led him to choose studying geography. *"I loved geography at school, it was my favourite subject, and I liked most social sciences"*. When it came to university, he had a mixture of subjects in his BA, choosing those he was into which included geography and history. His Dad suggested he might like politics, so while not fully knowing what it entailed, he also added that to his BA, and as he enjoyed it, he completed a double major of geography and politics.

The influence of parents was also present in David's story in terms of expectations. *"Mum and Dad encouraged me to think about both study or an apprenticeship, they didn't push me, and I was the final decision maker"*. The role of expectations was a motivating factor when he had to achieve certain grades to gain entry to the Master in Planning. *"I had to work hard to get the grades required to get into the Masters, that requirement motivated me to work hard"*

David shared how his lived experience of coming to the profession of planning had also been one of chance. *"One day at the end of my 2nd year of university, as I walked through the main geo building, I noticed a small half A4 advertisement on the Master*

of *Planning programme*.” This chance event David described as “*a tipping point and a catalyst*”. He explained that this advertisement connected with him; his interests and study. He explained the significance of this event.

...it spoke to where I was tracking and what my interests were. I had a bit of a moment where I was like ‘that’s what I want to do with my studies’. I guess in some ways it helped me align with a profession and put those skills into a professional area that I could apply in the real world.

David went to Vanuatu on VSA between the first and second year of his Masters. He had developed an interest in foreign policy through studying politics. David explained what he liked most about planning, “*working with other people to solve issues in the community, while bringing all my skills and interests together*” which I perceived combined aspects of the environment, human and political.

The breadth and range of planning work was raised by David. “*Planners can work in so many different fields these days*”. He shared a favourite quote which he thought really explained planning

“planning is everything, maybe it’s nothing”. This speaks to me because planning is just so broad and it is involved in so many different things in society. You can be a specialist or do consents, or love the whole high-level policy stuff.

It would appear from this narration that planning is broad with many specialties, and can appeal to a wide range of people with a wide range of interests and strengths.

David answered the second question with some specific suggestions about connections, including reflections on his own lived experience.

A good way to encourage others into this work would be to have a planner connect with all Year 13 geography students when they do their research project, which is similar to what planners do. That was my favourite thing at school. If I’d known at the time, if someone said to me this is what being a planner is like, I probably would have said okay, well I’ll go and do the undergraduate degree. But that connection was never made at the time. But then maybe at that age I wouldn’t have wanted to choose to study something so specific.

A further idea which David had to address the current skill shortage was to develop people into the work who show interest and skill “*growing them organically rather*

than say you need to have a master's degree to be a planner, as this can be a barrier for many. You can be taught and mentored without having a planning degree"

Furthermore, David suggested it would also be beneficial if tertiary students were more informed about planning during their undergraduate study, if somehow all students who studied geography at any university could hear about the post grad planning programme.

Conclusion

The findings within the four narratives show the unique, holistic, lived experience of each participant's journey to their career in planning. The stories also illustrate many of the elements of the Systems Theory Framework demonstrating the way components of the individual system are shaped by the wider social system of the person, as well as the influence from the environmental–societal system. These findings are discussed in a collective and thematic way, with reference to the STF, in the next chapter.

Chapter 5 Discussion of findings

Introduction

I began Chapter One with my personal narrative, sharing my career journey in human resources and career development which led me to this research topic. Chapter One also presented the context of a skill shortage in planning, and the focus of the study being to learn how people who work in environmental planning came to work in this field. Chapter Four presented my findings by way of the four created narratives, sharing their individual stories in a holistic way. The previous chapter also reported on their responses to the second research question – how do they think others could be informed and encouraged into this work? I move now to discuss the findings in a collective and thematic manner with reference to career theory, in particular the Systems Theory Framework of Patton and McMahon (1999). I suggest a wider societal issue was inherent in the findings, that of socio-economic status, and discuss how this is relevant to the context of this study. The findings provide important insights into potential limiting factors or barriers for this profession; a lack of awareness, misconceptions about the work, and socio-economic structuration (Giddens, 1984). The findings also lead to suggested approaches to strengthen numbers of people in the profession. Viewing the findings through my HR lens leads me to propose further research is needed to assist with developing intentional approaches to grow a talent pipeline and to attract people into planning. The capacity to address equity issues via career education, particularly engagement with people working in this industry, and ways to enable more people to come to planning, are discussed. A by-product of greater equity could be increased diversity, from which the industry would benefit by gaining increased diversity of perspective to solve today's complex planning problems.

Common themes

As I listened to the stories of my participants I not only gained insight into how these four people came to work in environmental planning, but I also heard how they navigated their journey and had found their identity (Stokes & Wyn, 2007; Vaughan et al., 2006). Sentiments of being blessed or privileged were shared, as was a sense of the ongoing construction of a meaningful career. Flexibility and adaptability were

demonstrated, with some participants also sharing their thoughts about their future. While the findings were the stories of four individuals, I evidenced common themes across these stories. These were: the connection of their interests and values to their work in planning, the breadth of their interests, the influence of parents and their social context on their career decisions, a lack of awareness about the profession, a perception that planning perhaps has an image problem, and the role of chance in their career stories. These common themes illustrated the elements and systems of the System Theory Framework. Their journey's involved university study at both undergraduate and post graduate level, and they reported few challenges or barriers in pursuing tertiary study, which I interpreted as being primarily a result of their socio-economic backgrounds. Discussion about the collective findings will focus on three main themes which emerged, and which links to material presented in the Literature Review. Firstly, the influence of their social context, parents, family, friends and teachers, in shaping their career journey. Secondly, the role played by interests and values in coming to planning will be discussed. Lastly, I will discuss the lack of knowledge and awareness about careers in general, and this profession, noting in particular the negative perceptions which were felt to exist about planning. The influence of socio-economic status and the way this may be a limiting factor for this profession, will be discussed.

The Individual and their social context shaping career decisions

A common theme, evidenced in all the stories, was the way career decisions were shaped by the experiences during childhood and youth; the places they lived, their parents, siblings, wider family, other adults they may have connected with such as family friends, and teachers. Expectations, and how these influenced them, was also prevalent. These findings illustrate social context theory (Duffy & Dik, 2009; Krumboltz, 1979; Lent et al., 1994) with Patton and McMahon referring to this as the influence of the social system (McMahon & Patton, 2006; 1999). It was clear that the most prominent influence on career decisions were parents (Kidd & Watts, 1996; Wright & Wyatt, 2008). A sub theme will also be discussed here, that is, there are problems associated with parents and the social context being a key influence.

The influence of parents is evident in Angela's journey, both in regard to expectations and encouragement. "My mum said 'I don't care what you study at university I just care that you go, pick anything I don't care'". Parental influence was clear in David's story in regard to family experiences; the suggestion that he would pursue some kind of qualification, and suggesting a university subject to study (politics). The influence of the family social setting was evident in Cathy's story when she shared that dinner with a friend of her parents was a pivotal point in her career journey. Beth's story also showed the influence of social setting; the expectations of family, her school, peers, and the expectation assimilated as a result of growing up in a university city. Her story reflects the geography of location and opportunity (Hirschl & Smith, 2020).

*My parents expected I would attend university, my school expected that I would go to university, all my friends from school were going, in fact everyone I knew in Dunedin was going to university, it seemed it was just what you did. I don't think I ever considered **not** going. Maybe it was because we lived in a university city and we interacted with university students.*

Jones and Mann (2014) explain how parental and school expectations contribute to personal identity and aspiration, and to the formation of social and cultural capital. This was evidenced in my findings regarding the beliefs my participants held about themselves and their ability to achieve. Consistent with the work of Kidd and Watts (1996), Krumboltz (1979, 1996), Phillips (2015) Palmer and Cochran (1988) and Percy et al. (2016), connections and conversations with parents, other family members and friends was evident in my findings, with this contributing to their sense of personal and career identity, their knowledge, aspirations, and decision making ability, i.e. social, cultural and human capital. The study findings illustrate how these conversations and connections contributed to career choices and employment opportunities.

A sub theme here is the potential problem which may exist with parents and the social system being a key influence. While parents and family connections can be a positive influence, there are also inherent problems in relying on parents and their connections for career guidance. Frequently parental understanding of the employment market is out of date, as is their knowledge of access (Alloway et al., 2004). Furthermore, not all parents and families have the ability to give career input. Those from lower socio-economic settings in particular, may have limited personal experience from which to draw (Barnes, Bimrose, Brown, Gough, & Wright, 2020). Parent aspirations may also be

inappropriate, in an 'over' or 'under' aspirational direction (Kidd & Watts, 1996; A.G Watts, Law, Killeen, Kidd, & Hawthorne, 1996). Thus the influence of parents and family can unknowingly contribute to continued structuration and social inequality (Barnes et al., 2020) a sentiment also shared by Sultana and Thomsen (Staunton, 2019). Connecting the influence of socio economic status and geographical location, Kirkpatrick and Abbott-Chapman (2002) illustrate how geographical location can contribute to structuration in rural areas. This highlights the important role of career education and guidance in exposing young people to a well-rounded career programme, regardless of socio-economic status or geographical location, with a focus on developing career management skills to enable people, regardless of the social and cultural capital from their family and social settings (Bimrose, 2020; Sen, 1995), to manage life and career with maximum benefits. Student employer connections was shown in the literature review to contribute significantly in this regard. The literature review revealed that employer involvement in the career programme is a way to facilitate accurate and reliable information about work and how to access it, and to build this social, cultural and human capital, with the associated benefits of increased motivation (Education and Employers, n.d), opportunity and wage premiums (Kemple & Willner, 2008; Mann & Percy, 2014; Percy et al., 2019). Having greater capital, inclusive of a strong sense of identity, can contribute to accessing opportunities across one's life (McArdle, Waters, Briscoe, & Hall, 2007) contributing to greater social equity.

The role played by interests, and values of social justice and environmental concern

A common view amongst interviewees was that the field of planning was broad and that planning work connected with their broad interests, in particular their interests in the environment and people. While each participant had a unique lived experience, all had enjoyed, and been interested in, the subject of geography. The stories of my participants highlighted that there was a strong link between an interest in geography and coming to environmental planning. This would suggest that the secondary school and university subject most closely aligned with a career in environmental planning, is geography. The findings showed an interest in both physical and human geography, with participants expressing interest in the human-environment interactions. Some talked more about the environment while others expressed their interest in the human

– environment interaction with regard to how people lived, and the solving of problems. Overall, they expressed an interest in the breadth of the subject (human and physical) and the connections between geography and other subjects such as economics, science and history. Interests have been shown to be the most powerful determinant of education and occupational choices (Patrick, Care, & Ainley, 2011), and the literature reviewed discussed how these interests are shaped by the other systems - the wider family, their physical or geographical setting and their socio-economic status, i.e. the environmental-societal system. While some literature found subject choice to often be random, the undeniably close link which exists between geography and planning has also been acknowledged (Dredge & Coiacetto, 2006). My findings showed that student enjoyment of a subject is an important influence on their choice of career (Dredge & Coiacetto, 2006) with my participants enjoyment of geography seen as influencing their study and career choices.

While my participants demonstrated an interest in the environment and the way humans interact with the natural world, they also shared with me their wider interests, worldviews and values. They were interested in politics, economics, issues of sustainability and climate change, and they contemplated the impact on people and the planet. I have named these social justice and environmental concern. The fact there were people disadvantaged in some societies, was of a concern to them, and they saw the ways planning could help address this. The values expressed were primarily around fairness and mitigating disadvantage, social justice, a concern for the environment, along with values of service, and being ethical in their practice. My findings showed that from this value of fairness came a motivation to act and to bring change, to make an impact and to stop disadvantage from occurring. Their stories showed how this could be achieved through their work as planners. They appeared to find their planning work to be very satisfying, which, from my career background, I suggest is because the work connected and aligned with both their interests and values. One participant shared *“you are working towards something that's for the greater good.... you can look back and be like, hey, that was really good that we stopped that from happening”*. (Beth)

They all exhibited ‘environmental concern’ (Wright & Wyatt, 2008), with an interest in anticipating the future and recommending strategies to help cities and communities

thrive as the future unfolds (Bayer et al., 2010). There was evidence of a desire to improve the way people lived, and to impact people and livelihoods in a positive way (Christensen, 2017; Fainstein, 2014). First hand experiences in the natural world are strong shapers of values such as environmental concern, as is outdoor play (Wright & Wyatt, 2008). Field trips and teachers who shared about the natural world, was evidenced in my research *“It was just things that our teacher showed us in our natural environment around us at school” (Angela)*. These were memories from primary years, confirming the work of Wright and Wyatt that these influences were sustained over time (Wright & Wyatt, 2008, p. 31). My findings confirm that interactions with their own ‘bio-regions’ had an impact on the development of environmental concern (Wright & Wyatt, 2008, p. 35). Each participant had found a strong sense of alignment between their personal values of sustainability, fairness and mitigating disadvantage, and the work they did as a planner. These values of fairness, to people and the environment, were evident as drivers in coming to this work (Christensen, 2017).

Lack of knowledge and awareness about this career, and negative perceptions.

The sentiment of a lack of awareness and knowledge of both the profession and the work, was expressed by each of the participants. There was also a common sentiment of concern that given this limited awareness of planning, their journey to planning was somewhat as a result of chance events (Pryor & Bright, 2003).

None of my participants had experienced a visitor to a school class to talk about what planners did, or the work councils are charged with for the community. *“I can't remember any such interaction as a high school student, which is a shame, because like I feel like I wouldn't have even known what a councillor was or, you know, similarly, what a planner was” (Beth)*

Three discussed the role of chance in their journey to planning. Angela shared a metaphor that her journey to planning had not been linear or intention, it was like a *“winding path”* and had been a *“meandering route”*.

My career has been a winding path through a forest, I have had some interesting experiences along the way, I wouldn't say that anything was a waste of time, they have all given me different skills that contribute to being

able to do my job well now, but I haven't quite known where I was going.... It has definitely been a meandering route. (Angela)

David also shared how it had been chance that he saw the small advertisement for the Master of Planning on the wall as he walked through a university building. The participants displayed a sense of concern about the role chance had played, which seemed to be relevant at both a personal and also broader level. I detected concern that their own lived experience had been one of chance, and that they felt this was a broader issue for the profession too. If more people were needed and if the journey to planning continued to be largely left to chance, then this posed a problem to growing the profession and bringing the needed skills into this field.

Stories were shared in most interviews about their own lack of knowledge about careers in general, likewise that of their parents and teachers. They spoke in particular, about a lack of awareness of the planning profession. One participant shared a story regarding this lack of knowledge by her teacher and careers advisor saying *"it really reinforces that they didn't really know what work is out there"* (Angela). This lack of awareness is not unique to planning, with other industries also becoming cognisant of a lack of knowledge in the community about what their work entails (Kashefpakdel & Rehill, 2018). The participants shared, in word or sentiment, that they perceived planning had an image problem; it was not well recognised or regarded, and there were negative perceptions about the profession. This was a concern to them, particularly as they saw it as a worthy profession which made a difference for people. One commented that she thought many parents think planning is about *"making stuffy decisions... which hold you back...I think if a kid came home and said, mum I want to be a town planner, most people would say, no you bloody don't"* (Beth), and another felt it was likely that parents would *"discourage their children from entering planning"* (Cathy.) This finding indicates the opportunity for parents and teachers to be better informed about this work in order to potentially view it more positively, and portray it more accurately. This perception affirms findings from other studies in the planning field (Christie et al., 2013; Dredge & Coiacetto, 2006; Owen, 2001; Thomas, 2017). This finding resonates with similar findings in other work and professions where image problems were found to affect interest and choice of career (Ahmed, Alam, & Alam, 1997; Chan, Yeung, Kutnick, & Chan, 2019; Kanji, 2019; Mercer, 2019; Valentine, 2019).

Research question two

This section will present the common themes which emerged from my participants lived experience, and specific thoughts and ideas they shared in regards to the second research question – how do you think others could be informed and encouraged into this work? Links are made between the ideas expressed in the findings and the literature discussed in Chapter Two, to support the tentative recommendations proposed. Given this was a small study, further research to validate these findings would be needed.

Findings and tentative recommendations

Recommendations range from increasing early experiences in the environment, through to broadening the ways people can come to this work, with and without degree qualifications. These and other findings are outlined below.

The findings support the importance of early experiences in shaping both interest and environmental concern in regards to planning, with early experiences in the outdoors when growing up being depicted in the visuals for Angela, Beth and David. This points to the importance of having an environmental curriculum (Bolstad, Joyce, & Hipkins, 2015) encouraging more education outside of the classroom, and providing hands on engagement with the environment, from an early age.

Given the current interest in climate change, with students in New Zealand and around the world engaging with the 'Fridays for future' movement, striking from attending school to show the importance they place on climate issues and to get this topic on their country's political agenda (McGrath, 2019), the findings indicate that this is the time to promote and inform society about this field of work; the contribution it makes and the role it plays in managing the human – environment interaction. Suggestions from my participants in response to the second research question focused mainly on connecting with secondary school students. My participants suggested that businesses, tertiary providers, employers and those who work in the industry have a role to play in

promotion, a stance also advocated across planning literature, and other professions (Eramo, 2017; Owen, 2001; Vet Record Careers, 2019).

So basically, get into high schools and tell these young impressionable kids that hey, all the stuff that you're learning about the environment and about climate change that you're so interested and you're striking to make sure that climate change is on the political agenda, well you can actually make that a career and this is how. (Cathy)

Another recommendation based in my findings, is to intentionally connect with those who are interested in the outdoors and sports given the link evidenced between this interest and a planning career. All my participants expressed their interest in spending time in the outdoors or playing sports, with this being key in the visuals for Beth and David. To focus connections in this area therefore seems a sound recommendation. Cooke, (cited in Christie et al., 2013) developed a potential profile for environmental managers, with an enjoyment and participation in the outdoors and sports being noted, in particular an interest in board sports for males (Christie et al., 2013). This love of the outdoors, particularly surfing was a dominant component in David's story. Connecting with surfers, surf life-saving clubs, or skate boarders, could be an avenue for intentional and specific engagement to a market who perhaps will have a more than average interest in environmental planning.

There was a clear link in my findings with the subject of geography and an interest in planning (Dredge & Coiacetto, 2006), represented in the visuals I created for Angela, Cathy and David given the dominance of geography in their stories. This would suggest that perhaps there is an opportunity here for intentional interventions to grow interest in the profession by connecting with geography teachers and students of geography at secondary schools. My study findings would indicate there is potential within the current NZ Year 13 geography course, the research project, for joining the dots and facilitating a connection between students, a professional planner and their understanding of planning.

If I'd known that that was what planning was at the time, if someone said to me this is what being a planner is like, I probably would have said okay, well I'll go and do the undergraduate degree maybe. But that connection was never made at the time. (David)

Further research may identify connections between other subjects and, if so, this idea could also be extended to those other identified subjects.

My participants felt strongly that those working in planning needed to connect with schools via any other avenues possible in order to raise awareness of the profession amongst students, parents and teachers. In the literature review it was presented that parents, family, family friends and teachers were key influences on career decisions, with these elements being dominant and therefore depicted in the visuals created for Angela and Beth. Therefore, opportunities to inform, educate or engage with those who are key influences, makes good sense. Class talks, career expo's and career evenings were suggested.

I would say that you need to get into schools ...when I went through high school there was no talk of what a town planner was. There was no concept in the teacher's mind that there was even a career in that sort of thing. (Cathy).

Planners connecting with younger students by acting as a specialist resource for relevant topics in lower secondary or primary schools was also suggested. These ideas are presented in literature (Hughes et al., 2016, p. 13). This could be supporting a project in social studies or working with students, even in the primary school years, on a city planning activity, inviting someone from the Council or a consultancy to support the project and thereby raise students, teachers and parents understanding about the work and its impact in the community and society,

"You could connect with younger ages in a broad, simple way, such as explaining how councils help manage our natural resources and help make sure that buildings aren't ugly". (Angela)

I saw an example of engagement at this level recently in my region, where a Council engaged with primary children across five schools and invited them to submit designs for a playground, involving an 18 month planning and consultation process. This would have enabled students, teachers and families, to learn about planning via a relevant topic (The Weekend Sun, 2020).

When promoting planning it was suggested by my participants to connect the work of planning with values such as caring for the environment and making a difference to society and to the planet. They shared the need to make it explicit that planning is a career which gives the capacity to find meaning in their work. Values were at the core for Beth, and key too for Angela and Cathy, therefore being depicted in their visuals. The connection with values is significant because current psychology has revealed an increased focus on aligning choice of work with values and one's personal sense of purpose (Pink, n.d.). When promoting this work, it was also suggested to focus on the breadth of the work, and the wide range of opportunities and specialities that exist. With planning drawing on a wide breadth of issues, as shown in the literature review and the research findings, opportunities potentially exist to connect with a wide range of people who could be interested in this field of work. Focusing on the opportunities within this profession for working internationally, was also suggested as a promotional tool, given overseas travel typically appeals to New Zealanders.

If more people knew about the opportunities to work in different areas and in different countries, I think that would be exciting because in many ways it's in our culture to travel. And I think that you can have a traveling career as a planner (Beth).

I note recent collaborative national promotion campaigns in areas such as Construction, Engineering, and Primary Industries, where skill shortages exist, and where a lack of accurate understanding and or negative perceptions has been identified (Careers.govt.nz; National Academy of Engineering, 2015). This approach informs students and the wider community i.e. those whom, as has been shown in the literature review and findings, influence career decisions. Such a campaign could highlight what planning entails, the contribution planning makes to solving problems, the wide range of specialities, the growth in the industry, and the ways in which the work connects with the altruistic values as noted in the findings.

My participants also indicated that there was a need for specifically raising awareness with secondary students, of the undergraduate planning courses at universities, such as was shared by David.

I don't know what those people (who went to study the undergraduate planning degree), had seen that I didn't see at school, like was there

advertising to say you should go and do a planning degree, a planning degree is about XYZ?. That confuses me a little bit, I don't understand how people made that connection so early with planning. (David)

These findings provide important insights in regard to raising awareness of the profession. I note that this requires an increased level of involvement by employers and those in this work, as well as increased collaboration between employers, schools and tertiary training providers. One participant stated that if the opportunity to connect with students is not seen as important by employers, such as councils and private businesses, then they only can blame themselves for the shortage when students, who are potential planners, go into architecture or engineering, careers which they do know about.

young people have an interest in climate change and the environment and the way our cities are set out, they're the next generation so why would a council or a private entity want to lose that to engineering or to architecture ..and only hope that through sheer luck, which is essentially how I got there, some will fall into the profession. (Cathy)

The value of employer engagement in career education was discussed in the literature review, showing how this raises aspirations, motivation and provides accurate information, all which help to give future direction (Percy et al., 2019). Stanley and Mann (2014) posit these employer connections also build social capital, as do McCardle et al. (2007) who extend the benefit of these connections to that of helping in the formation of identity. The connections formed between those in employment and those who are coming to work can be valuable links and avenues into a field of interest where they otherwise may lack these connections.

Policy implications and mitigating the influence of socio-economic status

The findings may also signal some potential implications at the policy level, however with such a small study, further research would need to be undertaken. The findings and the literature review, showed the value of employer connections beginning at earlier years. The NZ Ministry of Education careers curriculum currently encourages connections between young people and their communities, industries and employers in order to learn about and experience the world of work (Ministry of Education, 2009, pp. 31-37). This curriculum however only covers Years 7 – 13. A review of this would

likely be needed in order to facilitate careers programmes and experiences for those in the younger years being adopted by all schools.

There can be significant differences across regional and metropolitan areas in regards to experiences during education including career education opportunities (Kilpatrick & Abbott-Chapman, 2002). My participants came from city or larger regional areas within NZ, with none coming from smaller rural settings, yet even these people had not experienced connections with employers to learn about work. Opportunities to hear from and connect with those in business needs to be across the country in order to mitigate geographical location being a determinant of opportunity (Langley et al., 2014). Kilpatrick and Abbott-Chapman (2002), along with Alloway et al, (2004) discuss the need for regional and national programmes to overcome the differences which exist between the regional, rural and metropolitan areas in Australia which resulted in inconsistent standards in the delivery of careers across Australian schools. While research has not been undertaken in NZ to corroborate this, from my lived experience I would surmise the same situation exists, whereby those in the main centres have a richer experience of a wider range of career education opportunities including hearing from professionals than those who live rurally or in smaller regions. Further inquiry and research could be undertaken to ascertain the types of experiences across regional and metropolitan New Zealand, and a nationwide approach developed to enable wider exposure, if this was identified as being a problem.

Issues in regards to barriers to entering this profession were not particularly prominent in this study. When asking Beth about any barriers she had experienced or had to work to overcome, she paused for quite a while, then responded *"I can't think of anything, I feel like I have lived a pretty blessed life actually"* and with David noting *"I guess I'm pretty privileged.... I had every opportunity to probably be where I am today in terms of planning. I guess it's just I made the decision to go there and had that motivation to get there"*. My participants all conveyed, in different ways, either directly or in sentiment, that they had a fairly blessed or privileged background. They had support, encouragement, a sense of personal identity, financial means, and personal aspirations. This facilitated them to embark on an academic journey and to allow it to unfold over a period of time. From their stories I concluded that all four participants had come from a similar socio-economic background; one which facilitated the ability

to attend a tertiary institution and to explore their areas of interest. This finding has important implications for the planning profession given the current pathway to this profession is via university study; which typically necessitates having a certain level of financial means. This route to the profession is potentially a limiting factor, precluding many people from lower socio-economic status backgrounds, coming to this profession. Socio economic status impacts the accessibility of university, mainly due to affordability, which in turn impact job opportunities. The type of employment one enters impacts income level, thereby perpetuating the cycle of lower socio-economic status and limited opportunity.

The planning profession needs breadth of perspective and diversity as they work to solve 'wicked' community issues with understanding and specialist skills (Christensen, 2017). There are people who may have ability, interest and motivation for the work, but who are limited in their capacity to attend university, either through limitations stemming from the Individual system such as disability, their social system such as family responsibilities, or from their environmental-societal system such as geographical location or socio-economic means. This is a problem to solve within the profession itself, to create and build opportunities for people to come to planning via avenues other than this traditional route. Ideas may include internships, on the job training, and those which may combine paid employment and study such as the cadet scheme as operates in the UK (Human Resources). This would enable a wider range of people to come to the work of planning, rather than it being primarily limited to those of a certain socio-economic status. The cadetship approach is re-appearing in other professions within New Zealand, such as the KPMG cadetship for accountancy.

The one participant who did not have a Master of Planning, spoke of being trained in the work through others teaching her what she needed to know. *"I received excellent mentoring from staff there (staff who had planning degrees) and learned how to be a planner through experience rather than qualification"* (Angela). She also had a planner who was a mentor to her. David too felt that people could be trained on the job, and that a degree need not be a prerequisite and therefore a barrier.

I think there's a bit of a barrier there that, you see then – oh that person doesn't even have a master's degree or whatever degree... university

education has too much credit prescribed to it. If someone is willing and capable then yeah give them a shot. (David)

From the participants ideas I perceive an opportunity to boost numbers working in planning by growing talent within organisations through internal programmes of training, upskilling those with an interest in the work but who do not hold a university degree. My HR experience tells me this requires additional resourcing at the company level, however finding ways to enable these people to come to this work, has potential to bring more people to the work, and to free up those with the professional qualifications from lower entry level work. This may create time for wider promotion and connection. This finding provides a new opportunity for the profession to develop new entry points and pathways, with the potential of bringing a wider range of people to the profession, those who, for whatever reason, are currently excluded from this work given the current focus on tertiary qualifications. This idea could be developed to enable those who are already in the workforce to transition into this work.

With NZ becoming increasingly multi-cultural, and with Te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations to our indigenous people coming to the fore, it would be particularly beneficial to have more Māori work in this field, with any initiative which may facilitate this being worthy of closer consideration. Māori and Pasifika are typically under-represented in achieving university entrance (see figure below) often as a result of social context, limiting their numbers in tertiary education. Therefore, any approach which transcends socio-economic restraints may also assist Māori and Pasifika people to come into this work, bringing their cultural perspectives and values to help Aotearoa manage our impact on the natural environment (Papatūānuku). Ways of encouraging Māori and Pasifika people to this work is outside the scope of this study, however it is one which I believe requires further research and consideration. With people from a wider range of backgrounds in this field there would be greater diversity of perspective to solve the planning issues which lie ahead for this country. I would like to suggest that research into this is urgent.

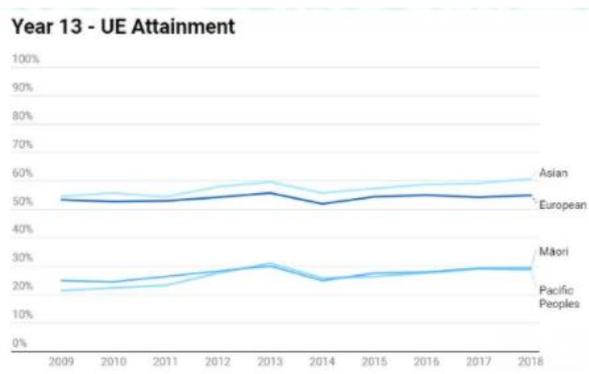


Figure 11: Who achieves UD? Attainment for Māori and Pasifika

Source: Michelle Johansson, Teach First NZ, Springboard Trust Learning Conference, 10 September 2020. Reprinted with permission.

Greater collaboration

A number of suggestions from my participants involved collaboration, either between employers and training providers, employers and schools, or between players in the industry. This topic is worthy of specific discussion given collaboration is seen as being the key to the way forward for many of the issues we face in this period of the Fourth Industrial revolution (Rassloff, 2019; Smith, 2018) and is being encouraged as a way of addressing the complex planning issues we face (Ministry for the Environment, 2017).

Firstly, the issue of collaboration across tertiary education institutions. Post graduate courses in planning are only offered at selected universities. Three of my participants attended a university where this was offered, however even they had not necessarily become aware of the programme from being a student at this university. One participant suggested there be promotion of the planning post graduate courses across all the universities so everyone studying at university could be made aware of the opportunity. This would require a collaborative approach across the tertiary institutions, sharing information with their students about courses from other universities. Typically, this has not been how our system operates, however, with a current shortage and predictions of increased need, perhaps it is timely to investigate the feasibility of this approach to help meet this shortage.

Collaboration opportunities exist between employers and universities, to develop more remote study and work options, and for scholarships and sponsorships. The UK and Australia has embraced these ideas for the planning profession (Human

Resources; Owen, 2001; Royal Town Planning Institute). This could be explored in NZ to help facilitate greater numbers to come to the profession, particularly from a wider range of backgrounds and geographical locations, those whom otherwise may have previously been precluded from this opportunity.

The participants discussed in particular the opportunities for collaboration between industry and schools, something which other industries have done to address talent shortages (Bolstad & Robertson, 2010).

I'd be quite happy to go and maybe chat at a school or something, but I just don't have the time for that sort of thing at the moment. I'm just too busy, work is just nuts with a lack of resourcing (David)

It requires resourcing and this is the problem. Because it is council, you're spending ratepayers' money, and you have to be getting as much value add as possible.if there was a budget for that, then that could easily be achieved. (Beth)

A case could be built for these activities being a social responsibility of business for the benefit of society (Ganti, 17 July 2020). This has potential to also benefit the business directly in building their own talent pipeline, not just that of the broader industry (Cherinka, 2019; Deen, 2015).

There are opportunities for collaborative endeavours across the industry, to share people resources to meet the work needs, and to develop breadth of experience. With my HR lens, and drawing on the comments made by my participants about a lack of resourcing, I note that private business and local government would need to recognise investment in collaboration as a valid approach to addressing the skill shortage by developing a talent pipeline, and to resource such initiatives accordingly.

Conclusion

In this chapter I discussed the themes which emerged from my narratives and synthesized this with the literature discussed in Chapter Two. Three main themes were discussed: the influence of the social context in shaping career decisions, the role played by particular interests and values, and the lack of knowledge and awareness about planning careers, including the negative perceptions which were felt to exist about planning. The stories reflect the interplay and interconnectivity of the systems

from Patton and McMahan's Systems Theory Framework; showing the way the systems collectively shape and influence people in regard to their career decisions. Systems theory positions interests and values within the individual system, with family in the social system. Geographical location, educational institutions, and socio-economic status, are situated within the wider environmental-societal system. The narratives illustrated how these influenced the participants coming to this work. Environmental-societal elements may also have an effect on the supply of people to this field in general. Three of the participants made explicit reference to the impact of the GFC on their career, a factor within the environmental-societal system linked to employment market and globalization. This is relevant given Covid-19, a current global phenomenon, may impact the career journey for many people in a similar manner. This systems theory framework provided scaffolding and context as I reviewed my participants' journey in coming to this career.

Findings in regards to the second research question were discussed and views surfaced which supported the need to get the work of planners known by more people, with comments made about the need to create a presence, both with the next generation and those who influence them; primarily parents and teachers. It was strongly suggested to utilize the current interest in the environment and concerns about human impact in regards to climate change, and to relate this to the work and impact of planning. It was felt that now is the time to leverage from this current interest in climate change, with intentional promotion, education and targeted connections. The importance of depicting what planning does and how it contributes to society, and to do so in a way that connects with people's values of making a difference, was suggested as an approach which may engender greater interest in the profession. As the field is not well known, and given it appears that misconceptions exist about what the work of an environmental planner entails, a clear and explicit definition of environmental planning, one which connects with the breadth of the activities involved and the challenges of balancing competing interests, may serve to attract greater interest and more people into the work.

My participants expressed a need for the creation of new pathways to enter the work, enabling increased numbers and also bringing diversity into the profession. This would open new entry points into the profession for those who may traditionally have been

excluded from this work. The research findings on the role chance played in their journey, as storied by my participants, are particularly salient in these times of increasing demand for this work, giving voice to the need for intentionality and urgency in addressing the current shortage issue. Overall, the participants conveyed a clear sense that much needs to be done to increase the awareness of opportunities in the world of work, in general terms, and in particular to raise the awareness of this specific profession.

Chapter Six Conclusion

This study has been a small inquiry into how people have come to work in the field of environmental planning. The motivation was to examine both the uniqueness and commonalities of their experiences, to understand both the influences and the meaning they made of these experiences. This inquiry came about as a result of my own lived experience, working in both career development and human resources. The context for this inquiry was one of projected growth for this field of work, and the current and future skill shortage. This context led to the second research question; that of seeking to learn how those working in the industry thought others could be informed and encouraged to enter the field.

The results of this research support the idea that early experiences and connections shape interests, and that these experiences are related to the family and social context. This affirms the work of previous studies in the career development arena, particularly that of Patton and McMahon and their System Theory Framework, which posits that the individual, or the individual system, i.e. the skills, interest, values, gender, ability, age, personality, to name a few elements, is influenced and shaped by the person's wider social system of family, culture and experiences. My participants displayed a strong connection between their experiences in the outdoors when growing up, and the development of their interest in the physical environment, with this contributing to their coming to environmental planning.

My findings are significant in that they suggest environmental planning work could be attractive to a wide range of people, thereby offering a large field from which to recruit, and therefore, with whom to connect. An interest in people and places, the natural and built environments, politics, legal and economic issues, was prevalent across the participants. The work connects both with those who enjoy humanities and those who like the sciences. There was a significant connection between values of making a difference and environmental planning work. The participants valued shaping the future spaces, and bringing about social justice by contributing to fairer, and more equitable environmental planning decisions. The work is therefore likely to be attractive to those who value justice and equity. The participants were all interested in solving problems and improving people's lives. An interest in

sustainability was also evidenced, with a focus on the human impact on the environment locally, and, more broadly, the planet. This is particularly relevant and important for the profession given the current and rising focus on climate change. With secondary students leading strike action calling on the Government to raise their efforts in developing solutions to the issues, it would seem there is an opportunity on which to capitalize. Potential exists for people to find synergies in this field with their sense of purpose.

This study revealed that planning is a relatively unknown and hidden profession, with low levels of understanding about what the work entails, as well as how it contributes to society, communities, people's lives, and the environment. The planners I spoke to expressed a belief that negative perceptions existed about their work. This lack of 'awareness' and 'presence in the market' along with the negative perceptions, could be a contributing factor to the current shortage. It was also suggested that the journey to tertiary study in planning is not well known and, like their own journey to this career, may largely be one of chance.

The data indicated that the current tertiary route to planning may be a limiting factor to those unable to engage in tertiary study, but who have the interest and ability to undertake planning work. This provides both an opportunity and a challenge for the profession; to explore alternative pathways in order to support a greater number, and a wider range of people coming to work in this field. This would bring the benefit of greater diversity and perspective. There is a need for collaborative endeavours to facilitate the development of the talent pipeline, requiring business, councils, tertiary providers, and schools to collaborate and work together.

In a broader sense my research supports career development literature, which shows that the increasing complexity in the world of work makes it critical to develop information gathering skills and other career management competencies, in order to be able to navigate this ongoing complexity and maintain employability. Incorporating employers and industry in career education programmes can positively impact employment and careers at the level of the individual and society (Kossen & McIlveen, 2018). Connections with employers results in better employment outcomes, which can mitigate the marginalization of those with lower socio-economic status. Improving

economic outcomes impacts people personally, at the community level, as well as being beneficial for the productivity of society (Vaughan, 2003). Some within the planning field have already raised the call to those who work in the planning profession to develop connections with people outside of the profession as one strategy to contribute to addressing the shortage ("Canterbury/West Coast Branch Regional Round Up," 2019; Owen, 2001). My study revealed similar thinking from my four participants, supported by the literature reviewed in chapter two, that accurate information and authentic insights into the labour market are achieved when employers and businesses connect with people outside of their field, in particular with the next generation. The study findings also showed the need for accurate information about what the planning profession does, and the contribution it makes to society.

Overall, this study strengthens the idea that planning is a profession which draws on wide interests and altruistic values (Dredge & Coiacetto, 2006). It shows the importance of accurately portraying the profession, and highlights the opportunity to make more explicit the connection of this work with interests and values, given the role they play in people coming to their careers. The results of this research also suggest that a greater level of awareness and information about the profession can be achieved through increased resourcing to enable connections across the community, and that this is a shared responsibility. The study lays the groundwork for future research into the development of greater opportunities for those who may otherwise be inadvertently precluded from the opportunity to join this growing career field. This study adds to the research that indicates the importance of industry engaging with people in our communities, to raise awareness and understanding about work opportunities, particularly in those career fields which are small and may be unknown or hidden. Increased awareness may draw greater numbers of people to the profession, thereby mitigating the current talent pipeline shortage. In addition, if people from a wider range of backgrounds are drawn to this work there will be greater diversity of thinking and experiences contributing to the 'wicked' issues and complex planning decisions which lie ahead for this country and our world.

Several questions still remain to be answered. One question being whether there can feasibly be alternative pathways into this work, pathways which enable people who may have the right blend of interests and values, but may not have a university

background, or have the option to undertake full time study due to limiting factors such as financial constraints, or a restricted ability to move geographical locations for study. This new understanding should help to open the discussion in professional, business and Government circles about how this gap can be bridged. A wider question also exists in regard to career policy. While ensuring students experience employer connections does feature as a component in the NZ Career curriculum for Year 7 - 13 (Ministry of Education, 2009, pp. 31-37), with schools not currently being reviewed on their career programmes, wide variation may exist in practice. My study also revealed the need for these connections to occur in the primary and early years, and to extend across metropolitan and regional areas. There is potential for research to ascertain the level of consistency across NZ as to how schools engage with their communities in order to provide these interactions, however this is outside the scope of this study.

Limitations of this study

The phenomenological paradigm in which this research is grounded, and the methodology of narrative inquiry, means there are limitations in this study. These stories and the notes I collected as data, are their memories, their recalled experiences, described and created by the participant. Likewise, the meanings, interpretations, and the significance attributed to the people and events, are the view of the participants with the benefit of hindsight. Throughout this research journey I have been aware and reflexive of my position in the research, in particular the role my own journey has played in bringing me to this research topic; those of career practitioner and human resource business partner in local government. As a qualitative researcher I am aware that I also may have influenced the stories, both when collecting the data and as I interpreted and presented my findings. A small study also has limitations in terms of application to the wider problem and population.

Through this research and dissertation, I have sought to present valid findings that could contribute to the body of knowledge on this topic, and which may contribute to further work to address the talent shortage which exists in this field in NZ. I present my findings and do not seek to lay any blame or extend criticism on parents, teachers, educational institutions or the planning profession. I am aware of my personal hope that my inquiry could contribute in some way to the profession, and to the policy and

practice of career guidance. I am fully cognisant of the limitations of a small qualitative study in extracting general from the unique, or moving from the 'micro' to the 'macro'. However, the study would appear to support literature which speaks to the need to revolutionize the way the future generation connects with the world of work, and to illustrate an opportunity which exists for these connections within the field of environmental planning.

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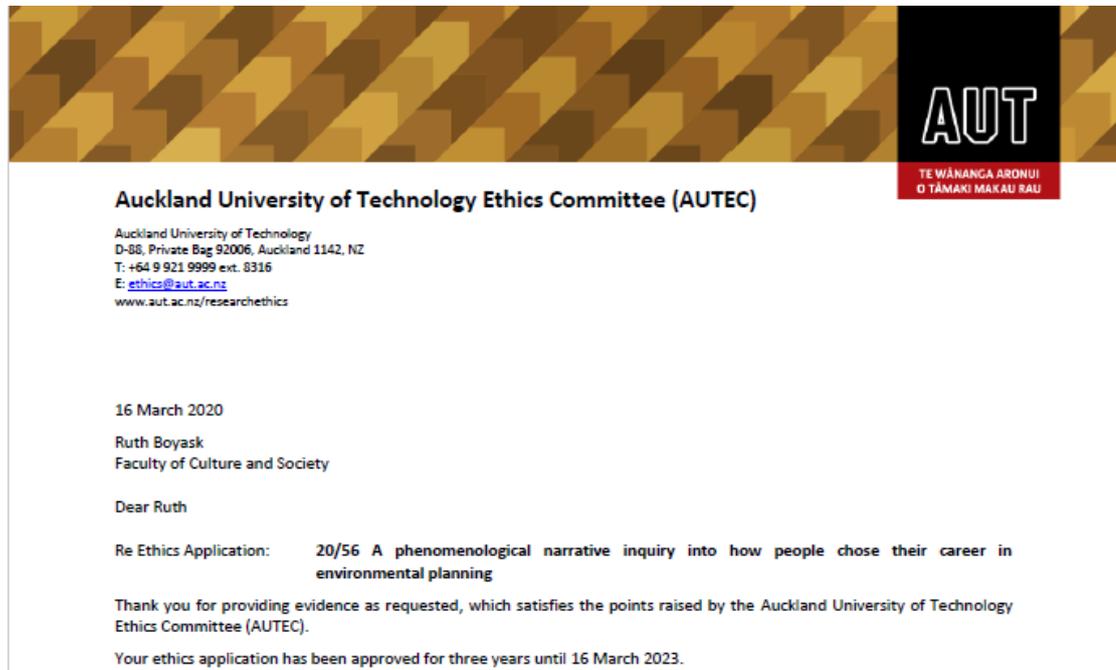
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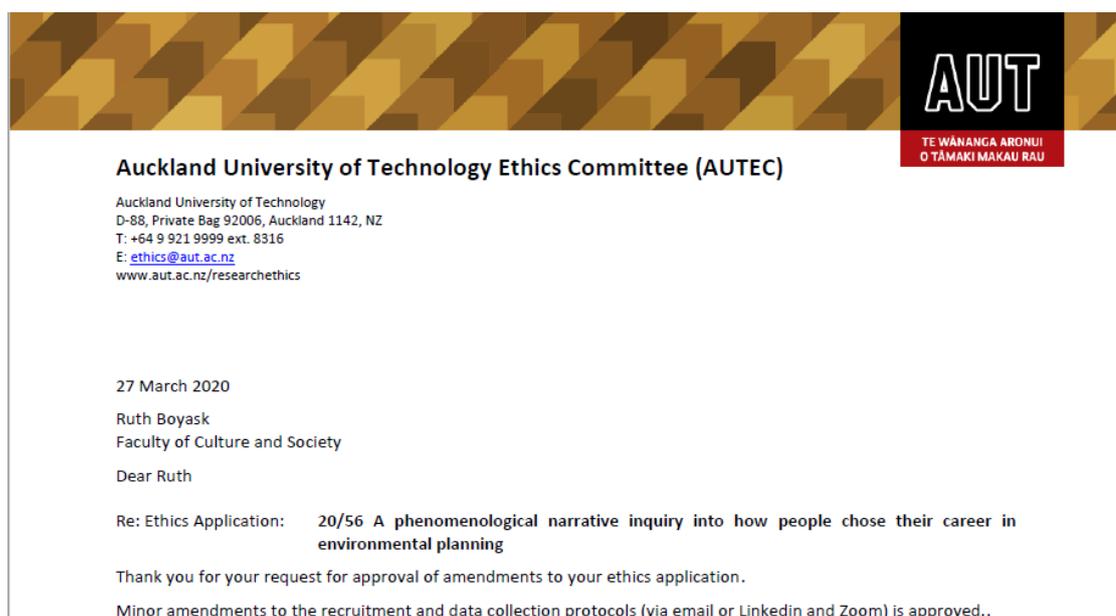
Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics Approval

Final approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 27 March 2020, AUTEC Reference number 20/56



Amendment Approval due to Covid-19 requiring data collection online.



Appendix B: Data collection tools

Chronology table, Interview outline

Chronology table

Table: Life History notes—events and people → → Name: _____ ¶

¶

| Age/- school- year: ¶ | Describe event—noting who was involved and why this is important, and/or → ¶ Outcome of event—what it caused or led to. (i.e. why you see it as significant) ¶ |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <10-years ¶ ¶ | ¶ ¶ |
| 10--15- years ¶ | ¶ ¶ |
| 15-16 ¶ | ¶ ¶ |
| 17-18 ¶ | ¶ ¶ |
| 19-20 ¶ | ¶ ¶ ¶ |
| 21+ ¶ | ¶ ¶ |

¶

Interview outline

IMAGES: Sharing of images brought along to interview.

Explore what, why chosen, when, thoughts, feelings, at the time, thoughts feelings now about this.
Context of when first seen.
Consider and explore significance, value and intent (C & C 2000)
Consider and explore links with Cultural and historical (CHAT theory Gilmore)
Consider and explore Causality & sequence, did one thing cause or lead to another key event / person / decision

Life Chronology Table:

View Table – discuss what is entered, what it highlights, what it brought to mind, what memories and stories they would like to share about the entries they made.

Questions

- What **other events, people or experiences, stories** come to mind which raised your awareness and interest in this field of work which you would like to talk. (Prompt – why is this important / why or how do you see this as being significant)
- Make tentative connections and interpretation of meaning - link **images they brought along** and the story they are telling.
- Tell me about any **barriers** you had to overcome to enable you to enter this field of work? Might be a discussion on socio economic or geographical context / family expectations
- What **metaphor or image** might you use to describe your journey into this field of work?
- Activity – Visual images and chronology: Tell me what part of your story these images illustrate? What could some other images be?

Before we wrap up:

- In your opinion **how might people be made aware and informed about this work? / influenced or encouraged** to enter into this field of work? (Blue sky thinking - without thinking of limitations / barriers / cost / time / resources – what approaches and avenues do you think have potential)
- How **would you personally encourage** other people to enter into this field of work?

Co-creation of Narrative. Would you like me to write up the narrative of your story, or would you like to collaborate with me, using the pre interview material and the interview, potentially representing your life story in a visual way. (show example of Attitude Gap ecosystem)

Appendix C: Participant Information



Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced: 25 March 2020

Project Title A phenomenological narrative inquiry into how people chose their career in environmental planning.

An Invitation

Kia ora, my name is Hilary and I am an adult student undertaking a master's degree at AUT. My background work and study have been in both human resources and careers counselling. You are invited to participate in my narrative inquiry research, which has a focus on how you chose your career in environmental planning. The data collection methods will be:

- Reflecting and making notes in a life chronology table prior to meeting with me as the researcher;
- Taking part in a meeting / interview of between 60 and 90 minutes.
- Taking part in a follow up meeting / interview of 30 minutes.

What is the purpose of this research?

The purpose of this research is to gain insight into how people in New Zealand came to work in the field of environmental planning.

I am interested in learning about the influences and particular experiences which informed and/or contributed in some way to people choosing to train and work in this field. I will do this by engaging with a few people who, like you, currently work as environmental planners, inviting you to share your journey with me. In order to hear the stories and experiences of the participants I will use a qualitative inquiry, and will employ a range of techniques for data collection; incorporating a semi structured interview and other tools to encourage recollection of key events and people.

I am also interested to hear how you think awareness could be raised about this work, and how people could be encouraged to enter work in this field.

While not part of this project, the learnings from above could potentially be developed into an intervention programme used to inform, educate and attract people into this field of work.

The write up of this research will form part of my dissertation which will be submitted for assessment and contribute towards my postgraduate qualification.

The findings of this research may be used for academic publications and presentations.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

Participants are being recruited based on the fact that they work, or have worked in a role which is, or is closely related to, environmental planning. You have received this information sheet because you are regarded as someone who fits the inclusion criteria for my proposed research. Someone else may have passed this information sheet onto you.

The inclusion criteria for the proposed study includes: A professional person with a degree working in the Planning field who I can meet with face to face, being located either in Auckland, Bay of Plenty or Waikato.

A limited number of participants are being recruited and I will be seeking to have a group including male and female, and a range of ages. This means that not all people who want to participate may be included.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you. You are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, then you will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to you removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible. If you would like to participate please contact me (contact details supplied at the end) and I will give you the required consent form to complete and return.

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What will happen in this research?

A small group of people will be selected (4 – 6) to be included in an in-depth inquiry of their journey into working in environmental planning. Once interest in participating is confirmed you will meet (online) with the researcher who will outline the purpose of the research and explain the data collection methods. This is estimated to occur in April or May. The meeting/s will be held online using Zoom, at a time to suit.

In summary there will be time spent in *preparation and in an interview*:

Preparation and pre interview materials: You will be asked to prepare for the interview by making brief notes in a Life chronology table and by considering images which may represent aspects of your journey into this profession (to a maximum of 3). These activities are designed to help facilitate your recollections of people or events which may have contributed to your awareness of this area and your seeking to explore this area further.

- o Life Chronology Table: Making notes regarding people, events and stage of life will be useful for you as the participant and me as the researcher to discuss and explore together. Primarily this is how events, people and experiences may have been influential on your career choice.
- o Images may capture ideas or be representative of triggers, which could be useful to share with the researcher. The criteria for image selection is very open and broad: These may be such things as an info graphic, a cartoon, a place or landscape, or an experience, indeed any visual image which resonates with you and which you feel may be useful to share in regards to your choice to explore or enter this type of work. An image may also be representative of the work or your feelings towards the work.

Interview: The interview will use a semi structured approach utilizing the above pre interview materials. The interview will be recorded using Zoom, and later transcribed for the purpose of analysis. The audio track (mp4 file) will be the recording which is kept and stored. The interview may take place in one session or be undertaken over 2 – 3 sessions of a shorter duration, which will be agreed by researcher and each participant.

Data collected: Both the images and the life history table will be discussed at the interview, with the life history table being considered data to be collected for the purpose of the study, and material from this may be included in the dissertation. Images shared of a visual or infographic nature will be discussed with the participant regarding inclusion in the research, and whether they hold copyright for the image. Photos or images which may identify people will not be included as data.

What are the discomforts and risks and how will they be alleviated?

It is expected there will be very little risk to you as a participant as the topics under discussion are unlikely to prove personally intrusive. You may find taking part in the research enjoyable.

While taking part is unlikely to affect you negatively in some situations there may be the following risk/s to you:

As you reflect on your life and career you may recall, and you may choose to reveal to me as the researcher, information that leads you to feel distressed. You can stop the interview at any time. You may also want to seek additional help and support following your participation if this occurs.

It is possible other people may be aware that you participated in this research, however what you reveal to me as the researcher will be kept confidential to myself and my supervisor. Note: there will not be any conflict of interest or link between information shared in the research to your employment or any current or previous work relationship with the researcher.

What are the benefits?

You will receive no direct benefits from participating in this research except an opportunity to explore your life history with regards to becoming a planner. It may contribute to the body of knowledge on this topic which in turn may assist with the development of interventions to assist with the recruitment of skilled people into this field. Your involvement contributes to my postgraduate qualification.

How will my privacy be protected?

Your confidentiality will be preserved because you will not be personally named or identified in my dissertation. You will be identified by a pseudonym, or code such as Participant A. There is a small possibility that you may be identified by those known to you from the information included in the summary of my research – the participants and their journey, particularly if any reference is made to the location of the Bay of Plenty and Local Government. My dissertation, once assessed, will be available in the public domain.

23 March 2020

What are the costs of participating in this research?

The cost associated with participation is your time. You can expect that your involvement will take a total of approximately 2 - 3 hours. This is made up of 30 minutes preparation time ahead of the interview, 60 – 90 minutes of interview, and as I will also check back in with you on the findings and my write up of them, a further 30 minutes at a later date. If you would like to co-construct with me the narrative of your journey then this will require extra time.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

Please consider this request and if you are interested in participating please contact me within two weeks of receiving this information sheet. If I have not heard from you by then I will follow up my invitation.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

If you would like to receive a summary of the findings, please indicate this on the consent form. A one to two page summary will be given to you.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr Ruth Boyask, ruth.boyask@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext. 7569.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTEK, Dr Carina Meares, ethics@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext. 6038.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Hilary Tomkins, Hilary.Tomkins@aut.ac.nz

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr Ruth Boyask, ruth.boyask@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext. 7569

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 27 March 2020 AUTEK Reference number 20/56.

Appendix D: Consent Form



Consent Form

Project title: *A phenomenological narrative inquiry into how people chose their career in environmental planning.*

Project Supervisor: *Dr Ruth Boyask*

Researcher: *Hilary Tomkins*

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 25 March 2020.
 - I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
 - I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that the interviews will be recorded (via Zoom) later transcribed, and the audio track kept and stored.
 - I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.
 - I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.
 - I understand that the life chronology table notes I make ahead of the interview will form part of the data.
 - I understand I will be given the choice by the researcher to give, or with-hold, permission for the use of any visual images or diagrams for which I hold copyright that form part of this project, solely and exclusively for the purpose of the research.
 - I agree to take part in this research.
 - I wish to co-construct the visual narrative summary of my interview with the researcher and understand that this will require additional time.
- (please tick one): Yes No
- I wish to receive a summary of the methodological findings (please tick one): Yes No

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 27 March 2020, AUTEK Reference number

Appendix E: Sample of code book developed

| Name | Description |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Environmental issues | Issues related to human impact on the environment as opposed to physical processes. Does not include climate change which is coded specifically as climate change |
| Environmental processes | A comment showing an interest in nature and natural processes |
| Hobby | A hobby, relating to their interest and abilities |
| Subjects | Subject interest or ability at school or university |
| Location | The physical geographical location - includes region, city land marks |
| Job market | The job market in relation to their location |
| Physical elements of location | A natural or physical element of the landscape |
| Motivation and values | Relates to a value they hold or a motivation |
| Affecting change | An interest in being an agent of change |
| Environmental concern | Comments which show a value of protecting the environment or natural resources. |
| Improvements for <u>peoples</u> lives | Relates to improving or protecting people, providing them with good places to live. |
| Justice | Issues which relate to social justice, fairness, disadvantage. A particular focus on the element of social justice as opposed to just protecting people at this stage, but may merge. |
| Prestige | Relates to having, or valuing prestige in some way |
| Other | |

Appendix F: Transcriber confidentiality agreement



Confidentiality Agreement

For someone transcribing data, e.g. audio-tapes of interviews.

Project title: A phenomenological narrative inquiry into how people chose their career in environmental planning.

Project Supervisor: Ruth Boyask

Researcher: Hilary Tomkins

- I understand that all the material I will be asked to transcribe is confidential.
- I understand that the contents of the tapes or recordings can only be discussed with the researchers.
- I will not keep any copies of the transcripts nor allow third parties access to them.

Transcriber's signature:

Transcriber's name:

Transcriber's Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....

Date:

Project Supervisor's Contact Details:

Ruth Boyask

Ruth.Boyask@aut.ac.nz

Phone 09 921 9999 ext 7569

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Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 27 March 2020 AUTEK Reference number 20/56

Note: The Transcriber should retain a copy of this form.