Constructing the Space for Professional Action: A Case Study of Professionalism in Education

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'Won't you help to sing,

These songs of freedom?

Cause all I ever had:

Redemption songs'

Abstract

This research seeks to understand the perceptions of professionalism in education. In particular it focuses on the constructions of the space for professional action. A case study focuses on people, including teachers and non-teachers, who work in a special school for young people with SEBD. The perceptions of professionalism in education held by those in this case have been carefully listened to and analysed.

Using an interpretive approach I have analysed data from interviews of members of the case. This reveals that a common language is used to describe professionalism but this is not commonly defined. There is an assumption that all share a common definition. In addition, other factors affect professional action. The experiences and life trajectories of the respondents are seen to colour and shape professional action. The construction of the space for professional action is problematic. There is a wide range of definition.

The findings reveal that professionalism is complex and common language hides a wide spectrum of definition and meaning. Professionalism, as a concept, is often confused and misused. Foregrounding these confusions have contributed to the understanding of professionalism. There is tension between the constructions of professionalism. The person trying to enact professionalism in education has to interpret, sometimes incongruent, discourses and locate themselves within persuasive discourses. Awareness of these differences and tensions can help understand and allow them to make their own choices. The development of typologies as an analysis tool has been effective in understanding the space for professional action in this case. It is suggested that this might be used as a basis for professional discussion for others who are engaging in development in their own context. Professionalism in education is important as this impacts on the performance of each person and this performance effects the young people. It is argued that people trying to enact it should engage in professional discussion and agreement making to establish what is good and worthwhile in professionalism.

Chapter 1

Introduction

1. Introduction

In this chapter I introduce the reader to my research to investigate the construction of the space for professional action in education. To do this I make a case study of staff in a special school for young people with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties (SEBD)[1] in Scotland. In this dissertation I record the research process and the choices I made in its design and implementation. These include my rationale for choosing this area of study, a critical review of literature, discussion of the choices made in the design of this study, accounts and outcomes from the process of generating and analysing data, and presentation of the findings and conclusions. Following this introduction there are two further sections in this chapter. In the second section I present my rationale for studying professionalism in education. This includes a metaphorical view of professionalism in education, a consideration of the policy context, and an introduction to the context in which this study takes place. In the third section I detail the aims and objectives of this research and the research questions I designed to help meet the aims and objectives.

2. A Rationale for Studying Professionalism in Education

In this section I discuss the problem that has motivated my research. My conception of this problem is given in a number of ways: firstly, as a musical metaphor of a concert of professionalism; then through consideration of the policy context of professionalism in education in Scotland; and finally, as an introduction to the particular tensions within the context in which this study is set.

A Concert of Professionalism

Bear with me a moment…I wish to begin with a metaphor. A concert is about to begin: the audience has arrived and the performers are about to start. However, this is no ordinary concert; this is a performance of professionalism in education.

[1] This is sometimes referred to as emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) or social, emotional, and behavioural needs (SEBN). Hereafter, this will be referred to as SEBD.

The performers are those who work in education: individuals with unique life histories, experiences, and views of what professionalism in education should be about and how it should be enacted. The audience include policy makers, parents, and young people: anyone with an interest in education. Many of the performers may have been audience members in the past and these experiences colour their performance now. The audience and performers are dependent on each other. The flux of this dependence shapes the space for performance. There is a great deal of uncertainty on stage. Very little of what is to happen is defined. Even the shape and make up of the stage cannot be assumed. Lots of performance issues remain unclear: is this to be a succession of solo performances, or are these people all going to play at once? There is no definitive score and no agreement on how the performance should take place. There are those who want direction, others who will accept none. No decisions on style or content have been made. There is an assumption that everyone should know what to do. Yet the perceptions of this space by the performers change the performance. It will be interesting to hear if the performer maintains the position on style and interpretation given in the pre-concert interviews or whether they will change to blend in or move in new directions in the gaze of public performance.

But when the concert starts what will professionalism sound like? Should it be a sonorous symphony of sound: ordered and structured with a clear classic form and direction; perhaps just a symphonic variation or even a concerto for orchestra; pleasing to listen to; and accessible to all (or to all educated to understand such things). Perhaps it would sound completely different: the gritty real-life recorded sounds of *musique concrète*[2] depicting the component parts of the machine working together like clockwork. Sadly, this idealised view of the complicated machine is a pale imitation of the complexity of reality. Or would it be chromatic saturation[3] where every note is played at once, all things included, the entire gamut covered, and nothing omitted? But this is utopian too: it is implausible that this performance would not leave out anything and that the professional knows which parts to select to be heard at anytime. There is a strong desire in many of us for order and sense but this professionalism is real: the definitions of professionalism tend to be

[2] For example Sir Harrison Birtwistle's *Chronometer* (1971)
[3] For example György Ligeti's *Atmosphères for Orchestra* (1961)

utopian, however, the people who are performing this professionalism are 'messy' human beings. Perhaps there would be a surprise with no specific genre or style. In fact, would there not even be the assumption by the performers that everyone should play the same piece or follow any conductor: some performers are intent on free-style improvisation. We should not assume that all the players are of equal ability, or, at least, good enough to play in public, although the listeners might have ideas of what is good enough; some members of the audience are quite sure the players should be on the road to excellence but have not got there yet. I wonder if the audience will be disappointed or shocked by a cacophony of sound? But this cacophony was never meant to entertain or be listened to as one body. The *avant-garde* composer John Cage (1957) said that music was:

> A purposeless play…[which is] an affirmation of life – not an attempt to bring order out of chaos nor to suggest improvements in creation, but simply a way of waking up to the very life we're living.

Rather than an entertainment to sooth the mind, listening to this performance is going to change how we think about professionalism in education. The assumption of this sound as being a cacophony is misleading: it hides the sum of the parts; it hides the different styles, different abilities, different rationales, and outcomes, attitudes to the performance and the audience. Professionalism in education is a performance by a myriad workforce of staff. There are many discourses on what this professionalism should be and many factors trying to influence the outcomes of the performance. However, there is no musical score, or programme note, no definitive treatise on interpretation. But this cacophony is not a weakness to shy away from; this diversity is a major strength: although questions have to be asked about good or bad, desirable or undesirable.

Questions of what the person has to do in the performance of professionalism in education must be asked. However, in this dissertation I do not announce my arrival as the composer with the definitive score, the conductor who is finally going to bring all these players together as one, or the theorist with the manual of interpretation. I am a composer, performer, and member of the audience but my role is to listen and make sense of what is happening in a performance in one case and to try to make sense of the constructions and accounts of this performance. My

study is based on data from people working in education and their accounts of their part in the performance.

Why Study Professionalism?

In reading Scottish policy one might be forgiven for thinking that professionalism is an assumed, accepted, and uncontroversial part of education. For example, the McCrone Report (2000) stated that: 'Teaching is a profession, and a profession of particular importance to society' (SEED, 2000, p. 44). The Scottish government, in *Targeting Excellence* (1999), acknowledged that:

> The vast majority of Scottish teachers are highly committed and professional in their approach…Teachers are at the heart of the school. Their professionalism is the key to improvement (Scottish Office, 1999, p. 66).

These policies could be read as follows: teachers are professionals, professionalism is good, and professionalism is valued. However, professionalism is problematic. To begin with professionalism is not universally defined. This term is widely used in discourses but, although common understanding is assumed, it has many definitions. The status of teachers is at question as is the status of the many non-teachers who make up the workforce in education. However, discourse often focuses on teachers and ignores others. The 'good' of professionalism is contentious. The purpose of professionalism is uncertain and rarely documented; therefore, outcomes cannot be agreed. The value of professionalism is inconsistent: from the competent worker to the specialist who meets society's needs.

Neo-liberalist reforms in the education system have had a profound effect on professionalism. These can be described as performativity or the excellence agenda. The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) (2008) published a code of conduct for teachers. The code claims to set out:

> Academic and professional standards of conduct and competence…to ensure high standards and public confidence and trust in teachers (GTCS, 2008, p. 3).

This is divided into four parts:

> Professionalism and maintaining trust in the profession; professional responsibilities towards pupils; professional competence; and professionalism towards colleagues and parents (GTCS, 2008, pp. 3ff).

Here professionalism is reduced to competences that the professional teacher has to attain for full registration. Holroyd (1999) warns against the value of reducing such a complex profession to competences.

Neo-liberalism is often viewed as leading to deprofessionalisation. However, Menter (2009, p. 222) states that 'Scotland and NI are a special case: enhanced professionalism with performativity.' Earlier Menter *et al.* (2006, p. 82) say 'authentic teacher professionalism is at least threatened in Scotland but not (yet) extinguished' as he suggests it has been in England and elsewhere. They identify clear historical differences for reasons such as the small nation 'trying to punch above it's weight,' and a post-devolution 'determination to be self sufficient' (Menter et al., 2006, p. 81). In addition they find a 'definite resistance to importing English developments as a model' (Menter et al., 2006, p. 80) and a traditional resistance to Conservative policies (Menter et al., 2006, p. 81). Scotland has its own version of neo-liberalism. Educational policy in Scotland in recent years has been focused on transformational change through the development of *Curriculum for Excellence* (SEED, 2004a). It has spawned a number of other initiatives: for example the *Teachers for Excellence* (SEED, 2006) and *Ambitious, Excellent Schools* (SEED, 2004b). This has shaped the context for all working in education. For example, Peter Peacock (2006), a former minister for education in Scotland, described 'excellent' teachers as follows

> A profession whose members are valued and who feel trusted and empowered to practise their professional craft, and in consequence display the highest professional standards. The key to this lies in CPD which is relevant and which challenges, stimulates and excites every Scottish teacher' and 'the need for opportunities for teachers to learn and grow together, and to work in collegial and collaborative ways to share practice, building on some of the excellent models developed through initiatives such as AifL - Assessment is for Learning, and Determined to Succeed (CPD Scotland, n.d.).

This definition nowhere refers to meeting targets (a corner stone of neo-liberalist practice); however, it employs emblematic language to convey, seemingly, unchallengeable and incontrovertible statements. CPD (continual professional development) is given a central role as is the collegiality and collaboration that will happen. This is then linked to central initiatives and policies. Alcorn (2009)

describes skills for teachers for excellence on the LTScotland website. She states that:

> Good teachers have a positive attitude to pupil learning (adapting learning to pupils needs)…an ability to communicate value to pupils (pupils learn best when they understand the value of their learning)…good content knowledge and understanding (good teachers use evidence to improve learning)…a teaching repertoire of many ways to impart content (including Bloom's taxonomy, observing excellent practice and know, understand and take account of pupils learning styles)…knowledge and understanding of connections across curricular areas (with innovative approaches to interdisciplinary work).

The language is again difficult to argue against and is emblematic. The use of the term 'good teacher' suggests that anyone who does not do this is not a good teacher. Again the centralist policy agenda is assumed within the document. There is a clear way in which these teachers will operate although this is couched in less prescriptive language. All of these policies are produced using the same language and graphics: one corporate identity. They are to be seen as part of one development in Scottish education. The case school has produced a change strategy called *Our Journey to Excellence* (2006) in this mould. Each one of these documents sets an excellence agenda and gives clear statements of the universal 'goods' that the practitioner should exhibit. Here espoused 'excellent' practice is posited; I question this concept of the excellent teacher and note that no information is given on how this might be achieved.

The importance of the job that people working in education are charged to do should be foregrounded: they are to educate young people. This is a complex task that requires the highest levels of professionalism. The person working in education has to enact this professionalism. But professionalism is problematic. In this research the problematics of professionalism are divided up into three groups: definition and enactment of professionalism, the role of the person, and the space for professional action. The person working in education has a complex task in knowing what professionalism is and is not, and in locating their actions on sound professional ground rather than on convincing arguments in policy. The emblematic statements in policy and target setting might doom the worker in

education to failure: not excellent or good enough, always striving to do better. A sustainable professionalism is needed where people know and can come to a shared agreement on what it is they are trying to do. They have to decide on the level of discretion they have in their complex work on the spectrums of autonomy and control; individualism and collectivism; and beliefs and values and knowledge and skill. Each person is enacting and interpreting professionalism. They are making sense of theory and policy in their daily working lives. Understanding how they do that is important. The space for professional action is a metaphor for the respondents' conceptions of enabling and constricting factors where they operate as a worker in education. It is not a fixed area and perceptions of its shape and function are unique to each person. Understanding how this space is constructed and perceived is important for seeing how professionalism can operate. The space is complex and in flux. This space includes: the protagonists in this space and the degree of power and control they exert; issues of funding, policy, supervision and management, and the maelstrom of interpersonal relationships; the different skills, interests, motivations, and abilities that people bring to the space and the perceived value of those attributes to others. Each person's construction of the space shapes how they work and what they do.

An Introduction to the Context for this Study

It is important for the reader to understand the context for this study. This is the social reality I investigated in this research and, to return to my musical metaphor, it is the site for the performance of professionalism. This is a space where professional action happens and it is where I collected accounts and definitions of that professionalism. The choice of context is not because it is in any way typical. In many ways the provision[4] is atypical, but this is the place where each member of the case worked. In addition, I had worked in the provision, since 2003, as a Chartered Teacher. This is a small special provision for young people from ages eleven to sixteen years with SEBN. It is located in Scotland and is part of a local authority's education department[5] and serves the communities of the six

[4] I use the word 'provision' in place of 'school' throughout this dissertation. Some respondents thought the term 'school' limiting and insufficient to explain what is done.

[5] This is one of thirty-two unitary authorities across Scotland established in 1996.

towns and thirty villages that make up the region (with a population of around one hundred and seventy thousand people). The provision has a high staff to student ratio. At the time of the intervention it had a roll of fifty young people and had thirty-five staff including teachers, support workers, training advisors, administrative staff, managers, and an outdoor education instructor. At the time of the interviews the provision operated as a school with a senior management team of principal (Headteacher), depute, two principal teachers, a senior training advisor, and a project manager. Being part of the context granted me privileged access to carry out this research.

The young people who attended the provision are defined as having SEBD. The definition of these needs is contentious as are the causes and solutions. However, the young people would have displayed challenging or disturbed behaviour and been unable to remain within the mainstream school system. The mainstream school would then have made referral to the senior officers resource group (SORG) who are the gatekeepers for the provision. The role of the provision was to ensure the young person was provided with their legal right to education. This included elements of academic education, social care, and vocational work. Academically the school followed a mini-mainstream-secondary-school model. A range of academic subjects was provided for the young person. At the time of the intervention, these subjects followed the Scottish 5-14 National Curriculum in early years and Standard Grade and Higher Still levels for senior students.[6] Social care included pastoral support through key work sessions and contact with home and other agencies. Vocational education included mechanics, painting and decorating, and work experience. This vocational work was not offered to all students but was allocated as a response to perceived needs by the senior staff. Qualification was seen as important because it opened opportunities for the young person in the years after school and the ability to live in the community was a focus of the pastoral work.

Problems and tensions in this context

[6] The Curriculum for Excellence has now superseded this curriculum and aims to offer education for 3 – 18.

The provision is a real place with its own history. The problems, changes, and tensions in this context were seen to impact on each of members of the case. This is a challenging and contentious environment in more than one way. Firstly, the context has a chequered history with several sea changes of management and working styles, and constitution. These factors have contributed to the problems of definition and purpose of the context and I write about these changes in this section. In addition, it caters for the young people with 'wicked problems' (Colebatch, 1998, p. 58): the young people referred to this provision have failed in the mainstream-school system and, often, see themselves, and have been positioned by others, as failures with nothing to gain or lose. SEBD is contentious in society, discourses, and, particularly, in education: the acceptance of a disability is tainted with 'common sense' understandings of bad behaviour and constructions of the young person: for example, it is not uncommon to hear people describing the young person in terms of 'mad or bad.' The question arises: what do we do with these children? The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1988) calls for society 'to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.' Realisation of this statement for each child is contentious. Even within the context there are polarities of positions on how to work with these young people. The purpose or definition of the context is not clearly defined or delineated and this leads to divergence and change in aims and practice. There is no indisputable canon or handbook for education of young people with SEBD in education, the values, and beliefs of the people involved colour the shape of the provision. In fact, even the word 'school,' which is in part of the title of the context, is sometimes replaced by the term 'provision' because some of the staff are uncomfortable with it. This discomfort with the name is, perhaps, indicative of the uncertainty of the role and purpose of the place. In addition, the hierarchical set up of education means that those working with the children do not have full control of how the place is shaped. This is very different to the working style suggested in the policy document *Succeeding Together* (WLC, 2004, p. 3) that promoted collaborative research for staff to develop their own priorities and activities. Policy, management, practice, and humanness are all factors in this place and none have been constant.

Cooper (1999) and Visser and Stokes (2003) define SEBN as a special educational need but note that these pupils and are not welcomed by the mainstream system. Munn *et al.* (1998) highlight teachers' perceptions of worsening behaviour in schools. O'Brien (1998) challenges teacher behaviour and attitude toward students. Cooper (1999), writing about work with students with SEBD, notes the never-ending drive forward required to meet the needs of students:

> [Work] takes place within persistently deteriorating circumstances: as the knowledge skills and practice of professionals increase, so do the challenges with which they have to cope (Cooper, 1999, p. 30).

Cooper (1999) notes that 'no one position, and no one profession has the answers to EBDs' (Cooper, 1999, p. 10). However, schools can make a difference. Wise (1999) and Munn *et al* (2000) suggest that teachers can make a difference and call for a therapeutic approach. Within these surveys of behaviour and staff action, questions of what actually works and what staff should do day-to-day go unanswered. It is not surprising that such an important and complex job engenders such passion and debate in politics, society, and the profession itself.

A history of the provision is only linear in chronological terms. It has been subject to fast-paced seismic changes throughout its existence with different levels of local authority involvement and management team preferences and goals. These changes have positioned the people in the case in changing ways. The school was set up in the late 1990s as part of the reorganisation of behavioural support in the authority. The purpose of the school was 'to cater for the needs' of some young people who 'could not be maintained in a mainstream setting because of their disruptive behaviour' and to be 'an advanced centre where the needs of the most seriously disaffected young people would be met effectively' (Hamil and Boyd 2000, p. 118). This was a strategy that sought to include excluded young people from their own community schools by creating another provision within the local authority. The format of the school was similar to mainstream school but with classes limited to six students. The balance of education and therapy was an issue for staff at the beginning (Hamil and Boyd 2000, pp. 127 – 131) and has continued throughout the history of the school. The Alternative Curriculum Project was set up later as a separate entity from the school (although sharing the same campus) in conjunction with a senior educational psychologist. It aimed to also reduce the

number of children in residential care outwith the authority. This aim was similar to that of the school but proposed using different methods. This was focused on the child at the centre, vocational projects, and a deliberate non-school format: a teacher was appointed but worked in a nurturing rather than traditional academic capacity; social attainment was seen as more important than academic attainment. The school and the Alternative Curriculum were merged in 2005 with the appointment of a new Headteacher who was to be Campus Manager. An already unsteady platform was bolted together with another. This new system is very much in flux: integration of the two units has been difficult due to incompatibilities in the practice interfaces of the two organisations and the politics of the situation. The people in this case are being positioned and repositioned by these changes in structure, aims, ethos, and practices. No one is able to remain unmoved by these changes. This environment of change is one in which each member of the case operated. For example in chapter 4 I record how SA4 thought there was a lack of a 'common thread' and T3 described the provision as the 'Zambezi.'

In addition, in its twelve years of existence its appraisal by others has undergone phased undulations. An HMIE inspection (HMIE, 2004)[7] did not identify any areas of the school to be 'good' or 'very good.' 'Climate and relationships' was found to be 'fair;' and 'meeting pupils' needs' was judged 'unsatisfactory.' 'The commitment of staff to the care and wellbeing of pupils' was highlighted as a key strength (HMIE, 2004, p. 1). A new headteacher was appointed and the HMIE carried out two further follow-through inspections in 2005 and 2006 before deciding that the school had met its requirements. The publication of the HMIE reports was a point of disjuncture: it brought to a head many issues that were not being addressed and raised these issues in the public arena. In 2005, the school was given the status of *School of Ambition*. In 2007, the school was awarded the titles, sponsored by a national newspaper, of 'Most Ambitious School in Scotland' and the 'Most Enterprising Special School in Scotland.' In 2009 a council review identified serious problems in the school: 'the strengths of the school were significantly outweighed by its weaknesses' (School Review Report 2009). The headteacher, appointed after the 2004 inspection, was removed and another

[7] HMIE inspections started before the merger. Follow-up inspections did not include any elements from the Alternative Curriculum. The HMIE inspected the AC as a project not a school and the outcome of that inspection is not available.

management system imposed by the authority. The school has had to become politicised: much is done to gain evidence that what we do is linked to the latest policy initiatives. There is now a shift of emphasis to nurture. The age-old debate of how to meet the students' needs rages on in confusion as targets are being set for higher academic attainment but timetables are weighted to social development. This undulating stream of praise and criticism has left staff with uncertain assessments of what they are doing.

The young people and staff that make up this provision are bound by complex, ever-varying combinations of systems and hierarchies, concepts of themselves, emotions, previous experiences, personal motivations, and beliefs. In this situation are added parameters of social and emotional damage. All of us carry damage and scarring, however, the young people in this provision display extreme learning and social, emotional, and behavioural needs. The behaviours of each of the humans involved dictate all the outcomes of the provision. Their definitions and enactment of professionalism, their personal histories, and perception of the space for professional action all shape how they work. This work has sought to investigate themes and attributes of these things to better understand how people work.

Summary of Rationale

Professionalism in education is important. The complex needs presented by the young people require high levels of expertise and ability. The person working in education has to be able to engage in high-quality interventions to work with these young people. The term professionalism is commonly used in discourses for those working in education. However, the definition and interpretation of professionalism is not universally defined. There is tension between the discourses on how professionalism should be enacted. The person working in education is charged with enacting professionalism and has to make sense of these discourses. The degree of discretion each person has in being a professional in education is uncertain. Again the person has to make sense of, and perform in, this space for professional action. This warrants study. A clearer understanding of how the person working in education enacts professionalism is needed and this is what I aim to contribute to in this research.

3. Aims, Objectives, and Research Questions

In the previous section I have identified my rationale for why I have chosen to study professionalism in education and, in particular, the construction of the space for professional action. In this section I present the aims and objectives of the research and the questions that have guided my investigation.

Aims and Objectives

The aims of this research are to contribute to the understanding of professionalism in education and, in particular, to contribute to the understanding of the construction of the space for professional action. My intention has been to understand how people working in education define and enact professionalism. To do this I have conducted a case study of people working in a special educational provision with the aim to investigate their definitions of professionalism and accounts of performance, to find out about the person and professionalism, and to hear their perceptions of the space for professional action.

Research Questions

My research questions are organised in three groups. First there are questions on how professionalism is articulated and performed, second there are questions about the person and professionalism, and third, there are questions about the space for professional action.

Professionalism articulated and performed.

How is professionalism expressed by the respondents and what value does professionalism hold for them (explicitly and implicitly)?

How do respondents' accounts compare with those of others in this context and those of other discourses on professionalism?

What factors are perceived to play a role in these constructions?

What are the differences between definitions of professionalism and accounts of practice?

What are the differences and similarities, and how do they relate to different professional groups?

The person and professionalism.

What values, assumptions, and judgements are revealed by the respondents' accounts of their own stories as individuals and as professionals in education?

How do personal histories correlate with accounts of performance and views of professionalism?

The space for professional action.

How do respondents perceive the factors and influences that shape space for professional action?

What do respondents' accounts of performance in the web of relationships, power, and perceptions reveal about professionalism and the person?

What factors in this space for professional action are perceived as restrictive or enabling?

Why and how is this important or problematic for them?

4. Concluding Remarks

In this chapter I have outlined the rationale for this study of professionalism in education. Professionalism is important for education but it is problematic. The definition of professionalism is not universally agreed, nor has it always been the same. The person working in education today needs to be professional. How this is defined, valued, and enacted has been investigated in this work along with the need to understand how the person affects professionalism. This then leads to the most important issue for the professional: how is the space for professional action constructed? I have also introduced the reader to the context where this research takes place and the tensions that exist within this context.

In the following chapter I present a critical reading of the literature on professionalism. The choices I made in the design of the research process of realising the aims, objectives, and research questions are presented in chapter three. I present professional portraits of each of the respondents in chapter four. My purpose for giving the portraits is to allow the reader to see the respondents, their definitions and accounts of enactments of professionalism, and their views on the space for professional action. This is presented with little analysis or comment. In chapter five, my analysis of themes and elements of the respondents' definitions and

enactments of professionalism is given. In addition, I present my analysis of the respondents' constructions of themselves and their working environment. In chapter six I present my analysis of the respondents' views of the space for professional action using themes and typologies. In the final chapter I present my conclusions on my findings, I suggest how typologies might be used as a tool for other professionals, and I present my critical view of the strengths and weaknesses of this research. In addition, I present my suggestions for next steps in the research and practice of professionalism in education.

Chapter 2

Professionalism: A Critical Review of the Literature

1. Introduction

This project is about professionalism in education. This raises questions about the idea of professionalism. In this chapter I will do three things. I will start with a description of what can be considered as a 'standard' view of professionalism understood as a kind of work that is orientated towards human wellbeing and, therefore, requires expertise, credentials, and autonomy. Sociologically this gives professionals a particular status in society. After presenting this 'case' for understanding professionalism I will discuss authors who have raised questions about this particular construction of professionalism and the professional. In the fourth section of the chapter I will look at the wider context of this discussion. Several authors have argued that the scope of professionalism strongly expanded as a result of the development of the welfare state. Before that professionalism was reserved to a small number of high-status occupations. But the rise of the welfare state also resulted in a call for greater influence of the clients of professionals. This was linked with the democratisation and emancipation 'waves' of the 1960s. This had an impact on the relationship between the professionals and the clients. A further development was the decline of the welfare state and the rise of neo-liberalism that changed the relationship between professionals and the state, particularly in terms of accountability regimes. Looking at the transformation of the context for professionalism and professional action provides some of the parameters for understanding how the space for professional action and decision-making has changed over time, and this contributes to an understanding of the particular 'setting' of contemporary professionalism. The idea of the construction of the space for professional action is utilised later in the thesis in relation to my empirical investigations.

2. A 'Standard' View of Professionalism in Literature

A standard definition of professionalism is given by Freidson (1994) and Carr (2000). Freidson (1994) describes this in terms of the elements of status, expertise, credentialism, and autonomy. In what follows I will discuss each of these elements.

Status

Freidson (1994) states that a profession is 'a kind of work that is done for a living' (Freidson, 1994, p. 150) but qualifies this to include only one group within a hierarchy of workers. He quotes Piore (Doeringer and Piore, 1971) who identified 'primary' and 'secondary' levels within the workforce:

> Secondary sector workers…the unskilled worker, the transient, the under employed, and the low paid members of the labour force…[And the] primary sector…labor force that have some form of job rights and job protection (Doeringer and Piore, 1971, cited by Freidson, 1994, p. 151).

Freidson (1994) further graduates this primary sector by identifying an upper tier to which professionals belong.

> This upper tier is characterised by lifetime, relatively secure, and stable work careers in particular identifiable occupations (Freidson, 1994, p. 151).

Another group of 'creative scientists and intellectuals' (Bell, 1976, cited in Freidson, 1994, p. 153) exist above the professional and a special place for managers is identified. This is a privileged place but it does not explain why the professional had such a place. It also suggests that professionals are not creative scientists or intellectuals.

High status is justified, for example: Freidson (1994) states that the professional does:

> Good Work…beyond monetary value…[has] a demanding period of training…a central life interest…[is involved in] developing practice…[and is] valued and trusted by clients but not evaluated (Freidson, 1994, pp. 200 and 202).

However, this view does not represent the professional in recent years. I have found they might be expected to be evaluated by their clients and have to build trust with them. Carr (2000) continues in this vein with a metaphor of a cocktail:

> A rich and vigorously shaken cocktail of personality, character, intuition, and knack which develops with on-the-job experience, is not readily transferable from person to person, and is resistant to codification in the form of general or precise rules and principles (Carr, 2000, p. 47).

This statement does not acknowledge the role of the client or government but does, like Freidson (1994), suggest a special person. These are attributes that the ordinary person might only glimpse. It would be wrong to dismiss completely these statements for being emblematic: they do summarise the problems of definition of the status of professionalism and highlight the changing attitudes and value of this professionalism. The professional had a special role in society. I consider other elements of professionalism below. I have found that these are used in literature to identify and define the attributes that the professional needs to have this status.

Expertise

The ethical and moral kind of work that the professional is engaged in requires a high level of expertise. Carr (2000) states that professionalism is 'necessarily or indispensably conducive to overall human flourishing' (Carr, 2000, p 28). Freidson (1994) describes the importance and complexity of this work and the expertise that is needed to do it. In his words:

> The kind of work they [the professional] do is esoteric, complex, and discretionary in character: it requires theoretical knowledge, skill, and judgement that ordinary people do not possess, may not wholly comprehend, and cannot readily evaluate (Freidson, 1994, p. 200).

Freidson (1994) further refines this picture of expertise. He identified tasks that need special skills and knowledge and the level of competence needed that is 'not part of the normal competence of adults in general' (Freidson, 1994, p. 157). It is clear from this definition that not everyone would be able to be a professional. This is a special person who is able to understand and use their expertise. Here elements of knowledge, skill, and judgement are not defined and are assumed to be interpretable.

Credentialism

The place of credentialism in professionalism is to ensure that the person has completed a significant amount of training and so can convince others that the level of qualification and competence has been attained. Freidson (1994), again referring to workplace hierarchies, delineates different types of training required in the workplace that linked to position in the hierarchy of the organisation:

> Crafts…reliance on practical on-the-job apprentice training… technicians… specific training for a specific set of job titles… professions… higher education required (Freidson, 1994, p. 152).

The purpose of the higher education of the professional is to prove competency and ensure the ability to complete tasks set for them. This is then used as a gate-keeping device for controlling entry to the profession. The professional would have 'particular credentials testifying to training considered necessary to work' (Freidson, 1994, p. 151). Freidson (1994) sees these as the 'conventional way by which people can identify an expert' (Freidson, 1994, p. 159). In his opinion the client may not be able to choose the right person to help them. In addition, he suggests that this level of training is required because the:

> Kinds of expertise which are so valuable or potentially dangerous, or which are complex or esoteric, that labor consumers are unable to choose competent practitioners (Freidson, 1994, p. 163).

This suggests that high standard of expertise was the property of the professional. Others might be unable, even, to understand it. Credentials allowed the client to identify the professional and trust in them.

Autonomy

Autonomy is the level of discretion in work. Freidson (1994) writes about the difference between professionals and proletarians who both have to work for a living. He makes a distinction between these groups based on the levels of control they have in their work. Freidson states that a proletarian worker is:

> Dependent on selling their labor in order to survive and stripped of all control of the substance and process of their work (Freidson, 1994, p. 132).

He views complete autonomous control as consisting of occupational, economic, political, and supervisorial monopolies (Freidson, 1994, p. 163). This is the antithesis of proletarianism:

> Workers emphasise discretion in their work, to assert their own judgement and responsibility as the arbiters of their activities (Freidson, 1994, p. 164).

> [They have] far less close supervision than those in the lower tier…[and] have considerable discretion and autonomy in doing their work (Freidson, 1994, p. 152).

Freidson (1994) continues with his tiered structure to the workplace and suggests that the professionals' skills are in demand and they can move between employers. This is possibly a description of professionalism in a particular financial circumstance. This may not be true in the current financial crisis.

Freidson (1994) states the reasons that autonomy is needed:

> The knowledge and skill it is said to entail is asserted to be so esoteric as to warrant no interference by laymen, and so complex, requiring so much judgement from case to case, as to preclude governing it by an elaborate system of detailed work-rules by supervision exercised by a superior official (Freidson, 1994, p. 163).

However, it is unlikely that the professional has complete autonomy. Freidson tempers the definition of autonomy to have:

> Sufficient authority over work to be free to undertake discretionary action as a matter of course (Freidson, 1994, p. 166).

Summary of the 'Standard' View of Professionalism

In the definitions of Freidson (1994) and Carr (2000) professionals are of high status and this status consists of expertise, credentialism, and autonomy. This standard view of professionalism is emblematic: it places the professional high in the hierarchy of employees; the high status is deserved because of the level of training and expertise that the professional has to offer; this expertise is beyond the ability, and even comprehension, of the average person; and professionals should be autonomous and offered workplace shelter. This emblematic professionalism is a utopian model but it does highlight and define many of the issues of professionalism. These constructions are contested in literature. Other views are considered in the next section.

3. Criticisms of Professionalism in Literature

Some authors contest the case for professionalism described above. Using the same elements of status, expertise, credentialism, and autonomy I present other views of professionalism. But first I consider writings on the problematics of language in the definition of professionalism.

Problematics of Language

One of the major issues in understanding professionalism is the confusion of a common language, but uncommon interpretation, used to describe it. Freidson (1994) states that:

> Unanimity is more apparent than real, relying more on common use of the same *word* [italics original] than on common agreement about what the word refers to (Freidson, 1994, p. 107).

He also notes that the definition of professionalism changes according to the perspective of the viewer. As an example he gives the viewpoints of sociologist, economist, political scientist, and policy maker:

> [The sociologists might write about the] honoured servants of the public need…occupations, especially distinguished from others by their orientation to serving the public through the schooled application of their unusually esoteric knowledge and complex skill…[The economist might write about] the closed, monopolistic character of the professional labour market…[The political scientist might write about] professions and privileged private governments…[And the policy maker might about the professional as being] overnarrow and insular in their vision of what is good for the public (Freidson, 1994, p. 13).

The position of authors is important in the perception of professionalism but this is rarely acknowledged in literature. Location of this position can be the key to understanding an author's writing. Stronach *et al.* (2002) write that 'academic' work in professionalism is part of the problem:

> The professional is a construct born of methodological reduction, rhetorical inflation, and universalist excess. First the paradox of a reduction that is also

an inflation. In literature, the professional is constructed very much as an emblematic figure (Stronach *et al*, 2002, p. 110).

The validity of this argument is questioned as many of the constructs we use everyday are born in a similar way. Similarly, they dismiss literature for being based on 'metanarratives' and 'extrametamorphicals' (Stronach *et al.*, 2002, p. 113) but this could be claimed of any concept. Based on their own research they suggest 'fragmented' and not 'unitary' definitions (Stronach *et al.*, 2002, p. 116). This was to move beyond the emblematic and to aim for definitions that better represented real people who were professionals: these people were themselves in flux and resisted definition. In some ways this is the classic argument of the difficulties in the interface between theory and practice.

Criticism of Elements of Professionalism

Status

The earliest definition of profession and professional, from the twelfth century, relate to one who has followed their faith or beliefs into a monastic order: a profession of faith. The construction of professionalism has retained some of the holy kudos of divine calling and setting apart. Carr notes that the professional has a special status in society and has been able to corner 'the lion's share of authority, prestige, or wealth in our society' (Carr, 2000, p. 22). This description of professionalism is historical and does not reflect cultural changes. He also hints at the misuse of status. This is no longer the shelter but the feathered nest. The history of professionalism has been affected by changes of the power, prestige, and wealth of professionals. Power and status are important. Gunter (2001) states that this is motivation for professional action:

> The real lives of [those in education] is one of negotiation, conflict and compromise, that is ultimately about power and their place with in it (Gunter, 2001, p. 139).

Status can get in the way of professional action. Boreham *et al.* (2000), from research in a hospital emergency department, found that experienced nurses and newly trained doctors could be working together. The traditional view of hierarchy in that situation would be that the doctor should be in charge assisted by the nurses. They observed:

> Non-verbal communication and cryptic remarks to suggest actions to inexperienced doctors without challenging their formal responsibility (Boreham *et al.*, 2000, p. 84).

Here status is an obstacle and excludes the nurses. Their real expertise cannot be used directly and effectively. Boreham *et al.* (2000, p. 89) refer to the way the nurses act as 'sapiential authority.' Robson (1998), Francis and Humphreys (2000), and James and Gleeson (2007) comment on similar uses of status to exclude some and reinforce boundaries. I return to this in more detail in the consideration of the element of credentialism below.

Expertise

Several authors challenge the assumption of expertise. Firstly, some see the professional as no more than a competent labourer. This is the antithesis to Freidson (1994) and Carr (2000). The pragmatist professional, as defined in a speech by David Milliband (2006), is:

> Simply someone who does a thorough job exactly in line with some sort of specification such as a service agreement (cited in James and Gleeson, 2007, p. 135).

The distinction between the pragmatic and expert in professionalism is interesting: on one hand the professional is something special offering society an expert service; on the other hand the professional is, merely, competent in their job and trusted to work within defined parameters. In the former the expertise defines the professional; in the latter expertise hardly features. However, the expertise is not always recognised. Gunter (2001) writes about radical professionality and radical collegiality where:

> It is about old-fashioned altruism of putting yourself out in a big way by ensuring that learning is planned through to more mundane and often invisible matters such as chatting in the corridor (Gunter, 2001, p. 146).

This radicalism might at first seem quite pragmatic, with the professional talking to colleagues, but she proposes that we must not underestimate the power of collective working. She sees schools as hubs or communities where this radical professionalism can take place. She writes that:

> Teachers know that everyday their ability to make a difference is encouraged and tempered by the conditions in which learning takes place and, while classroom conditions might be improved through site-based performance management, the school as an organisation is not necessarily orientated toward the communities it is located within except as a market through which the school can directly and indirectly select appropriate students and parents…schools should be hubs (Gunter, 2001, pp. 146-7).

She continues by claiming that 'teachers, within communities, can explore the power of structures in which they are working' (Gunter, 2001, p. 147). In fact, in her view, teachers are 'exhorted to work together to solve problems' (Gunter, 2001, p. 144). Community is an idealised term and glosses over the reality in schools; Gunter's work assumes that this community can exist. These 'communities' are made up of individuals who may not think or act collectively or want to do so. She also speaks about 'exercising professional courage at a local level' (Gunter, 2001, p. 148) to challenge policy but this assumes that the present system and the people in it are ready to work together in that way. Another example of the surprises of expertise can be seen in Lingard (2009). In his study of teachers' identities, he was surprised to find:

> Very supportive and caring teachers, teachers practising an almost social worker version of teachers' work…[and] the absence of intellectual demand, connectedness, and working with and valuing difference (Lingard, 2009, p. 87).

He was expecting to find 'authentic instruction' and 'authentic assessment' (Lingard, 2009, p. 84). This shows the assumption of learning expertise in education and the negation of the social role. The value of expertise is not considered and the professional is being judged in their performance of an expertise that is not recognised and is not what they value or do.

Bottery (1998) places a different slant on the perception of expertise. In his view, this is to meet with an untrusting clientele. He states that for the teacher:

> His or her teaching should be undergirded by the provisionality of opinions, not by any attempt to transmit their unchallengeability…to portray themselves

> as experts above and beyond challenge is to invite censure and criticism (Bottery, 1998: 165).

And states that this is due to 'increased public awareness of professional defects, and their increasing distrust' (Bottery, 1998: 165). He states that:

> Acknowledgement of epistemological uncertainty does not suggest a lack of technical expertise; the professional is much further down this road than the client (Bottery, 1998, p. 166).

Expertise is now not the sole property of the professional but, together with the client, they are to work to find solutions. The god-like know-it-all is humanised. To realise these realisations Bottery (1998, pp. 166-169) identifies 'five radical but essential ethics to underpin professional practice for the future.' His first ethic is 'provisionality…individual must recognise the limits of his or her judgements, his or her values' (Bottery, 1998, p. 166) and overlaps with the second ethic 'truth searching:'

> The search for the truth is the ultimate quest, which transcends the petty and transient squabbling for occupational power and career advancement, as well as obliging professionals to speak out upon issues that may be politically uncomfortable…uncertainty concerning the attainment of truth. Yet shining through all of this is a conception of 'better' descriptions of reality (Bottery, 1998, p. 167).

There are a number of issues that come from this ethic. Firstly, it shows the professional is working in an uncertain world where nothing can be assumed to be known. In addition, 'better' here suggests a deficit in the present. Perhaps we should be searching for other descriptions instead. If the first ethic is to accept limits to one's judgement surely we cannot assume our latest idea is better. His next ethic is 'reflective integrity' he quotes from Schon (1983):

> Must transcend that of 'technical rationality' – where a problem presents itself, the professional searches through his or her bank of expertise, and then selects the appropriate solution and applies it (cited in Bottery, 1998, p. 167).

The reflective professional must have 'an ecological dimension' where the client is included in the decision making process and made aware of the societal and value-laden nature of the practice (Bottery, 1998, p. 168). The professional must

have an ethic of humility: '…personal fallibility is not a failing but a condition of being human' (Bottery, 1998, p. 168) and, although 'disturbing' (for example, 'less secure') calls for a 'dialogue with clients rather than a monologue' (Bottery, 1998, p. 168). The client is constructed, in these two ethics, as an equal with the professional. I wonder if this suggests that Bottery is speaking to the golden-age professional that is now faced with new circumstances? He states that reflectiveness should also consider questions of value:

> What is the profession ultimately for? What techniques can be used, and why? What should be prioritised in training programmes, and why? And how should an institution's budget be allocated, and why? (Bottery, 1998, p. 168).

He writes these questions with the caveat that they 'transcend questions of technique' and indeed require the 'contributions of other stakeholders' (Bottery, 1998, p. 168). He notes the temptation to restrict to questions of technical expertise (which I suppose might describe competences) and that this approach, as it is based on a interrelationship, is strong and does not require the professional to know everything (Bottery, 1998, p. 169). This suggests that the omniscience might have been assumed in earlier definitions.

Credentialism

A number of authors contest the need and purpose of credentialism. Freidson (1994) notes that there is a movement to abolish credentialism as some:

> Wish workers to be free to do what work they desire without constraint [of credentialism as these are] obstructions to the efficient allocation of labor for productive ends (Freidson, 1994, p. 155).

This argument would not necessarily negate the training for tasks but does run the risk of removing the need for this training. In a financially-strapped society or a business model of institutions this might be an excuse to cut corners. Francis and Humphreys (2000) in their study of professional roles in the health service found that traditional roles were maintained by the credential system. Historically, doctors cure, nurses care, and health care assistants assist nurses. Their findings suggested that these 'boundaries are maintained by the professions in a manner that is deeply inconsistent with notions of a learning society' (Francis and Humphreys, 2000, p.

284) even though they are challenged and blurred for a number of reasons such as nurses taking on prescribing roles and employers reducing costs (Francis and Humphreys, 2000, p. 286). Of course, this is based on the notion that the learning society exists. The meritocracy argument here is laudable but implausible: the hierarchies and structures of power are also still in existence. Francis and Humphreys (2000) make the point that basing entry gates on credentialism means that 'youthful performance' limits future careers (Francis and Humphreys, 2000, p. 291). According to these authors career paths are clear within professional groups but cross over is difficult. They view this as social exclusion and call for inter-professional education in the future (Francis and Humphreys, 2000, p. 288). There is clearly tension between maintaining standards, having systems that ensure quality in training, and the social injustice of a social élite who have had privileged access to education and had their youthful performance recognised.

This is an issue in the Further Education (FE) sector. FE staff were typically experienced and time served in their trades but not credentialised. James and Gleeson (2007) state that many of the staff 'never expected professional careers' (James and Gleeson, 2007, p. 127). To become professional they had to become 'fully qualified' (James and Gleeson, 2007, p. 129). Essentially, their job had not changed but to be professionals they needed credentialised. Robson (1998), also researching FE, found that:

> The combined effect of a lack of any requirement to be teacher-trained and this enormous diversity in vocation and technical entry routes is to weaken the profession's standing overall quite considerably (Robson, 1998, p. 588).

This shows that, in credentialism, one form of qualification (academic) is recognised and valued over all others. It does not recognise experience or other types of learning.

Autonomy

Different professionals have different definitions of autonomy. James and Gleeson (2007), in their study of the FE sector, describe a level of autonomy limited to making 'continual adaptations to different learners and circumstances' (James and Gleeson, 2007, p. 131). This is far from complete discretion. They also write

about ‘reduced autonomy’ (James and Gleeson, 2007, p. 130) where a culture of appraisal and targets was replacing discretion.

The problematics of the boundaries of autonomy is illustrated in the work of Webb and Vulliamy (2001). They studied a project in which inter-agency work was supposed to take place. They note the ‘rhetoric of joined-up solutions’ (Webb and Vulliamy, 2001, p. 320) in policy but state that, in practice, there are tensions: different professional groups had different aims, rules, and norms obscured by a common language. For example, when working with other agencies together in an education context they noted:

> The external agencies which had a history of separate development and funding, worked to different sets of legislation and were subject to different lines of accountability (Webb and Vulliamy, 2001, p. 321).

When working together there had to be compromise. However, they found that this was not done justly. Schools were ‘hi-jacking projects and moulding workers to fit teachers’ priorities’ (Webb and Vulliamy, 2001, p. 322). Autonomy could then be sacrificed to fit a context. This suggests fluidity between the autonomy of professions in which a structure of priorities exists.

Edwards *et al.* (2009), Watson (2009), and Forbes (2009) write about the need for and issues in inter-professional working. Each of these writers identifies the calls in policy for more joined-up working. For example, Forbes identifies a particular Scottish policy theme for social justice and integrated working:

> *The Prospectus* [Scottish Office, 1998] called for an integrated approach by all practitioners, including those from health, social care and other agencies, now charged to work in schools (Forbes, 2009, p. 125-126).

The writers identify common problems in inter-professional working. For example, Edwards *et al* (2009) noted that:

> Frustrations were usually related to the old rules that still governed new practices and the barriers that existed at the organisational boundaries that were tested by practice (Edwards *et al.,* 2009, p. 9).

Edwards *et al.* (2009) find that:

> Inter-professional work involves working across systems to develop new practices outside the historically established practices (Edwards *et al.*, 2009, p. 42).

Watson (2009) states that

> Centre on differences in professional roles, values, and language and in the organizational structures within which different professionals work (Watson, 2009, p. 157).

Offering solutions to these difficulties and frustrations Edwards *et al.* (2009) find that:

> Inter-professional work involves working across systems to develop new practices outside the historically established practices (Edwards *et al.*, 2009, p. 42)

However, Watson (2009) considers these differences to be social constructions. Therefore:

> Myths and imaginaries may therefore lead professionals to construct the world in diverse ways and once there to occupy it differently (Watson, 2009, p. 158).

Watson (2009) concludes that discourse is part of the problem:

> What if it wasn't the clash of cultures which gives rise to a deficit model of interprofessional collaborative practice in a discourse which privileges consensus – what if discourse itself was recognised as being so inherently unstable as to prevent closure and consensus? (Watson, 2009, p. 164).

Forbes (2009) claims to map 'shifting interprofessional relations' in response to the 'integration agenda' noted in government policy (Forbes, 2009, p. 122). This mapping was to be

> A valuable conceptual map which might productively be applied to disentangle and analyse the new and sometimes slippery notions of interprofessional and interagency school site collaboration (Forbes, 2009, p. 123).

She found that this mapping highlights the problems as:

> Critical question of how *power* and *professional knowledge* [italics original] operate at each point of intersection (Forbes, 2009, p. 130).

She sees 'bonding social capital' (Forbes, 2009, p. 124) but does limit this:

> It is accepted that in practice each person's social capital is person-specific and will vary dependant upon, for example, people's initial professional education and formation, the social capital which they have built up in their previous posts and the opportunities that are unavailable to them to develop and use the different subtypes of social capital in their current post (Forbes, 2009, p. 128).

However:

> Strong bonding networks of trust within either education or health may undermine the good operation of agreements and contracts between the agencies (Forbes, 2009, p. 128)

Forbes (2009) concludes by calling for 'interdisciplinary education' (Forbes, 2009, p. 130). In addition she writes that:

> Issues need to be addressed in relation to professional values, visions and cultures; governance and leadership; recruitment, initial professional educational, retention and continual professional development; staff location and skills mix (Forbes, 2009, p. 127).

The perception of the autonomy of professionalism being a labour market shelter is noted in the literature. There is no universal definition for this shelter and its value is contested. Freidson (1994, p. 202) states that the purpose of this shelter is to protect the professional from dominance by clients or employers. He notes that this shelter entails 'etiquette and ethics' to prevent competition and there is an 'equality and solidarity' that involves a 'code of behaviour to client and peer' but there is a 'reluctance to judge' due to confidentiality and collegiality (Freidson, 1993, p. 203). In Freidson's view, this shelter can be seen as allowing the professional safety to act and to do right, even when this is unpopular, but can also be interpreted as something suspect: hiding from the gaze of public accountability, not granting everyone access, not treating all equally. Freidson also notes the need for security to attract people to professions:

> Without a shelter which provides the reasonable expectation of sufficient security to be able to count on a career of work at a particular kind of expertise, why should one undertake training for it? (Freidson, 1994, p. 161).

There are other views of the labour market shelter. These are about protectionism. Francis and Humphreys (2000) note that this is linked to the preservation of the current structures. Professions are made up of people with certain qualifications who may be, or have been, from the more affluent parts of society:

> Professionals seek to maintain their autonomy and status by self-regulation, and, in particular, regulation of the professional entry gate (Francis and Humphreys, 2000, p. 287).

Freidson (1994) acknowledges this negative view of the labour market shelter. He notes that there are problems when 'economic self interest has seems to overweigh service' (Freidson, 1994, p. 165). There is clearly tension between definitions: security and protection for the professional, or suspicion of protectionism of social élites.

Conclusions on the Definition and Criticism of Professionalism

In this section I have looked at the definition and criticism of professionalism in literature. This started with the views of authors concerned with the problematic use of language and the way that academics have tried to conceptualise professionalism. The common language used to describe professionalism has different interpretations. There is criticism of writers for falling into the trap of producing emblematic definitions. However, as emblematic models, these definitions are useful. Arguments criticise the interface between theory and practice. I have then considered the definition of professionalism by using the four elements of status, expertise, credentialism, and autonomy. Each of these reveals the complexity of the definition of professionalism: in literature there is wide ranging opinion and value within each element. It is clear that professionalism has an important role in society but argument and counter-argument for their status, expertise, credentialism, and autonomy are contentious. What is clear is that professionalism and the context in which it exists have changed. In the following

section I will look at how authors have perceived the changing contexts for professionalism and some of the responses to these changes.

4. Accounts of Changing Contexts for Professionalism in Literature

Changes in the context for professionalism throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries are documented in literature. The establishment of the welfare state and changes in its status and funding were major contextual changes for the professional. These effect the construction of what, and why, professionalism should be. In this section I will present some of the literature on welfarism, client emancipation, and neo-liberalism. In particular, perspectives in literature of the Scottish dimension, as a distinct response to neo-liberalism, are considered. Literature reveals how ideologies of welfarism, client emancipation, and neo-liberalism have an uneasy compatibility. There is tension between the constructions: remnants from these historical constructs still resonate in our present day definitions of professionalism. Locating the concepts of professionalism in relation to these contextual changes is important in understanding different authors.

The Welfare State

The creation and changes to the welfare state are significant in the study of professionalism. The definition of the welfare state in literature is an important starting point. The welfare of our society is a universal good but the value and definitions of how this is done change. A typical example, from Bottery (1998), who highly values social welfare, states that 'social cohesion is an essential prerequisite for economic competitiveness and societal health' (Bottery, 1998, p. 163). According to Briggs (2006), an aim of the welfare state was:

> Ensuring that all citizens without distinction of status or class are offered the best standards available in relation to a certain range of social services (Briggs, 2006, p. 16).

Each person is to have access to the social services they require at any time. The funding and value of this access is contentious. Bottery (1998) identifies three modes of funding: 'residual,' 'affordable,' and 'universal' (Bottery, 1998, p. 163). Governments have to decide how much of the public purse to spend on welfare. This is subject to much political debate, ideology, and assumption. Decisions are

also taken on vote-winning grounds. Pierson (1996) states that this is not dependent on funding alone:

> Welfare state expansion involved the enactment of *popular* [italics original] policies in a relatively undeveloped interest-group environment. By contrast, the welfare state retrenchment generally requires elected officials to pursue *unpopular* [italics original] policies that must withstand the scrutiny of both voters and well-entrenched networks of interested groups (Pierson, 1996, pp. 143 – 144).

The government, professionals, or clients are dependant on each other. Ideologies, the level of funding, and the value and purpose of the welfare state are fundamental to the changing contexts for professionalism. Three distinct strands of ideology from the literature are given below. They are welfarism, client emancipation, and neo-liberalism.

Welfarism

The years after the Second World War were an economic boom time. During this time welfarism was a predominant political ideology and this cemented the establishment of the welfare state. Gewirtz (2002), focusing on schools and promoting the welfare settlement, lists the values associated with welfarism:

> Equality of opportunity; valuing all children equally; child-centredness; comprehensive schooling; assimilationism; multi-culturalism; anti-racism; girl friendliness; anti-sexism; developing critical citizens; democratic participation and social transformation (Gewirtz, 2002, p. 31).

These are all 'goods' that would be difficult to argue against. However, she does not say how these are interpreted, understood, or enacted by others. For professionals Lawn (1996) and Nixon *et al.* (1997) identified this as a golden age of professionalism. At this time the professional was in control, funded by their government, and trusted to work for the good of society. Lawn (1996) wrote that during this golden age the relationship with the government was one of 'autonomy and partnership' (Lawn, 1996, p. 108). Nixon *et al.* (1997) write that professional status was high and the role of professionals was clear:

> Doctor knows best was not just a platitude: it was an underlying code whereby the right to make decisions on behalf of majorities, to exercise judgement on

> behalf of others, and to pursue the larger aim of providing goods and services in a fashion calculated to obtain public approval was ceded to particular occupational groups… [This was to] bring cohesion and stability to society (Nixon *et al.,* 1997, p. 7).

The balance of power was with the professional. It must be noted that these historical accounts of the golden age are nostalgic and emblematic. They suggest a rosy, positive image but not all was well here: for example, clients were to be subservient and grateful. The client emancipation movement arose in response to this negative imbalance.

Client Emancipation

The power imbalance between the professional and the client started to change in the middle of the twentieth century. In the health sector, growing patient movements challenged the deficit role of the client as the grateful recipient of the professional's expertise (Williamson, 2007, p. 102). These groups started to arise in the late 1950s and have continued to grow in power and influence (Williams, 2007, p. 105). Williams (2007) states that many of these groups are disillusioned with 'social, professional, or institutional beliefs, policies, practices, or standards' (Williams, 2007, p. 105) particularly those that disempower the client. Freidson (1994) expresses the changes to professionalism in relation to client emancipation. They are:

> Becoming more secular experts, professionals are no longer protected from the necessity of negotiating and compromising with a sceptical clientele, they are losing their jurisdictional monopoly over a defined area of knowledge and a given set of tasks (Freidson, 1994, pp. 130 – 131).

The clients' voice was to be heard and listened to. In this chapter I have already looked at constructions of expertise and status for the professional and the arguments from Freidson (1994) and others for control of these areas. As a response to the new role for the client, Bottery (1998) calls for professionals:

> To reconceptualize their practice to one which incorporates a greater education for the client in those connections between their practice and societal issues, for the understanding of issues like democracy, social

> cohesion and societal health is going to be essential in the pursuit of a better quality of life (Bottery, 1998, p. 164).

Bottery's (1998) final ethic, of five, for the professional is a call for humanistic education: 'the duty of the professional is to help the client help themselves' and by doing this with other stakeholders as 'professionals need other frames of reference.' For this frame of reference he quotes from Carl Rogers' person-centred theory on the importance of 'personal involvement and empowerment' (Bottery, 1998, p. 169). He goes on to write that:

> An ethic of humanistic education then requires of professionals that they be educators of learning which requires their help but not their imposition (Bottery, 1998, p. 169).

Bottery (1998) continues by stating we need professionals who are 'working at a level of the individual for the individual' (Bottery, 1998, p. 165). In this writing he is suggesting that the professional can help the client learn but must work collaboratively rather than imposing learning. This assumes the learner to be willing to work with the professional. What happens when this is not the case? For example with disaffected young people and parents, if the client is unwilling to accept the professional's help are they no longer able to be professional? Should the professional then assume a right to act apart from the client's views if all the other professionals in the frame of reference agree? Surely, this would return us to the golden-age professional. I think that Bottery's ethical, ecologically aware professional is the golden-age professional, or something just as superior and idealistic, but clothed in the softer language of the person-centred present day.

Neo-liberalism

Since the 1970s, changes in ideological political agendas have radically changed the context for professional action. Pierson (1996) noted the change in attitude to the welfare state: in some part due to financial crisis. A new era of political life was heralded in neo-liberalism. A statement that illustrates the clear blue water between the welfare model and the neo-liberalists is a quote from Margaret Thatcher (1987) about those who rely on the welfare state:

> They're casting their problem on society. And, you know, there is no such thing as society. There are individual men and women, and there are families.

> And no government can do anything except through people, and people must look to themselves first. It's our duty to look after ourselves and then, also to look after our neighbour. People have got the entitlements too much in mind, without the obligations.[8]

If society does not exist, everyone should provide for themselves first and then their needy neighbour, the role of the state to provide welfare is negated. In addition, this agenda was to introduce a business model to all aspects of public life, including education. This constructed teachers and schools as service providers and parents and children as clients. Gewirtz (2002), in her argument against neo-liberalism in schools, describes this as:

> A utilitarian discourse of efficiency, effectiveness, performance and productivity…welfare bureaucrats and professionals were held to be the source of major problems rather than the source of solutions (Gewirtz, 2002, p. 3).

Nixon *et al.* (1997) wrote that the neo-liberal reformists saw professions 'as unproductive occupations parasitic upon the wealth-creating private sector' (Nixon et al, 1997, p. 9). Lawn (1996) wrote that neo-liberalist methods entailed a:

> Prevailing sense of public service…and new pedagogical styles…in the nature of its labour process … centralised planning, rigid organisation, redesigned, and directly managed tasks, flowline production, and scale economics of production (Lawn, 1996, p. 110).

In this view of neo-liberalism the worker in schools was the technician to put these plans into place and not the professional deciding what was the best thing to do for the good of their client. The autonomy and partnership has been replaced with a refocusing on control from outside education. According to Lawn (1996):

> In the ideology of the market, professionalism (or the degree of control exercised over work) may be viewed as neither beneficial nor co-optive; instead it is seen as an interference in the market or as an attempt at unfair monopoly by the teachers, part of the old corporation state (Lawn, 1996, p. 112).

[8] *Woman's Own*, 31 October 1987, pp. 8–10. Often misquoted as 'society is dead.'

This might suggest that professionalism has no place in neo-liberalism. However, it is interesting to see how the reaction to these changes in literature.

Responses to Changing Contexts for Professionalism

Negativity towards neo-liberalism is prevalent in literature. However, Svensson (2006) relates its arrival in schools positively. He says that new market reforms are changing schools into 'clearer and more delimited organisations' (Svensson, 2006, p. 579). He sees new management as having 'enforced demands for professional competence' (Svensson, 2006, p. 580). He states:

> The management control models of audit and accounting have partly been replacing models of trust between managers and professionals…Control of the actual performance of work, however, has mostly remained an internal professional concern (Svensson, 2006, p. 582).

Hence, trust is replaced by accountability: this is deprofessionalisation in itself, as the new professional has to justify their action against benchmarks set by others. He claims this has engendered new forms of trust with the public. He notes that:

> Clients have traditionally had a subordinate relation to professionals and been subjected to expert authority frequently in combination with legal authority (Svensson, 2006, p. 581).

This is a confusion of client emancipation with client control and consumerism. But now, and as a result of, client control he states that:

> Professional competence tends to be less formally explicit and decontextualised, and instead more personal, implicit, individual and connected with the contexts of positions, tasks and actual performance (Svensson, 2006, p. 580).

This tendency to the contextualisation of professional competence is, in fact, the performance indicators set by others and more formally explicit. He sees clients having 'a rational choice' in the market (Svensson, 2006, p. 580). This assumption of rationality in the clients is not tested. The client who needed the professional's help is now in control. This assumes that the client knows what they want and that this is congruent with what the professional thinks they need.

On the other hand, Wallace and Hoyle (2005) dismiss managerialism, a response by management to meet the neo-liberalism agenda, by saying it is:

> A weapon of mass distraction…an unhelpful solution in search of a problem (Wallace and Hoyle, 2005, p. 10).

Biesta (2004) writes that the negative effects of accountability include the commercialisation of the school. The affect of this is that:

> Teachers and educational institutions…have to go along with the customer and meet the customer's needs. As a result it has become increasingly difficult for them to act according to their professional judgement if it runs counter to the apparent needs of the learner. Similarly, parents and students have been manoeuvred into a consumer position in which it is difficult them to rely upon and ultimately trust the professionalism of educators and educational institutions (Biesta, 2004, p. 249).

He also notes:

> The rise of a culture of performativity in education - a culture in which means become ends in themselves so that targets and indicators of quality become mistaken for quality itself (Biesta, 2008, pp. 4-5).

Gewirtz (2002) notes the constraining effect of targets. She states that:

> Teachers' work has always been constrained or controlled...but increased competitiveness, target setting and performance monitoring, and the narrowing definitions of performance...represent…a qualitatively different regime of constraint and control in school (Gewirtz, 2002, p. 71).

Rather than the improvement of the professionals work this has forced it down one particular route: to meet the targets. She says this has resulted in emotional consequences: 'manic grind and frenetic pace of work and to being squeezed dry' (Gewirtz, 2002, p. 75).

Biesta (2008) suggests that this culture is maintained through parental support. Initially, this might seem unlikely, but Biesta (2008) states one possible reason for this:

> Middle-class anxiety' and the effect of 'those in disadvantaged positions often tend to support the status quo in the (often mistaken) expectation that they will

> eventually also acquire the benefits currently available to those in more privileged positions (Biesta, 2008, p. 8).

Where does this leave other parents, for example, parents who are in the underclass? How are they positioned and compelled to act by middle class anxiety? Or do they support the status quo but for other reasons? Perhaps this is just a normal parental anxiety: to do the right thing for their children but that this decision is based on the information they are basing their judgements upon. A new focus is required to re-foreground the learners' needs. Biesta (2005) states that a reaction to this new thinking calls staff to:

> Respond to the needs of the learner…to redress the imbalances in which education has been mainly provider-led and inflexible the educational process… in economic terms…the business of the educator is to meet these [the learner's] needs (Biesta, 2005, p. 58).

To meet neo liberalism teacher professionalism has been diminished. Lawn (1996) notes it is:

> Now being redefined as a form of competent labour, flexible and multiskilled: it operates within a regulated curriculum and internal assessment system in a decentralised external school market (Lawn, 1996, p. 112).

In addition, Lawn (1996) states that, in managerialism:

> The version of the teacher that is being redesigned is individualistic not collective in orientation, differentiated not homogeneous, competent not responsible. From the employee's point of view, professionalism would be seen as an individual attribute, something the teacher has or will require (Lawn, 1996, p. 119).

In this construction the professional is no longer a trusted, autonomous person seeking to solve the problems of their clients; this professional is now a servant to their employer, with skills that can be defined as attributes. Perhaps the vigorously shaken cocktail has gone a little flat.

Reported reactions are interesting. Gewirtz (2002), in a study of two schools working under managerialism, notes that:

> Post-welfarist policies have altered significantly the conditions within which public-sector workers in general and teachers in particular operate, forcing them to respond in some way, whether by enthusiastic compliancy, reluctant implication, subversion, or outright resistance (Gewirtz, 2002, p. 7).

Gewirtz (2002) describes the reaction of those on the ground. Nixon *et al.* (1997) write, conceptually, at the professional level, that 'the new management of education requires a new professionalism' (Nixon *et al.*, 1997, p. 5). To this end they suggest emergent professionalism as 'an alternative paradigm:'

> Away from 'professionalism' as the ideology of service and specialist expertise: away from 'professionalism' where the status of the occupation is at stake; towards 'professionality' which focuses on the quality of practice in contexts that require radically altered relations of power and control…commitment to a learning profession through reworking the pluralist ideal and searching for integrative modes of agreement (Nixon et al, 1997, p. 12).

The quality of practice here is not about following a service agreement but is about agreement making. This has:

> Values…increased emphasis on agreement and difference and an increased commitment to defining integrative modes of agreement…between professionals and between professionals and their publics (Nixon et al, 1997, p. 6).

They describe 'postmodern' times and the need for professionals who can build trust with clients. These clients have changed with:

> The breakdown of cultural and class homogeneity…[with some upwardly mobile and others confined to] the underclass (Nixon *et al.,* 1997, pp. 11-12).

They see this new culture requiring a new type of professionalism. The authority of the professional cannot be assumed. This impacts on how the professional in education can show leadership in society. They state that the:

> Problem for teachers is that the construction of high expectations within an increasingly differentiated – and unequal – social order calls for a radically new version of authority…that is the teacher's dilemma: how to exercise civic

> leadership within a context where the assumption of civic responsibility has become at once so difficult and so urgent (Nixon *et al.*, 1997, p. 12).

Nixon *et al.* (1997, p. 16) note that the professionalism of the teacher focuses upon the complex practices of agreement making, such that collegiality, negotiation, co-ordination and partnership may be seen as emergent values informing the various fields of teacher professionalism. This leads towards 'communicative action' (Nixon *et al.,* 1997, p. 18).

Bottery (1998) writes about how the professional can work in the changing policy and management systems by being aware of the environment they work in and abiding by five ethics. He calls for professionals 'knowing themselves' and this is done by the:

> Ability to reflect upon and become better understanding of their practice and its implementation…[and] reflect upon the professionals' place and function in the institutional and societal terms, to understand the 'ecology' of the different professions (Bottery, 1998, p. 162).

The ecologically aware professional needs to be aware of different sorts of 'realizations' of the times: financial, cultural, and epistemological (Bottery, 1998, pp. 162-166). The financial realization is to be aware of the limits of funding (Bottery, 1998, p. 163) and different models of funding the welfare state: residual, affordable, and universal. He goes on to warn that:

> Professionals cannot afford to adopt strategies of avoidance in financial matters, or at best to be grudgingly involved (Bottery, 1998, p. 163).

The neo-liberal reforms are based on a business model where finance and wealth creation are central. The professional cannot afford to ignore this. This cultural realisation is a requirement of every professional:

Conclusions on the Accounts of Changing Contexts in Literature

The context for professionalism is in flux. Review of the literature reveals writers' perceptions of some ideological and cultural changes and their effects on professionalism. Authors have described the welfare state and the funding changes and political ideologies that have shaped how it works and the realities of working in it as a professional. Accounts are not value free and can be nostalgic. Discourses

now represent the client as active rather than passive. Neo-liberalism, and the responses in professionalism, is well documented in the literature. Here the professional was problematic as they were not wealth creators. The customer-provider model places the professional and the client in a difficult relationship. A raft of responses to neo-liberalism, in particular, is given in literature and these can be for or against neo-liberalism. Writers tend to focus on reactions to new-liberalism and there is comparative silence on alternatives to neo-liberalism.

5. Conclusion

In this review of literature I have shown that the question of definition of professionalism is a complex one. There is not, nor ever has been, a universally accepted definition of professionalism. Even the common language used to describe it is problematic as there is variation in different writers' definition of the same words. Writers are sometimes criticised for being emblematic and creating an *übermensch*. However, these emblematic constructions are useful for understanding professionalism in practice. They are used to reveal the implausibility of the emblematic professional. The tensions between theory and practice are evident in the literature. The complexity, range of definition, and value of professionalism is shown in the review of the literature on each of the elements of professionalism. There is little consensus on the definition or value of these elements. The changing contexts for professionalism are commented on in literature. Three particular areas have been considered here: welfarism, client emancipation, and neo-liberalism. The responses to neo-liberalism, as the preeminent ideology and model for government of society, show writers suggesting new ways for the professional to work. The muddle of definition and location of these theories within political and social ideologies is evidence in review of the literature. A search for definitive answers and ultimate clarity would raise questions of the plausibility of such ultimates in education but the realisation, statement, and foregrounding of this muddle and confusion is important.

Chapter 3

The Research Design

1. Introduction

This study focuses on professionalism in education. As I have already mentioned in chapter one, the overall aim is to contribute to the understanding of professionalism and the construction of the space for professional action while my particular questions are concerned with the definition and enactment of professionalism, the person and professionalism, and the space for professional action. My aim has not been to provide an explanation of how professionalism works, but to understand perceptions of professionalism and professional action and how practitioners perceive the construction of the 'space' in which they can enact their professionalism. My research, therefore, takes 'insider' or 'actor' perspectives, which locates it firmly within interpretative traditions of social research. In the second section of this chapter I provide a brief overview of interpretivism and discuss the particular choices I have made for shaping the design, methodology and methods of my research. I argue that interpretivism has been particularly important for my decisions around data-collection and data-analysis and will justify the particular decisions I have made. In the third section of the chapter I focus on the particular design that I have used for my research, which is case study design. I engage with the literature on case study in order to highlight specifics about the case study approach and how it differs from other approaches. I show why I have chosen case study and how this has influenced the overall design of the research. Within case study I then locate my decisions about data-collection and data-analysis and interpretation strategies. I also address some of the discussions of strengths and weaknesses of case study design, and pay particular attention to the vexed question of generalisability. I then provide a more detailed discussion of how the research was structured, particularly with regard to data-collection, and discuss how I have conducted data-analysis and interpretation. This raises bigger questions about the reliability of my procedures and the validity of my findings. I discuss this in a separate section in which I also briefly engage with the wider discussion about the applicability of notions of reliability and validity in interpretative research. In the final section of this chapter I discuss the ethical dimensions of my work.

2. Justification for Choices in this Study

The aims and objectives of this research are to contribute to the understanding of professionalism in education by understanding the perceptions of people who work in education. This has been done through the perspective of interpretivism. A requirement of this degree is to make a unique contribution to knowledge. The debates on knowledge are complex and contentious. These are part of the search for truth in the ability to interpret reality and are important in understanding where the researcher is coming from and the claims that they can make. Foregrounding assumptions of knowledge identify the theoretical perspective of the writer. Crotty (2003) states that theoretical assumption in methodology 'provides a context for the process involved and a basis for its logic and its criteria' (Crotty, 2003, p. 66). These affect the claims that can be made by the researcher. Dewey contests the search for truth. He wrote that 'outcomes of inquiry and research as 'warranted assertions' instead of truth' (as cited by Biesta, 2010, p. 16). The methodologies used to contribute to knowledge resonate with the historical searches for perspectives. Some of these have become established paradigms for research. However, it is important not just to outline a research paradigm. Biesta (2010) dismisses paradigm as 'an excuse for not having to engage in discussions about the assumptions that underpin research' (Biesta, 2010, p. 4). I resisted employing a paradigm and here I locate my work within, and explain my choice of, a theoretical perspective for this study.

Interpretivism: A Theoretical Perspective

I am interested in understanding people's perceptions of professionalism and how they perceive their space for professional action. This requires an interpretative approach as this *'looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world'* [italics original] (Crotty, 2003, p. 67). There is an important distinction between the 'understanding' and 'explaining' roles of research (Crotty, 2003, p. 67). Theorists, such as Dilthey (1833 – 1911), have suggested that the role of social science should be to understand, whilst natural science's focus is on explaining and causality (Crotty, 2003, p. 67). These roles are related to the aims of the research. Crotty notes:

> Our interest in the social world tends to focus exactly on those aspects that are unique, individual and qualitative, whereas our interest in the natural focuses on more abstract phenomena, that is, those exhibiting quantifiable, empirical regularities (Crotty, 2003, p. 68).

Interpretivism is about understanding rather than explaining. It is concerned with the individual and qualitative and, in this research, this focuses on the respondents' perceptions and opinions of professionalism in education. I do not want to explain their comments and establish causality for their views. Establishing causality is a part of the explaining tradition of research and not a significant part of the understanding aim of interpretivism (Crotty, 2003, p. 69). Silverman (1990) goes as far as saying that interpretivism 'rests on the emphatic denial that we can understand cultural phenomena in causal terms' (cited by Crotty, 2003, p. 69).

In the following paragraphs I show how case study and interview were used to further this approach and, highlight particular choices in their use, in this research. In addition I will also address the 'unscientific' dismissals of these methodologies and methods.

Case Study

I decided to use case study in this research. According to Simons (2009), 'case study is a study of the singular, the particular, the unique' (Simons, 2009, p. 3) and through this the researcher 'communicates enduring truths about the human condition' (Simons, 1996, as cited by Bassey, 1999, p. 24). My research is about researching the particular and specific in a social reality. Therefore, I have focused on one case rather than trying to represent an entire population. Bassey (1999) defines three types of case study: 'theory-seeking and theory-testing case study; story-telling and picture-drawing case study, and evaluative case study' (Bassey, 1999, p. 12). None of these types on their own adequately describes the use of case study I am making in this study: I do not seek to test theory but rather understand the perceptions of those in the case; although I want to describe the views in the case as accurately as possible I am not content with just drawing a picture or telling a story; and, my analysis of the perceptions will have an evaluative role but this is not my only aim. Case study is not without criticism. In an article advocating the use of case studies, Flyvbjerg (2006, p. 221) identifies five misunderstandings of the

case study. He then continues to address each point to rescue case study from the 'methodological trash heap' (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 220). Of specific interest in this study are his comments on the generalisation of case study data. He writes of the benefits of case study in research:

> It is important for the development of a nuanced view of reality, including the view that human behaviour cannot be meaningfully understood as simply the rule-governed acts found at the lowest levels of the learning process and in much theory (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 223).

In addition, he notes that, rather than objectivity and distancing the researcher from the subject, case study offers 'concrete experiences… via proximity to the studied reality and via feedback from those under study' (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 223). The generalisation of findings from the research is dismissed completely by some authors because of the unscientific basis of case study. Usher (1996, p. 10) notes the 'prized' generalisation of research from the explaining traditions and states that even this methodology is socially constructed and not 'made in heaven' (Usher, 1996, p. 14). However, Bassey (2008) suggests that case study can produce 'fuzzy generalization' … 'a qualified generalization, carrying the idea of possibility but no certainty' (Bassey, 2008, p. 44). Flyvbjerg (2006), using the example of all swans are white and the possibility of seeing a single black swan would be significant, says that:

> One can often generalize on the basis of a single case…formal generalization is overvalued as a source of scientific development, whereas the "force of example" is underestimated (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 228).

Flyvbjerg (2006) addresses the criticism of subjective bias, typically reported by those against the use of case study. This is rejection of distance and objectivity in preference to closer involvement with the case. He comments that this type of work challenges subjectivity:

> Researchers who have conducted intensive, in-depth case studies typically report that their preconceived views, assumptions, concepts, and hypotheses were wrong and that the case material has compelled them to revise their hypotheses on essential points (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 235).

There are a number of choices that have been made in defining the case. Selection of the case could be by random sampling. However, the process that best fitted the purposes of this research in this context was to choose a representative sample of the workers in the school. This is described as an 'information-oriented selection' (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 230).

The Thirteenth Respondent?

My role in this research is foregrounded. My presence changed this research. I brought interviewing skills from SPIN VIG counselling training and my experience in working with young people with SEBN and working in schools. I brought my belief in the limits of knowledge and the limits of knowing and understanding the perceptions of others also guided this research. However, I worked in the provision and knew, and was known, by each of the respondents. My place here and effect on the research cannot be discounted. As the 'thirteenth respondent' I designed and implemented the research: setting questions, selecting the case, interviewing, and analysing data. The margin for my subjectivity to influence this process was great. However, I tried to be impartial and to record and report each person's responses. I feel that any negative in this situation was outweighed by the access granted to me through mutual relationships, good will, and trust with the members of the case. An unknown, outsider would not have gained this level of access to those in the case. It was my aim for this process to be open.

Data Collection and Analysis

With the case defined I decided what data to collect and how to collect this data. Data collection in a case study according to Bassey (1999) might involve the use of questioning or observation. Observation is not useful in a research project that wishes to find the perspectives of those in this case. Therefore, questioning is adopted. Bassey qualifies questioning with 'listening intently to the answers' (Bassey, 1999, p. 81). Recorded interviews are used to allow this listening to happen and transcripts to be made. This is to allow the researcher to listen and read again and again to what was said. Interview is chosen as a method of generating data because of the possibilities of this method. Kvale (2007), in his book on using interview, begins with a definition of interview as an extension of conversation:

> In an interview conversation, the researcher asks about, and listens to, what people themselves tell about their lived world, about their dreams, fears and hopes, hears their views and opinions in their own words, and learns about their school and work situation, their family and social life. The research interview is an inter-view [sic] where knowledge is constructed in the inter-action [sic] between the interviewer and the interviewee (Kvale, 2007, p. 1).

A number of issues from Kvale should be emphasised. Firstly, the interaction between the researcher and subject is fluid. The researcher can react to what is being said and the interviewee can clarify questions. Secondly, Kvale views this as a natural conversation. He does not acknowledge the difference that being interviewed might make: the interviewee may want to reveal or conceal different aspects; their motivation for taking part is unknown. Perhaps they want to impress or frustrate the interviewer. In addition, the interviewee is not limited by writing ability. The fact that this generates data in the respondents' own words is very valuable. In this research a semi-structured interview is used: although I had an interview plan, this allowed me space to follow up on areas of interest raised by the respondents. Arksey and Knight (1999, p. 74) call this 'qualitative interviewing' and acknowledge that it can have 'unpredictable' results. In this study that unpredictability is a strength of the work.

Analysis

The respondents in this case have a perception of their world. I wanted to understand those perceptions; to find out what matters to them about professionalism and the space for professional action. The method of conveying these perceptions is through language and the interviews thus relied on the medium of language. This can be problematic as a common use of language thinly veneers different meanings. A coding approach to analysis would have recorded the common language but may have missed the variance of underlying meaning. Therefore, I adopted a more holistic approach to analysis: reading, forming an impression of meaning of what was said, and trying to capture this meaning. The themes and elements of themes and the typologies used to analyse the outcomes of this process show the complexity of what was said and helps to understand the meaning behind the common language. Flyvbjerg (2006) argues that it is easier to summarize rather than generalize in case study work. Through the introduction of

the analysis tools (themes and typologies) I intended to move from description to interpretation. These tools are further considered in section three. This then leads to questions of how to present the findings to others. The choice is, in many ways, dictated by the requirements of the degree as being, traditionally, a written dissertation.

3. The Design and Implementation of this Study

In this section I detail the choices that have been made in the design and implementation of this study. This includes the use and make up of the case study, the interview process from trial to the three full diets, and the analysis process from transcription, the make up of professional portraits, and finally to thematic and typological analysis.

The Case Study

The context for this case study is the place where I work. It was not selected as a typical context in education, in many ways it is atypical, but has allowed me direct access to real people working in education. An account of this context and the issues and tensions within it is given in chapter one. The perceptions of the people in this context are important, valid, and need careful study. These perceptions can be compared with those in other discourses. I decided to conduct a case study in this context by selecting a group of twelve people, who were working in this provision at that time. The twelve people selected in this context are the case for this study. I chose the case from the whole staff with reference to gender, experience, and role within the provision. The make up of the case included: one member of the administrative and ancillary staff (AD1); one non-teaching manager (MAN1); six support assistants (SA1 – 6); three teachers (T1 – 3); and a Training Advisor (TA1). Representation is not statistically balanced. It has been biased to ensure that all the roles and professional groups in the school are represented. All of the staff had full-time, permanent contracts and were experienced in working in this provision. This case included a range of professional groups, trajectories, and experiences, including teaching and non-teaching staff. I interviewed each member of the case on three occasions. This interview process is detailed below.

Interviews

I generated data from the case by using interview. The interview process began with the pilot interview in early 2008 and continued with three one-to-one interviews with each of the twelve members of the case between June 2008 and March 2009. This process is summarised in figure 3.1.

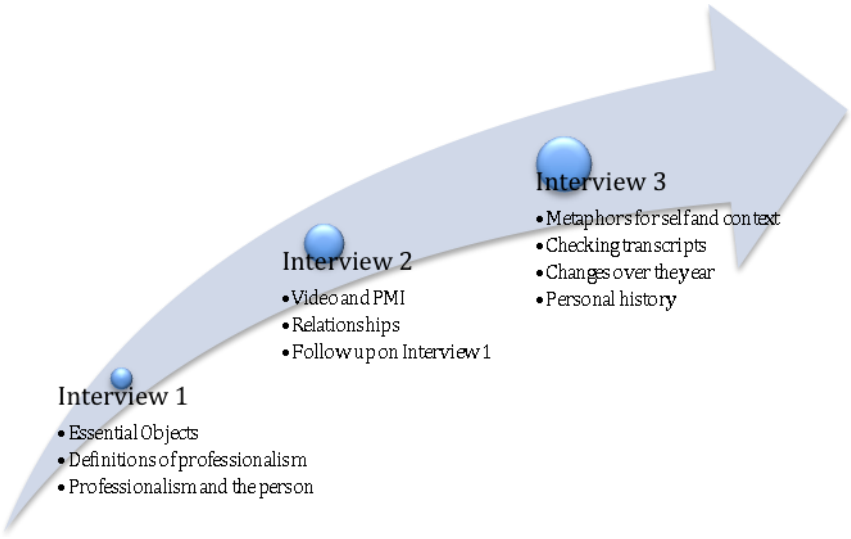

Figure 3.1 The Interview Process

Pilot phase.

The first of four phases to the interview process was the interview trial. Two members of staff (a teacher and a support assistant) agreed to take part in the trial interview in May 2008. An interview map was drawn up from issues of professionalism identified by Carr (2000), Freidson (1994), and Bottery (1998). This pilot process allowed me to test the interview questions, the use of the interview map, the equipment for recording and storing audio files, and to practice my interview and transcription techniques. Important lessons learned from this trial: the Likert scale, to ask the person to rate their own professional development, was not well received and was removed from the interviews. One of the trial interviewees felt that the use of abstract numbers was arbitrary. I also learned a great deal about the transcription process; issues of anonymity were raised by this process and addressed. For example, I decided to record names of students and other staff, used in the interview, with initials or, if they were members of the case, their code. This was to maintain anonymity but not affect the validity or analysis of the data. The interview process was adapted to accommodate these lessons.

Interview one (I).

The first diet of interviews took place in June 2008. The purpose of these interviews was to look at the person and their work; to hear each person's definition of professional, the importance of professionalism, and their perceptions of their own professional status; and to hear their perceptions on where they were at that time and where they were planning to go with their professionality. To try and get beyond the expected edu-speak answers I asked people to bring three objects to the interview that defined them or that they could not do without in their work. This was a focusing device (Lipthrott, 1994) for introducing novelty and spontaneity and produced a great variety of responses that generated discussion of their perceptions of what it was to be working in education. They were then asked about definition of professionalism. It was then interesting to compare the two responses: one on the practical level and one theoretical. Questions on professional development allowed me to chart who they thought was responsible for their development and where they were going.

Interview two (II).

The second diet of interviews took place between December 2008 and January 2009. This picked up on strands from each respondent's first interview. In addition, participants were asked to comment on a video of work carried out on an open day in this provision. It included a range of teachers and non-teachers who would be known to the respondents.[9] A Plus, Minus, Interesting (PMI) tool[10] was used to help guide the discussion on high-quality interventions: respondents had to identify positive and minus things in the video of others; in addition, they had to describe an activity they had worked in and describe what they did to make it a high-quality interaction. This was designed to have the respondent speak about actual practice and not describe an idealised situation. Again this was a focussing tool to avoid theoretical or right answers in place of actual situations. Relationship building, an important theme from the respondents in the first interview, was then explored. The respondents were asked to describe a good and bad relationship they

[9] This use of edited video came from my training in SPIN Video Interaction Guidance. Here positive clips would be shown to encourage self actualisation.
[10] The PMI tool comes from the Critical Skills Programme. Each of respondents had completed training through this programme and would be familiar with this tool.

had experienced in this provision. Finally, individual questions from the respondent's first interview were followed up.

Interview three (III).

I intended to have group interviews for the final interviews. This method was suggested by Arksey and Knight (1999) to:

> Observe the processes of consensus formation and the rules by which disagreement are played out (Arksey and Knight, 1999, p. 75).

However, this was not done due to the atmosphere of distrust in the provision following the suspension of the Headteacher. As emotions were running high, this had a major effect on the provision, those being interviewed, and me. This did give me the opportunity to hear perceptions from people at work in an uncertain context. The interviews took place in March and April 2009. All the respondents had been given copies of the transcripts of interviews one and two and a letter explaining the tasks and format for the third interview. Each person was asked to think of metaphors for themselves and the school. This was misunderstood by many of the respondents. In some cases adjectives and descriptions rather than metaphors were suggested. These are interesting in themselves. Innes (2002) wrote that metaphors could give the 'relation between the 'internal' world of the mind and the 'external' world' (Innes, 2002, p. 321). The previous transcripts were checked for accuracy by the respondent and any changes that the respondent wanted to make discussed. The production, reaction to, and withdrawal of the feedback from interview one were discussed. Finally, each person was asked about their personal histories: their reasons for working in this context; their work experience; their qualifications; and their own experience of school as children. The respondents were also asked about the perception of class. This question was flawed and the data collected ignored in this analysis.

Recording and Storage of Data

All interviews were recorded. This had clear benefits: the recording was instantaneous and did not rely on retrospective accounts; it freed me from detailed note taking (making the interview process more fluid); and the interview could be replayed as often as necessary. This gave space for me to listen carefully, without the pressure of note taking, and to ask subsequent questions to tease out the

concepts that the respondent was bringing. It provided a detailed record of what had been said and did not rely on the memory of the researcher. Recordings were kept on a password-protected hard disk to ensure that security and anonymity be maintained.

Analysis

Data collection and analysis have not been exclusive of each other. This process has not been linear. Analysis has been part of the research process and initial analysis from the first interviews has identified statements and issues that needed clarification. This has been fed into subsequent interviews. The process of analysis has used three tools: professional profiles, and thematic analysis and typologies. These are each considered below. The beginning of the analysis process was the transcription of the interviews. To make these I had to listen very carefully to what was being said. It was an intensive use of time but it gave me space to become a disciplined listener. This involved a process of replay, checking, and correction. The transcripts of the first and second interviews were shared with the respective respondents before the third interview and any issues or corrections discussed at the third interview.

Construction of professional profiles

The next stage of analysis was to read each person's transcriptions through the lens of the research questions. From this a professional portrait was written for each person. These are presented in chapter four. Stronach and MacLure (1997) wrote about the problems of producing portraits from interview data and how the author can shape the portrait for their own agendas (sometimes unintentionally). They noted that real people are complex and the researcher needs to be careful to avoid bringing closure but, remember that all accounts are 'contextual, defeasible, inconcludable and reflexive in the realities they invoke and address' (Ashmore, 1989, cited by Stronach and MacLure, 1997, p 56). The data collected in the interviews was complex and rich. Representing this in this dissertation has involved interpretive and editing decisions from me. I endeavoured to be true to the data and allow the respondents' voice to be heard. But my role in construction and editing of these quotes from the interview transcripts must be foregrounded.

Thematic analysis

Through careful reading of the transcripts I have identified themes and elements of themes in the respondents' interviews. This has been particularly useful in locating different definitions within a common language. By noting the language used and how that language was interpreted and the meaning behind it I was able to show how professionalism in education is constructed and how the themes and elements of themes in these constructions are differently defined and valued. My analysis of data is presented in chapters five and six: with a thematic analysis of the respondents' definitions and accounts of enactment of professionalism in chapter five; and a thematic analysis of the respondents' perceptions of the space for professional action in chapter six. In chapter six typologies are used to locate the perceptions of constraining and enabling effects within a spectrum of factors.

Typologies

Typologies are graphical representations of complex data. These have two axes at ninety degrees to each other each representing a concept with opposites of meanings at each end. The quadrants made by the juxtaposition of the axes allow for the data to be positioned in relation to both concepts at one time. Their use in this research came from the data. The complex and seemingly incongruent data on the respondent's perceptions of the space for professional action did not fall into simple patterns for analysis: a factor that was enabling for one person could be restrictive to another. Typologies offered a way of representing and making sense of this data and are given in chapter six. In chapter seven these are offered as a tool for professional development. This is not given as a tool for evaluation to position a person in a quadrant but for allowing the professionals to consider and come to an understanding of the space for professional action. The typologies are used in place of models. Models tend to be emblematic. The real-life respondents compare badly with them. This avoids judgemental comparison with the ideal and offers a refined view of the complex data.

4. Validity and Reliability

In this section I detail considerations of validity and reliability that have been made in this study. Reliability and validity are defined by Bassey (1999):

> …reliability is the extent to which a research fact or finding can be repeated, given the same circumstances, and validity is the extent to which a research factor or finding is what it is claimed to be (Bassey, 1999, p. 75).

Reliability, in particular, and, to some extent, validity are terms that traditionally fit more easily in quantitative research paradigms and are more problematic in interpretivist work. Interpretivism could be dismissed as of lesser value because of this lack of rigour. Morse *et al.* (2002), in their writings on validity and reliability in qualitative research, noted an increase of rigour in quantitative practices that was not repeated in qualitative methodologies: expressing 'a crisis of confidence from both inside and outside the field' (Morse *et al*., 2002, p. 14). This crisis deepens as the uncertainty of postmodernism is considered but not just for those involved in qualitative research. Gergen and Gergen (2003) write about the postmodern crisis of being unable to validly describe the world:

> Developments in poststructural semiotics, literary theory, and rhetorical theory all challenge the pivotal assumption that scientific accounts can accurately and objectively represent the world as it is…If there is no means of correctly matching word to world, then the warrant of scientific validity is lost, and researchers are left to question the role of methodology and criteria for evaluation (Gergen and Gergen, 2003, p. 577).

Gergen and Gergen's statement rebalances the weighting given to research types. Qualitative researchers had used this to question the role of quantitative research but 'there is no rationale by which qualitative researchers can claim that their methods are superior to quantitative ones' (Gergen and Gergen, 2003, p. 578). To counter this crisis they note the use of reflexivity: 'the investigator relinquishes the "God's-eye view" and reveals his or her work as historically, culturally, and personally situated' (Gergen and Gergen, 2003, p. 579). However, this does not solve the problem entirely as it assumed that the investigator can know where their work is situated. Gergen and Gergen (2003) caution that it would be 'intellectually irresponsible simply to return to business as usual – as if the validity critiques had never occurred' (Gergen and Gergen, 2003: 585). Bassey (1999) notes the problematics of trying to apply validity to case study. He suggests using Lincoln and Guba's '*trustworthiness'* (italics original) (as cited in Bassey, 1999, p. 75). He defines this as 'an ethic of truth in case study research' (Bassey, 1999, p. 75). Kvale

(2007, p. 122), in his book on interviewing, addresses the problems for qualitative research by interpreting language more traditionally:

> Reliability…[is] consistency and trustworthiness of the research findings…Validity…[is] the truth, the correctness, and the strength of a statement…whether a method investigates what it purports to investigate (Kvale, 2007, p. 122).

Kvale (2007) breaks validity and reliability down to 'the quality of the craftsmanship of the interview researcher, on the communication of interview findings and on their pragmatic effects' (Kvale, 2007, p. 123). To achieve validity and reliability he writes:

> Checking, questioning and theorising interview findings leads to knowledge claims that are so powerful and convincing…they carry the validation with them…in such cases research procedures would be transparent and the results evident, and the conclusions of a study intrinsically convincing as true, beautiful and good (Kvale, 2007, p. 124).

The notions that the outcomes are 'true, beautiful, and good' are value judgements. Yates (2004), in a study of methodologies, writes about three claims that have been made about good educational research. She says this should be technically good and contribute knowledge (Yates, 2004, pp. 16 – 17); it should make sense and be relevant to teachers (Yates, 2004, p. 20); and be scientifically based (Yates, 2004, p. 22). She notes that some see this scientific basis as 'lavishly analogous with medical research' (Yates, 2004, p. 23). However, scientific basis does not only mean using quantitative control models in research. There is little credibility in invalid or unreliable research. In the next part of this section I will consider how issues of validity and reliability have impacted on this research.

Reliability in this Research

Has this research been reliable? It was my intention that this research should be reliable. It was conducted with the aims of being consistent and trustworthy. Consideration was given to choosing methodology and methods and within this method research tools were used consistently (that is they were used with a conformity). Although constancy, absolutely unchanging, is not an aim of interview, within the freedom of this method steps were taken to maintain

reliability. Steps to ensure consistency included the fact that I conducted all the interviews myself following a predesigned interview map. This use of the map ensured that coverage of topics was consistent across the case and it afforded me freedom to investigate issues that came up. In addition, this removed the need for training and monitoring of quality of other researchers. I was experienced in interviewing and I had been trained in person-centred counselling and SPIN VIG: in both approaches I was coached in using interview as a helping skill. The aim of this was to allow people to speak freely and explore their perceptions and opinions. The interviews were to collect the perceptions of the respondents. I feel that this aim was realised. In addition, I produced all the transcripts and shared these with the respondents to check for agreement as to their accuracy and changes were made as appropriate. Openness was an aim of the research process throughout and every effort was made to be as open as possible. With these things in place I have tried to produce reliable research.

Validity in this Research

Setting aside Kvale's (2007) value-laden outcomes, I consider whether this research was well crafted and met Yates' (2004) requirements for good research. There is a logical strand from rationale, criticism of literature, to findings, and then conclusions. This strand and the processes involved in the project have been foregrounded and made transparent. Rather than hiding my subjectivity I have acknowledged it and challenged my assumptions. Methodology and methods have been investigated in literature, considered and planned, and used consistently. I have been able to answer my research questions and raise new questions with findings from my analysis of the data. This analysis has been based solely on the data and has then been compared with other discourses. Conclusions and findings have been based on analysis of the data collected. These have challenged my assumptions and added to contribution of knowledge on professionalism in education. One particular use for other professionals is in the application of typologies for the space for professional development. As a researcher within my own context I have to acknowledge that I am part of the context.

5. Ethical Considerations

In this section I will describe the ethical considerations in this research. The University of Stirling requires a basic statement of ethics for the degree of Doctor of Education and I have endeavoured to follow the ethical guidelines set by BERA (2004). However, ethical research is not guaranteed by following a code. Small (2001, p. 389) states that 'ethics guard against haste and insensitivity' but qualifies this with a warning not to 'surrender moral conscience to professional consensus' (Small, 2001, p. 391). He continues to say that ethical behaviour is 'everyone's responsibility' (Small, 2001, p. 405) but notes that ethics are about doing right rather than doing good (Small, 2001, pp. 395 – 396). This is an important distinction as 'doing good' and 'doing right' may not be the same thing. The first is an argument for quality work and guarding against poor-quality or flawed work; and the second is an argument about doing what needs to be done at that time. These discourses are not mutually exclusive. Biesta (2004, p. 242), after Bauman, notes a difference between moral behaviour and ethical behaviour. He views this difference as beyond merely following rules:

> Responsibility is what postmodern morality is all about… and …following rules, however, scrupulously does not and will never save us from responsibility (Biesta, 2004, p. 243).

Therefore there is a need for research to be responsible both ethically and morally. Research must aim to do right and good. In this work, and throughout my practice, I have tried to do what is right and what is good. I have carried out this work with responsibility to the respondents and others. For example, I have respected their rights to anonymity and their points of view. I want this work to enhance the understanding of professionalism in education and this should benefit all those involved in the educational process. However, it is not enough to ensure that the work is ethical. Human frailness, the value base of personal judgement, and the complexity of ethics make ensuring ethical goodness more difficult. For example, it might be possible, in good conscience, to contravene another person ethically. However, I have taken steps to try to ensure this research has been done to work for the good of education and those who operate in it. In the following section I consider some of the particular issues in this research.

Particular issues in this case

A number of issues related to ethics arose in this work: as an employee of the provision, with contractual duties and responsibilities that may have contradicted some research ethical codes (for example, child protection guidelines limiting my offer of confidentiality), I have acknowledged my dual roles, incorporating this into the informed consent process. A presentation on the aims and methods of the research was made during a whole-staff meeting and written, voluntary, informed consent had been sought, prior to any research beginning, from each person in the case. A letter was sent to each respondent detailing the purpose of the research, the intended outcomes, appropriate assurances of confidentiality and anonymity, and an explanation of how I intended to use the data collected. The right to withdraw at any point in the research process was stated and assured. During the interview process the limits of anonymity was a concern for some respondents. When feedback was circulated from interview one to all staff, after the second diet of interviews had taken place, some respondents realised that, despite the removal of names, they were able to identify others. The feedback sheet was withdrawn and this was discussed at the final interview. No one withdrew from the process and respondents said they were happy to continue with the assurance that feedback would not be made available across the school and trust any future use of the data by me. The interview process had been designed to minimise the bureaucratic burden on staff and run in conjunction with their daily work. I very much appreciate that respondents did make time in their schedules to take part in interviews and these were arranged as part of contracted development time and did not impinge on personal time. The people involved in this research were viewed as active participants and not subjects. They were treated with respect. The limits of confidentiality were upheld, discussed prior to the interviews, and restated during the process. Participation was voluntary, the process was open and visible, and the findings shared with participants. Opportunities were provided from the participants to comment on the process and findings of the research through feedback during or after the interviews and in response to the interim and final disseminations of findings.

6. Final Remarks

In this chapter I have given my reasons for using an interpretivist approach. This is the most appropriate theoretical perspective for understanding the perspectives of those who work in education. This choice of interpretivism affects choices in design and in methods. These choices and my reasons for making them are given. This includes the use of case study and interviewing. In addition, it has guided my use of analysis techniques towards understanding rather than explanation. Questions of the reliability and validity of this research and ethic and moral issues are considered.

In the next three chapters I present the data and analysis of data from this case. In chapter four I present the professional portraits I constructed using each person's own words from interview. In chapter five a thematic analysis of the respondents' constructions and definition of professionalism, enactments of professionalism, and personal experiences is given. In chapter six the respondents construction of the space for professional action are analysed using thematic analysis and typologies. Conclusions from this research and recommendations for professionalism are given in chapter seven.

Chapter 4

Professional Portraits

Introduction

The respondents revealed a complex set of definitions, practices, motivations, and histories in their interviews. In this chapter I recount this data using professional portraits. Professional portraits describe the views and comments of each person with little analysis from me. Each portrait is structured to introduce the person, their definition and enactment of professionalism, and their views of the space for professional action. Each concludes with my summary of what this says about professionalism and the space for professional action. The make-up and process of creating the professional portrait is discussed in chapter three. I do not suggest that these are definitive portraits of each person. These are snapshots, although hardly photographic, that are based on the comments of each respondent on a certain date, time, and place. The portraits allow the reader to see each respondent individually.

The Professional Portraits

AD1: The Well-Above-Average Professional in the Shit-Hole School[11]

AD1 The Person.

AD1 was a 47-year-old male who worked as Facilities Manager. His role was to look after the fabric of the building and ensure that it was a safe and comfortable environment for others to work in. He was the only interviewee who did not have any contractual remit for working directly with the children. He saw his life experience as a qualification:

> I have just got experience of life because where I came from Glasgow, I witnessed a wee bit of everything…I can come up and down to anybody's levels (III).[12]

[11] Respondents were asked for a metaphor for themselves and the school, although some people chose to use adjectives rather than metaphors, and these are used in the title of each portrait. This is the description or characterisation chosen by the person.

He also said 'I have been coached for life and I don't need anybody in here' (II). Indeed, he said: 'you have just got to laugh at things' (I) and said his best relationship was 'the rattle of my key going in the gate' (II). 'Education-wise' (III) he reports leaving school with seven Ordinary-Grade and three Higher-Grade[13] qualifications and then training to become an electrician. At the time of the third interview he was considering applying to university to complete his studies in electrical engineering.

His wife died some years ago and he became sole carer for his two children and has since become a grandfather. He saw this as his primary motive for working in the school: 'the hours …that is the only reason I work here because it suits me' (I). He distrusts systems and managers: he saw coaching and mentoring as 'a paper exercise…to paper over the cracks…to make the school look good' (II).

AD1 Professionalism articulated and enacted.

AD1 defined professionalism as:

> Getting on with what you are doing, doing it well, and keeping whatever it is to yourself and not going blabbering it about: 'this has happened.' You have got to be professional in what you hear and see…you have to honest with yourself and everyone else too (I).

He also said: 'different jobs have different modes of professionalism' (I). He does not claim professional status for himself, although wants to be, but claims to act as a professional. He noted that:

> You can be professional without having qualifications…but you have got to know your limits too, as anybody does (I).

He said:

> You have got to be professional and your targets have got to be set higher than what you actually do. Or you are just living an existence then…it

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[12] Quotations are linked to the first, second, or third interview by the roman numerals I, II, or III.

[13] Ordinary grades (also known as O-grades), replaced by Standard Grades in the late 1980s, and Higher Grade (also known as Highers) examinations are the qualifications used to measure attainment in 4th and 5th year of secondary education in Scotland.

doesn't matter what profession you are in, you have got to always grasp more knowledge and to me that has a lot to do with it (I).

Enacting this was:

> To be on time and merge into the background, basically, just do things that have to be done…I can't be in people's faces when things are done, you know what I mean. People think I sit about all day …but the things I do, they don't know they are there, they are not noticeable…things get done when nobody is about and you just have to merge in and keep an eye and see what is happening (I).

He would know if he was doing his job well because 'I have no complaints. People are no ringing me every ten minutes' (I). But this was not done in isolation:

> You have, obviously, to listen to staff members and if someone asks you to do crazy things then you have to decide: no, I don't do that, it is too much; if you can do it, then you can do it, but otherwise you say 'nah' (I).

On working with young people:

> For to work with the likes of Z or K you would have to work one-to-one to keep them busy all the time…but physical work… one-to-one …a workshop which interacts with their ABCs and everything altogether (II).

He says:

> You need to have a good laugh with the kids…I started by thinking he was a bad wee git and it is just you but when you get him away from here he is actually a nice wee boy in there. A nice wee boy but you have got to be with him, just him (II).

AD1 The Space for Professional Action.

AD1 saw himself as responsible for his development: 'it has got to be an inner thing. You have got to want to do it yourself' (I). He also identified conditions and restrictions:

> You have a standard of living and you just can't stop everything to move on …you have got to be secure financially…your job has to be secure

that you can pay the bills and you have to be financially set up to do what you want (I).

He also perceived restrictions in the management hierarchy:

> Nobody talks to you, as non-professionals because there is quite a lot of snobbery goes on in the council…they want to keep people in their own place…I would say it is top management…they don't like the likes of the 'lowerarchy' trying to muscle in on them…the council pecking order (I).

However, he thought:

> I don't think there are any limits to what anybody can do, so long as you have the willingness and determination to do it. The only person who can stop you doing it is you…people are in their wee safety zone. And that is what holds you back: 'Will I? Won't I do it?' And the time you think about it, years just pass on and away (I).

Relationships with other staff and recent experiences colour his description of the context as 'a shit-hole school' and was due to:

> The Headteacher, they have treated her terrible, the staff she thought she was friendly with have all stabbed her in the back. If that can happen to her it is going to happen to different teaching staff all the way along…they are all too busy looking after themselves (III).

He positions himself as a professional in this context as:

> Well above average … because I have got scruples … at least I know where I am a lot of people in here don't: jumping from fence to fence, the scruples are right out the window…that makes me better (III).

He said:

> There is a couple in here I can trust but the rest of them, nah…too many people who are want-to-bes in here and it is showing up very strongly now (III).

He said that there was an:

> Intimidation factor…it is divide and conquer tactics and they are going to keep that here. As I say, there are too many people who want to be in other

people's shoes and there is an awful lot of jealousy in here, right…I think they are scared of the unknown, they are very scared of the unknown and they see somebody getting moving up and they cannae cope with it…and then the knives come in…you can see it everyday (III).

AD1 Conclusion

AD1's definitions of professionalism are a case of pragmatism and traditionalism: he describes doing a 'good' job and being on time; he notes the requirements of keeping confidences and trust beyond merely following instructions; but sees a degree education as the marker for recognition as a professional. Therefore, in his definition, he could not be a professional but wanted to be professional. Although not part of his official remit, he wants to work with the young people individually to meet basic literacy needs and learn through physical, workshop-based activities. The data generated in AD1's interviews reveals his struggles with the social maelstrom and his place in the hierarchy. The positioning of himself in the lowerarchy reveals his perception of this hierarchy as a combative arena. He says he does not want public recognition but balances this with his desire to be heard and be given opportunities for development. His view of the space for professional action is coloured by his sense of injustice at the Headteacher's suspension. He is also keenly aware of the social and power hierarchies that he perceives others to be striving for unscrupulously. He does not see himself in this league for participation in these hierarchies. He recognises the role of his agency in his development: on one hand saying anyone can do anything, on another saying that he must look out for his family's interests. He saw his own self-limitation, inertia in his comfort zone, being a major obstacle to his development. Professionalism is the source of targets to move higher and a source of inertia.

MAN1: The Young-Person-Focused Professional in the Alternative School

MAN1 The Person.

MAN1 was a 40-year-old female who was Pupil Support Manager. She had responsibility for line management of the care staff and, working with young people, took sessions in Personal and Social Education and Vocational Education.

She had no key work commitment but managed others in this role. She had positive memories of her own schooling:

> I had quite a good relationship with some of the staff for the simple reason that my Mum worked there and they knew me personally (III).

She left school with six O-Grades and two Highers. She noted how her life experience has shaped her:

> I had my daughter quite young, I had my own show, I had my own business, and I split up with her Dad. And that was quite a turbulent relationship. I mean, it was really rocky when we split up. I think it was to prove something to myself, so I went to university to get a degree… I felt, maybe, a failure at that time, so I felt I wanted to succeed…[work] makes me feel valued (I).

She said, it was:

> Really important to me who I am working with, I get a lot of inspiration from them, I get a lot of support from them… it is that sense of belonging…you have to have that sense of belonging in your working environment (I).

> I like to resolve situations, I like to resolve conflicts, I don't like to take it home with me (II).

She described herself as: 'client-focussed, maybe, or young-person focussed (III) and said 'I am here to meet the needs of young people…that's my role in the school' (I) but notes that 'my degree is not related to my practice' (I).

This practice is now 'a more social-care-type frame of mind…I am more of that holistic kind of outlook' (I) although, initially, not by plan 'I think I fell into it through circumstances, financial circumstances' (III). She is now an assessor for the SVQs,[14] has completed counselling courses, and is working towards a qualification in Care and Management in Support Services.

MAN1 Professionalism articulated and enacted.

[14] SVQs are Scottish Vocational Qualifications. These are qualifications in vocational education and range from level 1 (basic skills) to level 5 (senior management skills).

Her definition of professional was:

> Doing my job properly…not letting my personal views impinge on my professional views…sticking within the guidelines for me and not necessarily my own judgement (I).

She went on to say:

> I think at times I am a human as well…I like to try my best…I think I am still professional enough to reflect and, maybe, make it better the next time (I).

She saw herself as:

> A person and I like to think that people do see the person *MAN1* nine times out of ten but professionally… if I had had a disagreement with a manager, I would just go with what they said eventually. But that would be me professionally saying 'okay, you are the manager, you are allowed to manage' … Personally, I might not agree with it (II).

However, it was difficult for her to define the extent of this:

> I would do it if it was part of my job description, professionally, I would say that 'aye, I would do that…[unless]…a manager was … breaching policies and procedures and practices' (II).

In addition, she spoke about:

> Different standards of professionalism…if I am working with the young people…I don't let professionalism slip, I don't think there is very much to the rules or the guidelines…I am maybe quite relaxed and things, but…in a meeting situation, I am a different type of professional…I am wearing different types of professional hats…and I might be viewed differently. I don't know stress myself out that you think I am being professional. As long as I know I am doing my job right…depends very much…on context (I).

MAN1 described 'an alternative school' not 'a traditional mainstream school' therefore 'people try alternative methods…and [be] creative' (III). It was important to her, and based on 'a wee bit of research,' that:

Magnets used to engage the kids…the practical activities, there has been something that has caught the kids interest…the fact that the kids are engaging… building relationships and engaging: you can see that there is obviously positive interaction there in every second …they thrive more in environments that are no necessarily within the classroom. The individual attention that they need is not happening in the classroom and they need magnets…In my experiences anything practical that I put in place for a kid I get a better…It seems to be quite individualised as well for each kid…the individual developing their own interests (II).

She describes how she would do this in different ways. Firstly, in organising a direct activity with the young person:

I would make it realistic for the young people…I would making the situation realistic… if it was a Maths lesson and we were weighing and measuring or whatever then I would take them to the supermarket…weighing the fruit…if it about communication skills I would get a kid to go around and take the lunches…and for us to pick the learning out in it (II).

Secondly, she describes how she would develop a course:

Speak to the young people, get feedback from the young people… collate that information…justify that to my [superior] (I).

MAN1 The Space for Professional Action.

Freedom to act was important to MAN1:

I do have a good deal of autonomy in my job. I do have quite a generic description … people do set down guidelines for me but then I have to add to fulfil that (I).

There are limits to this freedom:

Things chop and change, chop and change, chop and change, so sometimes…half way through to develop something and I am told, 'no, I cannae do that' because it is not going to fit…it can get quite frustrating at times but I think I have, kind of, mastered the art of checking…Am I going to cross over on anything (I).

Others are very important:

To do my job well, I would imagine I need support from my colleagues…there are times when I have felt like that, when you haven't been seeking the appropriate feedback and … not been doing my job well …cause there was no communication, so I would imagine that communication is probably the best thing (I).

However:

As long as I know I am doing it right because your judgement, and my judgement on what is professional, what you might think is professional, might not be what I think is professional…No, no, someone else can judge me thing-me, as long as I can judge myself, I am doing my job right (I).

And she did identify some restrictions:

It was, initially, safer to be keep confidential …morale low … feeling that their trust I think had been quite thingme-ed (II).

In addition she was:

Really limited in how flexible I can make it for them [other staff]…just spending some quality time with that member of staff…But I don't have any of that time now to interact…cause I still feel that they need to have ownership and responsibility (II).

Conflict was to be avoided:

Rather than have challenge and conflict with my colleague, we would just say, 'right, that's fine.' I would just respect where they are coming from and, kind of, continue what I was doing' (I).

Nourishing and developing was important and this also involved others:

I have quite an active inquisitive mind, so it is something that I would naturally do. I think, as well, even my colleagues…should all try and develop each other's practice (I).

She saw her role as creating the conditions to help others to do this:

I kind of do the training role for the staff or assessment for the staff and the HNCs etc. and I encourage them to do that, it is important for them to

have the theory behind their practice, especially for the SVQs for the social care staff (I).

MAN1 Conclusion.

This is a case of a mix of pragmatic and managerial professionalism: MAN1 wants to do her job well and to meet the needs of the young people but to follow the rules and regulations set down by others. Throughout the interviews a struggle between the delineation between her personal and professional life is recurrent. Interestingly, she sees professionalism as the abdication of personal responsibility and the greater importance of following procedures and respecting the chain of managerial command. She speaks about innovative practice that is based on research. This has to include 'magnets' to enthuse the young people and might well be outwith the traditional classroom. Her description of real-life learning is one of a one-off experience but does not link this to sustainable learning trajectories. However, this is to develop the individual's own interests. Her perceptions of the space for professional action featured 'autonomy' (I) but 'within guidelines set by others' (I). This juxtaposition of freedom and constriction is interesting. She acknowledges limits to her freedom and specifically cites the constant change involved in the work she does. This space has others involved: she checks with other staff; requires feedback and emotional support; and she sees communication as being vital. However, she does not mention working collaboratively. She recognised the need for nourishing and developing professionalism was important but saw her role as facilitating this for others rather than developing herself.

SA1: The Under-Used Professional in the Haven School

SA1 The Person.

SA1 was a 42-year-old male who worked as a Support Assistant. He was the key worker for three young people and, in addition, spent his week supporting in outdoor education, taking Forest School, garden project, and martial arts classes. He was also timetabled for corridor duty and interval supervision. He 'liked primary school didn't like high school, hated it…I didn't get much when I left' (III). From school he joined the clothing trade for twelve years rising from sales assistant to manager. He has also 'done lots of outside work, working on building sites' (III).

He has qualifications in holistic therapies including reiki and advanced remedial massage. He came to his present job due to family circumstances not as a career move, although, he said: 'I liked working with young people' (III). He has completed training since coming to this context: 'a HNC in Social Care…Forest School Leader level 3, Archery Instructor, …Trail Cycle Leader' (III) and a number non-certificated courses including working with young people with harmful sexual behaviour. He described a good day as:

> Productive…I might have done something with a young person…I might have stopped somebody going home (I)

And said he was not:

> The most pro-active person, I am a reactive person, if something happens I will deal with it, if I need to put something in place, I will just go and do it…and if it is wrong, I can go back and change it (I).

He described himself as:

> Under used…I don't think anybody's talents have been taken into account at all…you are just used as a gap filler… somebody decides what is going to happen and you've to go and do it and nothing is being taken into account of how you work and what you're best at…if I were used properly?…My self esteem would go up, productivity would go up, and you would think more about…outcomes, you would probably push yourself that wee bit extra to do things 'cause you enjoy it that much that you want to see a result (III).

He longed for the:

> Outside, being somewhere not remote but wooded…because it seems to…give the young people with me…don't feel so that they are being forced to do something or asked to do something…Ultimately, I suppose that is where I would like to be all the time (I).

SA1 Professionalism articulated and enacted.

SA1 gave the following definitions of professional

When they do their job well …things are under control, no matter what is happening, something goes wrong, and that kind of follow on thing… is going to happen (I).

A professional could be somebody who is really good at, like 'L' who is professional at her job, she does all the reports and typing up everything and keeping all the records together and everything. The files are all in the right place … I do not think I can do that (I).

He qualifies this in a future interview but also adds dimensions:

No, they cannot do everything well, not everything well…A professional makes a plan and then applies it. They know what they are doing before they actually do it…you are good at organising other people as well (II).

His assessment of himself is:

I am classed as a professional…but I don't look at myself as being a professional…I want to be professional but I don't know if I want to be: 'Oh SA1, he's a professional!'…I just want to go to my work…but I don't think my work is professional enough to be called a professional…in my mind, professional is a lawyer, social worker, teacher…and 'A,' outdoor ed instructor, he is a professional…taking activities…he has all these activities and he runs it well…but I don't know if I am a professional, and I don't know if I get treated as one' (I).

If he was to be a professional:

There would be expectations of what I should be doing, …how I should be doing it, and what should be the outcomes. But, unfortunately…all the support staff do all their things in a different way, I don't know if there is a commonality, thread going through it all (I).

Relationships are important with the young people and staff:

If they do not have the relationship then they are not interested at all (I).

When they [staff] are saying stuff you know, roughly, where they are…I do not have to verbalise it, or whatever, in front of young people (I).

Indicators of high-quality factors in his work included a:

> Level of engagement between the teacher and the pupil…quite relaxed and jovial…I kept looking at them and explaining but no berating them…Nobody was getting left out…not being out of their…comfort zone… it has to be something visual or kinaesthetic, something where they are using their hands. Seeing and doing… so it has to be a physical thing…You need to know them before you do the stuff with them (II).

You also need to be: 'somebody who can listen and… give some constructive feedback' (II). He described this working with a key child:

> He is a closed boy… key work time is done with sitting and talking about anything really… to try and build some sort of trust…where he thinks that I am some significant other (II).

SA1 The Space for Professional Action

SA1, although frustrated by some elements of the provision, called it a haven:

> From a kid's point of view…they actually come in and are getting something done about why they can't cope in school mainstream…they might want to talk just now about what is happening (III).

However:

> Staff wise, couldnae buy this job…from the point of view of working hours, holidays, and probably pay…the amount of training…And the haven thing as well in a negative way…it is quite a nice place to hide…because the thought of pushing themselves to do something else is, kind of, scary for them (III).

He spoke about his level of freedom and that there should be:

> I think 50-50, you know, 50-50 is an easy one, but having enough, at a certain level so that you can do without having to encroach on other people's time or whatever on a minor matter (I).

However, he felt that at the time of interview it was '75-25' (I). And identified another issue that limits him: 'we won't be able to breathe without doing

a risk assessment…there is no, I'll just decide that that is best' (I). There is confusion about the limits of freedom to act:

> We don't know where the line is. If I am dealing with my key kids and it comes to timetable changes and stuff like that, I feel I have the freedom to [act]…the only thing that kind of hold me back on the freedom side of it is the getting to the stage where you need to send somebody home (I).

He sees himself as responsible for his own development but wants support from management: 'the time back, or time back to implement it, time to implement it and study for it and to complete it' (I). He also requires directions from management:

> Give me a date, give me a time and I will work towards it. If you don't give me I'll just plod along. It is just the way I am, it is just the way I am wired up…it will stress me, I will have to go and get it organised, to get other people involved, I will go and ask people's opinions and get help or whatever (II).

SA1 Conclusion

SA1's definition of professionalism and his accounts of practice are incongruent. His definition has a number of facets: firstly, the traditional image of the degree-educated person of high social standing; secondly, a utopian definition where the professional is always in control or is successful by making plans and implementing them (particularly involving and using others); in addition, locating this in the practice of others, he also sees a professional doing a job well and completing definite tasks to a high quality. These definitions debar him from professional status: he does not have a degree; he cannot meet the unsustainable and unimpeachable standards; and, he perceives his own job does not operate on defined, common threads of practice. He also feels that he is not treated as a professional but wants to be professional in his work. However, his accounts of his own practice show his abilities, skills, and concerns for the young person in action. These suggest a high quality of work that uses skills to help the client. His definitions of the space for professional action reveal a number of strands: firstly, he wants to have space outside for himself and the young person to work; he sees the school as a safe haven for young people and staff; at the time of interviews he felt

he had too much freedom and was unsure where the lines of authority rested; in addition, he wanted direction from management in his professional development and nourishment. He describes himself as underused and he clearly feels restricted by the culture in school whilst at the same time wanting more direction.

SA2: The Outspoken Professional in the Safe-Haven School

SA2 The Person.

SA2 was a 44-year-old female who worked as a Support Worker. Her time in school was weighted to key time and she was key worker for four students. She led sessions on Personal and Social Education and had responsibilities for corridor duty and supervising young people during intervals. She noted that she brings 'my own values and beliefs from… my own parents and …empathy and unconditional positive regard' (I). She described herself:

> I am open-minded and I am outspoken as in I would go to whoever to speak about what I believe is right. I wouldnae let it fester away inside me…and sometimes I feel it is maybe no a good thing: I try to watch what I am saying sometimes (III).

She had positive, but not strong, memories of school. She listed her qualifications since leaving school:

> [I] qualified years ago as a hotel receptionist…and then I got halfway through my degree for my nursing but I never went back. And I chose to come here and then I done my SVQs, I did my HNC in Social Care, I did a year-and-a-half counselling course, I got COSCA 4 (III).

She noted:

> I think I would say I was qualified for this job, definitely…although recently…teaching rather than going out there to support the young person…are we getting under paid or are we or should we be more qualified? (III).

She had plans for the future to complete her degree in counselling. She stated that:

I always worked to bring up my kids and, three daughters…I wanted to be the mother that was there (I).

Her job satisfaction came from helping the young people and she said that 'I love my job it is the best job I have ever had' (III). She had worked in this provision for nine years and had the longest service of all those in the case.

SA2 Professionalism articulated and enacted.

SA2 defined professionalism as:

Just doing your job well…having all you guidelines and your boundaries, you are following procedures and policies (I).

On her own work she said:

I would like to think I do a professional job, that I am in a professional role…don't think it matters where you are on the ladder, as long as you are doing your job professionally (I).

She saw her job:

As supporting them [the young person] in education, in their family, in outside: employment, anything to do with social, anything at all to do with health…I can maybe go over the edge, and I think I need to step back here, you need to remember you are no the mother figure or sometimes the kid can rely on you solely to do everything for them (I).

She identified a number of high-quality indicators in work in the provision:

The kids that were participating were wanting to participate …they were interested in what they were shown…because it was practical things…they werenae getting challenged to do something they didnae want to do…and they were enjoying it…keen to learn about it (II).

And described staffs' professional attributes:

Talented at working…the staff are obviously trained and wanting to do that. They did a good service there (II).

In describing her own approach she noted the importance of relationship and the attitude of the staff:

Getting to know his needs… no being confrontational at all with him in any situations rather than work through what has happened…I don't think it is good work when you are seeing folk confronting them and challenging them (II).

She continued to describe how she brought about relationships:

Really getting good positive stuff about them, even getting the slightest wee thing and praising them and being positive…and then they are out in the car with you and they are then trusting you and you are on your own with them…Also having a relationship with their family…ninety-nine percent of the time you find that, no matter what is going on in a family, the kid always wants Mum and Dad no matter what is going on (II).

SA2 The Space for Professional Action.

SA2 noted that this provision is:

A safe haven for the kids…I think sometimes the kids can come here and it is the only sense of belonging that they have when they are in this place. And they feel self worth. A lot of them donnae get that in their home environment and it is a place where they can come and relax and get fed even…but again I know that there is sometimes where kids, maybe, don't feel safe, because there are other issues of bullying and things that are going on with the school (III).

However, this place of haven for the young people was not always a good place for the staff. The place of personal reflection and feedback from other staff was noted:

We can get recognition from other colleagues and from your management, but I think in here, more often than not, you don't get that…So, it is really down to how I see myself (I)

And this was sometimes coloured by events:

Yesterday, I did not have a good day in here and you go home at night and you question yourself and speak to your family or whatever (I).

Support from seniors is important and can colour how work is done:

> When I first came back to this job…the Headteacher did absolutely everything. You did not have any responsibility to go and use your own initiative or to do anything…When the new Headteacher came on board… I feel I have so much leeway that I feel I am practically able to make decisions…some things I run through with [Headteacher] …I feel that the management absolutely trust me to go and do my own job, which I feel is a really good asset from management…they trust me to do that, and I feel comfortable arranging things myself (I).

Contrastingly, when working with another part of the provision she noted:

> They run it a completely different way of running it… you are down at the bottom and you do not do anything unless you are told to do it …you were never allowed to use your own judgement or make any decisions at all (I).

She also noted the negatives of different professions working together:

> We done coaching and mentoring at [another local school] …and the people who delivered it said, a lot of you are support workers…and see how different teachers teach…And he [a teacher] just, then and there, said I am telling you right now there is no way I have gone to university to get my degree for a support worker to come in and tell me how to do my job…I think there will be so many people who feel like that, probably more so than none (I).

She stated that 'I don't know who I can trust. I don't know anybody I can go to and trust at the moment' (III). She saw herself and her line manager being responsible for her professional development although notes that 'sometimes it is good if other team members can go together as a group' (I).

SA2 Conclusion

SA2's definition of professionalism does not include the status of being a professional. She views this as an old-fashioned view that has no place today. She does wish to be professional in her job and this means doing a good job. She notes this is within 'guidelines and boundaries' but these are not restrictive or prescriptive and allow her to be safe rather than dictating her actions. She saw herself as a mother figure in the young person's life although saw limits to this role. In accounts of being professional she emphasised the relationship and trust building

that needed to be done with the young person and the importance to get to know the needs of the young person and to address these without being confrontational. Her view of the space for professional action had different facets: she described a place where a young person's basic needs could be met; she spoke about the place of personal reflection; and the different types of support from senior management and management styles. She also spoke about the importance of staff supporting each other.

SA3: The Cog-in-the-Wheel Professional in the Ship School

SA3 The Person.

SA3 was a 46-year-old female who worked as a Support Assistant. She was key worker for two students, took one-to-one outreach sessions, and was timetabled to teach History. She was also responsible for administering the positive behaviour rewards system. She had good memories of school and left with seven O-grades and four Highers. Since leaving school she had completed two HNCs: one in administration and another in social care. She was working towards:

> An OU degree Childhood and Youth Studies. If I get that completed I am planning to do a year PG training for teaching, primary teaching (I).

However, she thought that qualifications were only part of what it takes:

> I know you need a certain degree of qualifications, but I don't think they are as important as your life experience…I think I had led quite a sheltered life when you see some of the kids here (III).

She described her journey to here:

> I kind of fell into it accidentally when I started working in the office just on supply…but then I really took a notion of wanting to work with the kids just to try and help them (III).

She brought two essential objects to the first interview. One was her relationship with her key kids and the other was an offer of employment following her recent interview:

It was good to be able to draw on that knowledge and be able to answer the questions confidently and to feel that they know what I am doing, sometimes (I).

She described herself as:

Just a cog in the wheel… we really just sort of fit in, we all help the place tick over and do our bit to keep it running smoothly…Sometimes [indicating different directions] one cog goes that way and one cog goes that way (III).

SA3 Professionalism articulated and enacted.

SA3 defined professionalism:

Doing the job as it should be done, with the right attitude … treating people as they deserve to be treated, with the respect they deserve (I).

Her definition went further:

The first thing that the word professional means to me is like a teacher or someone in an actual profession. What I have is just a job. I like to be professional in the job but I don't think that I am a professional (I).

The professional was:

Someone who has been to uni and has trained to do that job: lawyer, doctor, teacher, whatever. I suppose that is what I would think of as 'a professional' (I).

She said:

I don't consider myself professional…I probably would want to be but I consider myself just as a support worker…I do my best (I).

She spoke about her key work:

I don't know how much difference I am making to their lives but just having that good relationship with the kids, it is maybe something they do not have somewhere else (I).

I think to do it well, is… try and do what they need whether is conflicts with your personal, your personality, with what you want to do or whatever, you have to keep the kids and their interests in the foreground (I).

She knew she was successful because:

If you do something to help a child and it works in some way and then they come back for more help. That, it tells you that they trust you and that you have maybe helped them (I).

She said:

I think, it was mainly, the fact that I do kind of know what I am doing, most of the time, I do not know everything and having a bit of confidence behind you (I).

In addition she spoke about collaborative work:

Sometimes we make the policies as a group…then put it out to everyone to have a look at and to agree or disagree, add things if they wanted, take things out…it was good that we got to design it because it is us that does the keytime…Somebody from higher up, if they designed it, they might not take into account the things that happen in keytime (I).

High-quality work was:

Hands on, sort of showing kids what to do…no just telling them how to do it but showing them and keeping them right…the verbal, chit chat back and forward between the staff and the kids was quite relaxed and quite friendly (II).

And she described a course she was designing for history classes:

You have the ten-week's slot…doing work on a time line in Scottish history…a wee bit of research about that and then an activity related to that person or whatever it is they are researching…a visit to an historical place: a castle…put that perspective into it…giving them a bit of ownership over it…an end goal that you are going to do this…working on things as you go, as a group, maybe a bit of peer pressure keeping the children going (II).

SA3 The Space for Professional Action.

The context was seen as:

> A ship…we got caught up in stormy water lost the direction a wee bit and are needing somebody to steer us in the right direction to get back into the nice, calm waters (III).

Freedom to act was seen as important but not unlimited:

> I think there is a balance, you have a certain amount of freedom to do what you feel is needed at the time…keeping within boundaries and rules, the procedures that the school follows, as long as you are working among them you have a certain amount of leeway to interpret them yourself (I).

She was responsible for her own development: 'the attitude has got to come from [you] in the first place' (I). Relationships with other staff was a condition of development:

> The respect of your colleagues and the acknowledgement that you are doing a good job, that you are valued as a worker…being supportive…Just kind of looking out for you, if you are in a bit of trouble, then seeing if they can help anyway, giving you advice how to deal with any situation that you're struggling with. Caring, I think (I).

SA3 Conclusion.

SA3's definition of a professional is traditional: a university educated and trained person. This debars her from holding professional status but she still wishes to act professionally. This is defined as doing a good job, having the right attitude and showing respect to others, and 'foregrounding' the needs of the young people. In addition, she sees life experience as more important than, although not exclusive to, qualification. However, she dismisses the importance of her role in this work as doing 'just a job' (I). Her accounts of professionalism in action are to ensure that the young people are involved. Her view of the space for professional action has a number of facets: she is the only respondent to report a positive example of collaborative working with colleagues; she wants freedom to act but this is to be a balance of being free to act and being supported; in addition, she wants a supportive management team that are 'looking out for you' (I) and are 'caring' (II).

SA4: The Reliable, Consistent Professional in the Essential School

SA4 The Person

SA4 was a 33-year-old male who worked as a support worker in the school. His timetable was to lead outdoor education sessions and he had no key work commitment. He described himself as:

> Reliable, consistent…I turn up, every day I am here generally on time…And I can say I am definitely consistent in my approach: the young people know the boundaries (III).

He also stated: 'I am too much of a process person: I have OCD on time keeping and stuff' (III). He said:

> 'School for me, really, was a let down…I couldn't cope with school; whether or not I have issues I don't know. I never was suspended, I turned up but I just never got very far with qualifications. I left school as soon as I could and went…and done a sports course (III).

He also related his early experience of working with teachers:

> The outdoor education teachers…suddenly became specialist teachers… they got an enhanced wage…I was the first full-time outdoor education instructor in [the region]…I wasn't a teacher but trained to do exactly the same things (III).

His qualifications, post school, were all related to his work:

> I am a senior diving instructor… senior wind surfing instructor …advanced power boating instructor…tour cycle leader… level three kayak coach, level two canoeing coach…SPA trained at climbing…ski leader' (III).

He said that:

> I don't think, qualification wise…I don't need to do much, much more. I am fairly well qualified and fairly highly qualified for what I do here now (I).

He said he worked in this provision because:

> I quite enjoy what I do in here, quite enjoy the freedom…making up my own programme just getting out there and working with the young people. It

is not like working in a factory. We are dealing with the same kids but we are not just processing kids everyday. There is relationship building (III).

SA4 Professionalism articulated and enacted.

Professionalism means coming in and doing my job to the best of my ability…within the guidelines and parameters that are set by me by the council…to keep the standard you would expect (I).

I think I am a professional because…the standards and qualifications I have…I have been given a job working with vulnerable young people…to bring their behaviour up (I).

If I wasn't being professional then I wouldn't care. If they wanted to drop litter 'go for it' and I wouldn't challenge them about it. And challenging young people is good for them and good for us to let them know what is right and what isn't (I).

I think it is coming away at the end of the day and thinking I was right in challenging the young person and having an argument is was worth having an argument about…You go away feeling maybe I have done some good (I).

He said:

I have always seen myself as being professional…private sector or for local authorities… from both industries and both sectors you needed a lot of professionalism to be there: the private sector because you are dealing with paying members of the public and in here…members of the public that are needing your help and your services (I).

He knew he was successful:

When the young people keep coming back and saying 'that was brilliant, what are we doing next week, can we do this again, can we go and do that again?…[because] outdoor activities isn't everybody's cup of tea…some folk don't want to do it. But if they come out and give it a shot for one week…then I will be happy (I).

He gave others the responsibility for young people who would not work with him:

That decision is out of my hands, at the end of the day…But if it is a case of 'I just don't want to do it,' I can only feed that back to the people who make these decisions (I).

He describes how he works to ensure high-quality:

I have to communicate well …kind of build the trust level there because you need the trust for some of the activities…using SMART targets…so they do not fail (I).

This could include:

Anything within the remit of what my qualifications deem me to do… I keep everything flexible…To give them options, to try to get them to take ownership of it (I).

It is all tailored around their ability and their needs and what they are capable of doing…just about meeting individual needs and I think that is what makes it much more quality as opposed to a bit of stand up lesson and 'that is what you are going to go and do'…they are actually doing it and it is not me (II).

SA4 The Space for Professional Action.

He described the school as:

A necessity, essential we need something like this…to put the young people that are not going into mainstream school (III).

Within this place he says that freedom to act:

Is vital…I have the range of tools there. So I can go away and swap round and go and do it. And if that was taken away, it would be 'we are biking that is it!' And I can't change that. I think we would be stuck and make my life harder (I)

In addition:

I need equipment, I need young people, and I need supportive staff…that are keen to come out and give it a shot (I).

An example of this was SA5:

> We know each other, we work really well together because we are fairly consistent in our approach and what our aims are for the day. We know what we are out to do and what we have to achieve…Trust, respect and just having a good laugh and trying to make it as fun as we can really for the young people (II).

SA4 said his line manager was responsible for his professional development. Supervision was seen as an important part of his work and development and he described it as:

> A standard operational procedure…it is very open… we go through everything and have a look at what we need to look at and what we need to get on with (I).

He also required to be trusted:

> I know this is where I find hard: I am not one that does my job in the school, I am out there doing my job and they need to trust me (I).

He said:

> I need open, honest communication…I suppose it is just a nice friendly atmosphere as well. I think that makes a huge, huge difference' (I).

Inconsistency was identified in other people's action and this was:

> Confusing and frustrating…because there is not a consistent approach, it is not the same answer all the time…I thought it was a simple answer, you just follow a set process that we went through, there is obviously not that (II).

He also says:

> Although we are professional it works from the top down. Sometimes from the top down they make *faux pass* and they aren't professional in how they are dealing with things (III).

SA4 Conclusion.

This is a case of the pragmatic professional and one of the most technical: he is skilled and trained; he works consistently and reliably; he follows the parameters set by the council; he uses his skills to maintain the standards required by his employers who have entrusted him with vulnerable young people. His work is an

industry. He describes elements of setting SMART targets, building relationships, and building activities around the skill level of the young person. His view of the space for professional action has a strong role afforded to management. He is the only person to hand all responsibility to management for his professional development and he also defers to management if anyone is unwilling to engage with him. He requires a support staff (who are willing to do his activities and support him) and needs honest, open communication. In his perception, inconsistency of others limits his ability to work effectively.

SA5: The Reliable Professional in the Essential School

SA5 The Person.

SA5 was a 42-year-old male who worked as a support assistant. He was key worker for one young person and also led groups for fishing and supports sessions on construction, personal and social education, and outdoor education. He participated in an after-school martial arts group. His own experience of school was affected by his mother's illness:

> I was with my Dad everyday, as the oldest son, I went to see my Mum because I wanted to be there. As a factor of that my education suffered and I left with two o-levels (III).

He has held various jobs since including working as a police officer. Since leaving school he said:

> I am always learning. I have just completed my HNC course, I have my four SVQs to do, so that is a big achievement for myself…I feel as if I will always be going to learn. You are always learning, you are never too old to learn (I).

He worked here:

> Because I want to help young kids…[in the police] I felt that when I done my job it was too late for some of the kids and I wanted to help them before they got to that stage (III).

He sees himself as:

Reliable…I attend my work and if I am given a project…I do the paperwork, look at the relevant stuff, I am organised in doing that…I give it 100% (III).

SA5 Professionalism articulated and enacted.

He defined professionalism as 'doing you job correct, to the best of your ability' (I) and is unsure of his status:

I believe myself to be, professional I don't know, in my job I try to do my job to the best of my ability…I don't know what distinguishes something from being a professional career and no professional career…I want to work in a professional basis with these youngsters…If I wasn't professional then I am definitely striving to be one (I).

He qualified this by saying:

To call yourself professional, to do a job, lots of people know that you are, it is not just a nine-to-five job, it is not just going in like anybody who works in a factory…It is young kids' livelihoods that we are dealing with here (I).

It was also important:

To come in with the right attitude every morning and…be aware of what you are undertaking…to want to come in here and work with kids…you need to have that caring bit in you to work in this role (I).

He noted his professional status:

I'm no a teacher…but I do believe we all actively play a part in teaching these kids basic social skills…it is all learning, you do not need to be sitting in a classroom to learn (II).

To provide a good experience for the young people he felt you have to:

Have a good basic knowledge of what you are trying to teach them, I think that will come across to the kids…makes the kids feel uncomfortable and disengaged with the activity altogether [if you do not] (I).

He said it is:

Very important to be a good listener…being able to communicate with people…I don't want to be just a facilitator. I want to be an active support…I want to identify the kid's needs (I).

He described how he engages with the young people and deals with disengagement:

If I have one kid in the group who does not want to take part and I have five others…or three who are dying to take part and two who are not so keen in engaging in it, and I have one that doesnae. Then I will look at the majority of the group…I try to explain to the kids on the activity… this is what we will be doing. So they have an idea what they will be doing. There will not be shocks, surprises, or whatever (I).

But if I seen any kids or kid no taking part then I would try to identify why…and it might be structuring the activity different for them (II).

He also stated to ensure high-quality interaction:

I have to plan in advance and be organised…make sure the venue is there, identify my group, see if they are getting on as a group okay…you are doing your best to get these kids prepared for the outside world (II).

SA5 The Space for Professional Action.

He said:

The school is essential …because it is a facility that provides an individual education plan for young kids who aren't attending mainstream school…kids who suffer from SEBN or ADHD or whatever, this school is an essential part of their education plan (III).

He notes the importance of other staff, not himself, in his work and development:

You have got to have good management staff, you have got to have good colleagues round about you that you can go to… you know, I could see them and learn off them…like just now I need to identify this course or I think that this would benefit me…I would go to my supervisors (I).

Later he said:

I feel as if I am building confidence in the job and…am quite comfortable in my role but it is good to know there is always support there because there always comes situations where you will need a bit of advice (II).

The team was seen as important:

In dealing with damaged children…We are just in the firing line like everyone else…I think if there is a team working and a happy atmosphere at work. Then that can help you (I).

Freedom was important but had to be balanced with planning:

There is a good balance here, but I think at times, right, we have got set procedures and policies, that are agreed for the children we are working with…you know you have that bit of liberty…We have the lesson plans… but if I know I have a basic thing to do, but if I have that wee bit of freedom, aye if I have that wee bit of freedom, it allows me to be flexible (I).

He also noted the importance of training:

I think also you have to be able to have the training that is required to do your job right. The courses have got to be made available for you for to enhance the skills you have already got (I).

SA5 Conclusion.

This is another case of pragmatic professionalism: doing a good job and working to the best of your ability; completing paperwork; and having good basic knowledge of the subject in hand. He is unclear about his own professional status but is striving to be professional. His distinction between an active supporter and a facilitator is interesting: he sees attitude and willingness to work with the damaged young person as important and wants to make a difference before the law-enforcement systems are involved. His view of the space for professional action focuses on the provision as an essential place where the young person can have an individual education plan. This is something that was not done for him when at school. He gives much emphasis to the others he works with. Management are responsible for providing him with training but he needs a happy team atmosphere and support and advice from colleagues. Freedom to act is important: he must be

allowed to vary the plans made to suit the young person although this should be done within clear policies and procedures.

SA6: The Never-Say-No Professional in the Fighting-for-Survival School

SA6 The Person.

SA6 was a 42-year-old female who worked as a Support Assistant. She was key worker for three young people and took one-to-one outreach sessions. She also supports around the provision and in classes. At school, her dyslexia was undiagnosed and she did not attend. This changed who she was:

> Never wanting to put the hand up because of the problems I had from primary one with my reading, writing and understanding level… It still does come into your psyche a wee bit (II).

She described herself as:

> Never says no…I sometimes struggle with saying… and speaking up for myself and saying 'no, that's not okay'…I think it is… just trying to please people (III).

She left school with no qualifications and completed an apprenticeship in hairdressing. She had now started her SVQ in social care.

However, this disability was a strength when working with students as she could say:

> Listen, I struggle, I will try and do it together…I don't know exactly how you are feeling but I know how I felt, I can see you are struggling, we can try it together, and if two of us get stuck on certain things then I will go and find out the information and I will come back and we can talk about it again (I).

She said:

> I am quite passionate about that and try to give a bit back, I think, because of my dysfunctional, you know, upbringing and when I was young… I am no a highly ambitious person, right, to be honest with you. And for me, getting through my day well…that is the goal for me (I).

On being approached for her advice: 'I would probably collapse with shock and surprise, but… of course, I would do my best' (II). A major concern is 'being listened to. Being heard. And try not to be afraid to speak up' (I).

SA6 Professionalism articulated and enacted.

Professionalism was defined in terms of values:

> It's about my own values, I must say as well, and, obviously, the school has its certain codes of practice…as in a certain way you speak to the young people, speak to your staff colleagues, what you are trying to, kind of, relate to. I can only go with my own moral values (I).

She further defined professional action:

> I definitely want to set an example…not coming into your work late, or taking time off all the time…you either have the work ethic or you have not, and I have (I).

Her own position on the worth of professionalism:

> I think it is for myself as a person and it comes down to me…the respect I have got for myself now and how I want…others to see me. It is more for how I am and how I see myself. If I don't have 'professional' and everything that comes with that then, I don't know, it is pointless for me being in this type of job, it is really important…I think, for me there are no mistakes; it is just learning curves. Being able to make mistakes is important (I).

She described important things in her own practice:

> I think, it is first about safety…young people who get into bullying … make sure they are okay…they are not harming themselves or anybody else…That there is respect as well…For me to challenge the young people, is … why I am wanting to be here (I).

She said 'the building of relationships…is no judging the young people' (I) was more important than academic targets: 'I would prefer if that was also done…if there is an issue, if I can be supportive with that' (I).

Her accounts of good practice were from her hairdressing:

It allows me to be confident in what I'm doing, and think about different ways. I mean hairdressing…would be three years, when you are a junior you are a 'go-for' and you are the washer upper and sweeping up and the tea…and I cannae do that…putting rollers in and, being …maybe staff for them to blow dry…if I go at the pace of real life then they would get bored…so I can bring it down (II).

SA6 The Space for Professional Action.

SA6 described the school as 'fighting for survival…the now it is just fighting for positions' (III). She said:

I don't think I get a lot of pats on the back from my superiors…I just mean I don't really get a lot of feedback…It will be through the young people, and I feel how they respond to me, act towards me (I).

And needed to be free to work:

It is important that I am allowed to just be myself with a young person and not be restricted…I would not like somebody over my shoulder twenty-four seven, you know, and constantly checking, checking (I).

Although she had already stated her position on reporting to her superiors:

For me it has always been check in, check in, check in and I feel that if I didn't it would be either: they would presume I was skiving; and that is not who I am…I am just making them aware of the thing that I am doing (I).

She saw herself as the one responsible for her development but is concerned about her place and treatment:

I think to be listened, someone to listen to you, to be heard…it can be horrific sometimes, and it's no being heard, being spoken to in a way… there are so many bosses now. You know, it's hard, it's hard now, who is it going to hear me?' (II).

She recounted a bad experience of speaking out:

I asked for the confidentiality be kept in that triad and I was assured it would be. But it wasn't and I was disappointed in that. And it went back to

my big boss and she spoke to me…so who do I trust then. I find it hard sometimes to trust my own, kind of, bosses (II).

SA6 Conclusion

This is a case where professionalism is defined by her own values and used as a source of respect for herself. However, this is also pragmatic: good practice is defined as being on time and not taking time off. From accounts of practice she speaks about protecting the young person and dealing with emotional issues before trying to complete academic work. She feels most comfortable when working her own skill area rather than completing tasks set by others. Her views of the space for professional action include a number of factors: the freedom to work is clouded by her discomfort with supervision that is too close, or thinking that she is not doing what she should be when out of sight; she is concerned by her treatment by others, including managers, in not being heard or being shouted down; she sees herself as responsible for her own development. Emotional safety is a common feature of her wish for space for professional action and something that she offers to the young people.

T1: The Unsettled Professional in the Chaotic School

T1 The Person.

T1 was a 41-year-old female who was a principal teacher in the school. She taught Physical Education and was responsible for the management of the base and Personal and Social Education. Since the interviews she has left the school and now runs a support base in a mainstream school. Of her own experience of school, she said:

> I was not particularly academic but I took part in just about every club or sport that was on going…academically wise, I would say that bits of it were struggles for me: very good at things that you could work out: Maths, Physics, Chemistry, things you could work out; not so good at imagination, words, literacy I struggled with. It then goes through all of your other subjects and goes through the rest of your life…when I left school I had nine o-grades and five Highers (III).

Since leaving school she has gained a B Ed honours degree in PE and a diploma in additional learning needs. She said she worked in this provision because:

> I enjoy working with challenging children and I quite like the challenge of trying to help young people try to turn their lives around. I like the fact that every day is different and in this environment, you know, we get the opportunity to work much more closely with individuals it is not just about teaching your subject (III).

She had worked in mainstream and special secondary. She was reflective and concerned that someone else might find a problem she had missed:

> I think I really seriously evaluate everything that I do, pretty, pretty heavily, and I think I am critical of myself, much more than anyone else, so if there was something that hadn't been noticed…I think I would be extremely stressed (I).

She brought a balance of positive and negative items to the first interview. When asked about this she said 'I think it is too easy in here to be negative. I think it is really important to accentuate the positives' (II).

T1 Professionalism articulated and enacted

She defined professionalism:

> I am thinking teacher, teacher contract, teacher expectations. I am thinking legal things in terms of teaching and teaching practice and school-based educationy [sic] things…meeting your contractual needs. But in terms of team and being in here, I think it is about role models, about setting good examples, about being well organised, about treating the kids with respect, about raising their expectations (I).

She saw herself as being professional and stated:

> It is very important, I think if people lose sight of that, then you are losing…why you came into the job and things like that (I).

In a later interview she added that:

I don't think it [professionalism] is a fixed thing. I think it is something that people can work towards…in a supportive environment (II).

I think we have a long way to go in here in terms of professionalism…in terms of, em, consistency, expectation (II).

To be able to succeed she had:

To know the pupils I am working with…to be competent in what I am offering…to be well organised…to have the resources…to feel valued (I).

She would know she was doing well because 'the kids are achieving something' (I) and they are 'changing lives, building relationships' (I). She described her attitude:

It is not a subject I am delivering, I am teaching somebody and it is the somebody bit that is more important than anything else (I).

Her account of this in practice was:

In the practical classes…we look quite carefully at who we are pairing up with. If we are pairing up kids who lack in confidence…need a little extra work on their skills. The teaching points for those at a higher level we pair up with someone…who is ready for that level of challenge…we can put them in a team each and try to bring the team on (II).

She identified high-quality interactions where:

Clear information and instructions going to students… they were asking for clarity…feeling comfortable enough to do that … the staff were explaining things pretty well… there was nobody sitting there doing written work (II).

Staff were:

To find ways of challenging them to do something without it becoming an in-your-face challenge…there are ways of negotiating (II).

She noted a concern with practical work:

They are learning something, and it is a way of getting that learning, we have to record that somewhere (II).

T1 The Space for Professional Action

She described the context as:

Chaotic, thinking unsettled, thinking, em, not a nice atmosphere…it is to do with the situation with the management of the school…We have had far too many changes and I think it has been a wee bit of the culture here for a long time (III).

On levels of trust she said:

I know that some people aren't comfortable having their views well known in public…I think that for some people it will always be a private thing but, but the ethos of distrust and the ethos of people not feeling that they can air their views, em, without it, kind of, coming back to bite them or being held against them is kind of culture in here (III).

She noted that she was responsible for her own development but:

That time and funding is made available for that, and that there are people in and around that you can speak to about it. So there is some kind of support mechanism in there as well (I).

She said 'there, potentially, is space to act here' however an obstacle was:

The kids…expectations on themselves and in terms of their behaviour and in terms of what they can achieve and all that…I think the team has to, the whole school has to take that on board…On your own…I think the impact you can have is limited (I).

Freedom was important in her work:

In a lot of ways I don't think we are held back here…and we do, mostly, get the message: go and try something, if it works, it works; if it fails, it fails. But don't be afraid to go and try it… but in reality it maybe doesn't quite happen …So sometimes you will be told, yes go ahead do it, sometimes you will be encouraged to do a thing but then it might be knocked on the head…But sometimes you just get told no. So you get different messages (I).

This was further limited by her being:

Concerned about how diverse things could become… we are bound by a lot of things…contractual things…child protection things (I).

T1 Conclusion

In this case, T1's definition of professionalism reveals a mix of strands: this is concerned with contractual remits and fulfilling the role of the teacher; it is about being valued; and it is also about working together as a team consistently and making a difference. These strands are not necessarily incongruent. However, they reveal expectations of being a teacher, being in employment, and what that means for action. The theme of consistency across the school comes back again and again. This is very much constructed as a responsibility: that all are to work in a consistent way. This suggests that there is one way to operate and that everyone should recognise and follow this way. In her accounts of practice she emphasises her skills in engineering classes to recognise and best use ability and strengths. She also speaks about negotiation skills and ways of avoiding conflict. For her the space for professional action is one where she has to work with others but raises concerns about how others might find problems with her work. This working together was to ensure that the right strategy was being used consistently. She saw power in the team effort and weakness in isolation. However, when asked about being close to others she thought this was not good. She saw the space as unsettled and I wonder if this was, in part, an extension of her own fears. She saw her own agency in her own development but needed a supportive mechanism of management. She noted that some in this community are not willing to wear their heart on their sleeve, and have their views known, as she would be. She raised fears about diversity and thought management control a better model.

T2: The Tarzanesque Professional in the Jungle School

T2 The Person

T2 was a male, who would not give his age, and was a chartered teacher. He taught Business Education and Personal and Social Education. He also ran extra-curricular martial arts and chess clubs. He said he

> Endured school for the employment prospects it afforded him. Primary was good and secondary rough (III).

He left school with a National Diploma and became a graduate of the Marketing Institute. He has an ordinary degree in education, had worked as a teacher in London, and recently gained the M Ed. He said of his learning: 'a long journey is still going on and I suppose, I hope it would never stop' (III).

He came to Scotland for family reasons and has worked in this provision since:

> I love this type of work, oddly enough…it is very challenging but it is very inspiring…you can make a good living out of it…You get the chance to do great things and it is not that damn hard and it is never the same and it is always varied (III).

He described himself:

> I would like to say I was Tarzan but I think that would be flattering myself…some of my colleagues would have me as *Nikima*, the little monkey that sat on Tarzan's shoulder…maybe, I am a cross between those two (III).

T2 Professionalism articulated and enacted.

> Professionalism is to do with, dare I say it, the Scottish General Teaching Council, and observing, what is their idea and codes of being a professional…I come from a business studies/economic perspective on this and that is: you take the Queen's shilling, therefore, do a good job, the best you can that you can within reason, and I don't mean subscribe to the 'go the extra mile' theory…we are rewarded quite well, I think, we are given salaries, we are given conditions of service, we are given support, we are given support for training, you know a lot is going for us here, we are facing a group of students who have very little… and our job is to help them and we are reasonably well equipped to do it… so be a member of a working group or groups, take part in the distributed leadership idea and be a contributor because the deal is good…we are not in here just for that reward, it's a vocational thing, we are motivated by more than just that… but we feel a certain reward for being a teacher … when you see certain students… turning a corner (I).

He continued:

It was almost owned by the middle class at one point…I think anybody can be a professional in their role … it comes from the principle of exchange, doing something for something, not exploiting, not profit only (I).

He wanted to see:

Improvements in their ability to learn, their ability to be independent learners, their ability to understand the norms of behaviour…to allow a young person to go forward and develop in his community (I).

He stated that the professional should provide:

A degree of social, a degree of variability/flexibility, a degree of human nature, humanism: I am not robotic: 'this is what has to be done, this, this.' I am also trying to sense where they are at…and then recording of lesson and maintenance of artefacts (II).

This was done by the power of the relationship:

We have seen formal-this and policy-that swing left and right and, actually, it appears that, no, the key is actually the strength of that relationship you have with each individual…I will use humour…That puts you in a slightly risky situation because if you engage in humour you are going to get some of it back (II).

In describing positives in the work of others he identified:

In an SEBD school: to be innovative on the curriculum side or even not innovative but trying different things, enterprising in the broader sense. Doing different things and trying things you think, you believe from your experiences with these wanes, that these will be interesting. And very often hidden within it is, in fact, the formal curriculum, the embedded curriculum (II).

He noted:

A warm interaction between the professionals involved and the students …there is a lot of dialogue between the staff and the people involved…an equality as well…There is a lot of communication going on and not just verbal (II).

And continued:

> The only fear I would have is obviously as we move around the curriculum ideas and so on, we still have to formal in some parameter in what we teach them. Some kind of boundary, if you like, em, within some reason…this is educative, this is developmental, this is progressive (II).

He spoke about the balance between behaviour and academic needs and felt our focus should be on therapeutics with:

> Higher achievers, instead of going up the way I would go across…attainment covered actually horizontally not just vertically…go wide and start bringing in…drama…Art (II).

T2 The Space for Professional Action

The metaphor he choose for the school is a jungle:

> Because there is good and bad in jungles…creatures that help you survive and there is the sheer beauty of the place and, eh, you live there but you can die there. You have got to survive (III).

He was also concerned that:

> [Staff] do not want their views known…they don't want their opinions known, em, they desperately want security when expressing their opinions…It is dangerous to express your opinion here (III).

He noted relationships that may restrict his work:

> I have had difficulty in relationships with people who I consider to be very strident, very strong in their views and who generally evoke a more mainstream view of how this school would work. And even, I would say, an outdated view of how any school would work which is heavily, even, slightly authoritarian in its approach and very top down about how all things should work (II).

However, he did see a great amount of freedom:

> You could call it distributed leadership if you wanted to but it is more straightforward than that…there isn't absolute freedom we can't just do

anything but…if it is something you are passionate about, you will genuinely get the freedom to try it here (I).

This then allowed for:

> A mixed bag with everything. Don't ban anything, don't outline anything…Don't create an absolute line…but encourage a massive range of ideas and give people freedom to try them all but expect them to try to justify…give back to the pool of knowledge and information that we are building up here (I).

He noted that:

> Anyone who sits here and says 'here's the book and the answers' is a liar…the book is fairly empty and…different answers work for different people…Not to operate in isolation or in some kind of artificial or Alice-in-Wonderland freedom, we are all doing our own things, different things around the school (I).

On personal development, T2 said that:

> The primary responsibility does lie with the individual themselves…You are not the master of your own professional development in a centre, you are the leader of it and the most responsible, but you are not absolutely in control of it (I).

He expressed concerns that some development might be about:

> Marginal Physical Productivity…how much work you can get from a person or a machine for one extra unit of input what more output could you get. You are always looking at getting more, more efficiency (I).

T2 Conclusion.

This is a case of professionalism that is informed by an awareness of the statutory codes but also recognises the good conditions that are available and the importance of giving something back. He wants to improve the young person's understanding of the norms of behaviour and to help them become better learners. This is done through being human, flexible, and, in particular, in using humour to build relationships. He speaks about being innovative. His space for professional action has two different themes: earlier in the interview process he thought that he

had freedom to act but later came to describe the school as a jungle. He thought staff should work together but cautioned against stridently held views. He thought himself responsible for his own development but warned against pressures in the drive to efficiency.

T3: The Boatman Professional on the Zambezi River School

T3 The Person.

T3 was a 45-year-old male who was a chartered teacher. His teacher training was in primary education and he was timetabled, in this provision, to teach Maths, Personal and Social Education, and outreach support for students. His own experience of schooling was mixed:

> I didn't really like school…I had about eight standard grades and I had fierce mother…that is what got me up to the end of 4th year…I enjoyed because all my pals were there and I played football and it was a good place to meet women…there was no jobs …done a fifth year and sixth year and loved it…Teachers suddenly changed and…I got enough Highers in fifth year to breeze through sixth year. So I started a school newspaper (III).

Since leaving school:

> I have got my undergraduate degree, a MA from Glasgow in English Lit and Philosophy, my PGCE, my Masters in Education in Comparative Education…I think I might do an…Ed D or something like that at some point (III).

He worked in mainstream primary:

> To Acting Senior Teacher and organised a couple of primary behaviour bases…project manager for a home-link project…teaching half the time and half the time managing, you know, getting parents involved in the school and stuff (III).

He came to work here through the alternative curriculum project. He said:

> The reason I want to work with bad boys is I have kind of found my niche in education…I seem to be able to connect with them, I don't have a

fear of them…I have never really fitted in well with the mainstream archetypal teacher sort of person (III).

He saw his role:

> When they come in with a vision of what teachers are like and teachers are all bastards…I, maybe, soften that and break it down, and that will allow a relationship to take place (I).

He described himself as 'a bit gobby so, you know, I cheer and just chat away to folk and be silly' (I). He said:

> I need my colleagues to be happy at work, comfortable at work…my performance at work has been very much influenced by the mood (I).

He felt:

> The fact that I am able to get on with…a lot of different people from different professional backgrounds…as you know there is a mutual respect there, so that kinds of shows me I am quite good (I).

T3 Professionalism articulated and enacted.

He described professionalism as:

> An air of conscientiousness…professionals are meant to be something different…there is a moral code or ethics, an inner thing that determines how you do your job…and I think that autonomy is important…being able to be trusted to do your job (I).

He continued:

> I think I have quite an idealised view of a professional is, and I don't know whether it is quite old fashioned. But I think I hold it up as an ideal of what I think it is and I attempt to meet those like the level of conscientiousness, the autonomy…continually reviewing your professional development (I).

But noted that there are limits:

> Talk about teachers being autonomous professionals, and teachers taking on leadership roles, but at the moment I think that is a lot of sedge…We had just become technicians and now they are trying to

reprofessionalise and talk about autonomy and leadership but the structure of schools … the Headteachers are still more absolute monarch than presidents (I).

He identifies professionalism in others work:

> Very little occasion of the power relationships there…It was all dialogue, a two-way thing… giving quite clear instructions…a very sort-of chatty kind of manner…the students were all involved, they all seemed to be doing things, and they were all taking part… any questions I heard from them were about what they were supposed to be doing…very active (II).

Although, warned that 'those kind of activities can be seen as fillers… after we have done the work' (II). He also describes his own work:

> I have developed for their language work a sort system for self assessment… overcoming things like low self esteem …COPs… they can highlight for themselves what area they are looking for whether it is capitals or whether it is the state of their hand writing or their spelling, so they're applying it to their writing and making changes without my direct intervention…it allows a level of interaction with the learning process almost physically, you know, whether interacting with it they are looking at it (II).

T3 The Space for Professional Action.

T3 saw the context as:

> A river which goes from torrents, white-water torrents which are very difficult to stay afloat; then it goes into periods of calm and it's, em, you can see what's coming up (III).

He saw himself as:

> The guy with the pole and trying to steer…the boatman …most schools are the River Tay but [this provision] is the Zambezi (III).

On trust issues he said:

> It is not just typical of this school…of all the places I worked in…where there has been genuine collegiality…those places are far fewer than other

ones. So, I am not surprised, and I think with so much change going on and it has been a place of rumour and counter rumour and gossip (III).

Freedom was important to him and he said:

> In the old days…I had complete autonomy…It has been, it is, quite self motivating, being good at what I do is actually quite important to me. So I had loads and loads of autonomy in terms of assessment (II).

He continued:

> That level of freedom is still there, I can still organise my day, my timetable…has changed they are blocking off my timetable…that has been frustrating thing…It is like these reporting things, everything is very ticky box (II).

He felt at the beginning of the interview process that:

> I think I am in a cist of a flux at the moment…some of the practice we did were quite innovative and were being successful. So I am quite sad that a lot of that has been abandoned (I).

At the end of the process he said:

> People are arriving with 'here's the plan this is what we are going to do, this will be great, this will all work.' So it is partly frustrating because if you were that smart why didn't you allow…if you are so keen on cross-curricular and team teaching…It is just frustrating it has happened this way it is not evolving through trial and error it is just the latest, the latest thing…different staff reaction to things…you get people who are almost smug and partly you are getting people…instead of blue-sky thinking it is like dark-cloud thinking (III).

He saw himself as responsible for his own development but:

> I want a manager to have an idea, a firm idea of where they are going, you know, and an ability to make you understand their reasons for wanting to go there…I think in terms of being aware of what you do, you know, understand, somebody who knows how I teach (II).

He said: ‘I have worked for … a couple of very inspirational people’ (I) and another manager had:

> Recognised some of your strengths but was very good at saying you need to work at this or work at that or watch some other teacher (I).

T3 Conclusion.

T3 saw his concept of professionalism as old fashioned and idealised. For him this involves an ethical attitude producing something special. He saw autonomy as an important part of professionalism and defines this as being trusted. He is concerned by the rhetoric of autonomy in education today and the fact that this is restrictive. The space for professional action is described in a number of ways: firstly, this is the river rapids of collegiality; then the importance of freedom and his concern that this might be eroded; he also identified the management changes and the ideas that are imposed from them. He wants to be in control himself but also needs a manager with clear vision that he can interpret. He sees his role as helping other staff by cheering them up.

TA1: The Happier Professional in the Up-and-Coming School

TA1 The Person.

TA1 was a 39-year-old female who was a training advisor. She was a key worker for two young people and was responsible for the Enterprise programme in the school. She said she maintained positive relationships with the staff because:

> I am a training advisor as well, rather than just a support worker. I find that I might have to ask the staff to do things (III).

Her own school experience is mixed:

> Primary up to, kind of, second year I was bullied so it wasn’t very nice…I kind of changed and stuck up for myself, and I thought everybody, the whole school, was behind her and it turned out they didnae like her either. So it ended up we all bombed her out and we all remained friends (III).

Her qualifications included:

Five o-grades, two Highers, two, an RSA 1 and 2, computing module. Then I went to college and got five other modules (III).

Since working in the provision she has completed her HNC Social Care and SVQ III:

I felt I had the experience and I just needed the qualification to back it up. I feel that and the SVQs definitely benefited me, just having the qualification to back up what I am doing (III).

Job satisfaction was an important part of her reasons for working:

Or else I would be just here for the money and it would be quite a mundane thing, it would be just going through the process (I).

She also said: 'I come here for the children' (I). She has worked as a carer 'five days a week with dementia!' (III).

TA1 Professionalism articulated and enacted.

Professionalism was defined as: 'doing your job. Being responsible, respectful' (I). She also said:

I always do feel like a professional and I always have the respect of my managers…I wouldnae take rubbish off them as such. I might take it then I'd say 'excuse me that is not appropriate.' I am a professional that way and I know what way to deal with things that if I know I am not being treated fairly I would not just go off on one (I).

She noted that:

I think you can be your normal person as well, there is always a bit of you comes out as well, but I think: you are in doing a job, you have to be professional, you are acting on behalf of the council…so I have to act in a professional manner for them to look good, for them as well (II).

Doing her job well required:

Good communication and good listening skills…you need to be aware of how the staff are feeling, and things like that, as well to be able to give them the support. You need to be able to communicate and listen to the

children as well because sometimes it is not always the staff that are right. And being quite open minded as well (I).

She would know if she is doing a good job because:

I think I have filled out quite a lot of evaluations over the years as well and got the feedback from it through speaking to the children and through my supervision and appraisals. It has been very positive (I).

She identified the strengths in people's work:

A lot of interaction, from staff and pupils … Communication and actually focusing on things…You had their attention … The teacher wasn't just speaking to himself I think that the kids were actually listening because they asked questions back… get a little clarification in them and that … it was activity kind of based, there was a lot of information and knowledge (II).

She describes an example of her own work:

I would say that even just going back to Friday there, St Andrew's Day, the food quiz and that that we made up. We purposely put in questions that they would have learned the information from it out on their tourist…Aye, and it was interesting how many of them had actually took it in. They were actually: 'I know that one, I know that one!'…The ones that had it was beneficial (II).

In addition, as a key worker of a boy who was very quiet:

I just started, kind of, working on his issues: anger management and speaking to his mammy quite a lot and that, and he ended up just was coming in and going 'I tried that one, I tried that one, so I did.' I think he was seeing positive results so he wanted to come back and try something else (II).

TA1 The Space for Professional Action.

One of the most striking things of the interviews is TA1's feeling of restriction. She said she felt:

Like a caged lion. I feel that the wains feel like that as well as if I am just trying to contain them all in this space. I just feel that it is just about containment here (II).

This was due to:

I feel more that I have to be more, fall into the school environment way, as before you are out and about and in the community and you have to act differently. If it is not working then we try something else…it is easier that way and a lot of it was done on your own judgement. You risk assessed things…I just feel more restricted here (I).

She now feels that:

If I, working with these children, and feel I need to remove them from the building because I feel it is not the right place then I could do that…Since all the people have come in and tried to support us and to help us to move on, then I have felt much better (III).

Professional development was the responsibility of:

Yourself and then when you want to take it further then that's when you would speak to your management…I think you need to want it yourself first (I).

This was achieved through supervision and appraisal when you:

Go in to see if there is anything that's, they feel they could help you with, or you could further develop as well. It is just to see you are really doing your job and to get the feedback rather than it going on too long if you are not happy or they are not happy with your work or whatever…And my appraisals, they are great, sorting out my CPD or whatever (I).

In addition, she says:

I would always hope that the management would support me … by offering the CPD or by supervision and appraisals…I think you need that wee bit of back up from management to let you know whether it is right or wrong what you are doing. Especially in the area of work you are in (I).

She said:

I will always respect what my manager says but I will, if I feel really strongly about something, I will bring it up and I will challenge it but at the end of the day, if they say 'that's what goes' that's what goes (II).

TA1 Conclusion.

TA1 sees herself as a professional. This was defined as doing a good job and focussed on respecting and being respected by managers. She thought she was acting on behalf of her employer. She saw humanness in her approach and thought she needed to show good communication and listening skills in her day-to-day work. Her enactment of professionalism was an account of an ad hoc lesson and giving strategies to a young person. Her view of the space for professional action has a number of factors. Noticeably, this includes the feeling of restriction in the school and the relief at being released from this. She also noted the importance of management in setting her CPD, giving her feedback through supervision, and setting the agenda for her.

Summary

These portraits demonstrate the diversity in the case. The commonality of language thinly veneers a variety of meaning. There is a complex range of definition, enactment, value, and purpose for professionalism. The portraits show the unique personal histories and trajectories in coming to work in this provision. There is a distinction between being professional and being a professional. The former is a desire of everyone and the latter a status that some accept and others feel they do not meet. However, the definition of this status is uncertain and hides further complexity. There are tensions between personal and profession responsibilities. The descriptions of the context reveal a variety of views and opinions. As a space for professional action it is a confused picture: there is little agreement on construction or purpose. Freedom and discretion are important but there is little agreement of the themes and elements that construct this: what is enabling to one person might be restrictive to another.

Analysis of the data is given in chapters five and six. Chapter five focuses on the definition and enactments of professionalism in this case and how the person's history and experiences construct and influence these. This is done through thematic analysis. Chapter six focuses on the perception and construction of the space for professional action. Here I use thematic analysis and typologies to make sense of the data.

Chapter 5

An Analysis of the Respondents' Constructions of Professionalism

1. Introduction

In this chapter I present my analysis of the data and identify themes that have emerged from that analysis. It is divided into seven sections. In sections two and three I consider the themes in respondents' constructions of professionalism in education. Each section focuses on one of two distinctive discourses: being professional and being a professional. Sections four and five consider how the respondents perceive the environment in which they work and how this affects professional action. In section four the respondents' constructions of the client or young person and the purpose of education is considered. In section five I analyse respondents' reports of personal experiences and trajectories that have brought them to this provision. This includes their accounts of their own experience of school as young people and their life trajectories. The sixth section is an analysis of congruence and incongruence between the theme and element of themes in definitions, experiences, and the trajectories identified in the previous four sections. In particular, this analysis focuses on the responses to youthful experiences in present-day professionalism. The final section summarises my findings in this chapter.

Before presenting the outcomes of my analysis there are a number of issues that deserve mention. Firstly, there is an interesting silence in the respondents' interviews: when asked about professionalism no one asked for clarification of my terminology. This suggests that the respondents held the assumption that professionalism is commonly understood and this understanding is shared. The interview process had been designed to find how each person defined and enacted professionalism. Analysis of this data has shown the common language obscured significant differences. There were some areas of agreement. For example, no one wanted to be unprofessional: the professional/unprofessional polarity is of little use here.[15] In addition, the centrality of the young person and the need to work for them was important to all. However, one of the striking outcomes from the interviews is

[15] Only two respondents (SA4 and SA5) mentioned the term unprofessional. They said that they knew people, other than themselves, who were unprofessional.

that there are two distinct discourses in use here: being professional and being a professional. The first of these is working in a certain way to produce competent levels of performance; the second is, essentially, about holding a special role and status. This distinction is important but not unproblematic: respondents blur the lines between these discourses and mix themes from each. They cannot and should not be viewed as polarities. Diagram 5.1 shows the stated position of the respondents to being professional, not being a professional, and being professional. This diagram is useful in seeing that being a professional or not can both be done within the discourse of being professional. Analysis of the themes and elements of themes in each discourse are considered in sections two and three.

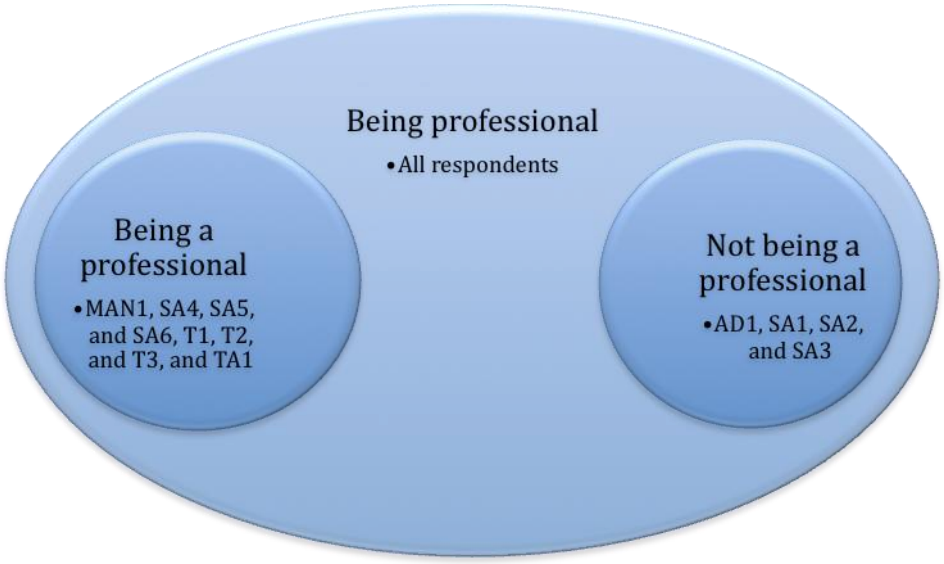

Figure 5.1: Respondents Positions on Professionalism

2. Themes and Elements of Constructions of Being Professional

Being professional was a common desire in the respondents' accounts but this was not commonly defined. It is important to emphasise that this is not an opposite of being a professional and there is confusion and blurring of the respondents' distinction between being professional and being a professional. Being professional is sometimes constructed as doing a good job or being a good worker. T2 (I), using the principle of exchange, saw this as simply giving something back for financial reward. Anyone, in his view, could be professional by doing a good job. However, the definition of 'good' or 'quality' in work is a value judgement and there is a range of opinion of what makes work 'good.' It is also interesting to compare this

to the definitions of good work in being a professional in section three of this chapter. Some respondents' constructions of being professional were about pragmatics and practicalities. Here they were being a good worker rather than doing good work. This included being on time (SA4, SA5, and SA6), not taking time off (SA6), and setting a good example: for SA4 this was about challenging the young people when they misbehaved (I). MAN1, SA6, and TA1 spoke about the importance of relationships with seniors in the hierarchy. For example, TA1 spoke about being professional in how she spoke and reacted to managers recognising their superiority and 'not going off on one' (II). In fact, for MAN1, this respect for authority could also mean an abdication of personal beliefs (I, II, and III): being professional meant following the manager. Training was an important part of some definitions of being professional: this was not at degree level and tended to focus on producing competent practice. MAN1 and TA1 both stated that this gave theory to back up practice experience (III); SA1, SA2, SA3, and SA5 all recounted how this training had bolstered their confidence; SA5 had said he needed to know enough about the task he was teaching to be proficient (I). The value of training is high but SA3 had described training as secondary to common sense and meeting the needs of the young people (I).

It would be a mistake to limit good work in being professional to basic competence or being a good worker, although this is how some respondents viewed it. For example, AD1 reported that doing good work was to work out of sight and have jobs completed when others were not around (I). Other definitions of good work go well beyond this. Of the respondents who did not claim to be a professional: SA1 summed up his good day as having carried out an intervention to stop a young person in crisis from being sent home (I); and SA2 saw her job as supporting the young person even going to the extent of becoming the 'mother figure' (I). In interview three respondents were asked to recount a high-quality intervention that they had been involved with. AD1 now spoke about setting up workshops to engage with the young people individually (III); SA1 described his efforts to know the young people and to engage with them (III); SA2 spoke about how she avoided confrontation and the talent needed for working with damaged young people (III); SA3 described activities for designing lessons with young people and strategies for engaging them (III). These descriptions of high-quality

intervention are, mostly, everyday occurrences in the working lives of the respondents. They exceed the boundaries of unskilled work or competent execution of tasks.

Summary of Being Professional

On one hand, the person being professional could just be being competent and giving value for money but, on the other hand, they might be doing much more than this. Perhaps some of this quality work is about being a professional and some of the respondents are debarred by their definition of being a professional. There is no clear-cut definition of what it means to be professional. This is interesting in itself as it shows how the constructions of professionalism and the problematics of language in recounting it are confused. Although there is conceptually a clear distinction between the two discourses the respondents do not always make this clear.

3. Themes and Elements of Themes of Construction of Being a Professional

In this case all but four of the respondents claimed to be a professional. Definitions and accounts of being a professional are varied and sometimes obscured by common language. In this section I will look at the respondents' constructions of being a professional through a thematic analysis of their definitions and accounts of practice. This includes their views on a special status; expertise and quality of work; training, qualifications, and standards; and discretion and autonomy.

A Special Status?

There is general agreement amongst the respondents that being a professional included having a special status. The definitions of what this special status was were varied. There is a great deal of difference in the respondents' constructions. T3 spoke about having 'an air of conscientiousness…professionals are meant to be something different' (I). He had stated that his view was old fashioned and gilded but this definition suggests that that ambition is still real for him in his work. SA4 stated that the local authority had granted his status. His competence had been recognised and he had been trusted to work with challenging and vulnerable young people (I). The trust to do a job and be set apart to work with these young people was the special status of being a professional for him. However, professional status

was dismissed by SA2 as a social 'ladder' (I) that had no place in modern society. For her status was about social climbing and she did not want that for herself.

Expertise and Quality of Work

Expertise and high-quality work were important in respondents' constructions of being a professional. There was little commonality in the respondents' definitions of expertise and high-quality work. Here I detail the themes and elements of themes in the constructions of high-quality work and expertise in this case.

High-Quality Work

High-quality work was an important theme in many respondents' construction of being a professional. The question of what made high-quality interventions was asked as part of the plus, minus, and interesting activity in the second interview. This activity was designed to enable respondents' to review other people's work and then describe an intervention of their own. This was a chance to recount the height of their work as a professional and produced some interesting examples. These include practical arrangements and preparation, relationship building and working with the young person's needs, and some miscellaneous activities. The quality of these activities and their validity were not assessed. It was important to know what the respondents considered to be high quality. Some of good work that is described by those who would not consider themselves a professional (in section two) might be considered of higher quality than that of those who consider themselves to be a professional.

Each of the teaching staff interviewed spoke about aspects of learning: T1 spoke about careful planning and organisation in classes to ensure that the best combinations of young people were working together (II); T2 recounted his levels of preparation, flexibility, and use of humour to build relationships; T3 wanted to encourage self assessment by using a system called COPs. Of the non-teachers, who considered themselves to be professionals, SA4 recounted how he would take the young people skiing on real snow to further their experience from the dry slope; SA5 spoke about being organised and having the preparation done for any activity; and SA6 spoke about having to change the hairdressing-training pattern to suit the young people she was working with. This meant focusing the delivery of practical

elements and time warping the whole process to maintain the young person's attention. Here she was using her expertise and moulding this to suit the learning needs of the young person. TA1 spoke about an ad hoc, unplanned dance activity that she had used as an add-on when timetabling went wrong. This had limited social and learning goals but allowed the young people to show their dancing skills. She also spoke about giving strategies to her key kids in response to their needs. MAN1 spoke about a Mathematics lesson that involved taking the young people to the supermarket.

Respondents' Roles and Identities

The roles and identities that the respondents recounted are important. These show the plurality in people's views of themselves and what they do. The perception of role and identity affects the work that is done by that respondent. The task of working with young people with SEBD is not defined or proscribed. The respondents rarely acknowledge this but the uncertainty is rationalised by creating roles and identities to justify what they are doing. Analysis of these roles reveals a great deal of variance between what people are doing. Here I will consider the tensions between the roles of teacher and supporter and carer and parent figure.

Teacher or supporter.

Teacher or non-teacher and academic or care/nurture are polarities used to define roles. A common oversimplification is that the teacher teaches and the non-teacher supports and cares for the social needs of the child. This type of normalizing statement is based on fundamental, and limiting, assumptions of what happens in education. This distinction is blurred in the scrutiny of the respondents' comments. Everyone interviewed recognised the commitment to the young people that was part of this work. This included elements of care and learning. However, these elements should not be separated. In fact, SA5 recounted an incident when he was referred to as 'the teacher' (II) by a young person speaking to his father but does not see himself as the teacher. However, he does acknowledge that 'we all actively play a part in teaching these kids basic social skills' (II).

Carer or parent figure.

Only one of the respondents did not have their own children, most were parents and all have experiences of being parented themselves. *In loco parentis*, or

acting in place of the parent, is a common and contentious element in educational practice. The duty of care to the young person is enshrined in law but it is not defined in practice how much or how little should be done. The 'parental' role of the respondents as employees is different to their personal lives. The similarities and differences are interesting as is the way that some respondents construct themselves as parents. SA2 spoke about her desire to have been the 'mother who was there' (III) in her personal life but also saw herself as a parent figure in the young person's life. She also acknowledged her 'own values from my parents' (I) to be part of what she brings to professionalism. SA2 spoke about the importance of 'caring' for the young people. She had already identified a young person that was pitied and had problems in their lives. SA3 wanted to care for the young people because of her knowledge of their backgrounds. SA6 spoke about her own parents as 'dysfunctional' (III) and how this experience motivated her as she was 'wanting to give something back' (III). She said she was to keep the young person safe: safety was one of her objects in the first interview. This protection is her functional parenting of the young person. MAN1 spoke about having her relationships with staff in her own school because of her mother's relationship with them and her own experiences of being a young mother. She does not explicitly link this to her work, preferring a business model, but does speak about her work with staff as parental: she wants to be able to get to know them, spend quality time with them, and support them. AD1 saw himself primarily as a parent and, therefore, provider for his family and that his work was only to fund that role. He did not expect to have any parental role in his work.

Training, Qualifications, and Standards of Being a Professional

Many respondents, as part of being a professional, identified levels of training, qualification, and standards that should be attained. These are not commonly defined. There is a range of opinions on what this should be. It is important to understand the range of training in the respondents' accounts. Here I will consider the trajectories and level of training and the codes and standards set for professionals.

Training Trends: the Unexpected Professionals or to the Profession Born?

Many of the respondents in this case did not expect to be professionals not least on the basis of their youthful performance in education. At the final interview I asked the respondents about their level of qualification. This revealed a wide range of levels of qualification and a distinct trend between teachers and non-teachers in qualification trajectories. All of the teachers interviewed are qualified to post-degree level. Indeed the teachers had a fairly common educational trajectory: T1 and T3 both had good enough results at school to go straight for university education which included or led to teacher training; T2, although having good enough results on leaving school, worked in retail between leaving school and completing teacher training. Since becoming teachers each person had completed further study at postgraduate level through the universities: T1, the most highly promoted, had a diploma, and both T2 and T3 had Masters-level qualifications and expressed the intention of extending this to doctoral work at some stage. T3 described his own learning as 'a long road that will never stop' (III). Of the other respondents, MAN1 had a degree in management and law, completed after her business folded, and, since starting in this provision, was completing further study in management of care services. SA2, having completed SVQs in social care and administration, was working towards a degree with the Open University to enable her to access teaching training. AD1, although seeing life experience as much more important, was considering completing a degree as an electrical engineer and SA3, who had social care and counselling qualifications, was considering doing a degree in counselling. This degree-level study all followed a different trajectory to the teachers: this is second-chance education with the person returning to study later in life. At the time of the interviews, each of the respondents, except AD1, were involved in study at non-degree level. In fact, all staff had at least started or completed further study since coming to this provision. Study for the non-teachers was mostly to SVQ level in Social Care. An exception to this was SA4 who had completed training in specific, skills-based courses to allow him to take certain outdoor activities. He was not working towards his SVQ in social care and had no training in therapeutic or learning skills. SA1, who had holistic qualifications and had completed his SVQ in social care, saw the possibilities for training to be a major perk of the job. SA5 and TA1 had both completed their SVQs. Since leaving school SA6 completed an apprenticeship in hairdressing and had just started her work for SVQ in Social Care.

Learning and knowledge are valued. SA5 rated 'knowledge' highly enough to bring it as one of the objects that showed he was doing his job well; TA1 said that the SVQ qualification in social care backed up her practical experience. MAN1 thought that learning for staff allowed them to 'back up their practice with a wee bit of theory' (III). The commitment to professional development is seen as a part of working life. There are differences in the construction of learning. For some, especially those returning to study, learning is individualised and not collaborative (or only collaborative in having social support in going along together (SA2)); learning is attending and completing courses for awards of qualifications: these awards allow certain work to go ahead. For other staff learning was collaborative: T2 saw this as an opportunity to build up a knowledge base in SEBN provision through sharing what they have found in their practice.

It is interesting the importance of elements of credentialism: nearly everyone has started or completed some training. However, this is not always degree-level education and that does not seem to matter to some of the respondents. Conversely, SA1, SA3, and AD1 saw holding a degree to be a defining element of professionalism and a bar on their claiming that status. In fact, the provision, at ground level, does not make a significant difference in the role of the staff member with the young person based on qualification or experience. However, distinction is made outwith the provision: entrance to the teaching profession is controlled by the GTCS, requires degree-level study and teacher training, and is rewarded with higher levels of pay.

National and Contractual Standards

T1 and 2 both referred to the codes of professionalism set by the GTCS. T1 saw this as 'teacher expectation' (I) and 'legal things in education' (I) that made up 'contractual needs' (I). T2's description of these codes is interesting: 'their codes and ideas of being a professional' (I). Both see these codes as a baseline and were keen to stress that their jobs involved much more than this.

Summary of Being a Professional

This section has been about the themes and elements of themes in the respondents' constructions of being a professional. Although there are some similarities there are important distinctions with the discourse to being professional.

There was a wide range of definition hidden by a common language in the respondents' accounts. However, being a professional often involves: having a special role; carrying out high-quality work including the planning and implementation of activities. Respondents reported many different roles they have in being a professional in education. Training was at a higher level (mostly, but not all, degree level) and learning was an on-going process; there were also contractual and national expectations to be upheld. In section four the respondents' constructions of the young person and education are analysed. The distinction between being professional and being a profession is blurred in the definitions of the respondents' accounts. Therefore in this dissertation I use the term professionalism rather than being a professional or being professional.

4. The Respondents' Constructions of the Young Person and Education

Constructions of the young person and education are important in understanding professionalism in education. The young person is commonly the focus of the respondents' work. However, differing definitions of the young person and the education system give rise to different expectations, values, and purposes. These affect the professional action that takes place. In this section I will be looking at the themes in the respondents' constructions of the young person and education.

Constructions of the Young Person

Working for the good of the young person was an important, widely held aim of the respondents in this case. This is a common positive in the respondents' accounts. The assumptions about the young person and what could be done to, or with, them were varied. A thematic analysis of the respondents' accounts is given here. This includes the young person with needs, as a learner, as mad or bad, and other more holistic views.

The Young Person with Needs

The construction of the young person as someone with needs is common in the respondents' accounts. This is not surprising because the young people have been 'sent' to this provision because of 'problems' elsewhere and that the respondents' were employed to work with them. However, the construction of a

young person as someone with needs is not commonly defined. These differences are important in shaping what people do. There is an assumption in the respondents' accounts that these constructions are shared and understood by all. This is not the case. For example, the young person might be viewed as deficit and failing the system; others might see the system as failing the young person and it being deficient. Constructions of these needs guided the actions and reactions of the respondents. Those enacting professionalism might have different agendas and aims, and ways of working. The young person with needs could be constructed as one who was needy, objects of pity requiring protection, or deficiency. There was also a discourse of diagnosis and cure. Viewing the young person as someone who engenders pity does not always mean that the young person was a pathetic or helpless individual. For example, T2 describes them as 'having little' (I) compared to staff and so deserved the best that could be done for them; SA3 spoke about feeling her own life 'sheltered' (I) in comparison to the young people. Some respondents described a young person who needed protection. SA5 wanted to make a difference 'before it was to late' (I) and they were in the hands of the criminal courts; and SA6 thought a priority for the young person was 'safety' (I) to stop harm to themselves or from, or to, others.

Some respondents viewed the young person's needs as something that could be diagnosed and remedied. Some constructions of this view are more plausible than others. For example, SA2 spoke about how some of the young people had basic physical needs of food and shelter. For her the provision was a 'safe haven' (III) where these needs could be met by offering a warm meal or a safe place. But others spoke of meeting social and emotional needs as an achievable and expected aim. MAN1 and TA1 described a deficit young person who had needs they could address. For TA1 this was through giving the young person strategies to use when in crisis and for MAN1 this was a matter of taking 'feedback' (I) from the young person and then acting on this. Both of these respondents have based their position on the assumption that the young person can rationalise their needs and others can diagnose them, the staff have the appropriate strategy or response to hand, and that the young person will be able to accept, interpret, and enact this strategy. It is implausible that respondents and young people would be able to work together

seamlessly. This is an idealised view of professional action and sets impossible aims for the person in enacting professionalism.

The Young Person as a Learner

The construction of the young person as a learner in a case of people working in an educational provision might seem arbitrary. But the differences and nuances in these constructions are interesting. Only two respondents in this case referred to the learners as passive: SA4 described the students as objects for his expertise (II); and TA1 described her ability to diagnose need and hand out solutions to the young person. Most of the respondents described active learners but with varying levels of independence: T2 and T3 said they wanted to encourage independent learning but noted that this was part of a 'two-way dialogue' (T3 II) and a human approach (T2 II); most respondents wanted to work in partnership with the learner. MAN1 saw the learner as someone with interests that were to be discovered and developed with the worker's help who would engage 'magnets' (II). SA3 saw the young person as a partner in the course-building process (II). T1 spoke about learning through young people teaching their peers in carefully managed learning situations (II).

Deserving and Undeserving

The construction of the young person as deserving or not deserving help has a number of elements. These affect how the person values and acts towards the young person. I consider two strands here. The first is the construction of the young person being 'mad' or 'bad' and the second is the constructions of cooperative and uncooperative. The construction of the 'mad' or 'bad' young person is one where the person is trying to account for the causes of the young person's behaviour. The simple polarity of mad and bad is commonplace in society. Both construct the young person in a deficit position but attribute this to different causes: whether mental instability resulting in the inability to make appropriate choices; or the rational choice of behaving badly due to some malice. This is a narrow definition of behavioural problems; both of these outcomes are negative and deficient. These are essentially value based. The 'mad' young person is ill and has a condition that can forgive wrong doing and renders them deserving of help. The 'bad' young person does not deserve help but challenge and punishment. AD1 describes the same student as 'a bad wee git' (II) and a 'nice wee boy' (II). This

change came about through him getting beyond the initial front of bad behaviour and establishing a relationship.

The respondents' construction of the young person as cooperative or uncooperative is common. With the making of this judgement the treatment of the young person and the professionals' job in working with them sets a different trajectory. Co-operative usually meant that the young person was willing to work with the member of staff or, at least, to compromise and play the game of learning. Examples of this are described in the accounts of others practice in the PMI analysis in the second interview. Uncooperativeness is described as a deficiency of the child rather than the worker and an insult to the worker. Treatment of the uncooperative young person could vary from exclusion (for example SA4 and SA5 (I)) and rejection to renegotiation and renewed effort to engage that person (SA1 and SA2 (II)). What is interesting is the correlation in respondents' accounts between cooperation and deservedness or, more markedly, uncooperation and undeservedness. For example, SA5 described a young person who would not join in with his activities as not deserving his attention. His 'loyalty to the rest of the group' (I) meant that the uncooperative young person was excluded so that he could concentrate with those who wanted to take part. SA4, although describing how he would try to engage the young person, described lack of his cooperation as being 'out of my hands' (I) and spoke about how this was then a job for management to deal with. A very different approach is described by SA1. He was working with a boy who he described as 'a closed young person' (II) who would not engage with him. He recounted how this had been an opportunity for him to give more of himself to build a relationship. He was reaching out and not condemning for uncooperation. Small changes in the construction of the young person could make vast changes in professional action.

Holistic Views of the Young Person

Constructions of the young person as a person and an individual are categorised, in this dissertation, as holistic views. SA2 accepts the person with 'unconditional positive regard' (I) and this is not untypical of the respondents. For SA2 the young person is an individual with physical, social, emotional, and academic needs (I). She sees the young person as part of a family and works to maintain the relationships within that unit. SA1 sees the young person as someone

who can be met and, with some willingness on his or her part, build a relationship where the worker can become 'a significant other' (I) in that young person's life. The account of SA1 working with a 'closed' young person above shows how the young person is allowed respond in their own time and not being judged for not responding at the worker's pace. SA6 also spoke about the importance of 'not judging' (II) the young person. The effectiveness of the holistic approach is not to construct a worker as the solution or cure to the young person they are working with. This does not assume that the adult is ready to help or the young person ready to be helped. This holistic view is sustainable, as it is not based on presuppositions of cause or cure, neither does it set unattainable goals.

Constructions of Education

There is a range of views and values of education and the purpose of education. Again within a common language there is an assumption of shared meaning yet the differences in the constructions of education changes the professional action for the respondent. I use three categories to roughly delineate the stands of educational purpose in the respondents' accounts. These are the academic strand, the behavioural stand, and the social care strand. The variation in definition and the value and importance of elements within these strands will also be considered here. In addition I consider other constructions of education reported by the respondents.

The Academic Strand

The strand of education that I refer to as academic includes a wide range of outcomes for the young person's cognitive development: from the provision of tutoring in basic literacy to the strategies deployed to develop independence and thinking skills. There are different purposes for the academic strand of education. The respondents speak about preparation of the young person for work; attainment and achievement in subject disciplines; and the ability to contribute to their community. AD1 describes a physical workshop for the young person (II). This was to be work based to address basic literacy. He also stressed that this was best done one to one (II). This suggests that the value of social learning for the young person is out weighed by the importance of the benefits of working directly with staff without distractions. For SA4 learning was about coaching in specific skills-

based activities. T2 and T3 (II) both noted the need for an innovative curriculum in the school. T3 was concerned that this was not merely a 'bolt-on' (II) addition to the lesson.

The Behavioural Strand

The behavioural strand of education is about bringing about change in the behaviour of the young person. This is a common aim of the respondents in this case. The methods and approach to changing the behaviour of the young person is not commonly defined or accepted. It includes behaviour modification, and education of the person to make better choices. The descriptions of these by the respondents reflect the polarity of the retributive to the restorative and therapeutic. For example, T2 (II) called for an emphasis on the therapeutic approaches that should take priority over the academic. He wanted the young person to be given the chance to explore their lives and grow through the arts. Here the person is not being coached in specific skills but is learning through educational experiences with the aim of developing as a person. SA4 described the young person as someone whose behaviour was deficit and required to be challenged and changed. Throughout the interviews he spoke about how the young person is to build a relationship of trust with him: knowing and behaving to his standards, being challenged, and enjoying the activities. There is no mention of development for the young person except in learning the specific skills of the activities they are taking part in or the standard of behaviour that the member of staff requires. The young person was seen as needing to be challenged and needing an expert to lead them. This gives the young people choices to make and the assumption is made that the young person is able to rationalise and make that choice. SA5 also suggested that the young person was here to learn better behaviour.

The Social Care Strand

This strand of education is about the social care and personal development of the young person. This was commonly reported as the most important aim of the school: the health, happiness, and safety of the young person. At the time of the interviews, this was formally done in this provision through keytime but was also entwined in different parts of the work of the school: its informal curriculum. It could include any area of the young person's life where they were perceived to be in

need, or had asked for help. This included relationships with others, especially, with parents or carers. SA1 sees the school as a place where the young person's needs can be met and that staff are responsible for building the relationships that can make this happen. This allows the member of staff to become 'a significant other' (II) in the young person's life. For SA2, the school for the young person is a safe haven where their basic needs can be met: they can relax and be fed. This is viewed above any academic targets. Though she sees this a prerequisite of any academic work or progress. For SA5 the school was the essential place where the individual education plan could be made for the young person. When SA6 works with the young person, emotional safety is an important issue and part of her role is to keep the young person safe. She uses her own disability as a strength in trying to work through the work together. She states that she wants to give a bit back (I). Building relationships was rated higher than academic targets. She also reported that learning a trade was an important part of her life and she sees this apprenticeship as a model for education. T1 saw the young person who was ready to be helped turn their life around. She was keen on working with the individual. She stresses that in this case it is all about teaching the individual and not the subject. T2 spoke about preparing the young person 'to go forward and develop in their community' (I). TA1 saw school as a place where the individual could be met and should move beyond the constrictions of the school campus if this does not fit the young person.

Other Constructions of Education

It is interesting to unpick the other constructions of education used by the respondents. The model they choose to describe what is happening reveals a lot about their sense making and position. Elements of models that are brought by the respondents include: business and economic models, social models, and other models. MAN1's comments are full of managerial jargon: 'client-focussed' (III), 'appropriate feedback' (I) and 'ownership and responsibility' (II). T2 used terms from his economics background: the 'principle of 'exchange' (I) and 'marginal physical productivity' (III). SA4 described the work as an 'industry' (III): this suggests he is providing a service for consumers. SA5 stresses that this provision must be about more than a 'factory' (II) and a place were individual needs can be met.

Summary of Constructions of the Young Person and Education

This analysis in this section has shown variation in the constructions of the young person and education. These constructions are important because they are rarely verbalised but affect each person's professional action. The young person is, seen as someone with needs, a learner, and deserving or undeserving of help. There variation in the definition of these themes. Education is seen as having academic, behavioural, and social care strands. Within these strands there is variation and it is important to foreground the respondent's definitions.

5. The Respondents' Reports of School Experiences and Life Trajectories

Everyone in this case had experienced education as a young person and reported an individual trajectory in coming to this provision. These experiences have shaped the person and affect their professional action. In this section I will present the themes from the respondents' accounts of their own educational experiences and the reported trajectories that have brought them to this provision. The personal experiences of the respondents give an important viewpoint on their actions: are they repeating history or righting wrongs? This is used in section six, with findings from the rest of the chapter, to identify congruence and incongruence between themes and elements.

Reported Experiences of School

The respondents' experiences of school as young people give an interesting view on their position in education now. It was interesting to hear about how the respondents were using this experience to change or reconstruct their work in education now. What was very interesting, but hardly surprising given the decision to work in this provision, was that only two of the respondents, MAN1 and SA3, said that they had good memories of school. MAN1 attributed her good experience to having had good relationships with the teachers because her mother worked in the school as a cleaner. SA3 did not give any reasons for her good memories. One further respondent, SA2, had no memories of school, and, therefore, concluded that it must have been okay. All of the other respondents had either mixed or negative experiences of school (focusing mainly on early secondary, the age-group worked with in this case). There were many different reasons given: SA1 'liked primary but hated secondary' (III); SA4 described it as 'not for me' (III) and admitted that he

had issues with teachers; SA5, although he missed out on schooling because his mother was ill; and SA6 did not attend school because of undiagnosed dyslexia and her associated discomfort with learning situations. T1's experience of school was mixed: she enjoyed the social side and the mathematical/logical subjects and struggled with anything that involved 'imagination, words, literacy,' she noted that this had stayed with her through her life and went through all the subjects; T2 said that secondary was 'rough' and he 'endured school for the employment prospects' (III); T3 disliked junior secondary but enjoyed senior secondary when he found that the teachers changed and saw school as a place to socialise; and, TA1 reported having bad experiences of bullying at secondary school until she, and others, 'bombed out' (III) the bully. AD1 did not mention any memories of school but rated his life experience as much more important than education (I).

Reported Life Trajectories in Coming to this Provision

Respondents, in the interview process, reported individual life trajectories. It is possible to see some themes through this but it is inherently individual. Therefore, the analysis has been on the level of the individual. AD1 admitted that the hours suited his care commitment for his family. He was keen to stress that that was the only reason for his work in this particular provision. He had not chosen here for any other reason. MAN1 described a failed business and relationship after which she wanted to prove herself. She completed a degree, unrelated to her present work, and fell into this type of work through financial circumstances. SA1 worked in clothing sales, after being introduced to it through a youth training scheme. He had also worked outside on building sites and worked as a volunteer in youth clubs. Although already interested in youth work, primarily he came to this job because of a change in family circumstances. SA2 wanted to be the 'mother that was there' (I) and this job allowed her to have the holidays. She had worked as a hotel receptionist and as a student nurse. SA3 also came to this provision because it suited her family care commitments but as a clerical assistant before joining the support staff. During her time as an admin assistant she became more interested in working directly with the young people. SA4 trained in various outdoor education qualifications and worked for a local authority centre. He then changed to working in this provision because he wanted to be more closely involved with relationship building with the young people. He had been involved with a greater volume of

young people he only would see once or for one activity. SA5 had completed factory work in various jobs, then joined the police but after just a few years decided to move to this provision. He wanted to work with the young person before they were at the stage when the police were called. SA6 had a career in hairdressing, and then started counselling working in a cancer hospital, she then decided it was time to 'give something back' and came into this provision. T1 wanted to teach the young person rather than her subject. This is what she had found in mainstream primary and secondary. This provision offered her a new way of working. T2 had been working in sales and then trained as a teacher in London. He came to Scotland through family circumstances and took the opportunity to work in a special school where he was inspired to work with children who were challenging. T3, after completing time in mainstream primary, then travelling, returned to join the Alternative Curriculum. He felt he was then forced into this provision. In working with the Alternative Curriculum he found he had found his niche in working with 'bad boys' (III) and wanted to change the tradition views of the teacher (I). TA1 worked as a carer in the community. She did not want to work fulltime with dementia patients and came into this provision because she wanted to work with children and wanted job satisfaction.

6. Mapping Constructions Together: Congruence and Incongruence

In the preceding sections I have presented my analysis of the respondents' constructions of being professional, being a professional, the young person and purpose of education, and personal experiences from respondents' accounts. This is how professionalism is interpreted and enacted in this case. However, it is important to understand how these factors work together. Analysis of the accounts shows congruence and incongruence and these will be presented in this section.

Professional: Status Unattainable

SA1's evidence is congruous because his definition of the professional (who must be educated to degree level) then goes on to describe a high level of expertise and practice. There is a similar response by SA2. She did not think being a professional was worthwhile in modern society. However, her work and training show a high level of expertise in reaching out to clients in need. Indeed, her

qualification level is almost to degree level. SA3 saw her position as 'just a job' (I) and her definition of a professional again required a degree-level education. Her own studies are now at degree level but she does not see this as elevating her to professional status. This status is for someone else.

Limited by Definition

The link between personal experiences and professional performance is tested in MAN1's interviews. Although she reported a good experience of school, and the desire to be a holistic worker who worked to meet the needs of the young people, her definition of professionalism limited her ability to use herself in the role. She spoke about professionalism as an abdication from personal responsibility. This subjugation to hierarchy as a cornerstone of professionalism was continued by TA1. She reported being bullied as a major part of her primary and early secondary experience. She spoke about her career as a carer working with people with dementia. When speaking about her work now she refers to being the remedy for the needs of the young people. She is confident in diagnosing and communicating strategies to sort the problems the young people bring to her. She also spoke about the importance of showing respect for bosses. Is this a resonance of the bullying? She also spoke about being like a caged lion in the school and a feeling of release when working outside it.

Repeating History

SA4 describes his own experience of school as a young person as difficult. His relationship with teachers was a particular problem and this continued into his working life. He was keen to stress that in his professional role he was going to set SMART targets and change work to meet the individual needs of the young person. But he then describes his role as maintaining behavioural standards and challenging young people's behaviour. This manner and approach is reminiscent of the authoritarian teachers he had such a problem with. Here he is recreating history rather than righting wrongs but is also describing this in terms of meeting needs and other modern phrases. T1 reported a mixed experience of school: enjoying the social side and seeing the academic work as creative or mathematical. She speaks about feeling at a loss at the creative work and happier with the mathematical. Her description of ideal working practices is for the team to work consistently. This

consistency is about working in a logical and uniform way to ensure that everyone is working the same way. Here her learning experiences at school are continuing to colour her career.

Responding to History

SA5 reported missing his final years at school because of his mother's illness. He then describes the present provision and his work in it as essential and part of an individual education plan for the young person. I wonder if this is because his experience was of being unsupported? He wanted to be an active support for the young person and stressed that we were working with real kids lives and not a factory. SA6 reported missing most of her schooling through truancy because of an undiagnosed learning difficulty. She was a successful hairdresser before training as a counsellor and coming to this provision. She wanted to use her counselling skills to listen to the young people and help protect them from the harm they could inflict on themselves. Her definition of professionalism was about being on time and working hard. Being professional was a source of self worth to her. However, she did describe high-level counselling skills to help the young person. She often stressed the need to keep the young person safe. T2 said he endured school for the employment prospects. His trajectory has been one of economics and sales management. He tends to describe his work in terms of a financial model. And to this model he suggested that he should give his efforts for these young people who had little and the deal was good for him. However, the school was to be a place for innovation and that should be shared and built upon. The young person was to be welcomed with humour, careful planning but with flexibility and humanity to build relationships and prepare them for life in their communities. He wanted a balance between the therapeutic and academic strands of the work of the school. This favoured the therapeutic over the academic. T3 reported his dislike of early secondary and the change of the teachers in upper school. He wanted to break down the traditional image of a teacher in this provision with the young people. He wanted to develop their abilities to self assess and saw his role as one of conscientiousness and autonomy.

Summary of Mapping of Constructions

This section has highlighted the tensions that exist in the respondents' definitions. This is a complex situation and the rationalisations of different elements sometimes clash. Some described high-quality practice and yet debarred themselves from professional status by their definitions. Others limited themselves by surrendering personal agency to managers. There is a tension between responding and repeating experiences from the past in present-day practice.

7. Final Remarks

The professional portraits in chapter four show individual, wide ranging, and, even sometimes, inconsistent definitions of professionalism. In this chapter I have looked at the themes and elements of themes that are used to construct the definition and enactment of professionalism. In addition, I have considered the person and professionalism. My analysis of the respondents' interviews has identified that the professional/unprofessional polarity is of little use to those in this case. The respondents, under the banner of professionalism, make a distinction between being professional and being a professional. However, this distinction is blurred in some accounts. Many of the themes and elements of themes used to construct professionalism are not commonly defined. The use of common language and uncommon definition of that language gives an initial impression of commonality but this is dispelled by closer analysis of the accounts. There was no common agreement on the role of the worker, the standard of work, or level of training. Training was commonly valued but the purpose and level of training was not commonly agreed. Learning is valued for different ends: for example, ensuring basic competence or a process of continuous development. The constructions of the education system and the young person were wide ranging and included many different definitions, values, and beliefs. These can be seen to shape the agency of the professional. In this case the person and professionalism are closely linked and interdependent. The reported experiences of school as young people and the life trajectories in coming to this provision are unique to each person. These reports offer another viewpoint on the person's accounts of what they are doing, who they are working with, where they are doing it, and why they are doing it. Perceptions of how they now act in response to these past experiences are interesting. Accounts of practice show that some are responding to and readdressing issues, others are

repeating history. Those who are repeating history do not seem to be aware of it. Histories have shaped the person into who they are now and, therefore, the work that they do as professionals. Understanding the importance of the person in the construction and enactment of professionalism has been a major outcome of this analysis.

Chapter 6

The Space for Professional Action

1. Introduction

The space for professional action is a metaphor for the respondents' perceptions of the constraining and enabling factors of their working environment. These perceptions vary widely but this is not surprising. Each respondent does not work in isolation; they work in the maelstrom of social interactions, and come with unique personal histories. The perception and interpretations found in this case will be documented and discussed in this chapter. It is divided into two sections: in section one, the respondents' constructions of the space for professional action in this case are analysed; in section two I make sense of these findings by comparing respondents' definitions with typologies. The findings of the chapter are summarised in the conclusion.

2. The Respondents' Constructions of the Space for Professional Action

The professional portraits, in chapter four, include each respondent's views of the space for professional action. In this section I give a thematic analysis of these constructions. Analysis of the data reveals a complex picture of the perceptions of enabling or constricting factors in the respondents' environment. There are varied definitions and value of these factors: what is constricting for one person might be enabling for another. Freedom to act was a common desire and, generally, seen as a positive in the respondents' constructions of their space for professional action. However, freedom to act is not commonly valued or defined. The differences and nuances of opinion on the definitions are analysed here by considering themes and elements of themes in the respondents' constructions. These include perceptions of hierarchies and structures, discretion and autonomy, professional development and nourishment, and the role of others.

Hierarchies and Structures

All the respondents work in the same provision. No one works in isolation; they are employees within a hierarchical system. However, there is little consensus on the perception, value, or purpose of this hierarchy and structure. For some, for example AD1, hierarchy is an oppressive structure whose purpose is to keep him in the 'lowerarchy' (I); for others, for example SA2 and 3, this was a safety zone in

which to work; and others, for example TA1, the opinions of superiors within this system were valued above their own judgement. Here I will document the respondents' constructions of the rules and procedures of the organisation, the management styles, and authority.

Perceptions of Rules and Procedures

Rules and procedures for the organisation can be perceived as being liberating or constricting: SA1 saw the risk assessment rules as restricting his ability to work as the paperwork stopped him from thinking and adapting in action; SA2 and 3 saw these rules as guidelines for their own safety but did not allow them to stop doing what they thought was right. T2 thought that a freer system where you would 'ban nothing' (I) allowed for 'a mixed bag' of responses for the professional to use and evaluate. T1 said she thought that a high level of freedom would lead to an unwanted level of diversity (I). MAN1 saw these rules and procedures as surpassing her personal judgement and dictating her professional action. SA4 wanted to be trusted to operate within these rules when off campus and away from supervision. Two of the teachers (T1 and 2) also noted the role of the GTCS codes. T1 also spoke about her contractual and legal responsibilities as a teacher (I). They spoke about these as structural boundaries that defined the baseline of behaviour. For them this could be enabling or constricting.

Respondents' Constructions of Management Styles

Respondents perceived management styles in this case differently. SA2 described different experiences of working with various managers: the first headteacher who, she felt, disempowered others by doing everything herself; another headteacher empowered by granting her independence and encouraging each person to act independently but was always available for support; and other managers who were directive and hierarchical telling her what to do. SA6 reported concerns that she was afraid to speak to managers because she was worried about not being heard or shouted down (I and II).

Authority and Control

Constructions of authority were spoken about in a number of ways: responses to managerial authority could be accepting the present system, wanting more, or

wanting less. Authority from perceptions of a non-managerial hierarchy is also discussed.

Managers

In TA1's responses, she emphasised the importance of showing respect for managers and doing what they asked. Supervision, a traditional practice of part of the provision before the merger, was praised highly by SA4, MAN1, SA5, and TA1. SA6 did not report her experiences of supervision positively. The level of authority this granted the manager over the worker is considerable and will be discussed in the section on development and nourishment below. SA1 had not experienced the supervision role of the manager. He wanted more direction. He described the freedom he had as too great and wanted to have targets set and rigorously maintained. He thought, at the time of the interviews, he was 'underused' (III) because his skills were not being identified and developed. T3 spoke about his surprise at the sea changes that could be imposed by managements. He noted that, after the suspension of the Headteacher, the introduction of a new way of working was done without consultation (III). He felt that the professional should be consulted and change brought about from the bottom up. Authority would now be transferred away from the manager.

Other Staff

SA2 spoke about authority levels between the different professional groups. She reported this as experiences of 'snobbery' (I) between a teacher and the support assistants in another school where she had worked but felt that this attitude was present in this provision too. Here the teacher said he did not value the opinions of the support worker because of their lesser training. A chain of authority was being set up and this placed the support worker lower in the hierarchy than the teacher.

Freedom

Freedom to act was a fundamental part of work for all respondents. However, the perception of freedom is defined and limited in different ways. Some claim autonomy and others discretion. Here both are considered separately.

Autonomy

Only two staff (MAN1 and T3) claimed to have autonomy. Each person defined this differently: the limit, value, and purpose of this autonomy is different for each person. MAN1 described her job description as being generic with tasks set by others. It was up to her to fulfil this brief and she said that she had a great deal of autonomy in doing that. This definition of autonomy is limited: she is only to work independently to complete the tasks set by others. Indeed, this respondent returned repeatedly in the interviews to her struggle with professional and personal boundaries. She thought that being professional meant setting aside her personal beliefs and judgements to fulfil a role set by others. Again, this limits her autonomy. She is disenabling herself from acting according to her own personal wishes because of a 'professional' need to follow policy and procedure. T3 claimed 'complete autonomy' (I) for his work before the merger of the two elements of the provision. He reported being free to design lessons and assessments as how he wished. He felt that this had been taken away with the constrictions of the timetable being imposed on him when the elements merged. He dismissed autonomy now as 'a load of sedge' (I) and the feeling that we have 'just become technicians' (I). Here autonomy is independence and freedom to act. Even timetabling is a threat to that independent action.

Freedom and Discretion

Most respondents spoke about freedom to act rather than autonomy. The respondents reported that this discretion was defined and limited in different ways. It varied from the ability to make changes in lessons from plans (SA4 and 5) to the acknowledgement of work 'beyond distributed leadership' (T2). SA4's changes would be limited to working within the areas he was qualified to work within. SA5 thought this meant that written plans could be changed to meet individual circumstances. T2's freedom was to 'ban nothing' (I) but to allow for a 'mixed bag' that was used and evaluated. This has to be tempered by T1's concerns about the 'diversity' (I) this might produce. These are two sides of the argument between consistency and diversity. SA1 thought he had freedom to act independently until the decision to send someone home (a legal exclusion) when he had to approach the Headteacher for permission. Freedom is important to SA3 but is acknowledged as not unlimited (I). She defines this as leeway to interpret rules and guidelines (I). SA6 wanted enough freedom to be 'herself with the young person' (I). Only one

respondent, SA1, thought he had too much freedom. He saw a happy balance of 'fifty-fifty' freedom and direction whereas, currently, he had 'seventy five-twenty five' (I) in favour of his freedom.

Professional Growth, Nourishment, and Development

The area of professional development and nourishment was explored at interview. This was an area where the freedom of the individual and the limits of the discretion offered them could be seen. Perhaps, T2's claim that he 'was leader but not master' (I) is indicative of the majority of opinions on the personal responsibility for development. AD1 was concerned about the risk of moving forward in professional development. He felt that his own desire for security (protection of his income and his family) would stop him moving forward. SA3 saw it as a personal responsibility and required an open-minded attitude (I). MAN1 also spoke about the importance of each person taking personal responsibility and having ownership of his or her development. She also said that as a manager she had responsibility for the professional development of the staff she was assigned. Only one respondent, SA4, did not acknowledge a role for himself or personal responsibility for his own professional development. He gave all responsibility for his development to his supervisors and the systems that they had in place. Namely, this was the supervision system.

The Other

The acknowledgement of the role of others was reported in many ways. This could be enabling or constricting depending on the perspective of the respondent. Again, there is a common language but differences of interpretation and meaning. There is a wide discrepancy in definitions, value, and purposes of working with others.

Team Work

Team working was reported by a number of respondents but the nature and purpose of the team was not unequivocal. T1 spoke about a consistent, team effort being part of the professional's role (I). Part of being professional was to give up individuality to conform to a way of working consistently across the provision. She had also spoken about her worries of diversity from too much freedom (I). However, this respondent also reported being 'extremely stressed' (I) if anyone else

were to find something wrong in her practice. SA1 spoke about the lack of 'commonality' in the support assistants' work. For him this common thread of practice was very important. On the other hand, for SA4, SA5, and T3 team working was a friendly and supportive atmosphere in which to work. Whereas, the importance of a team and consistent approach and the sense of participation and belonging exist, the limits and scope of the team is unclear. There is little agreement on what it is to work in a team. For SA1, being able to organise and work with others was part of his definition of professionalism. However, only one member of staff spoke about working in collaboration: SA3 had described working together with others to rewrite an internal policy document (I). When MAN1 spoke about working with others this was just to check for overlap not to collaborate with others. T3 used collegialism to describe working with others and said this was an uncommon reality in schools. The supportive element of the team was noted by some but definition of this support was not universal: SA3 spoke about being respected by colleagues, for example, being asked her opinion, and being known by managers, illustrated by them caring about you (I); and SA4 described support from staff as them taking part in his activities with the young people. MAN1 and SA2 said that team working should be part of development: MAN1 saying it was everyone's responsibility to develop each other's practice (I); SA2 had said it was good to go together to training for social support (I).

The concern that individuals might be lost in this team effort was also reported. For T2 this individuality was too important: his humanity and personal relationships were important to his professional practice. He also reported difficulty with other staff who had stridently held opinions and a mainstream view of education. He also wanted freedom with nothing banned but use of tools rigorously evaluated to add to the body of knowledge in what works in this provision. Here team working was imposition of a straightjacket of consistency that was unacceptable to the person. SA6 had noted her concerns about not being heard or shouted down. Her silence then contributed to the impression of a harmonious team.

Trust

Another problem in the working together with others was the level of trust respondents reported. The lack of trust and not knowing whom to trust is a

recurring theme in the respondents' accounts. These perceptions were, in part, shaped by the events in the school leading to the Headteacher's suspension but this tended to sharpen the focus and allow people to speak about how they were feeling. This uncertainty produced strong responses in the interviews. AD1 reported concerns about the motivations of others in social climbing (III); SA2 felt that there was no-one she could trust; SA6 felt she had to 'check in, check in' to assure managers she was doing her job and that she did not know who to turn to. MAN1 spoke about the 'safety' (III) in keeping views confidential and T1 reported her perception that others did not want their views aired in public (III). T2 spoke about the 'jungle school' where it was sometimes safer to keep quiet (III).

Emotional Needs

Emotional need is a factor in human interactions. The levels of care, love, worth, and respect that a person needs varies. The mention of this in the interview process on professionalism was interesting. Only two respondents spoke about their own emotional needs. These people thought that this was an important part of their work and did not separate this part of their lives from their work. Relationships are a strong theme throughout MAN1's interviews: interestingly she sees herself as in need of emotional support, she needs to be valued in her work. This comes into her experience of school where she had good relationships with staff because her mother was known. She also recounted in detail her emotional life experience (having a daughter young, breaking up with her partner, and her business failing). She spoke about needing to prove herself. Hence being successful is very important and having good relationships and a sense of belonging. This was important in her view of success. T3 stated that he needed to have a happy workplace and saw himself as the person who would make others happy. SA4 and 5 each spoke about the happy working place. However, SA6 reported it was not always 'happy families' (II).

Working Relationships

Working relationships are distinct from emotional relationships. These are the relationships needed to operate with others at work. AD1 thought he could 'come up or down to anyone's levels': he was supplying a justification of himself as a member of the 'lowerarchy'. He said he did not need anyone: again stressing his

individuality and self worth but also noted his good relationships with some of the students and how he could not operate in isolation. His suspicion of others is something that comes through the interviews. His sense of humour is used to defend his position: his best relationships are 'the rattle of keys going into the gate' (II). Others are viewed with suspicion as 'above themselves' and 'untrustworthy, want-to-bes' (II), who are unscrupulous. This colours his view of the context as the 'shit-hole school.' SA2 spoke about the lack of trust between the staff. SA3 shows meekness throughout her accounts of dealing with the young people and other staff. She was the only member of staff to speak about an instance of real collaborative working with others. She also spoke about being a cog in the wheel and being one part of the machine of the school. She said she did not know the effect that she was having: but this is understating what she does. Her personality is quiet and introverted but she did say that she was confident in what she was doing (her success at interview). SA4, throughout the interviews, described staff and students that would play his game: taking part in the activities he was leading. SA6 sees herself as low on the hierarchy of staff and would be astounded if anyone ever asked her for help. She then feels unheard and afraid to speak out although is trying to counter this. She has a low level of trust in her managers.

T1 was reflective and was very concerned that anyone might pick up something that she had missed. This insecurity is dealt with by ultimates of action: she stated that the staff were all to work together in a consistent approach. This suggests that she sees one approach that everyone should use that involves the expectations of the young person being raised by the whole staff. She mentions not mixing with staff but wants a professional, consistent approach. T2 brought a cup of tea as an object to the first interview. This was to demonstrate that the staff needed to work together. He wanted a mix of people to work with and only thought that those with stridently held or authoritarian views were difficult to work with. TA1 is concerned that she is respectful to managers and has good relationships with other staff in case she needs to ask them to do something in her management position.

Summary

In this section I have noted that there is little commonalty in the definitions of respondents' universal desire for freedom to act. This includes differing

constructions of hierarchy including management styles, the normative rules of the school and responses to authority and control. Professional development was seen, by almost all, as an individual's responsibility. However, there is a great deal of variance in how much responsibility should be given to supervisors. Finally, the perspectives of the others who work with them are given. These show a wide range of construction and value of working with others.

3. Making Sense of the Findings on the Space for Professional Action

To make sense of the respondents' diverse definitions of the space for professional action I use typologies. In each of these the perceptions of factors as constraining or enabling is considered against a theme from the respondents' accounts. This theme has been characterised by two polarities within that theme. This includes control and freedom for an explanation of how people work within hierarchies, structure and control; individualism and collectivism for an explanation of how people work with others; and knowledge and skills and values and beliefs for an explanation of how people justify how and why they do their work. In chapter seven I suggest uses for these typologies as tools for professionals engaging in development in other contexts.

Typology 1: Control and Freedom

The first typology that I use to make sense of the space for professional action is the enabling or constraining factors that people feel they have within different levels of control. This is expressed using the polarities of control and freedom and is given in figure 6.1. Here control is managerial and denies free choice on the part of the professional. Freedom is the ability to act without this control and to take responsibility for actions.

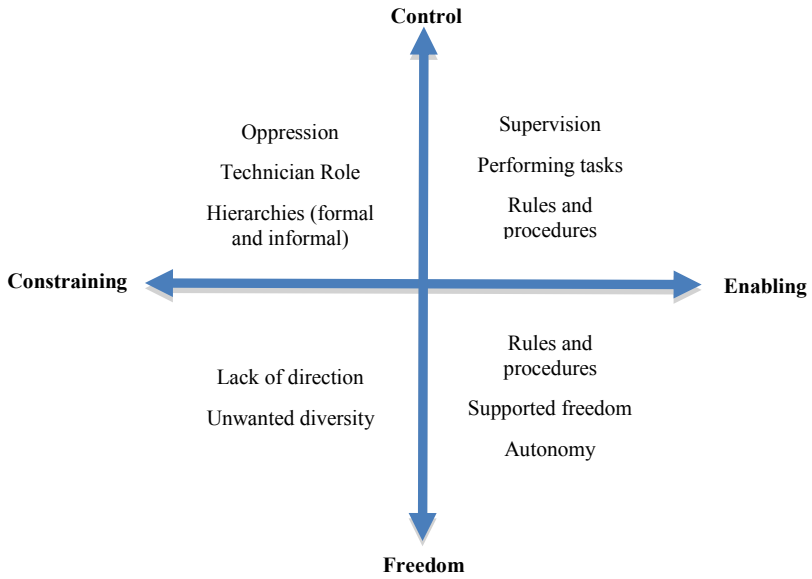

Figure 6.1: A Typology for Control and Freedom

Enabling and Constraining Perceptions of Control

It is, initially, surprising to find enabling elements of control. However, this was not uncommon in this case. It was particularly true of respondents who had defined professionalism as doing a good job in completing tasks set by others. Elements within control included managerial supervision, performing tasks, and the place of rules and procedures. The level of supervision was important: pleasing the senior was a factor for some but, for others, this involved surrender of personal control to the manager. This also featured strongly in the accounts of development. One person was even unwilling to accept any personal responsibility for this. Performing tasks under various levels of supervision could be defined absolutely or by requiring generous gifts of control, from the manager to the staff member, to make changes in practice to meet the changing demands of the young people. The purpose of rules and procedures in an environment that was controlled by others varied between abdications of personal responsibility and clearly delineating tasks. Constraining perceptions of control were also common. They include oppression, limiting professionals to technician role, and formal and informal hierarchies. The strongest of these is the notion of oppression. This is a statement of the control being used to extinguish freedom. In the view of the oppressed the hierarchy was something set up to protect the position of the manager. The technician role was only to complete tasks that you had been told to do. Here the responsibility for

choice was removed and competence in task completion rather than deciding what to do with the individual became the goal. Those who wanted, or expected, independence, particularly disfavoured this level of control. Hierarchies could be formal or informal: the formal management structure of the school or the informal structures between the respondents. Informal structures were classed as 'snobbery' (SA2 I) and highlighted the perceptions of social ordering within the professionals in this case (for example teacher and support worker). Both informal and formal hierarchies were seen as a part of life in education and both had negative connotations.

Enabling and Constraining Perceptions of Freedom

The enabling perceptions of freedom included rules and procedures, supported freedom, and autonomy. Rules and procedures had changed from those mentioned above in the enabling factors of control. Now rules and procedures are guidelines to be interpreted with leeway by the professional and to act as a safety zone. Supported freedom granted responsibility for actions but reassured support and help when required. Autonomy was a greater level of freedom. It was described as nothing banned and everything left up to the person to use their free choice and discretion to use strategies, as they felt appropriate. In this was professional trust that the person was being conscientious and was working, without supervision, to achieve the best for the client. The constraining perceptions of freedom included the lack of direction from managers and the unwanted outcomes of too much diversity. Too much freedom was seen as problematic for some of the respondents. The cost of removing control from managers was seen as a lessening of the degree of direction they could give. The respondent who had said this wanted to have benchmarks set for his work and to have these rigorously monitored. Another 'unwanted' part of freedom was the freedom of staff to pursue their own strengths and interests as this might lead to an unrecognisable diversity within the organisation. This assumes that the aim of the professional is to be part of a uniform, consistent organisation. The control of management was seen as important in both of these conceptions of the space.

What does this mean for the space for professional action?

In a controlled situation ways of working could be imposed without the consultation of the professional. The manager/supervisor would just issue new instructions. This led to people feeling under employed or under used. Some see control as disempowering, however, others wanted that level of control in their work. There is an element of protection of the self and personal safety: this was an abdication of responsibility in place of competence. Freedom was considered by all to be a great goal but this was always seen as limited. The response to the level of control in gaining this freedom is interesting: this could be rebellious, deviant behaviour to circumvent the control; resigned acceptance of the place of the controller; or negotiation with the controller to be able to bring about the action that was wanted. It is a different conceptualisation of the situation for anyone to state that they held autonomy. Absolute autonomy was unlikely but the release of control and the freedom of personal responsibility could allow the professional to exercise their own judgement within the structure of an organisation. The claim that this might bring too much diversity is interesting: it is control thinking describing freedom.

Typology 2: Working with Others: Individualism and Collectivism

The second typology that I use to make sense of the space for professional action in this case is the constraining and enabling factors in working with others. This is represented by the polarities of individualism and collectivism. Here individualism is the person working on their own, independently of others; collectivism is the person working as part of a group. This is given in figure 6.2.

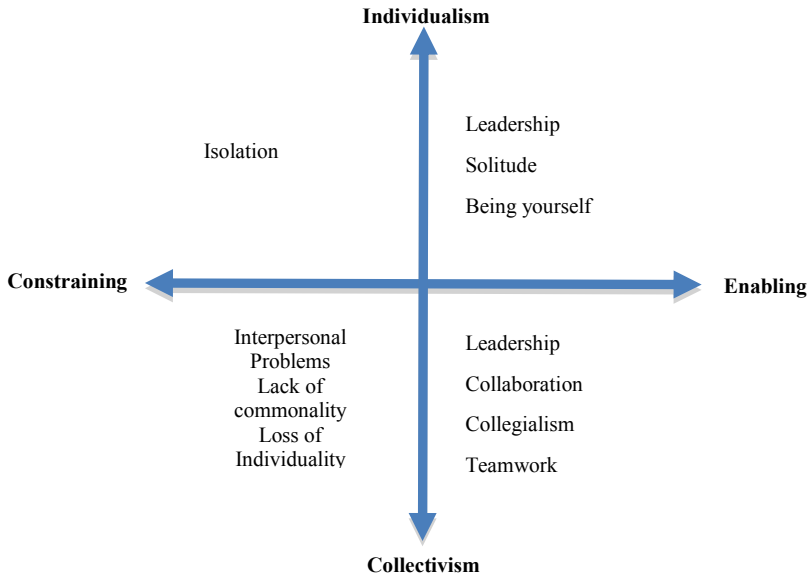

Figure 6.2: A Typology for Individualism and Collectivism

Enabling and Constraining Perceptions of Individualism

The enabling perceptions of individualism included the place of leadership, solitude, and being able to be yourself. Here leadership is one person telling another what to do. Solitude is defined in two ways: not needing anyone else and not wanting anyone else to scrutinise their work. By not needing anyone else the respondent was suggesting a self-imposed isolation and a personal resilience that transcended the dominant calls for collective action. The respondent who had not wanted others to scrutinise her work had also been the person who wanted to have a consistent group way of working. In a sense, both definitions of solitude are about self-protection. Respondents also reported the importance of being able to be yourself as this was a fundamental part of being able to act. The major constraining perception of individualism is the fear of isolation. This isolation is not a product of the professional's agency but an outcome of others' positioning and actions. Here the professional is not heard or recognised by managers or colleagues. It could also be because of the removal of peer support and the comradeship that could come from the group.

Enabling and Constraining Perceptions of Collectivism

The enabling perceptions of collectivism included leadership, collaboration, collegialism, and teamwork. Leadership in a collective sense is not authoritarian;

rather it seeks for the person to be leading initiatives with colleagues. Only one member of staff mentioned collaboration. This was working together towards a particular goal. Gunter (2001, p. 139) speaks about staff 'chatting in the corridor' to share ideas, communicate, and negotiate; working together 'to solve problems' (Gunter, 2001, p. 147). True collegialism was seen as a rare thing in actuality. However, the idea of the team is confused as this sometimes refers to the consistent, focused team effort, and sometimes sounds more like a social club. The constraining perceptions of collectivism included interpersonal problems, lack of commonality, and loss of individuality. These interpersonal problems were related as lack of communication or stridently held views that excluded others. These difficulties in the composite output of the whole team are a real part of humans working together and should not be overlooked. The lack of commonality was a problem when common, consistent practice was seen as a goal. One respondent noted that teachers had a defined role but the support assistants did not. They could not be judged in a similar manner when the outputs were seen as so different. However, the commonality with others might be a myth. Other respondents had noted that duties were spelled out in codes of practice and contracts but that this was merely a baseline. Loss of individuality is a concern for those who see the group output as being more forceful that the individual's contribution.

What does this mean for the space for professional action?

The place of the person as an individual or as one of the group is in flux. The commonality of the work done is an interesting aim: any client going to any professional should be given a consistent level of service. However, this is mixed with the notions of manufacturing models where consistency is the goal. Perhaps this is a superfluous goal when working with the complexities of human beings. The collective can be seen as a social club to welcome or exclude the professionals; it could also be a synergy of practice to ensure that the organisation was stronger through combined efforts of many rather than the conscientious work of any single person. However, the aim of consistent, collective practice is often to present a managerial organisation that has, or, at least, looks like a thin veneer of, consistent, uniform, quality-controlled practice. Failure to live up to this veneer could be seen as deviance or challenge, or as not fitting in to the group. The search for solitude may be more to do with resisting conformity than the desire not to work with others.

Equally, the place of the social and emotional needs of the staff cannot be ignored. The membership of a staff and the need for belonging and respect are important. However, this sometimes becomes exclusive, as the price for joining this social club might be too high.

Typology 3: Values and Beliefs or Knowledge and Skills

The final typology that I use to make sense of the constricting and enabling factors in the space for professional action in this case is the motivation of values and beliefs or knowledge and skills. This is the motivation for acting. But was this because it was known and understood that a particular action should take place? Or was it because it was believed and part of someone's values to act? This is given in diagram 6.3.

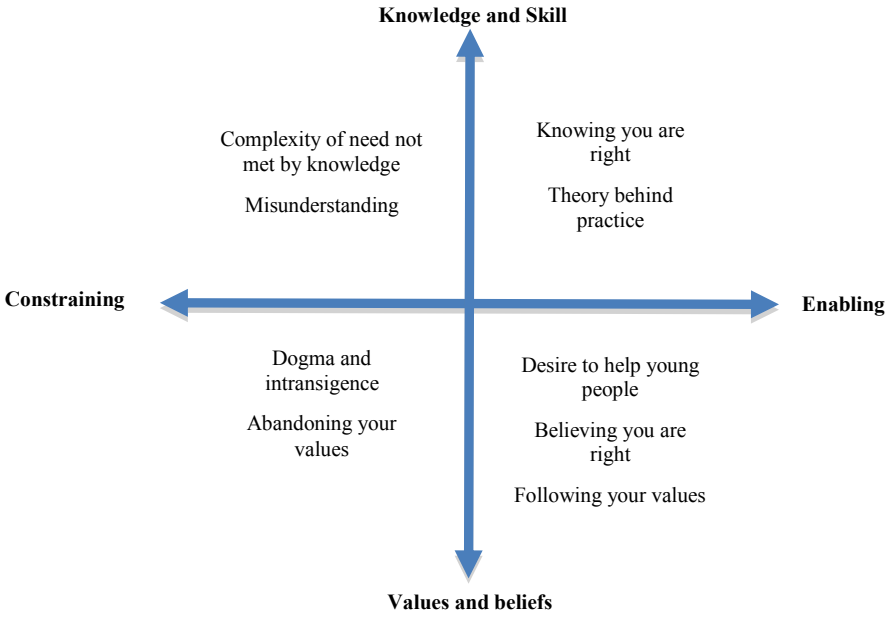

Figure 6.3: A Typology for Knowledge and Skills and Values and Beliefs

Enabling and Constraining Perceptions of Knowledge and Skills

The enabling perceptions of knowledge- and skill-based action in the space for professional action included knowing you are right and understanding the theory behind action. In 'knowing you are right' is the theory behind the action but this has to be considered with the training required and ability to put that training into practice. Constraining perceptions of knowledge- and skill-based action in the space for professional action included the place of misunderstanding and the

realisation of the complexity of needs and the futility of the professional's action to meet these needs. Here the skills and awareness of the respondent are enabling them to identify situations that are too complex to be able to resolve and may need other types of action. This is the identification of the 'provisionality of knowledge' (Bottery, 1998, p. 167). That author saw this as a positive part of being professional at the present time.

Enabling and Constraining Perceptions of Values and Beliefs

The enabling perceptions of basing action on values and beliefs included the desire to help the young person, believing you right, and being able to follow your own values. The statement of desire to help the young person was seen as important for the professional to make. This statement was seen as part of the work. The belief in being right is important in guiding the professional through areas where knowledge and skills are unknown. Believing that you were right gave a moral justification to practice. Being able to follow one's own values was an important part of self-belief and again became part of the moral justification of practice. The constraining perceptions of basing action on values and beliefs included the place of dogma and intransigence, and the concerns of abandoning your beliefs.

What does this mean for the space for professional action?

The place of values and beliefs and their counterbalance with knowledge and skills is important. The professional working against their values and beliefs is constrained: their own moral compass is subsumed by the organisation that they are working for. This inability to be your self is dangerous. The position where some are setting aside their own values in place of a common will is not enabling them to operate fully. Indeed the opposite of acting on values alone without the theory to back up practice is problematic. Here the person is in danger of becoming motivated by dogma. The difference between knowing and believing you are right is one that should not be ignored. Belief and values have to be tested against knowledge and skills and vice versa.

Summary

In this section I have looked at the respondents' constructions of the space for professional action using typologies. These show the complexity of factors that are seen as constrictive or enabling in their practice. There is a wide range of opinion

and reports of practice. There is a prevailing discourse of wanting to help the young people by having a friendly, supportive working environment. Professionals in this environment produce a consistent and high quality service for their client. However, the implausibility of such an environment existing in reality and the desirability of such an environment is given. One thing is clear: the professional does not operate in isolation. The issues of working with others and within structures are an ever-present reality. Values and knowledge need to work together: belief has to be challenged by theory and theory has to be challenged by belief. All knowledge is provisional. The professional must be aware of these realities but also focus on the real task at hand: helping the client.

4. Concluding Remarks

In this chapter I have explored how respondents perceive the construction of their space for professional action. In section one analysis of the respondents' accounts has revealed themes and elements of themes in the constructions of this space. Within these themes there is little common definition and this is obscured by a common use of language. There is little agreement on the definition of themes and elements of themes that make up these constructions or on the effects these have on the person's ability to act. One theme or element of a theme may be enabling to one person and constricting to another. In section three I have used typologies to understand how respondents see themes and elements of themes in the construction of the space for professional action as constricting or enabling. This has been a major outcome from this research. Rather than constructing an ideal model for the space for professional action I have contributed to the understanding of professionalism in education by showing how people perceive this space in this case. The quadrants of the typologies show the outcomes of differing perceptions of elements as constricting or enabling. Understanding the complexity of the perceptions of this space has implications beyond this case. This will be further discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 7

Professionalism in Education: Conclusions

1. Introduction

This research investigates professionalism in education. It has a particular focus on the construction of the space for professional action. An initial survey of the data from this study and the literature might suggest that professionalism is in a muddle. However, I have contributed to the understanding of professionalism in education by carrying out close analysis of this muddle to reveal a cacophony of definitions and practices hidden by a common language. A common understanding of this language is often assumed. The different constructions of professionalism do not sit well together: there are tensions and incompatibilities between them. My use of thematic analysis in chapters five and six enables me to unpick these constructions. In addition, the use of typologies in chapter six has contributed to the understanding of the space for professional action. The space for professional action is complex but the typologies help me to represent and better understand this complexity. This has yielded a research-based tool for other professionals. In this chapter I present my conclusions in four sections. Following the introduction, the first section is a critical discussion of the findings. I return to my research questions and show, based on the work presented in previous chapters, I can now provide answers to these questions. In addition, I also critically assess the questions and highlight the unexpected outcomes of the research. In section three I write about one of the most important outcomes of this research: I will show how the typologies, used in chapter six for analysis of the data, might be used as a tool by other professionals in education who are engaging in professional development. I detail how the typologies might be used to help other professionals understand their space for professional action: to come to a professional understanding on the definition, value, and desirability of elements of professionalism, and understand the potential effects of actions. In the fourth section I consider the strengths and weaknesses of this research. I include consideration of what is 'good' research and how 'doctoral' study has affected this research, a consideration of methods and methodology employed in the study, and the benefits and drawbacks of researching one's own context. In the fourth section I include my opinions on the future of professionalism in education based on my findings in this study. This includes

recommendations for further study. The final section is my concluding remarks on what this research has found and has to offer professionalism in education.

2. A Critical Discussion of the Findings

At the beginning of this research process the areas I was interested in finding out about were formulated into research questions. In chapter one I identified three clusters of questions: professionalism enacted and performed, the person and professionalism, and the space for professional action. I use these clusters to structure the section and reproduce the questions here as a reminder from chapter one. In addition, my research has gone beyond just answering these questions: other more interesting things have come from the research and I detail these below. In this section I critically discuss the questions and my findings. In addition, I write about how my research complements or contradicts the literature reviewed in chapter two.

Professionalism Articulated and Performed

The first cluster of questions, showing my interest at the beginning of the research project, is about how professionalism was articulated and performed. These include the questions of: how is professionalism expressed by the respondents? What value does professionalism hold for them (explicitly and implicitly)? How do respondents' accounts compare with others in this context and those of other discourses on professionalism? What factors are considered to play a role in these constructions? And, what are the differences between the definitions of professionalism and the accounts of practice? My findings about how professionalism was articulated and performed show that there is a common use of language but this hides a multiplicity of definition. This illusion of commonality is similar to that found by Freidson (1994). Stronach *et al* (2002) had also identified problems with the lack of commonality and the attempts of theorists to reduce practice to theory. In this research themes and elements of themes found in the analysis of the respondents' definitions in this case are presented in chapter five sections two and three. These themes are not commonly defined and the multiple definitions could be incompatible and a source of tension. The lack of unanimity in the definitions of professionalism is interesting. In this work I have tried to locate and understand the respondents' definitions. I have also found that the assumption

of this unanimity by the members of this case is also interesting. There was an assumption in the respondents' accounts that professionalism could be defined and was commonly understood. In my experience, this desire for consensus is a common and strong factor in education. Within the conflicting definitions there are two distinct discourses about professionalism: being professional and being a professional. I have identified a silence in the literature regarding this distinction. But the respondents in this case also spoke about being professional. This was about a quality of work and service and did not make any claim for 'special' status. Some respondents, who mixed the two together and did not make a clear difference, blurred the distinction. This blurring and confusion is an interesting finding in this work. Being a professional had elements of status, expertise, credentialism, and autonomy. These were also found in my review of the literature in chapter two sections two and three. In this case status is, almost unanimously, viewed positively, however, it is viewed as a positive and negative in literature. For example: Freidson (2004) writes about a workplace shelter but warns against economic self-interests; Robson (1998), Francis and Humphreys (2000), Boreham (2000), and James and Gleeson (2007) see this negatively: limiting others, mere protectionism or sheltering social elites. However, in this case it is, almost unanimously, viewed positively. The definition and purpose of having a special status in this case is not common to all. In the respondents' accounts claim of this status does not automatically entail quality. There is no direct correlation between claims of being a professional and a higher quality of work than of those who do not claim this status. Responsibility in this case is not affected by professional status. Professional barriers, seen as a problem in Boreham (2000) and Webb and Vulliamy (2001), are arbitrary here. In day-to-day practice, in this case, these are not always recognised. In fact, in this case it was a personal decision whether or not to define oneself as a professional. The structure of the organisation does not recognise professionalism in the level of responsibilities given to staff. However, professional groups are in place and are awarded different levels of financial reward. In my review of the literature in chapter two, expertise is not commonly defined. Freidson (1994) and Carr (2000) have high expectations for expertise. Lingard (2009) was looking for high levels of performance and was surprised to find a social worker model of teaching. Meanwhile, Gunter (2001, p. 146) saw this as anything from 'altruism' to 'chatting to colleagues.' Lawn (1996) and Milliband (2006 quoted in

James and Gleeson 2007) write about the servant of the market and the competent labourer. Biesta (2005) sees the focus as meeting clients' needs. The difficulties in definition in this case are similar. However, I have found that the differences in the themes and elements of themes on which expertise is defined depends on how and where it is used: the young person, the education system, and the roles and responsibilities of the person working there. Expertise is often neglected as the day-to-day coping with the young person is given precedence to helping the young person to change. There are value judgements made about the value of expertise. Again and again relationship building is seen as an important part of working with these young people. This is seen as a fundamental of working successfully with other human beings and an important part of expertise. However, officially this expertise is ignored and other 'harder' measures are put into place. In Freidson (1994) credentialism and the need for a degree was seen as important. Francis and Humphreys (2000) note that this values youthful performance in education. Robson (1998) and James and Gleeson (2007) note the high value on credentialism that obscures other skills. In this case I found the value of learning for staff was high but the level of qualification varied greatly: from the theory to back up practice to a never-ending road of discovery. Credentials to credit basic competence in skills are valued highest by many in this case. Others saw their lack of degree as excluding them from professional status. Again there is no direct link between quality of work and level of qualification. Discretion and autonomy was very important to all respondents but the definition and limits to this freedom were not common to all. Supervision by seniors was highly valued by some who claimed to be professionals. Others shunned any interference in their work. Again there was no link between the quality of work and the level of supervision or freedom.

This research has yielded answers to the research questions on the definition and enactment of professionalism. The identification of the multiplicity of constructions and definitions of these constructions shows that professionalism has many definitions. Common language hides this multiplicity and suggests a commonality to professionalism that simply is not seen in literature or in the findings in this case. The finding of this multiplicity is a major change in my understanding. I had hoped for some closure but instead this has yielded many new openings. It is important for the understanding of professionalism that this is

foregrounded. There is no one-for-all solution or definition of professionalism. Professionalism is a complex construct and the respondents have many different definitions for what it means to them.

The Person and Professionalism

The second cluster of questions was about the person and professionalism. This included the following questions: what values, assumptions, and judgements are revealed by the respondents' accounts of their own stories as individuals and as professionals in education? And, how do personal histories correlate with accounts of performance and views of professionalism? At the beginning of the research process I thought that the effect of the person and their agency in enacting professionalism would be an interesting area to investigate. Stronach *et al.* (2002) identify the individual's role in shaping professionalism. Similarly, Forbes (2009) notes the role of each person's social capital. Watson (2009) noted the places were people worked well together and the individuals who made that happen. This research yielded a strong argument for the role of the person. The person is key: they decide on what to do and how to respond to the context in which they work. Accounts of welfarism and neoliberalism (Lawn (1996), Nixon *et al.* (1998), and Gunter (2002)) and client emancipation (Freidson (1994), Bottery (1998), and Williamson (2007)) help locate practice in different political and social environments but these are found to be blurred in the respondents' accounts in this case. The person's life experiences colour their perceptions and this affects the work they do as a professional. This cannot be over emphasised. The affects of these experiences can be seen in the analysis of the perceptions of the young person and the school, given in the fourth section of chapter five, and in the analysis of the respondents' accounts of education and their trajectories in coming to this provision, given in chapter five section five. This suggests a strong correlation between personal history and current practice. However, the reported rationales for this behaviour are not common. Some respondents can be seen to be repeating history while others are righting wrongs in their present job from their school days. It is interesting to note that, especially in repeating history, respondents seem unaware of their actions. The importance of the person and the choices that they make is key to understanding professionalism in education. A model of professionalism without the person is implausible. However, the complexity of the person and the effects of

their history make prediction of action on the basis of previous histories dubious. This lends weight to an argument for the importance of professional understanding as each person comes with different agendas but needs to work with others and agree a common definition of what they should be doing. It would be wrong to try to legislate and codify this. The person must come as themselves and be prepared to mediate practice with others.

My research has enabled me to answer questions of the person and professionalism. The second question is now seen as very important as the correlation of histories and present performance is very strong. In fact, life histories have shaped the definitions of many of the factors that are used to construct professionalism. The value and purpose of these factors is therefore shaped by life experiences.

The Space for Professional Action

The final cluster of questions is about the space for professional action. This included the following questions: how do respondents perceive the factors and influences that shape the space for professional action? What do respondents' accounts of performance in the web of relationships, power, and perceptions reveal about professionalism and the person? What factors in this space for professional action are perceived as restrictive or enabling? Why and how is this important or problematic for them? Gunter (2001) and Forbes (2009) are clear in documenting the need for people to work together. Many authors have acknowledged the difficulties in doing this (for example Boreham (2000) and Edwards *et al.* (2009)). Bottery (1998), in his ethics for professionals, suggests that knowledge is limited, awareness of others is needed, and we must be searching for truth. The study of the space for professional action in this research has yielded a major outcome: a new understanding of the complexities of the constructions of the space for professional action and the outcomes of these constructions. In the second section of chapter six I have thematically analysed the respondents' constructions of the space for professional action revealing a multiplicity of definition in this case. Themes and elements of themes within these constructions were defined differently. Respondents did not report a common response to these factors. They could be constraining for one person, and enabling for another. The typologies in the third section of chapter six (see figures 6.1 – 6.3) have been very useful in understanding

this cacophony of definitions. There is no right or wrong position. I suggest that these may be used to allow other professionals, in a structured way, to look at their own practice. This is further detailed in section three of this chapter. Each of the typologies shows the constraining or enabling perceptions of polarities of themes from the space for professional action. Each of the polarities in these typologies is an everyday concern for the people trying to enact professionalism. The professional need not be in any fixed position within these typologies. Change and flux are an inevitable and healthy part of professionalism. The first of the typologies (see figure 6.1) shows the constraining and enabling perceptions of levels of control in the workplace with the polarity of control and freedom. The professional is working within structures. He or she has to operate within the levels of control or freedom. Not everyone wanted to have freedom and the levels of control that people wanted varied. This raises difficult issues for those leading or being led and having leadership and responsibility distributed. A hierarchical system is comforting for some whilst being a stumbling block for others; similarly, too much freedom was seen to be a negative by some and an essential part of work for others. The supervision role of seniors comes back throughout the interviews. There is a multiplicity of definitions on what the senior's role should be and how much responsibility each person should be given. The second typology (see figure 6.2) shows the constricting and enabling effects of working with others with the polarity of individualism and collectivism. One section of the thematic analysis of the space for professional action, in chapter six section two, also considers the other. The perceptions of how others were viewed and the rationale for working with others are not commonly defined. There are strong discourses of teamwork and collectivism in education. This can be welcomed or seen as a barrier to individual practice. The notion of community is strong in education: the aim of teamwork is, often, to rely on each other and share good practice. This is based on the assumption that community can or might exist and my study of this case suggests that community does not exist, other than in a thin veneer of common language that has no depth and soon reveals incompatible differences. Individuals are important to professionalism. There is a concern that under a collectivist system the individual might be lost. However, it should also be noted that some are concerned about isolation and how this could come from individualism. The professional must be able to work independently of others but there is a need for support. Isolation is

the absence of support. The final typology (see figure 6.3) shows the constraining and enabling perceptions of beliefs and knowledge with the polarity of knowledge and skills and values and beliefs. Perhaps this is not a polarity but if the person enacting professionalism is denied one or the other problems can arise. These positions need each other to produce a balance of informed practice to which the person can bring their beliefs and opinions. Never should either of these positions over rule the other. The power of knowing and believing you are right, the knowledge to back up practice must be kept in balance with the acknowledgement that all knowledge is provisional and belief must be questioned.

My research has enabled me to answer the research questions on the space for professional development. I have contributed to the understanding of the space for professional action in this and in other contexts. Through thematic analysis I have identified the complexity of the constructions and typologies help to make sense of the multiple accounts of perceptions of factors in these constructions. In this research I do not evaluate these factors and make judgements as to their value. Identifying the multiple perceptions that are held by the respondents has been important in understanding how professionalism can operate.

3. Typologies for the Space for Professional Action: A New Tool for Professional Development

A major outcome of this research has been the creation of typologies for the space for professional action (see figures 6.1 – 6.3). These typologies have been useful analytical tools in contributing to the understanding of how professionals perceive and articulate the constructions of the space for professional action. They have been used to show how this space is not simple: similar factors are perceived as enabling or constricting by different people and this is difficult to predict for any person. The professional is pulled in different directions by different discourses and policies that are equally convincing and plausible. Seeing complexity through the typologies, and making sense of the professionals' place in it, contributes to the understanding of the space for professional action. In this section I argue that these typologies could be used in other contexts as a tool for professional development. These typologies are not models of what the perfect space for professional action

might look like but could be research-informed analytical tools to allow professionals to come to professional understanding of their own space for professional action and the changes they need to make within it. They could be used to help professionals understand more and less desirable elements of the space in which they operate and to predict and evaluate the potential outcomes of actions to enhance professionalism.

Using Typologies as a Tool for Professional Development

Here I will outline one way in which others could use the typologies for the space for professional action generated in this research. This is a multi-staged process: firstly, everyone involved should assess their own constructions using the blank typologies (see figures 7.1 – 7.3); completed typologies can then be shared and discussed by the group; further discussion should taken place with the comparison of the completed typologies from this research (see figures 6.1 – 6.3). This would allow mapping of their context to be compared with another one already tested in research.

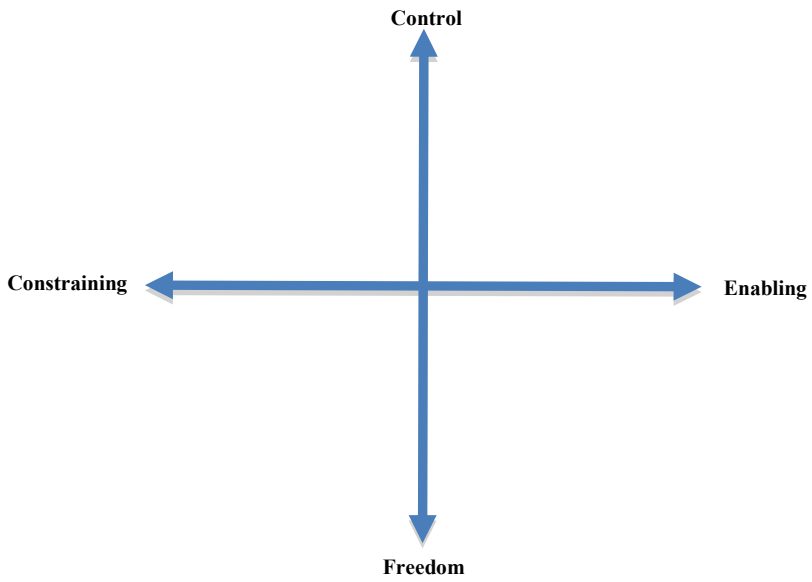

Figure 7.1: Control/Freedom Typology

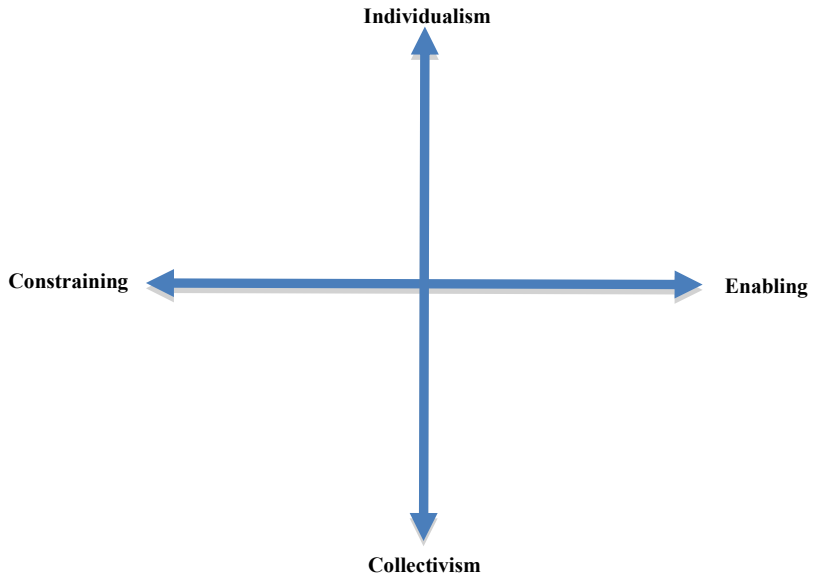

Figure 7.2: Individualism/Collectivism Typology

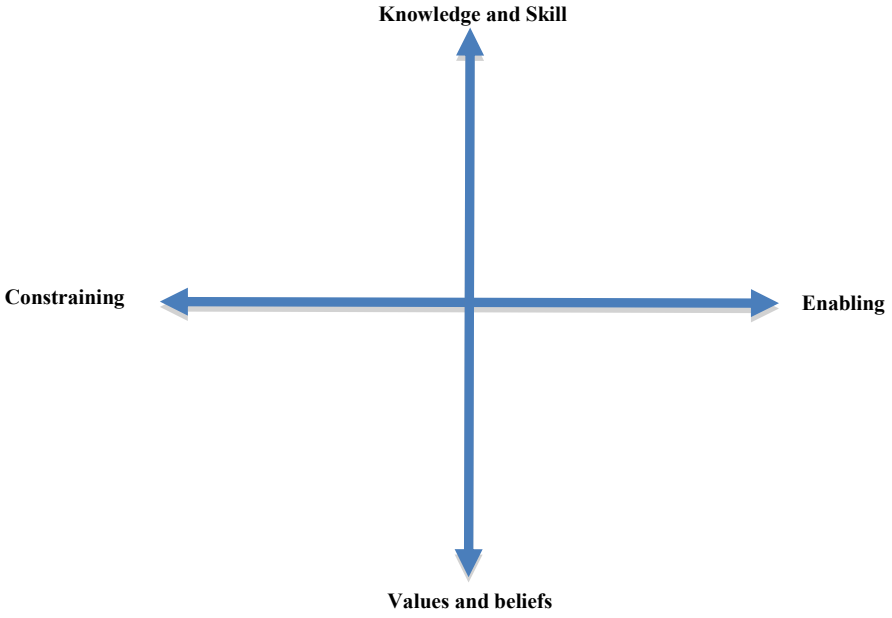

Figure 7.3: Knowledge and Skill/Values and Beliefs Typology

The process and discussion is designed to achieve a number of things: each person will have had a chance to think about their constructions of the space for professional action; to have shared and discussed these constructions; and compared their findings with those in this research. A common understanding can be discussed and agreed. This will have given the participants the opportunity to identify their assumptions. Those involved in the process will have taken part in

professional discussion to establish factors that are constraining and enabling. These factors can then be considered and action taken to address areas where weaknesses or problems have been identified. The decisions would be grounded on a strong evidential base that has foregrounded and agreed definition and language. This could be an evidence-based tool for identifying areas of strength, justifying the need for change, and stimulating action. The process could be repeated to measure the perceived effects of any changes following implementation. The process and actions of professional deliberation are much more important than outcome. This will in itself build stronger professionalism. Professionals who have an understanding of what they want, the decisions that have been made in the deliberation process, and knowing the direction they want to take.

4. Strengths and Weaknesses of this Research

In this section I consider the strengths and weaknesses of my research. I look in particular at a number of different aspects of this study: considering the effects of the doctoral study; the success of the methods and methodology; and the issues found in researching my own context. This research is submitted for the degree of Doctorate of Education (Ed. D.) at the University of Stirling. This has affected the process of the research as it has been crafted to meet criteria set by the university. The work will be assessed and examined. The academic rigour of this process might address, but does not guarantee, issues of quality in this research. It does not automatically infer that good research will have taken place. However, there are certain elements of the professional doctoral study that offer special opportunities to the researcher and the research that can take place. These deserve special mention here. Firstly, the professional doctorates, including the Ed. D., allow the candidate to study his or her context in depth. Lee *et al.* (2000, p. 119) and Scott *et al.* (2000, p. 54) both say that the professional doctorate requires a new hybrid form of knowledge creation including elements of disciplinary knowledge, technical rationality, disposition, and critical knowledge. The person here is both researcher and expert in their own workplace and not an outsider dropping in to do research. Lee *et al.* (2000, p. 127) view the professional doctorate as bringing together the workplace, professional, and university to create knowledge. They call for a 'properly sceptical view of the new rhetorics of 'learning' and 'research'' (Lee *et*

al., 2000, p. 132). The literature polarises the workplace and university: however, the person under taking the professional doctorate is negotiating a place between these. This space is academically researched practice. However, the person is caught in the tensions of claims and different priorities in the workplace and university. Some might view the professional as being crafted into an academic: Middleton (2003) writes that candidates are viewed as 'doctoral material' performing to meet this standard. In addition, the workplace, often wants quick answers, so dismisses the long, slow process of research. This work has allowed me to forge a new path with access to both university and practice. This work has benefited from the academic rigour of the university at doctoral level: I have been able to engage in deeper reflection and analysis of the data gathered. It has also been grounded in the perceptions of those in the workplace: I have been able to gain privileged access to people working in a context I am working in and to have opportunities to interview them. I think this has been a strong and healthy balance and a strength of this research. However, there are issues of researching one's own context. Firstly, working in my own context granted me privileged access to a social reality. I used my local knowledge and expertise to design and implement this study. My role in making decisions and carrying them out is foregrounded in this dissertation. This is not unproblematic: researcher objectivity is constrained here. However, Peshkin (1998) questions the plausibility of this objectivity. By foregrounding my own role I have tried to tame my subjectivity. Through this study I learned a great deal about professionalism in education, how this is perceived in my own context, and this has challenged my own assumptions. This also contributes to the understanding of professionalism in education and raises interesting questions on the limits of research and practice in the workplace. For example, information given in the interview was treated in confidence but this knowledge changed my perceptions of that person. This developed my relationship and understanding of the individual and affected how I worked with them. In addition, verbalising issues at interview has encouraged participants to think about their own practice.

An interpretivist approach has been useful in this study. I have considered the perceptions of those working in this case and this has enabled me to move beyond my assumptions, and those of other discourses, to develop a 'non-common sense

attitude' (Pring, 2000, p. 84) to professionalism in education. Pring uses the term 'non-common sense' to refer to abandoning what is commonly held or believed to be true. This jars with accepted meanings and values of common sense and the sentiment is useful in reading this new understanding of professionalism in education. The outcomes of this research demonstrate its validity. These include the understanding of the multiple interpretations of professionalism and a research tool for others to use in their own professional development. Case study allowed me to focus on a small group of individuals and get to know and analyse their perceptions of professionalism in education. This could be done in detail. Interview was a useful tool in generating data for analysis. As a process it was flexible enough, within semi-structured interviews, to explore issues that were raised and warranted further investigation during that interview or at subsequent interviews. The willingness of the respondents to take part and be open demonstrated the safety they felt in the interview process. The respondents were able to speak openly and this helped uncover the tensions within each person's definitions and positioned them against other respondents' uncommon definitions hidden behind the common use of language. However, the use of interview is not completely unproblematic: I was concerned that sometimes I was hearing rehearsed answers to particular questions (for example in some respondents' accounts of supervision) but the tools used in interview to get beyond these dogmatic responses were useful. In particular, the objects brought along to interview one, analysis of the film in interview two, and the use of metaphors in interview three introduced spontaneity and novelty to help get beyond the standard answers and rationalisations. Personal experience and enactment of professionalism could be compared with theoretical constructions. I, occasionally, found my personal knowledge and assumptions of the respondents incongruent with the answers given at interview. In these cases, I had to accept the respondents' remarks and use this tension to contribute to the analysis. This has contributed to the sense making of the data and the confusions of common language.

5. The Future of Professionalism in Education

Professionalism may be in a muddle but it does not need to be scrapped or have a new raft of targets and performance indicators set by others imposed.

Neither does it need to operate in isolation from the rest of the world. Stronach *et al.* (2002) state that 'to be healthy, it [professionalism] needs exercise rather than medication' (Stronach *et al.*, 2002, p. 132). I would add to this by suggesting that, perhaps, it is also time to exorcise professionalism of some of the demons of its past. This study has shown how each person constructs the space and definition of professional action. This is seen to impact on the young people. A high level of professionalism is needed to meet the young person's changing and complex needs. This professionalism requires a healthy foundation: a new understanding of professionalism. A new sustainable trajectory of performance and development is needed for those in professionalism. This needs to begin with understanding of what is desirable and less useful for professionalism. Informed decisions on the effects of strategies for the development of professionalism can then be made.

Further Research

This has been a small-scale study. It would be interesting to see if the findings were similar in other contexts through small-scale studies or through broader studies of larger samples. It would be interesting to find out how much contextual influence there is in the definitions, particularly, in the respondents' perceptions of schooling and the effect of this on their practice. Neo-liberalism has been seen to have a profound effect on all areas of life and in school in particular. This model has become pervasive. There are strong arguments that the adoption of business models in education is flawed. But, as this model is used to assess and measure the success of the professional's work, to suggest not following it would be unwise. This might be interpreted as engaging in self-protection or building a workplace shelter and not being interested in the improvement of the education system. Nothing could be further from the truth. Professionalism should be about working for the young person to ensure they have all the help they need to grow and develop. We need viable and credible alternatives to neo-liberal, business models. For example, it might be possible to have a sustainable education system where each person is trusted to develop his or her practice for the good of the young person. This system would require this understanding to be shared and the system would have to be nurtured: to be planted and grown rather than being imposed from above. The professional would be the one charged with nurture of the young person and the system for educating that young person. This might require a sea change in

our top-heavy education system, dominated with hierarchical quality-control systems, to one of collaboration and collegiality. However, this research has shown that one-for-all solutions are implausible and do not suit everyone. A sea change then would be drastic and it should be our aim and further research is needed to work in partnership with the education workplace to help put change into place. As a growing system this would benefit from a culture of knowledge creation from within.

6. Final Remarks

The completion of this dissertation marks an ending point in a long journey. I have shown the importance of professionalism in education and the multiple points of view on its definition and enactment. The uncertainty of the respondents' perceptions of the space for professional action is clear. To return to my musical metaphor, I do not propose a new score, to launch my career as a new conductor, or to offer a definitive interpretation, however, I have highlighted the cacophony of professionalism in education. In addition, I suggest a model for people in education to use when investigating their own space for professional action and, through this, develop their professionalism. Professionalism in education is essential in helping our young people identify their needs and helping them to find and implement solutions. This requires professionals who can locate terminology, understand and share definitions, and articulate this in practice by being able to use their expertise to help others. Understanding the space for professional action is an important step. Through this understanding the person can enact and develop professionalism.

Appendix 1: Interview Maps

Professionality Interview Map (Trial)

1. Explanation of interview process: limits of use and consent
2. Definition of professionality
    a. Are you a professional? Do you want to be?
    b. Rate your professionalism using the Likert Scale 1- 10
    c. What three things have you identified to signify your professionalism or professionality?
    d. Why have you chosen these?
    e. What does professionalism mean to you?
    f. What worth does this hold?
    g. What does a good professional do?
3. Where are you now?
    a. Where are you now in your professionalism?
    b. Is there a gap between ideal and actual?
    c. How do you feel about where you are now?
    d. How are you nourishing and developing your professionalism?
4. Next steps?
    a. Where would you like to be with your professionalism?
    b. How might you get there?
5. How do you feel about the coaching and mentoring initiative?
    a. Do you think this will be useful tool?
6. Is there anything else you would like to add that we have not covered?

Professionality Interview Map 1

1. Explanation of interview process: limits of use and consent
2. The person and their work
    a. Tell me about three objects that describe what you find important in doing your work? Why these objects?
    b. What do you have to do to do your job well? How do you know you are doing so?
    c. Is there space for you to act here or is what you do set by others?
    d. How do you feel about this level of freedom? Is it important?
3. Definition of professionality
    a. What does 'professionalism' mean to you?
    b. Are you a professional? Do you want to be?
    c. What worth does this hold?
    d. What does a good professional do?
4. Where are you now and where are you going?
    a. Who is responsible for nourishing and developing your professionalism?
    b. What conditions do you need to develop?
    c. Where are you now in your professionalism?
    d. Is there a gap between ideal and actual?
    e. How do you feel about where you are now?
5. How do you feel about the coaching and mentoring initiative?
    a. Do you think this will be useful tool?
6. Is there anything else you would like to add that we have not covered?

Interview 2 Map: Professionality

1. High-Quality Work
    a. Show film and discuss
2. Relationship building.
    a. Easiest
    b. Hardest
3. Follow-up questions from the previous interviews

T1	Do you think it was important to bring a balance of positive and negative objects to the last interview? Where are you now in your search for next steps? Has anything changed? You spoke about 'feeling valued.' Can you explain what you mean by this? When you spoke about professionalism I wondered if you consider it a fixed thing? A status set by someone else? Once attained can it be lost or improved upon?
SA1	Last time, you thought others were professional, but did not see yourself as a professional. You make a definition of someone who does everything well. Do you think that this person exists? What is the role of working together with others? You spoke about being 'stuck' in your professional development. How do you feel now?
T2	You spoke about the young person attaining access 3 and improving their behaviour. Is this unrealistic for some and restrictive for others? What happens if you have worked hard and not seen this change? You spoke about the level of freedom being 'beyond distributed leadership.' Can you explain what you mean by this?
SA2	You spoke about your own reflections being coloured by your own feelings and emotional state. How do you get beyond this in reflective practice?
TA1	When you spoke about supervision you were very positive. Does your manager know better than you or are they always right? What authority do they have? Is there a limit to this? You used the term constricted when I asked about freedom last time. How do you feel now?
AD1	No questions
SA3	When I spoke to you about conditions that you needed to develop you said that seniors needed to be supportive: looking out for you, seeing if help and advice are needed, and caring. You also wanted 'respect from my colleagues.' What would each of these things look like? Can you give some examples? How should managers care for staff?
T3	When speaking about the level of freedom last time you said that you were

	uncertain and expecting more prescription. How has this panned out in the months since we last spoke? When asked about conditions you said that you wanted a manager that knows their staff and what they need to do next. What sort of support do you need from your manager? Is this not the mentoring/coaching model? Are you still uncertain in your next steps forward?
MAN1	When I asked you about how you knew you were doing your job well you mentioned feedback from colleagues and seniors and your own judgements. Do either of these over rule the other? Give me some examples. Last time, halfway through, the bell interrupted us. When saying that you were a professional you said 'and a human as well.' How do those two things sit together? Does one over rule the other?
SA4	When I last spoke to your about the level of freedom you had, I got the impression that you were giving a lot of responsibility to supervisors. Do you feel this way? Is this limiting?
SA5	You spoke about being new to the job and needing other people for support. How do you feel about this now?
SA6	When I last asked you about freedom you felt you had to 'check in, check in, check in.' You spoke about new ideas. What has changed for you? How do you feel about your place in the provision? You seemed unclear about too many managers. Are you being heard now?

4. Where are you now regarding coaching and mentoring?

Professionality Interview Map 3

1. Ask to bring metaphors for you as the …… professional and this being the …… school?
    a. Why did you choose these metaphors?
2. The previous transcripts.
    a. Check confirmation of contents
    b. How do you feel about what you have read? Have you views changed?
    c. How have things changed over the year? How has this affected you?
3. The feedback to staff
    a. How did you feel about it?
    b. What does that say about the provision and you?
4. Personal histories
    a. Why do you work here?
    b. How did you come to be here? Qualification, experiences (career and personal), class, gender, background, histories, age.

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