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Professional superheroes: Are changes in higher education stretching hospitality management academics' professionalism to the limit?

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Published version

DUNNING, John (2019). Professional superheroes: Are changes in higher education stretching hospitality management academics' professionalism to the limit? Journal of hospitality, leisure, sport & tourism education, 25, p. 100200.

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Professional Superheroes: Are changes in higher education stretching hospitality management academics' professionalism to the limit?

Abstract:

The higher education sector in the UK has changed considerably over the last few decades, but particularly in the last ten years. As a result, working practices are such that hospitality management academics are 'stretching' their professional orientations in-order to accommodate increased bureaucratic and market-focused requirements, which in-turn impacts upon their professionalism. A typology is introduced in this empirical paper which is used to gain a deeper understanding of professionalism and professional orientations of this vocational academic group in the context of a changed higher education working environment.

Key words: Hospitality Management Academics, Professionalism, Professional Orientations

1.Introduction

Specific research into professionalism in relation to hospitality management academics (HMAs) working in post-1992 universities is extremely limited, and this empirical paper contributes to an understanding of the phenomenon. As changes in the Higher Education (HE) sector, particularly due to government legislation (Higher Education and Research Act, 2017; Sambell, Brown and Graham, 2017) have occurred, they have impacted upon academics, including those involved in teaching hospitality management (Jones, 2018; Lugosi and Jameson, 2017; Gross and Lashley, 2014; Wood, 2015; Floyd, 2016).

The sector changes are reflected in altering university systems - from elite, to mass, to universal (Shattock, 2014; Deem, Hillyard and Reed, 2007) - where there is now a much greater emphasis on efficiency and enterprise (Tight, 2014). As a result, academics now operate in more bureaucratic, managerialist and consumerist organizations (Kolsaker, 2014; Barnett and Di Napoli, 2008). In conjunction with the changes in HE, there has been considerable discussion about the nature of academic professionalism (Carvalho and Santiago, 2016; Gibbs, 2010; McInnis, 2010), and this paper also explores this in the specific context of HMAs who typically have a vocational industry background (Trowler, Saunders and Bamber, 2012; Smith and Boyd, 2012; Boyd, 2010;) or, as McInnis (2010:152) describes them, those who come from 'vocationally orientated fields'.

The HE sector is now a more pressurised work environment for hospitality management academics (indeed for all academics); as a result, just as superheroes go 'above and beyond'

HMAs are having to 'stretch' their professional orientations in-order to meet the work demands made upon them. This is important because in this commercial-orientated context (Dredge et al., 2012), where 'market and state pressures' have become dominant 'for the academic staff this carries with it the effect of de-professionalization' (Olssen and Peters, 2005:325) which has implications for HMAs and others.

As hospitality management academics' professionalism is undermined it influences their ability to teach, research and carry out other scholarly work which also affects the students who will be graduating with hospitality management degrees, which in turn relates to the current debate around the nature of hospitality management higher education and curriculum (Leung, Wen and Jiang, 2018; Jones, 2018; Lugosi and Jameson, 2017; Lashley, 2013).

Given the discussion of professionalism, and the altering HE sector, the aim of the research was to gain a deeper understanding of professionalism of this vocational academic group and how changes have impacted upon them. The objectives were: to examine and critically analyse the construct of professionalism; to critically analyze the impact of changes on the English Higher Education sector, with a particular focus on university systems, and finally to conduct qualitative empirical research into hospitality management academics' professionalism. The empirical research included constructing and using a typology to examine professional orientations to further develop understanding of the impact on individuals in hospitality management. A key outcome of the research was the typology of professional orientations which can be used to support the analysis of the impact of the changes not-only on HMAs but can also be utilized to examine the effect of changes in professionalism of other academics, in other higher education disciplines.

This paper commences with a literature review which briefly refers to the hospitality management academics context and then examines the construct of professionalism from the perspective of traits and Freidson's (2001) logics; changing university systems are also described. These factors are then synthesized into a professionalism typology, which is used as an analytical tool to examine the empirical data. The conclusions consider and reflect upon the impact of a changed HE work environment on HMAs and their professional orientations as well as future implications.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Hospitality Management Academics Context

Universities are complex organisations (Collini, 2012; Nixon, 2003) located in the higher education sector which, as Trowler, Saunders and Bamber (2012) suggest, has experienced great change due primarily to expansion, including the development of vocational subjects. Vocational education (Vactio = 'call' in Latin) in this sense refers to learning, training and practical skills for a specific trade or occupation (Dredge et al., 2012). In relation to vocational education, Trowler's, Saunders's and Bamber's (2012) claim regarding expansion in HE is also supported by Fanghanel (2012) who refers to how professionals from other fields of industry and the world of work have led to an altering in the makeup of the academy, where staff come from professional areas (Smith and Boyd, 2012; Boyd, 2010; Trowler, 2008); this includes hospitality management (Lugosi and Jameson, 2017) where courses have a core of management of food, beverages and accommodation in a service context (Brotherton and Wood, 2000:144).

2.2 What is Professionalism?

This is a complex construct, made more complicated by usage of other terms such as 'professionalization', 'de-professionalization', 'professions' and so on. Furthermore, understandings of professionalism have developed temporally (Kanes, 2010; Cunningham, 2008; Walker and Nixon, 2004). Indeed, Lawn (1996:100) suggests that 'professionalism […] is not neutral or fixed in its meaning'.

One way of examining professionalism is to use a traits-based approach, as this relates to key characteristics of the construct (Brown, 2009; Cunningham, 2008). Even though Runté (1995) points out a weakness of using traits (principally that there is often a wide perception by authors on professionalism as to which traits are indeed 'key' and which are not) he also claims that 'traits models continue to be an important aspect' when studying the phenomenon (p.290). Four key traits emerge from literature as being relevant to professionalism, as they are focused on a limited group of occupations, 'the professions' (Abercrombie, Hill and Turner, 2006), which includes university academics. These traits are:
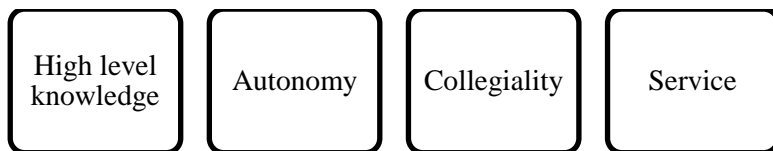
Figure 1: *Professionalism Traits*

The traits are examined below and applied to the university context.

2.2.1 High Level Knowledge

High level knowledge could be regarded as that above the level of lay persons, which is only normally achieved through prolonged and intensive study. More specifically, Bourner, Katz and Watson (2000:135) suggest that 'the notion that a professional has a specialist knowledge base is central to the ideology of professionalism'. Other authors indicate that where high levels of knowledge are used by professionals to do their work, then the knowledge-holder is normally accorded authority and status by society due to them having attained that high level (Adler, Kwon and Heckscher, 2008). In the HE context, academics are regarded as not-only users of high level knowledge (through their teaching and so on) but also as generators, through their research (Entwistle and Peterson, 2004), although as Morrison and O'Mahony (2003:39) suggest, the changing academic scope of curriculum in hospitality management education is dynamic and evolving, reflecting a balance between knowledge that is liberal and reflective, as well as vocational.

2.2.2 Autonomy

The word 'autonomy' stems from Greek meaning *auto* relating to *self* and *nomos* to *law*. Individuals with autonomy therefore have the independence to make their own decisions (Nicholls, 2001). In the HE context, Ercetin and Findik (2018) suggest that the autonomy of academics has been influenced by changes in the sector. Bleiklie (1998) indicates that academic autonomy is not only relevant to professionalism but is a fundamental right. Fanghanel (2012:9) takes this further by claiming that autonomy and academic liberty are based on the freedom to choose when, how and where to learn as well as an entitlement to teach a wide range of people both inside and outside the institution. Academics should therefore have the autonomy and freedom to go about their work as they deem appropriate (Shattock, 2014), for example, by carrying out research, teaching and conducting other scholarly activities. However, this autonomy is challenged by new management approaches in universities and the changing face of higher education (Macheridis, 2018; Ercetin, 2016; Kolsaker, 2008).

4

2.2.3 Collegiality

The professionalism trait of collegiality refers to homogeneity developed through socialisation of individuals working in the same professional area (Evetts, 2011). These collegial relationships reinforce group and individual identities, as members have shared values and roles, and without such homogeneity the profession is not able to fully maintain professional cohesiveness (Deem, Hillyard and Reed, 2007; Walker, 2001). In the HE context, Halsey (1992:126) suggests in his seminal text that 'strong collegiate traditions […] unity of teaching and research […] general homogeneity of intellectual and cultural values' are an essential part of working relationships. Indeed, academic work is normally carried out in collegial communities (Trowler, 2008; Kogan, 2000; Fanghanel, 2012), although Shattock (2014) suggests that tighter corporate governance in universities has led to a loss of collegiality.

2.2.4 Service

One understanding of the trait 'service' is that of placing the needs of the client first and is associated with values, attitudes and behaviours (Boyd, Harris and Murray, 2011). In this sense, 'professionals […] are […] assumed to be focusing on higher values associated with responsibility to clients and the public good' which is more highly regarded than profit alone (McInnis, 2010:149). In providing a service to others the professional must up-hold standards of work as being important (Cole, 2005); maintain professional and ethical standards (Muzio and Kirkpatrick, 2011) as well as their commitment to providing service to the community and a wider society (van Mook et al., 2008; Tong, Standen and Sotiriou, 2018). In relation to service, Gordon and Whitchurch (2010) suggest that the commitment to quality work is particularly relevant to academics and their activities, although Clark (2004) suggests that an entrepreneurial service approach has become more prevalent in HE.

Having examined professionalism traits, this paper now moves onto briefly discussing Freidson's (2001) 'logics' as these are used by him as a way of examining professionalism, in comparison to bureaucracy and the free market. The logics are also used later in the professionalism typology, applied to HMAs.

2.3 Freidson's Logics

Eliot Freidson (2001) examined professionalism from the perspective of three 'logics' (systematic ways of thinking) which are 'ideal-types'. These logics are the consumerist *free market*, *bureaucracy* and, the third logic, *professionalism*. Freidson compares the logic of

professionalism with the other two in that for him the *free market* is focused on competition, consumption and consumer preferences; *bureaucracy* relates to efficiency, bureaucratic work and managerialism. *Professionalism* however is associated with body of knowledge (abstract concepts and theories, higher learning); discretional control; occupational schooling and common intellectual and practical interests (where practitioners work together to develop new knowledge); an ideology of serving, transcendent values and devotion to doing good work rather than to economic rewards.

The comparison between Freidson's *professionalism* with the other two logics is helpful when considering how professionalism has altered in the context of an adjusting higher education sector. This is done by linking the **three logics** with different **university systems** i.e. – the *professionalism* logic with the **elite** university system, *bureaucracy* with the **mass** university system and the *free market* with **universal**. In this way, university systems, in the context of professionalism traits as a framework, can be used to examine the impact of changes on academics and their professional work, applied to HMAs.

As is mentioned above, the logics and university systems are used later in this paper in the typology. However, before that university systems are examined in more detail below.

2.4 Elite, Mass and Universal University Systems

The **elite university system** was described by Shattock (2014) as being made up of relatively few universities and existed pre the 1960's. Scott (1995:177) claimed, when referring to high level knowledge, that 'an elite university curriculum [is built…] on knowledge embodying a critical and problematizing ethic'. Fulton (2001:2) indicated that academics in the elite university system existed with 'traditional values and practices (democracy, community, individual autonomy), the right and obligation to both teach and research'. Academics also had a high degree of autonomy, or as McInnis (2010:149) indicates, they had a privileged position to maintain academic freedom.

Elite university system institutions were also focused on teaching and research built on collegial relationships, where collegiality was more aligned with peer working, sharing of resources, with an educational ideology related to human and social development (Peters, 2005). The provision of service underpinned standards and these were based on 'membership, identify and loyalty' (McInnis, 2010:148) where service values were consistent with

'intellectual honesty, scholastic rigour' (Nixon, 2001:175). Academics in the elite university system also had a high degree of control of work (Jarvis, 2001:4).

However, there was then growth in the sector, initiated by the Robbins Report in 1963, which suggested that there needed to be a greater number of university places available. The rapid development that followed, particularly during the 1980's, led to the massification of HE and was underpinned by greater cost controls, managerialism and audit (Welch, 2005; Tapper, 2007; Brown, 2010).

In the **mass university system**, there was also a focus on efficiency, which impacted upon liberal education and knowledge as there was a rationalisation, centralisation and greater control of work (Peters, 2002e). Autonomy and collegiality were affected as universities became 'bigger and more complex' (Kerr, 1995:26). The provision of high-level service became more challenging as greater levels of managerialism and bureaucracy affected academics' activities. Indeed, there was a fundamental change in the knowledge economy in higher education institutions as the work of academics became more accountable and controlled (Carvalho and Santiago, 2016; Peters, 2002e; Sambell, Brown and Graham, 2017).

The mass university system was followed by the **universal**. Indeed, Halsey (1992:19) suggests that there has been 'pressure to move along the path from elitist through mass to universal higher education' and as a result HE has become more dynamic, corporate, entrepreneurial and capitalist (Lynch, 2015; Pritchard, 2000; Nichols, 2001). High level knowledge has become more of a tradable commodity, for example in international student recruitment markets (Hampton et al., 2009; Hirsch and Weber, 2002; Williams, 2003). Academics' autonomy has also been reduced as the focus has moved to students as consumers, which underpins decisions on curriculum, resources for teaching and learning etc., dictated by senior managers (Shattock, 2014; Barnet, 2000). There has also been an impact upon collegiality as departments have been altered, groups split up or subsumed into faculties or business schools (Lugosi and Jameson, 2017; Fanghanel, 2012). Service and scholarly values have been affected as there has been a 'supplanting of certain norms, such as those of service and dedication, with others such as those of competition, quality and consumer demand' (Eggins, 2003:60-1).

Greater controls have also been implemented on academics and their work (Gibb, Haskins and Robertson, 2013; Holmwood, 2012;) which have been manifested in mechanisms such as the National Student Survey (NSS); Research Excellence Framework (REF); university

league tables and other performance measures (Peters, 2005; Henkel, 2000; Shattock, 2014), which has led to a more demanding work environment.

Having examined above **professionalism**, **traits, Freidson's logics** and changed **university systems** these were synthesised into a *professionalism typology.*

3. Developing a Typology

When examining the phenomenon of professionalism, in relation to Hospitality Management Academics, through a review of literature, the author realised that there was synergy between **professionalism**, **traits** and **Freidson's logics** and that these could be aligned with changes that have occurred in the university sector, as represented by **university systems**. It was not the intention at the outset to develop a typology, but rather this evolved as a *conceptual framework* through synthesis of literature. In this regard, the typology reflected presumed relationships between different factors and was used by the author as a way of seeking to make sense of the highly complex phenomenon of professionalism.

A figure representing the research process of examining literature and developing the typology is presented below:
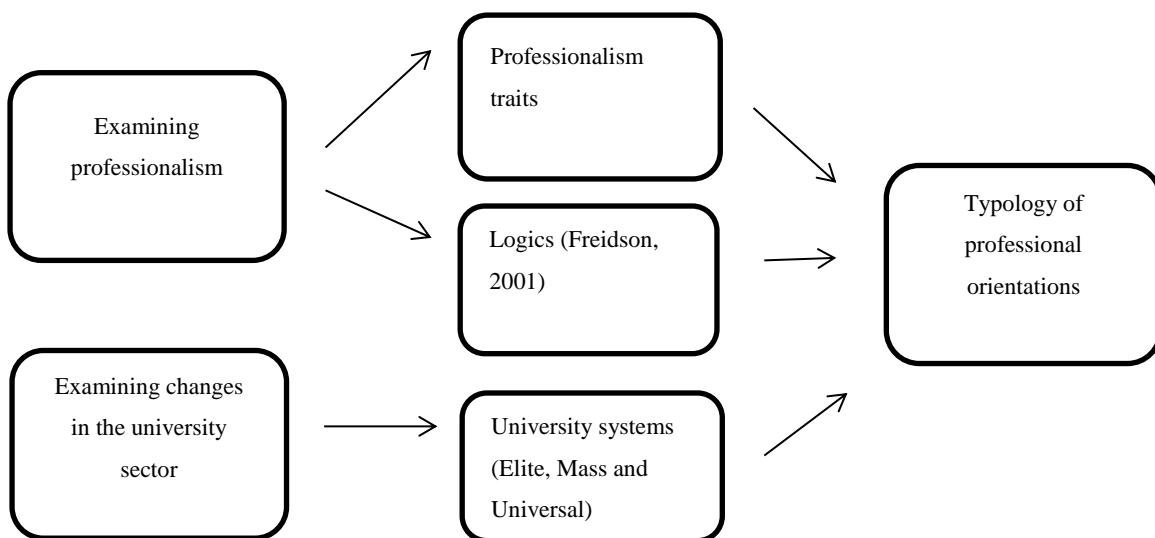

Figure 2: *Research process of examining literature and developing a typology*

It is relevant to further explain here that the typology, as was mentioned earlier, is presented as an 'ideal-type', which is a 'hypothetical construction' (Abercrombie, Hill and Turner, 2006:189); 'ideal' in this sense refers to abstract or pure, rather than normatively desirable.

Furthermore, as the research referred to in this paper was focused on professionalism in relation to hospitality management academics - who, as Strauss and Goodsir (2011) indicate, often come from an industry background and have, as Brinkman-Staneva (2015) discuss, 'real world' experience - the typology was then applied to HMAs in the HE context.

3.1 Professionalism Typology

In the professionalism typology there are three types, these being: *Personal Professional*, *Bureaucratic Professional* and *Entrepreneur Professional*. The types are used to represent 'the professional orientation of the professional practitioner' (Nixon, 2001:174). In the empirical work the 'professional orientation' term refers to how the hospitality management academics, as practitioners, are orientated towards the three different types. The three types are explained below.

3.1.1 Personal Professional

The *Personal Professional* type relates to academics whose **professional orientation** (Nixon, 2001) is towards **professionalism** associated with **traits** (high level knowledge, autonomy, collegiality and service). This has consistency with Freidson's **professionalism logic**.

Academics who are orientated to the *personal professional* type therefore have as their main focus **high level knowledge** (body of knowledge, abstract concepts and theories, higher learning e.g. research and contributing to knowledge); **autonomy** (discretional control e.g. being able to choose the what, how, when and where of learning, and an entitlement to teach and disseminate); **collegiality** (occupational schooling where practitioners work together to develop new knowledge e.g. common intellectual and practical interests) and **service** (an ideology of serving, transcendent values and the devotion to doing good work rather than economic rewards e.g. service to others such as students and doing quality work). The *Personal Professional's* professional orientation is therefore towards liberal educational values associated with the **elite university system**.

3.1.2 Bureaucracy Professional

Bureaucracy Professionals have an orientation to efficiency, bureaucracy and managerialism, consistent with Freidson's (2001) **bureaucracy logic**. In this regard audit, control, performance and accountability are of importance, where the focus is on efficiently managing processes etc. in the context of work in higher education associated with the **mass university system**.

3.1.3 Entrepreneur Professional

Entrepreneur Professional academics have an orientation towards Freidson's **free market logic** – competition, consumption and consumer preferences. *Entrepreneur Professional* academics' activities are consistent with the **universal university system** and are orientated towards, for example, income generation, knowledge transfer focused on paid consultancy work, competing for students in the HE market etc. The professional orientation of the *Entrepreneur Professional* is therefore focused on the consumer.

With regards to the professionalism typology, the **professionalism types**, **professional orientations**, **Freidson's Ideal Type Logics** and **University Systems** are summarised below:

Professionalism types	'Professional Orientation of the Professional Practitioner' (Nixon, 2001:174)	Ideal Type Logics (Freidson, 2001)	University Systems
Entrepreneur Professional	Consumerism, enterprise, business and entrepreneurship	The free market	Universal
Bureaucratic Professional	Bureaucracy, administration, accountability and managerialism	Bureaucracy	Mass
Personal Professional	Professionalism traits (high level knowledge, autonomy, collegiality, and service)	Professionalism	Elite

Table 1: *Summary of the professionalism typology*

Having briefly explained the professionalism types, which were used in the research as an analytical tool for examining hospitality management academics' professionalism orientations **-** which will be returned to at a later stage of this paper when discussing the empirical research findings - an explanation is provided below of how the research was conducted.

4. Methodology

Given the complex nature of professionalism, the approach adopted for this empirical study was qualitative, which 'investigates aspects of the social world that are not amenable to quantitative measurement' (Sumner, 2006:248). A range of research methods was used that focused on interpretation and meanings (Carter and Little, 2007; Huberman and Miles, 2002) of the phenomenon. Open-ended methods were used to 'explore participants' interpretations…in a relatively close setting' (Sumner, 2006:249). The approach taken with the research relates to 'transferability' in that the conceptualisation of the study, the contextual information about the fieldwork and the presentation of the findings, suggest that these are transferable to other contexts (Shenton, 2004). Furthermore, the emphasis of the research in this paper was on discovery and not proof (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994) and the study was not seeking to be representative of all contexts (Creswell, 2007; May, 2001; Jupp, 2006). The following section describes in more detail the research methods.

4.1 Research Methods

The research methods used were interviews and mind maps (Buzan, 1995) with thirteen participants (the use of mind maps enabled the participants to represent their understandings of professionalism in a visual form, as well as the opportunity to talk through explanations of their thinking as they drew them). A reflective log was also kept throughout the research.

The reflective log used by the researcher acted as a research tool to assist in recording and reflecting on the phenomenon being investigated and their role as a researcher (Alaszewski, 2006; Punch, 2005). The reflective log comprised records of when the researcher observed issues related to professionalism and HE work that were interesting or relevant to the study. The reflective log did not have a set layout as such and was more a series of remarks, notes, observations, insights and comments, drawn from a wide range of sources, such as presentations; workshops; seminars; articles in the media etc., relating to professionalism and the HE environment. The log was initially used in the research to engage with the study and initiate deeper thinking about the phenomenon but was used less frequently as the research progressed and the empirical data from participants became more dominant. The reflective log was used as it was a helpful research method for recording data (MacDonald and Hills, 2007; Wheeldon and Faubert, 2009; Denscombe, 2010) and is consistent with a qualitative research approach (Marshall and Rossman, 2006; Savin-Baden and Strauss, 2013).

The participants in the study were all HMAs working in post-1992 universities who teach a range of hospitality management subjects and there was a cohort of four males and nine females. Given the in-depth nature of the interviews and mind maps the number of participants was sufficient to achieve data saturation. HMAs in three post-1992 universities were invited to participate in the study and the sampling method used was self-selection. Participants had a wide range of experience (Boyd and Harris, 2010) and hospitality backgrounds and they taught a variety of subjects including finance, food and beverage management, strategic management, research methods, human resource management and marketing at undergraduate and post-graduate level. The participants had a range of roles from Lecturer (one participant), Senior Lecturer (eight participants), and Principal Lecturer and above (three and one respectively). Ethical considerations were applied throughout the research, including the use of pseudonyms and the right for participants to withdraw from the study at any time. Involvement in the research by the participants was through willing consent (Creswell, 2013).

A series of four pilot interviews and mind maps were conducted prior to carrying out the main interviews. Different approaches were used in the pilot interviews (ranging from an open format to closed questioning). Data and learning from the pilots were used to develop an interview schedule for the main interviews.

The main interviews were conducted in an open, semi-structured way, as from the outcome of the pilot interviews this led to particularly productive discussion of the research topic. Ethical conventions were followed throughout. Towards the end of the interviews, participants were asked to draw a mind map of professionalism and to describe what they were drawing (and writing) as they did so. As this study was focused on discovery, an unstructured approach was adopted to questioning in the interviews so that participants were able to talk in an open way rather than be restricted by specific questions relating to traits, university systems and so on. At the start of the interviews, participants were asked about their previous experience (to gain context of their background in hospitality and HE) and then an open question on how they became an academic at the university was used to generate discussion. The thread of the conversation was then followed from how they responded in order to gain additional information and as a way of 'checking of understanding to encourage narrative' (Boyd and Harris, 2010:12). This flexible and fluid approach (Mason, 2004) to gaining data is advocated by Wheeldon (2011) who also used broad, open-ended questions in order to stimulate dialogue.

The interviews, and the descriptions of the mind maps, were digitally recorded and transcribed and copies of the mind maps produced. Each participant was also allocated a letter as a pseudonym, as well as a specific reference number; for example, the first participant in the first institution where the interviews took place was given the reference number 1.1, 1.2 and so on; the first participant in the second institution was given the reference number 2.1 etc. - this was useful when analysing and interpreting data, such as presenting findings using diagrams, as the reference numbers were short in length and could be presented on a relatively small image (as is shown below in Figure 8: *Triangle Representation of Professional Orientations – All Participants*).

4.2 Data Analysis

Three steps were taken when analysing and interpreting the data (Creswell, 2007) these being:

A. Examining general constructs in literature - this step related to the development of the professionalism **typology**, which was a deductive element, which synthesised literature based on professionalism **traits**, Freidson's **logics** and **university systems**.

B. Inductively analysing empirical data by using an open-thematic coding approach (Silverman, 2010; Hennink, Hutter and Bailey, 2011) - this was achieved by transcribing the interviews and the mind maps; a line-by-line approach was used to engage with the transcripts to identify codes, which were then classified into thematic clusters (categories), from which themes emerged; these were then related to relevant literature. An example of this process is: codes such as 'student engagement'; 'education as a product'; 'changed regulations'; 'commodification'; 'coping strategies' etc. were developed to categories: 'the market focus of universities'; 'the bureaucratic and managerial nature of activities'; 'the day-to-day work of HMAs' and 'increased workload', which subsequently led to the themes of: 'changes in Higher Education impacting upon hospitality management academics'; 'the academics' experiences of being an academic with a hospitality background' and 'teaching in the university as hospitality management academics'. This step B. was used to provide context to HMAs professional work environment, which was then used to interpret their professional orientations, which was the final step of the study, **C.,** where the **typology was used as an analytic tool for the empirical data**. These steps are shown below:
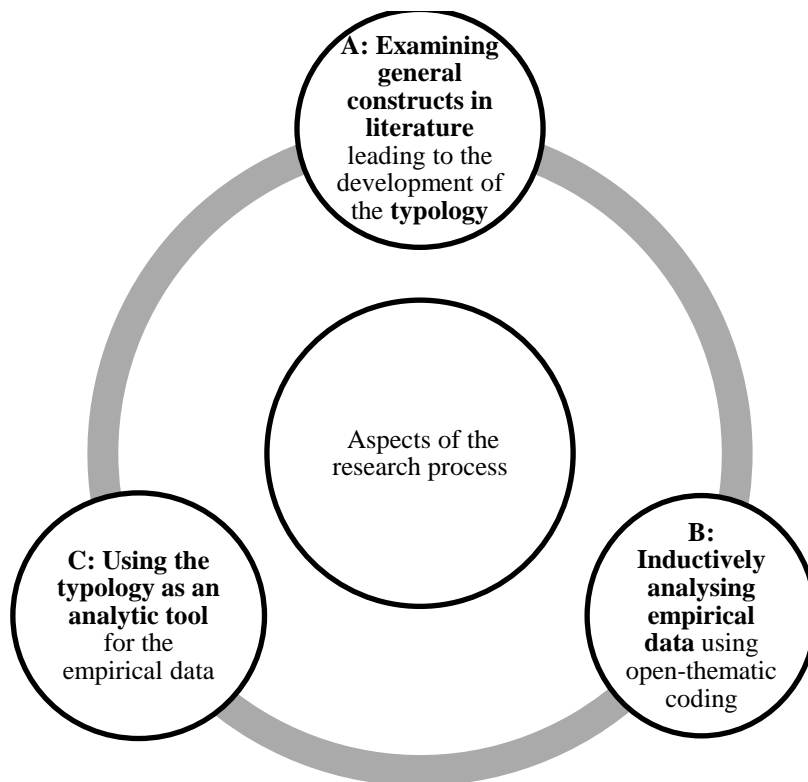
Figure 3: *Aspects of the research process*

Once the data from the research had been analysed and interpreted, findings were presented and discussed.

5. Findings and Analysis

As is explained above, the professionalism typology was used as an analytical tool, in that data from the interviews and mind maps were used to 'position' participants on a triangle, which utilised the three types as a way of representing their professional orientations, which is explained below.

5.1 Representation of the Professionalism Typology

The starting point for using the professionalism typology was that a triangle diagram was developed with each of the points representing the types, which were explained and presented earlier i.e. *Personal Professional*, *Bureaucratic Professional* and *Entrepreneur Professional.* Within the triangle, circles were used to represent different professional orientation positions; this approach was used so that it was possible to compare-and-contrast different participants' orientations. This is shown below:

14

Entrepreneur

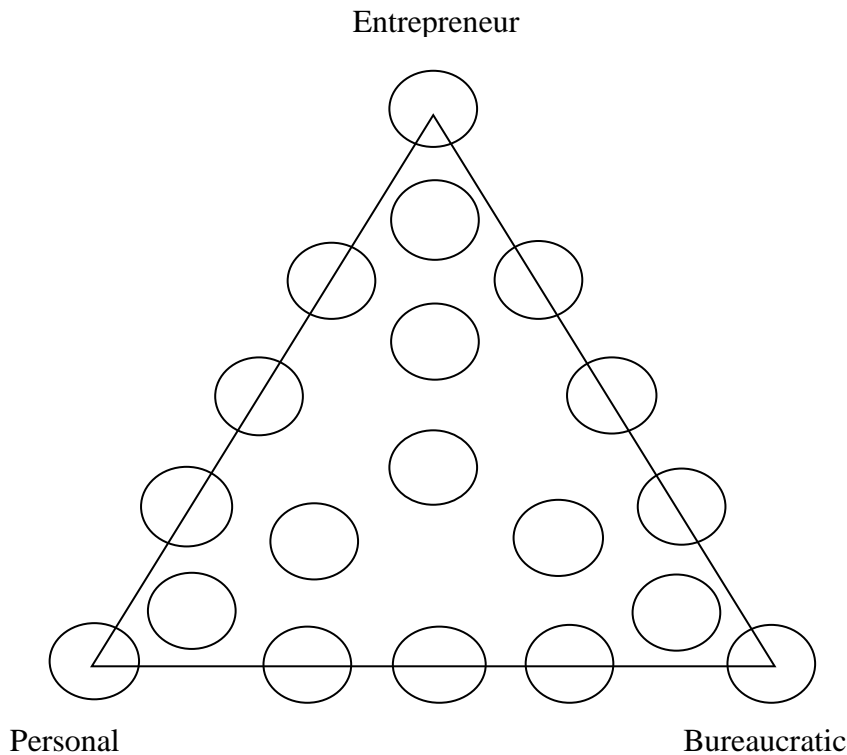Personal   Bureaucratic

Figure 4: *Triangle representation of professional orientations*

By analysing and interpreting the empirical data, each of the participants was 'positioned' in the triangle in order to reflect their professional orientation, by shading in the relevant circle. For example, if a participant was strongly orientated towards the *Personal Professional* type then this would be represented by shading in the circle in the extreme bottom left-hand corner of the triangle.

Decisions as to where each participant was located within the typology triangles were as-a-result of the researcher's immersion and engagement with the data and their interpretive and analytical capabilities (Marshall and Rossman, 2006). The researcher did not seek to quantify them nor give them a 'weighting'; this was due to the complexity of deciding upon each participants' position, although a full justification from the data, with quotations where relevant, was provided as to why each participant was positioned where they were. The approach used could therefore be regarded as combining elements of science and art (Patton, 2002).

Three examples of participants' professional orientations are provided below, in-order-to illustrate how the positions were derived and to present findings from the study.
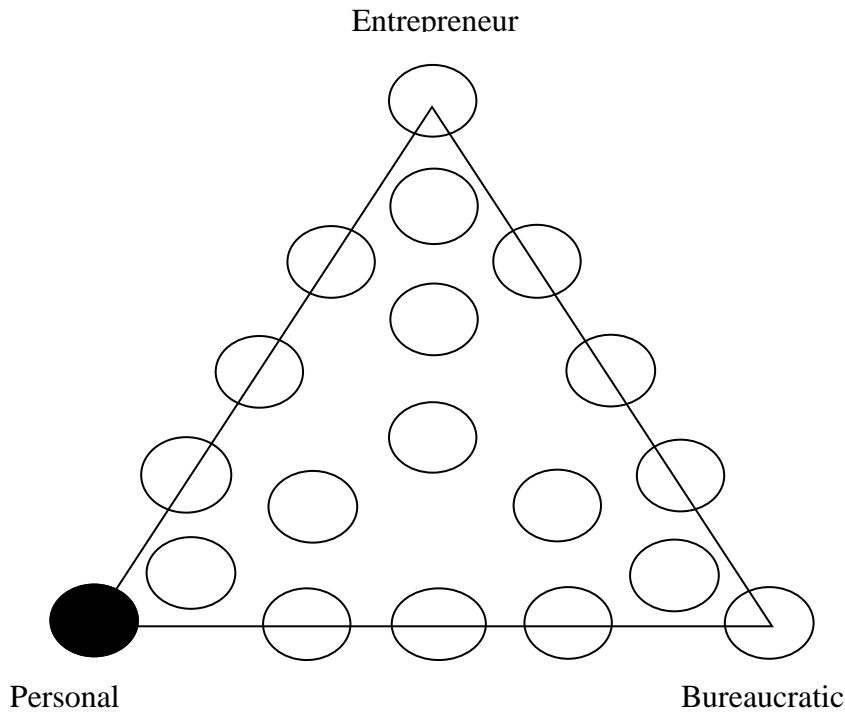
Figure 5: *Representation of Professional Orientation - Participant D (1.4)*

Participant D (1.4) had a strong professional orientation towards the *Personal Professional* type. For example, in relation to high level knowledge, D expressed views of liberal education, where there is a "pure joy" of learning and that she agreed with the "very strong ideological culture in our school about the freedom of education" where "liberal notions of education" are "incredibly important". Furthermore, D said that she "finds [herself] most closely aligning to a teacher" and an "educator". This was further supported by her views on the hospitality industry (these being that hospitality work is vocational) and she said that she has a "bond", "pride" and a "passion" for teaching hospitality management. These views are consistent with her having a commitment and calling to both her work in academia and connection to hospitality; this was further illustrated when she said that "the reason I'm here is for the students". Furthermore, when referring to professionalism specifically, D said that it is important to have "integrity" and "self-integrity" as well as "a passion for your profession…and a knowledge about it"; she expressed the importance of developing strong collegial-type relationships as well as building "trust" with others.

The findings suggest that Participant D was not orientated towards the *Bureaucratic Professional* type and she resents the bureaucracy and administration required as-a-result of what she described as "the encroachment of mass Higher Education". Participant D

particularly dislikes her autonomy being restricted and cited the example of not being able to make what she regarded as professional decisions in examination boards. She clarified this further by saying:

> The regulations are there for a purpose but when it seriously disadvantages some-body I get extremely upset about that and feel that that's compromising my professional integrity.

The findings also suggest that D does not have an *Entrepreneur Professional* orientation and she explained that education is about learning and that it is not a "product and the consumers consumes it". She also said that HE should not be about business and enterprise, and it is important that academics can act in scholarly ways. These comments are consistent with discussion around higher education becoming more consumer-focused (Veles and Carter, 2016; McNay, 2006; Walker and Nixon, 2004) which has led to de-professionalization of academics (Sambell, Brown and Graham, 2017; Evans, 2002; Olssen and Peters, 2005).

The business and enterprise approach of universities also relates to a different way of viewing academic work in the sense that managerialist and commercial aspects of university operations have made it more difficult for academics to carry out their scholarly activities (Kolsaker, 2014; Brown, 2009; Gordon and Whitchurch, 2010). This has synergies with the debate around the changed focus of university hospitality management education (Jones, 2018; Gross and Lashley, 2014) and its challenges for HMAs being able to work in scholarly ways, which can be associated with the personal professional orientation, in that increased pressures such as greater degrees of audit and control, commercialism etc. mean that it is more difficult for them to conduct research, spend time supporting students, working collegially and so on.
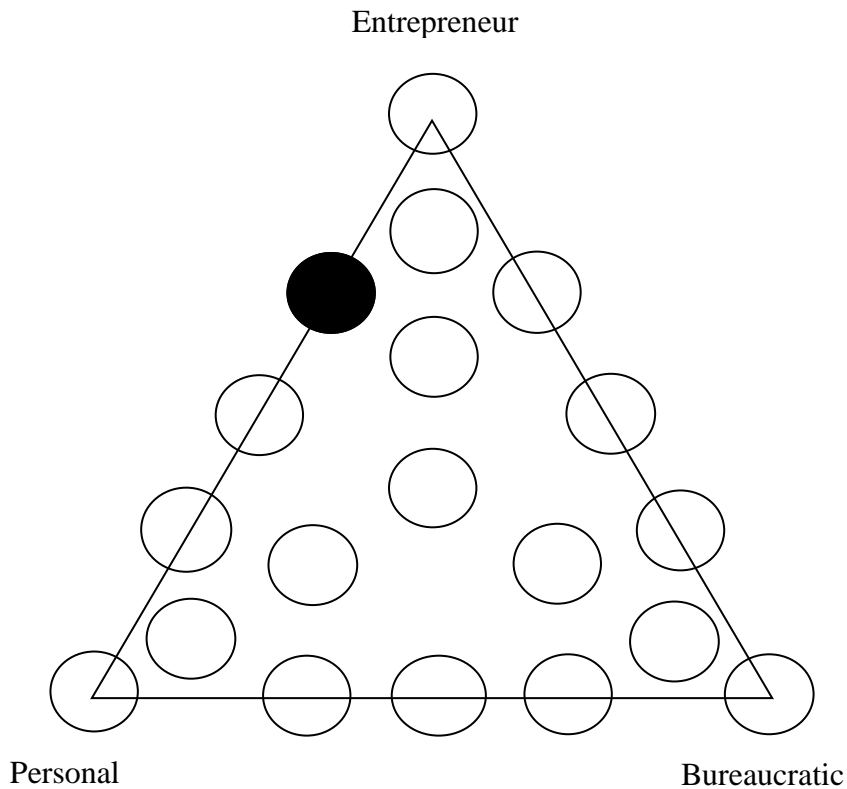
Figure 6: *Representation of Professional Orientation - Participant M (3.1)*

Participant M's (3.1) professional orientation was unusual in the sense that she was the most related with the *Entrepreneur Professional* type. Although most other HMAs were more aligned with the *Personal Professional* and did not seek to actively engage with entrepreneurial activities, Participant M had applied for and accepted an enterprise role at her university, with the aim of being, as she described: "enterprising and entrepreneurial". Participant M's Enterprise Centre role was a 0.5 post, as she spent the rest of her time teaching in the Hospitality subject group. M also explained that one of the aims of the Enterprise Centre was to adjust "behaviour and working as much as you can possibly in the same way as business". She also described having some "freedom, creativity and innovation" in order to develop business and revenue for her institution.

M had attended an Academic Enterprise course at the university which she found very interesting because it was "all about business development and making commercial opportunities out of the academic experience and making links and collaborative partnership and all the rest of it". She also liked the fact that these more commercial-type activities resonated with her previous experiences in the hospitality industry running public houses and hotels. However, there was a tendency in her view that "enterprising and entrepreneurial

behaviour" at the university was "quashed" by some colleagues within the hospitality management team who actively resisted any involvement in business-focused undertakings as they thought that other activities, such as pastoral care for students, time to conduct research, etc. were more important and relevant to their work. However, she felt that there is a trend within the organisation, stemming from senior university managers, to move towards being more consumer-focused, or as she puts it "there's quite a few of us now starting to emerge" who are engaged in business activities. Participant M also indicated the type of activities that are involved in her work:

> I have a multi-disciplinary role and it's dual, it's dual in so far as it is a senior lecturer, quite academic but within the vocational context of hospitality and very rigorous and now research-focused and the other part of it is very much engaged with enterprise.

Participant M liked the freedom to be able to develop business and revenue for the university, which is consistent with having control of her own work and is aligned with Freidson's (2001) consumerist free market. In this regard, M's approach relates to the need for universities to develop funds in other ways than just student numbers on traditional three-year degree programs. This is supported by Teng, Horng and Baum (2014) who indicate that universities are more accountable for public funding and therefore other, innovative approaches to revenue generation have become relevant. This also relates to the tensions and pressures for universities to adapt to change, which has impacted upon academic professionalism in that the more traditional ways of working (that can be related to the elite university system) have had to alter to facilitate coping with heightened accountability and competition (Kolsaker, 2014).

Although Participant M has embraced a business-engagement type role, she did however, somewhat paradoxically, refer to a link between academia and enterprise by saying: "theory has its place, it's become more real, more relevant now and that's what I feel proud of, the fact of a university that theory has its place". In this regard M has come to recognise that theory, from research and scholarly activities, is important when dealing with businesses and other stakeholders and she regards herself as a knowledge specialist; this has synergy with the *Personal Professional* type, where the trait of high-level knowledge is relevant.

An example of the complexity of professionalism is represented in M's mind map (which she drew at the end of her interview), which depicts a Janus-faced individual. She further explained that there are two sides to the façade of professionalism, which relates to being

hospitable, welcoming and professional, but also has a more serious side where professionals "know what is appropriate…behaviour" and where "integrity" is essential.

Entrepreneur

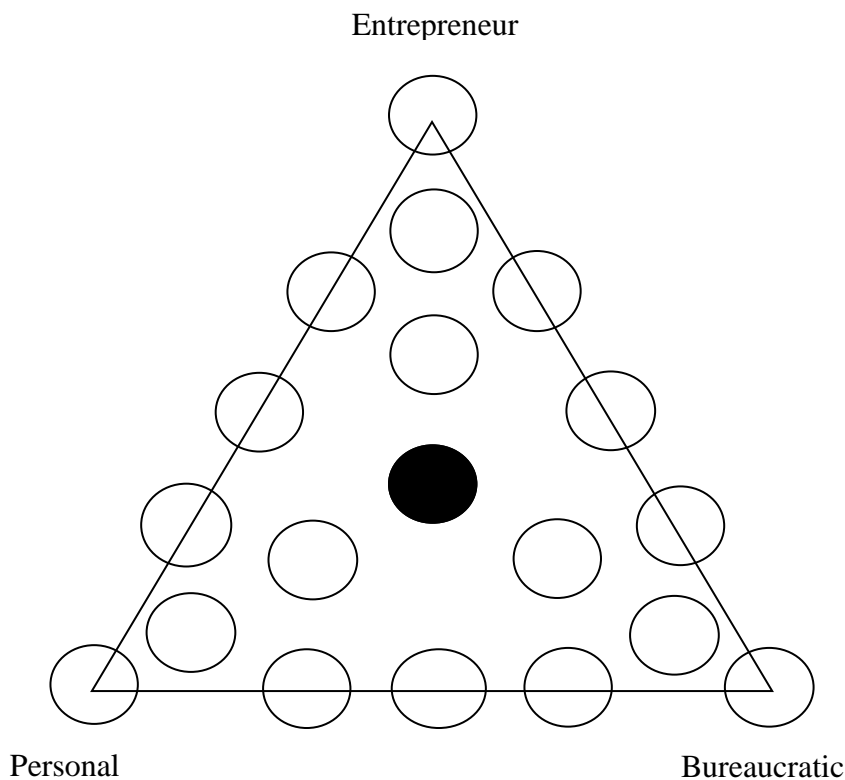Personal   Bureaucratic

Figure 7: *Representation of Professional Orientation - Participant H (2.4)*

Participant H's (2.4) professional orientation was quite interesting as it was in a central position. H has some orientation to the *Personal Professional* from the perspective of having a calling in that she said: "I've always had a little bit of teacher so-to-speak in me" and that she has always wanted to share her knowledge and experience with others. Furthermore, she explained "I like the university environment and I do like studying". Participant H also referred to having a student-centred approach by indicating on her mind map that 'Support, Guidance, Knowledge and Learning' are important so that she can support students in their studies. She further went on to say: "I'm professional in that I think the job gets done, you know, we have a duty to our students" and being an academic is "about giving time to students". However, H also has some orientation towards the consumer approach from the perspective of recruiting students in the competitive HE environment and ensuring that programs have a market appeal.

Along with this consumer focus, H also has a leadership-type role that involves her engagement in bureaucratic processes such as, as she described, carrying out audits,

managing programs and so on. She also adopts a very pragmatic approach to her work which she said is challenging given the increased workloads on her and her colleagues. She also said however that "we have lost a lot of control of our work in the university and we are told a lot more what to do". This relates to what Robson (2006) refers to as some of the 'challenges' and 'demands' associated with work in higher education and its impact upon professionalism with regards to how knowledge, practice and status of academics have been affected by the growth of HE, as reflected in changed university systems (Kolsaker, 2014). For example, increased accountability and the need for competitiveness has led to diminished cohesiveness and purpose of the academic profession (Robson, 2006) such as, in the hospitality context, where curriculum has become more standardised (Leung, Wen and Jiang, 2018; Smith and Cooper, 2000), with an increased focus on competing for students in a diminishing recruitment pool.

Participant H's 'central' professionalism position can be seen in her own description of her work at the university where she has a "sort of lecturer hat standing up in front of a classroom or supporting and guiding students and marking" but also carrying out "feedback audits and that kind of thing". Furthermore, H is involved in having a market-orientated approach and considers questions such as "what do we need in terms of the curriculum, how are our student numbers, what do we need to do at open days and visits?" H further refers to the mixed set of "expectations and standards" that academics have-to comply with; these result in her having a mixture of professional orientations towards being an academic (*Personal Professional*), carrying out administrative and audit activities (*Bureaucratic Professional*) as well as focusing on recruitment and student numbers in a competitive market (*Entrepreneur Professional*).

Above are some examples of individual HMAs professional orientation positions. Below (Figure 8) is presented a triangle representation of the variances in professional orientations of all participants (This was done, as was explained earlier, by allocating each of the participants a reference number so that they could more easily be plotted on the triangle).

5.2 Variances in Professional Orientations

Entreprenuer

Key: 1.1 – Participant A.   1.2 – Participant B. 1.3 – Participant C.   1.4 – Participant D.

2.1 – Participant E.   2.2 – Participant F.   2.3 – Participant G.   2.4 – Participant H.

2.5 - Participant I.   2.6 – Participant J.   2.7 – Participant K.   2.8 – Participant L. 3.1
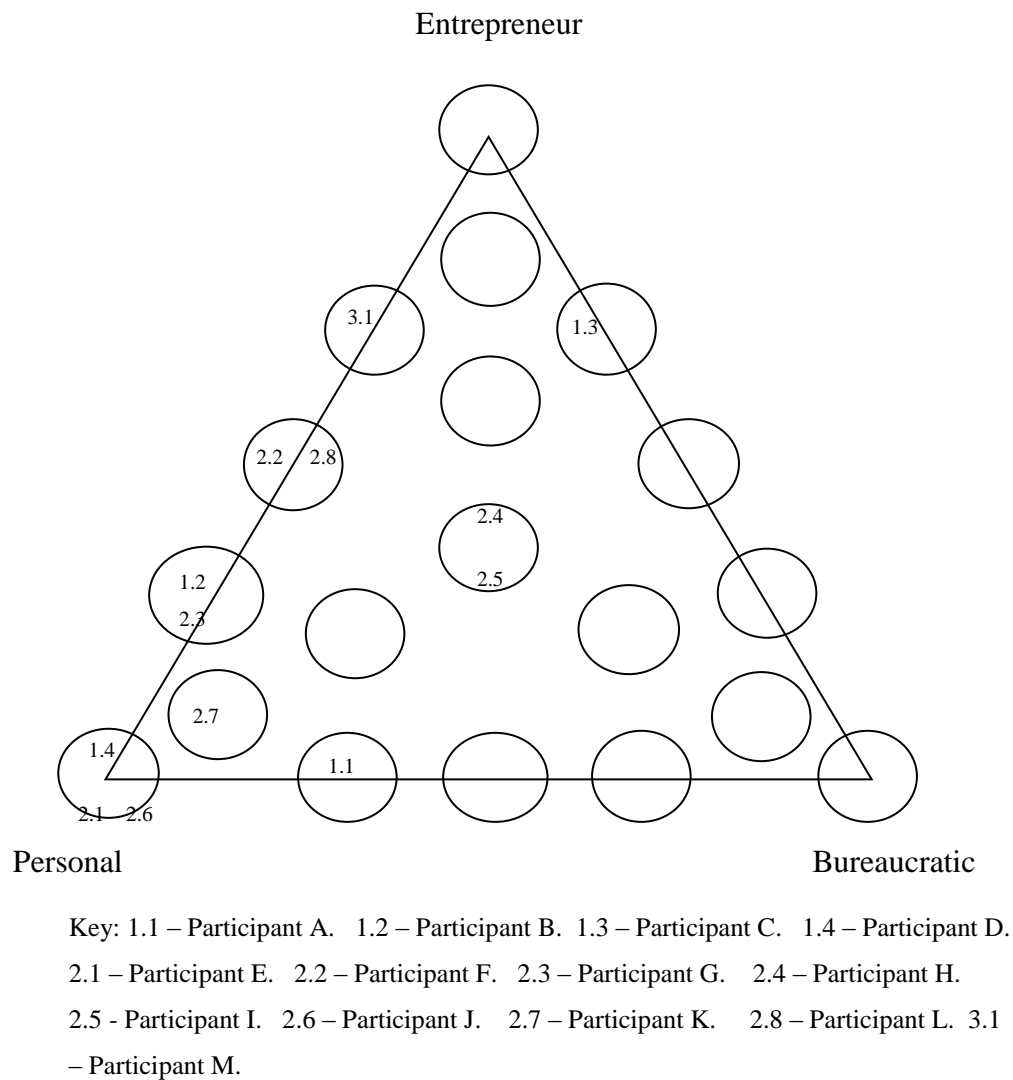
– Participant M.

Figure 8: *Triangle Representation of Professional Orientations – All Participants*

What was discovered in the research, represented in the above diagram, is that there is a varied 'spread' of professional orientations, although, to some extent, some clustering occurs towards the *Personal Professional*. It is also interesting to note that none of the participants were strongly orientated towards the *Bureaucratic Professional* type. However, what did come across in the empirical data, from what participants said and was reflected in the mind maps, is that increased workload, intensification, more bureaucratic processes, too much focus on students as consumers and so on is negatively impacting on their scholarly work.

The above effects on scholarly activities is also reflected in the debates regarding the changed nature of academic work (Carvalho and Santiago, 2016; Floyd, 2016; Winter, 2009; Boyd, 2010). For example, where the participants mainly seek to work in scholarly ways, consistent

with an orientation towards the *Personal Professional* type, aligned with the elite university system, they have-to constantly compromise their professionalism due to the other demands made upon them which in turn creates pressure. One way of critiquing this pressure on professionalism is in the context of McInnis (2010:155), when referring to Coaldrake and Stedman (1999), who suggest that academic work has 'stretched' rather than adapted to the changing demands. This could be due to, as Boyd, Harris and Murray (2011:3) suggest, the 'continued intensification and increasing fragmentation of academic work'.

The above 'stretching' of academic work and its impact on professionalism can be seen in the professional orientation of one of the participants, Participant J (2.6), who has a strong *Personal Professional* orientation, in that he described having liberal views of higher education and the importance of research, the process of learning, the intrinsic value of a Degree for its own sake as well as a strong vocational commitment to teaching represented by his statement that if it was not for the students he would not stay at the university. However, he also said that there have been changes in his work at the university in that he now has to comply with increasing bureaucratic processes implemented by senior managers, as well as having to generate external income, which he is totally against. Participant J therefore has-to 'stretch' his *Personal Professional* orientation in order to try and comply with the bureaucratic and entrepreneurial pressures on him.

6. Conclusion

The above examples illustrate how work in HE is challenging. This is reflected in how the HMAs 'struggle' to work in ways consistent with their professional orientations; they have-to constantly 'stretch' in an effort to meet the other bureaucratic and business demands made on them, all in the context of a competitive HE free market. Indeed, findings from this research indicated that changes in the sector have had a significant impact on them and their day-to-day lives, which conflicts with their views of being academics. Fundamentally, hospitality management academics have varied professional orientations but all are trying to meet the many and diverse influences on them in the altered HE environment which causes tension with their professional orientations.

The research also indicated another interesting issue for hospitality management academics with regards to a practical implication for their work; if HMAs' professional orientations are being so 'stretched', then at what point will this 'stretching' become too much, to the extent

that this might lead to metaphorically 'snapping', which could lead to the point of no-return where they are no longer able to fully work in scholarly ways consistent with, for the majority of participants in this study, their *personal professional* orientations. This could have consequences and ramifications for teaching of hospitality management in universities. For example, for high-level teaching and learning to take place this requires full-engagement from the academics, such as conducting research and engaging with the hospitality industry in-order to be able to develop cutting-edge knowledge in the field, but this is being compromised by all the other demands made on them. This also has further practical implications relating to how this might be impacting upon hospitality management students; if HMAs are being over-stretched, as they simply do not have time to develop high-level research-informed knowledge, work in collegial groups to improve curriculum and so on, then ultimately there is the potential consequence that students' learning will be poorer quality as a result.

As well as the impact on students, a further consequence is that this will continue to have an effect on the individual hospitality management academics themselves; they could become frustrated, demotivated and disillusioned due to being over-stretched, as they, for example, seek to continue to work in ways associated with the *Personal Professional*, but in organisations with increased bureaucratic and enterprise demands.

Although this research is relatively small-scale, the implications raise concerns regarding academic professionalism more widely with regards to whether the experiences of hospitality management academics are being replicated across universities in other academic areas. A starting point therefore for future research could be to use the typology as a tool to examine the professional orientation of other academics, to analyse the impact of changes on different disciplines and provide further insights into professionalism within the sector.

Is it time to ask: can hospitality management academics carry-on being **superheroes**, constantly going 'above-and-beyond' and 'stretching' their professional orientations in an attempt to be all things to all people (researcher, teacher, bureaucratically efficient, income generator and so on)? Or will they revert to being 'normal beings', as this could have an impact on hospitality management education, the future for graduates going out into the hospitality industry as well as the nature of professional work within higher education.

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