

**Behind the Curtain: An Exploration of
Professionalism and Capital in Further
Education**

by

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Declaration

I declare that the research contained in this thesis, unless otherwise formally indicated within the text, is the original work of the author. The thesis has not been previously submitted to this or any other university for a degree and does not incorporate any material already submitted for a degree.

Signed: *Paul Tully*

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Glossary

| | |
|--------|---|
| AoC | Association of Colleges |
| BECTA | British Educational Communications and Technology Agency |
| BERA | British Educational Research Association |
| CA | Correspondence Analysis |
| CoP | Community of Practice |
| CPD | Continuing Professional Development |
| CSW | Curriculum Support Worker |
| DfE | Department for Education |
| DfEE | Department for Education and Employment |
| DfES | Department for Education and Skills |
| DTLLS | Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector |
| ETF | Education and Training Foundation |
| FE | Further Education |
| FEFC | Further Education Funding Council |
| FELTAG | Further Education Learning Technology Action Group |
| FENTO | Further Education National Training Organisation |
| HE | Higher Education |
| HOLEX | Professional body for Local Authority Adult Community Learning (ACL) services |
| HPS | Hall's Professionalism Scale |
| IfL | Institute for Learning |
| ITT | Initial Teacher Training |
| LEA | Local Education Authority |
| LLUK | Lifelong Learning UK |
| LPT | Labour Process Theory |
| LSC | Learning and Skills Council |
| LSDA | Learning and Skills Development Agency |
| LSIS | Learning and Skills Improvement Service |
| LSRN | Learning & Skills Research Network |
| LSW | Learning Support Worker |
| MM | Middle Manager |
| NAO | National Audit Office |
| NPM | New Public Management |
| OFSTED | Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills |
| ONS | Office for National Statistics |
| P1 | Professionalism scores in the lowest quartile |
| P4 | Professionalism scores in the highest quartile |
| PGCE | Postgraduate Certificate in Education |
| PTLLS | Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector |
| SET | Society for Education and Training |
| SMT | Senior Management Team |
| TLC | Transforming Learning Cultures |
| TU | Trade Union |
| UCU | University and College Union |

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Abstract

Behind the Curtain: An Exploration of Professionalism and Capital in Further Education

Professionalism is an important issue for FE policymakers in post-16 education because of its established links to competence, morale and staff continuity. This study examined concepts of professionalism in the English further education sector, how it is strengthened or weakened, and the implications this has for workforce planning and management.

The study adopted a Bourdieusian framework which explains social phenomena such as professionalism in terms of three capitals (social, economic, cultural). These capitals operate dynamically in a social structure (field) and generate potentialities for social thought and action (habitus). The study utilised a survey comprising quantitative and qualitative forms of enquiry to investigate both structural and attitudinal aspects of professionalism. The survey contained six sections: demographics, employment, subject knowledge, work relationships, motivation and professionalism. Perceptions of professionalism were measured using a revised 15-item version of the Hall professionalism scale (1968) based on adaptations by Wimmer (2007) and Scailes (2003). Measures of cultural, social and economic capital were also constructed. An online survey was sent out to teachers, managers and curriculum support staff working across the sector with 461 useable responses collected.

The achieved sample reflected the sector profile in terms of gender, ethnicity and background, though the average age was slightly higher in the achieved sample. The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential methods including exploratory factor analysis, regression, ANOVA and correspondence analysis. Professionalism was affected by key respondent demographics and occupational position. Professionalism was also found to be statistically significantly related to the distribution of capital (cultural, social and economic).

A typology highlighted the way in which the three capitals were distributed in the sample. The data yielded three overarching themes for FE professionalism: expertise, service and

organisational compliance. Respondents' location in the FE hierarchy determined which of these themes were perceived as dominant. Of the three themes, expertise was the most important variable differentiating scores on professionalism and work status, but to function as capital it must be recognised by others.

This study has demonstrated that professionalism is a more nuanced concept than previous studies have suggested. In FE, notions of professionalism vary across the FE field according to job role, committee membership, trade union membership, teaching load and incidences of non-specialist teaching. The findings establish a relationship between people's position in the field and the way capital is distributed. There is also further evidence, in line with recent analyses by Lobb (2017) and Donovan (2019), that professionalism in FE is being challenged by persistent managerial pressures.

Chapter 1 - Situating the Nature and Purpose of the Study

1.1 Contextualising the Researcher's Position

As someone who has worked in the English Further Education sector for almost twenty-five years, I was familiar with its recent and more distant history. I started my career as a part-time psychology lecturer in 1995 at a time of significant change and only two years after Incorporation. In 2003, I proceeded into middle management, working in professional development, quality and departmental posts, before joining a University consortium as a lead teacher trainer in 2009 for an FE college. I witnessed changes in curriculum, organising bodies and the coming of OFSTED, the rise and fall of the Standards Unit, LSIS, LSDA and the demise of the Institute for Learning and statutory teacher training (see Chapter 3). I now support teacher trainees as a university teaching fellow, a move I made in 2019.

The initial inspiration for this study came from the publication of Lord Lingfield's review into FE professionalism (Lingfield, 2012a; 2012b), from which simple statements precipitated seismic changes in how FE work, training and professional membership would be organised, leading to the removal of statutory training and staff professional development obligations. This proved to be a highly controversial decision (Hillier & Appleby, 2012), and one which also strongly divided college leaders and practitioners (see Fazaeli, 2012; Pryce, 2013).

The Lingfield Commission described the characteristics of a sector I knew well: one that was adaptable, inventive, resilient and student-focused. In the colleges I worked in, professionalism came to mean different things: one saw 'smart dress' as indicative; in a second, a willingness to cover absent staff; in a third, the award of 'outstanding' for a college observation. My 'inside' position enabled me to observe first-hand how different staff calibrated professionalism, what they saw as important, what they demanded, what made them feel 'unprofessional'.

I also witnessed the debilitating effects of constant change and adaptation, which saw the loss of many seasoned staff who preferred to leave their posts rather than face another round of change, signs of what O'Leary (2011) described as 'initiative fatigue'. While some were thankful to be leaving the sector, itself a worrying condition, others were regretful, having enjoyed

working with students but no longer feeling valued at work. Stamati & Papadopoulos (2012) acknowledge the destructive effects of staff attrition and re-organisation on the retention of corporate memory. This loss, they state, impairs organisational decision-making and competitiveness. I was struck by how wasteful 'change initiatives' could be in terms of the loss of staff expertise.

My role as a teacher educator brought to the forefront a distinction between 'front-of-house' and 'backstage' issues (Goffman, 1959). The visible aspect of the job was dominated by pragmatic and pedagogic issues: ensuring trainees met professional standards, improved lesson grades and developing a student-centred orientation. Evans (2008) might describe these as issues of *professionalism*. Behind the scenes, different considerations prevailed: disputes over the link between student numbers and course hours in which missed enrolment targets triggered cuts in guided learning hours; concerns about sufficient time for marking and giving feedback; why travel-time to observation sites was 'invisible' to official timetables and workload assessments; and the increasing dominance of 'OFSTED-ready' practices driving professional development events.

As a departmental head, new professional situations were encountered: workload concerns regarding staff health and well-being; the amount of tutor autonomy permitted when deciding tutorial priorities; staff conformance to regulatory training requirements; and in one memorable (and needless to say depressing) case, being asked by the Principal to remove two staff members with high sickness records to 'prove you are a serious department'. This last case exemplified the disciplinary mechanism through which discourses of professionalism can operate (Fournier, 1999).

Having been in the FE sector for almost a quarter of a century, it isn't surprising that there are many profound moments that shape perceptions of work. These represent a snapshot of the reasons why I became interested in the subject of professionalism, and indeed it is unlikely that such an interest would have emerged had these experiences not taken place. Equally, experiences differ across individuals and institutions, and those indicated here are by no means the limit on agents' understandings. Chapters 6, 7 and 8 fully explore the range of insights shared by respondents, some of which can be seen refracted in the vignettes that I have

selected from my own experience, others which represent entirely contrasting 'professional' experiences.

1.2 Rationale for the Study

This thesis set out to measure attitudes in experienced FE staff in England. In their examination of professional identity amongst FE tutors, Jephcote and Salisbury (2009, p967) opined that "there is much research into the initial training of teachers, but much less so into the lives of experienced teachers." This study did not exclude trainees, but equally did not want to replicate previous studies. Importantly, little comparative work on how professionalism differs between FE groups has been undertaken, and therefore little is known about why certain ideas on professionalism are held, how they develop, their antecedents and consequences, or the factors that strengthen or inhibit them. Therefore, this study makes an original contribution to the empirical work on professionalism in the FE sector as well as add to the growing commentary on life inside FE institutions.

The study comes at an important moment in the evolution of FE, at a time where staff morale is reported to be low (Coffield, Costa, Muller & Webber, 2014) and where structural change has been unprecedented (Hodgson & Spours, 2019). With significant cuts to adult funding (Belfield, Crawford & Sibieta, 2018), and the loss of more than 20,000 staff since 2010 (Savage, 2018; O'Leary, 2020), FE appears to be in a period of extreme turbulence. While improving educational standards is high on government priorities (OFSTED, 2019), the de-regulated FE sector does not need to have qualified teachers. How these changes are affecting staff professionalism, and with what effect, is therefore of interest, not just to UK audiences, but also internationally (Misra, 2011; OECD, 2010).

Professionalism has arguably not been a policy priority in the UK (see Chapter 3), contrasting with European vocational education and training (VET) models where teacher professionalism is more firmly embedded in state reform agendas (Hanley & Orr, 2019). However, compared to schools, there remains a lack of information on VET workforces. "Poor data availability on VET professionals makes it impossible to provide a comprehensive statistical picture of the VET workforce and of the various challenges it faces" (Cedefop, 2009, p115). A lack of knowledge about the sector can create the impression of opaqueness. Yet, as Baroness Sharp (2011)

reported, the sector has a flourishing reputation for those who use its services. This reinforces the argument that more needs to be known about the FE sector to improve its national status.

In light of these issues, this study aims to:

- Measure the strength of professional attitudes across different FE staffing groups to assess commonalities and differences in their perceptions.
- Consider the degree to which professionalism is impacted by institutional structures and conditions of work.
- Identify and explore factors that individuals claim enhance or weaken their professionalism.
- Provide new knowledge and insights into the experiences of FE staff during a time of significant structural change.

An online survey was sent out to thousands of FE teachers, managers and curriculum support personnel to assess their professional attitudes. The research utilised quantitative and qualitative measures to seek answers to the research questions outlined in Section 1.4 of this chapter. With the aim of generating new ideas and contributing to the existing research corpus on FE professionalism, this thesis develops our current understanding of the views and experiences of post-16 practitioners working in the English FE sector.

1.3 Research Context – The ‘Here and Now’

To contextualise this study and its aims, three aspects of the FE sector are outlined: those relating to the sector’s *profile*, its *purpose* and its public *perception* (the 3Ps). An understanding of each element is considered important to a study of FE professionalism because it establishes what FE work is like, how it has changed and how it is thought of.

1.3.1 PROFILE

FE is large, heterogeneous and extensive in scale (Lingfield, 2012a; Foster 2005; Sharp, 2011). It comprises all forms of post-compulsory education and training for 16-19 year-olds and adults not already delivered in schools or universities including A-levels, vocational courses,

foundation degrees, basic skills provision, special education, specialist land-based and arts education, prison education, adult community provision and work-based apprenticeships. In 2017/18 there were 3.2 million learners taught in FE (OFSTED, 2018) including 2.4 million adults, of which 815,000 were apprenticeships (DfE, 2018). Around 1800 FE providers hold government funded contracts ranging from large colleges and companies to small private training providers, charities and community organisations (ibid). These include 244 FE colleges who teach 7 in 10 FE students taught by 55,000 teaching staff (AoC, 2020). Colleges offer almost 40% of all apprenticeships, 11% of all HE provision and teach 50% more 16-18 year olds than in state funded maintained schools and academies (AoC, 2020; 2019). A fifth are specialist sixth form institutions catering for about 5% of the FE student population (Hupkau & Ventura, 2017). In addition, in 2018, there were 986 publicly funded independent providers (OFSTED, 2018). These together comprise the FE sector. Such diversity, Robson (1998; 2007) has argued, challenges a sense of professional unity across FE.

1.3.2 PURPOSE

With diversity also comes the thorny issue of purpose. Kennedy's 'Learning Works' report in 1997 promoted FE as a place of opportunity for 'second-chance' learners (Hillier, 2005). Reporting in 2005, Foster acknowledged the gains made under the 'widening participation' agenda, but suggested the sector lacked a "clearly recognised and shared core purpose" (Foster, 2005, pvii). The Sharp report in 2011 criticised FE's "confusing lack of focus" (Sharp, 2011, p14), while the Sainsbury Review (2016) felt the sector lacked clarity to employers. These reports commented on the bewildering array of institutions, courses and students, ranging from academic to adult basic skills, suggesting there was no single defining purpose underpinning FE work.

Arguably, FE did not really become a central policy concern until the arrival of the New Labour government in 1997 (Orr, 2008). Under their election mantra 'Education. Education. Education', FE was re-purposed around two policy objectives, first to improve national skills and competitiveness, and second, to increase social justice, captured for example in a series of White Papers, including *Learning to Succeed* (1999) and *Success for All* (2002). However, further reports by Foster (2005), Leitch (2006) and Lingfield (2012a) suggested FE had lost contact with

its vocational mission. Under Coalition and Conservative governments, the *vocationalisation* of FE accelerated (e.g. BIS, 2011; 2010), notably through the rise of apprenticeships, and a significant cut in adult & community learning funding, whose decline is estimated to be 4 million students since 2010 (Mersinoglu, 2020). Additional reports by Wolf (2011) and Sainsbury (2016) blamed FE for an expansion of low quality ‘employability’ qualifications, and advocated a return to compulsory GCSE English and Maths and examination-based technical qualifications, decisions which the sector has arguably had little control over, but which have been criticised by sector leaders and practitioners for their unsuitability for many FE learners (Davis, 2018).

1.3.3 PERCEPTION

Government reports have consistently highlighted FE’s low status compared to schools and universities (Foster, 2005; Sharp, 2011; Sainsbury, 2016). Tony Blair once famously joked that you could hide a declaration of war in a speech about skills and no-one would ever notice it (Cook, 2015). In 2014, Vince Cable claimed civil servants wanted to ‘kill off FE’ to save money (Wheeler, 2014). In August 2019, Jon Yates, special advisor to Damien Hinds, Education Secretary in Teresa May’s Conservative government, stated:

“...we have been crap at technical education...for 70+ years. Why? Fundamentally, because people with influence (politicians, journalists, business leaders) don’t think about it.” (Camden, 2019a).

The publication of such comments does little to enhance the view that ministers understand the challenges of the sector or are supportive of its goals. Public denouncements of poor performance, such as those made by former Chief Inspector, Michael Wilshaw, have not helped this image (Exley, 2017). As these views are ‘on-the-record’, they are also unlikely to promote public trust and confidence in the sector. Research indicates that public perceptions may have a bearing on how practitioners consider their own occupational standing (Chartrand et al, 1987; Hoyle, 1969).

“The status of the individual teacher, his self-esteem, and the manner in which he performs his role are to some extent dependent upon the status of the teaching profession in society” (Hoyle, 1969, p80).

Foster (2005) argued that national reputation was “a key factor in the ability of the sector to attract support and resources” (Foster, 2005, p8) and a reason why FE struggled to maintain its prominence in ministerial priorities. Its description as the ‘Cinderella Service’ (Randle & Brady, 1997a), the ‘neglected middle child’ (Foster, 2005, p48) and the ‘everything else’ sector (Panchamia, 2012) illustrate that FE has an uneven public profile. The exception is sixth form colleges, who retain a high public status linked to their university focus (LSC, 2007; Foster, 2005; Sharp, 2011).

1.3.4 RECENT CHANGES

In the last few years, the size of the sector has significantly contracted. Current participation rates represent a 35% decrease on the 4.9 million students Bolton (2012) estimated had started a publicly funded FE course in 2010/11. Today’s FE colleges represent just over half the number operational in 1993 (AoC, 2019; Taubman, 2000). These cuts are juxtaposed against ministerial rhetoric that FE is expected to be a ‘powerhouse’ for the modern economy (Blair, 2006; Hinds, 2018). Funding cuts have, according to the National Audit Office, forced more than a third of colleges into financial deficit (NAO, 2015), a situation which has since worsened (Camden, 2019b). Government intervention, in the form of Area Reviews, launched in 2015 to create “a more sustainable sector” (Collins, 2015, p2), have meant fewer institutions and staff. Since September 2015, 94 mergers have taken place (OFSTED, 2018). Against this backdrop, changes to jobs and institutions have become a fact of FE life. This study considers the extent to which this lack of stability and constancy may have impacted on staff’s professionalism.

1.4 Research Aims

The need for a competent teaching workforce has been at the heart of government intentions to raise teaching standards across education (DfE, 2010; DFES 2006; 2004), yet ministers have rarely engaged in critical discussions of what professionalism means. The Lingfield Commission in 2012, which abolished the statutory system of teacher training, stands as an exception to this trend, though it also serves as illustration of how powerful authorities can influence

professional priorities. The intersection between power, politics and professionalism is at the heart of this thesis and central to understanding the effects of recent FE reforms (see Chapter 3).

The initial aim of this study was to measure professionalism and its relationship to other key workplace variables. Little work of this nature has been previously undertaken, which seemed surprising given the influence of performance metrics and audit on the FE world. However, early on, it became clear that to treat professionalism independently of the wider political and cultural environment would be to unnecessarily narrow the object of enquiry, with a danger of presenting findings in a vacuum. James & Biesta (2007, p11) write:

“Teaching and learning cannot be decontextualised from broader social, economic and political forces, both current and historic, and that addressing this complexity directly is the most likely route to acquiring an understanding that will be most useful to policy and practice.”

There was therefore a need to situate the study within the wider political and policy environment to examine how macro influences shaped institutional practices and attitudes.

One of the drawbacks of any investigation into professionalism is the range and breadth of issues that could be suggested as focal points. A scoping (pilot) study was helpful in narrowing down these possibilities (see Chapter 5). In formal exercises and anecdotally, it revealed participants' preoccupation with parity of esteem with schoolteachers, who were generally considered to be better paid and enjoyed better privileges (e.g. holidays, secure contracts) than FE staff. This underscored the relevance of professional status as a topic of enquiry.

Although professional status was an integral part of the wider professionalism discourse, it was an elusive concept in the FE literature. To speak of status conjured images of self-interestedness and narcissism, “a longing for money, fame and influence” (DeBotton, 2004, p11), that sat awkwardly with educational idealism and a concept of ‘vocation’. However, DeBotton has argued that status is an essential element of human survival.

“Those without status remain unseen, they are treated brusquely, their complexities are trampled upon and their identities ignored.” (DeBotton, 2004, p12).

To have low status brings with it a “corroding awareness that we have been unable to convince the world of our value” (p5). DeBotton’s concept of ‘status anxiety’, and its association with being valued, seemed to resonate with the issues uncovered in the scoping research and scholarly reflections of FE’s ‘low status’ (Crawley, 2012; 2017).

The work of the scoping study, as well as informal discussions with colleagues and third parties working in FE, suggested that professionalism, power and status were recurring themes and ought to be included within the study’s aims. It suggested the following general research question:

**How are notions of professionalism, power and status
connected in the FE sector?**

Recent surveys by Davis (2018) and the University College Union (e.g. Taubman, 2013) provided a partial insight into this relationship. However, none of these exclusively focused on professionalism. As such, this was an exploratory study, intending to be both descriptive and explanatory (Robson, 2002). Further engagement with Bourdieu’s work led to a refinement of the research question and the operationalisation of capital (Chapter 5). The central research question underpinning this study therefore became:

**Is the concept of capital useful in explaining differences in perceived
professionalism amongst FE staff?**

To answer this question, the following supplementary questions were identified:

- 1. Are FE staff highly professionalised?**
- 2. How does professionalism vary with capital?**
- 3. How does professionalism vary with position in the FE field?**
- 4. What practices support or weaken FE professionalism?**

While professionalism can be investigated in different ways, this study set out to examine staff's *perceptions* of their professionalism. It follows Hall's (1968) suggestion that staff attitudes measure the degree to which an occupation is highly or poorly professionalised.

The study's research questions were shaped by sociological research into the professions (Chapter 2), selected FE sector policies and thinkpieces (Chapter 3) and the cultural theory of Pierre Bourdieu (Chapter 4) as well as my own professional experience. Ryan & Bernard (2000) state:

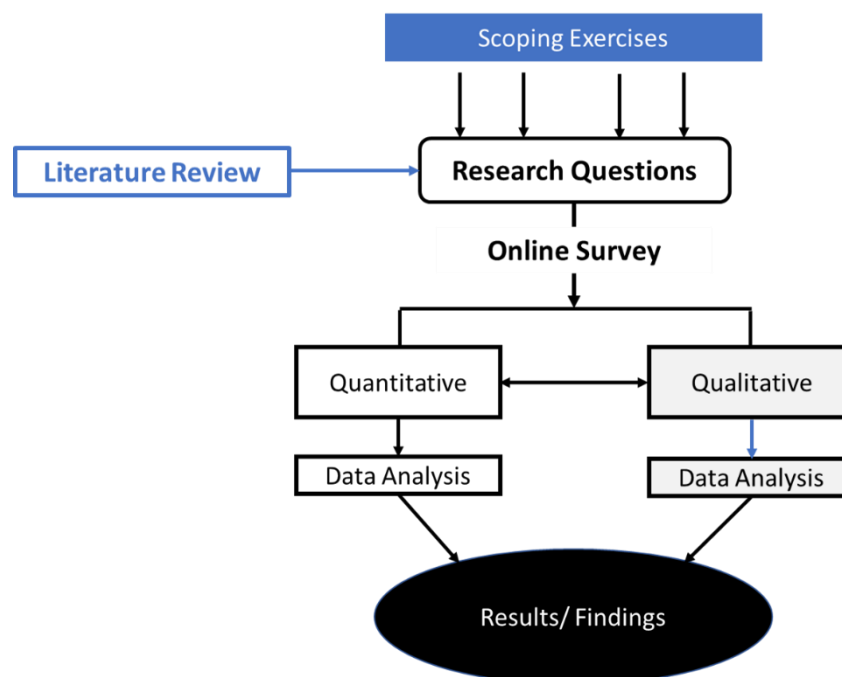
"Themes are abstract (and often fuzzy) constructs that investigators identify before, during and after data collection. Literature reviews are rich sources for themes, as are investigators' own experiences with subject matter". (Cited in O'Leary, 2011, p17)

Further iterative engagement with the literature enabled the first-cut of a draft survey to be compiled, centring on issues of professionalism, status and organisational commitment. Further development and refining of these categories, drawing on feedback from supervisors, discussions with other academics, and colleague comments (who worked in the FE sector), enabled a clearer picture of the study's focus to emerge.

The final research themes provided the basis for the analytic framework, and evolved as part of an ongoing iterative cycle of engagement, modification and re-development of the data and its interpretation, moving backwards and forwards between data and theory, inductively and deductively, to get at the heart of what people were reporting. This was a case where "the theoretical and the empirical [were] inseparable" (Bourdieu, 1998, p2).

1.5 Outline of the Research Design

The research questions drew on both quantitative and qualitative approaches (see Figure 1.1 for an overview). As Howe & Eisenhart (1990) advise, "research questions should drive data collection techniques and analysis rather than vice versa" (p5).

Fig. 1.1: Research Design Overview

Data from the scoping exercises (see Chapter 5), alongside findings from the literature review, informed the main research questions. The overall design was developed from these questions, and from these, it was established that a mixed methods approach to data collection would be most appropriate. Chapter 5 explains the strengths and limitations of each approach taken.

1.6 Intended Impact

My objective at the outset was to better understand the factors and conditions that both support and inhibit professionalism in the FE workplace. Although this study did not represent equally the different parts of the FE sector, which precludes its wider generalisation, it illustrated how power can be mobilised to control the definition of professionalism inside FE institutions. It also showed how the use of power could be de-professionalising. This knowledge offers an opportunity to reflect and re-imagine social relations within FE institutions, and to re-connect with the fundamental ideals that draw individuals into FE careers in the first place. I hope this study will lead to further research in the FE sector and in other VET systems to explore how professionalism can be better supported. This includes exposing those conditions that constrain and weaken it. Only through relentless scrutiny, of policy, working conditions and

inequalities at work, can the FE sector transform its public status and become a career of choice for a new generation.

1.7 Terminology

Certain terms are used throughout this thesis: ‘further education’ is used to describe the professional domain of teachers who work across a variety of post-compulsory settings not covered by schools or universities (Kennedy, 1997); the ‘FE sector’ refers to provision that typically includes A-levels, NVQs, apprenticeships, diplomas, foundation degrees, basic skills, adult education, land-based study, work-based learning and community learning; the term ‘teacher’ is used in preference to ‘tutor’ or ‘lecturer’. Terms have been chosen for their familiarity.

1.8 Thesis Structure

Following this introductory chapter, **Chapter 2** begins with an examination of the wider literature on professionalism and the sociology of professions. It provides a detailed critique of consensus and conflict approaches, and through this, argues that professionalism should be understood in terms of competing claims for legitimacy.

Chapter 3 explores the wider political and policy debates that have encircled FE work and professional discourse. These debates draw on major research traditions that have investigated professionalism and status in the FE sector, showing how wider economic, social and political forces have shaped dominant ideas, belief-systems and orthodoxies.

Chapter 4 discusses the use of Bourdieu’s cultural theory as an analytic tool to theorise professionalism. This includes its capacity to understand and explain differences in people’s professional experiences across different FE groups and workplaces. The concepts of capital, field and habitus are central to this analysis, and provide the context for examining changes in professional status and power.

Chapter 5 describes the methodological framework, design, sampling plan, scoping study, survey construction, data collection and analysis methods. It also considers the ethical considerations the study raises.

The study's main findings are presented in **Chapters 6 and 7**. Chapter 6 presents the study's quantitative data and examines the relationships between professionalism, capital and social structure. It shows that professionalism and capital are significantly related. It also confirms professionalism is constructed in one of three main ways: expertise, service and compliance. The chapter concludes by introducing an analytic framework to theorise these findings.

Chapter 7 uses a thematic analysis to explore practices that strengthen and weaken professionalism. It considers the strategies that FE staff used to acquire, protect and contest capital. It also provides evidence to support the proposed framework.

Chapter 8 draws together the main findings from the data and provides a critical review of the emergent themes. This is undertaken by reflecting on the main ideas raised in the literature using Bourdieu's concepts of misrecognition, doxa and illusio.

Chapter 9 draws together the conclusions of the research and how the findings represent an advance on current knowledge. This chapter also provides an evaluation of the study's aims and research questions, its limitations, recommendations for practice and possibilities for future research.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review: Conceptualisations of Professionalism

2.1 Approach to Literature Review

The previous chapter introduced the research questions, rationale and motivation underpinning this thesis. This chapter, alongside Chapter 3 (Practical and Policy Contexts in FE) and Chapter 4 (Bourdieu's conceptual framework), comprise the study's literature review. A systematic keyword search of the University of Brighton Online Library identified key journal articles from existing electronic databases (e.g. British Education Index, Emerald, ERIC, ScienceDirect). Google, Google Scholar and ResearchGate provided additional policy and FE-specific literature. Searches were supplemented by government policy archives (e.g. YOUGov, OFSTED), data from professional associations and teaching unions, and online news sites such as *FE week*, national newspapers and BBC news. Relevant schooling, higher education and international sources were also considered. Search outputs were recorded on excel spreadsheets using author, title, year, summary and starred for relevance out of 5. The literature review was conducted in four phases (see Fig. 2.1).

Fig. 2.1: Literature Search Strategies

| <i>Phase</i> | <i>Aim</i> | <i>Strategy</i> |
|--------------|--|---|
| 1 | Explore literature on sociology of professions | Searches were refined by particular theories (e.g. Functionalism) and then subdivided for key authors in the field (e.g. Durkheim). Papers were further refined for critiques and commentaries on the work of these key authors. |
| 2 | Explore FE literature on professionalism | A review of the articles related to 'professionalism', 'professional identity', 'professional practice' and 'professional status' in the FE sector, filtered for 'full text', 'journal' and 'peer reviewed', and then by abstract and relevance, which yielded a final total of 226 articles. This was supplemented by Harper & Jephcote's (2010) 'walkthrough' review of the key FE literature on professionalism. |
| 3 | Research on professionalism scales | Keyword search on 'measure', 'scale' and 'inventory', combined with 'professional' or 'professionalism'. Only scales with multiple citations were considered, producing 29 articles for Hall's professional scale (HPS). |
| 4 | Explore Bourdieu's conceptual framework | Initially narrowed down to Bourdieu's original works, and papers that cited him in respect of 'professionalism', 'profession', 'power' and 'education'. A review of abstracts gave a list of 467 relevant papers. Based on alignment with the research aims, 64 were chosen to analyse. |

2.2 Introduction to Chapter

This chapter is divided into three main sections. Section 2.3 explores definitions and contradictions associated with the concepts of profession, professionalism and professionalisation, as well as the related concepts of professional status and professionalism. Section 2.4 examines the sociological literature on consensus and conflict approaches to the study of professions. While consensus theories show how professional taxonomies have been used to signal the *exceptionality* of professional work, conflict theories reframe professionalism as a strategy to increase occupational control, status and privileges. Section 2.5 considers recent contributions from institutional sociology, in which the 'organisation' is identified as a key site of enquiry in studies of professionalisation. The chapter concludes with a summary of the main themes of this review, revealing gaps in the literature and explaining how these are addressed by this thesis.

2.3 Profession, Professionalism and Professionalisation

Professionalism is a nebulous concept (Kolsaker, 2008). James & Biesta (2007) state it is complex, contradictory and elusive. Complex, because professionalism involves understanding the deeply embedded systems of beliefs, values and practices that workers use, embody and enact at work (Hodkinson et al, 2004). Contradictory, because 'professional work' can be contrived in ways that challenge these belief systems (Shain, 1999), causing stress, conflict and dislocation (Gleeson & Shain, 1999). Elusive, because as Gleeson, Davies & Wheeler (2005) argue, professionalism is experiential and situated, and therefore a personal construction, making it difficult to articulate with precision.

Much of the sociological literature on professionalism has been located within a study of professions, so this is the starting point for this chapter. This research has attempted to pinpoint the unique properties of professional work to explain why some occupations enjoy higher status than others (Evans, 2008). The search for these properties has preoccupied scholars for almost 100 years, an exercise that Johnson (1972) believes has been futile, and which Hughes (1958) disparagingly called a 'vanity project' for certain elite occupations seeking superior status and rewards. This large body of work considers professionalism as a description

of work activities inside professions, though its usage in common parlance is arguably far more ubiquitous than this.

2.3.1 PROFESSION

“The title ‘profession’ is a claim to social standing and recognition.” (Elliot, 1972, p5)

A concept of ‘profession’ extends as far back as the Middle Ages where it was held synonymous with being a gentleman (Clough 1982). Its original meaning derived from the Latin *profiteri* to describe someone who ‘professed’ religious vows (Hughes, 1958). Today, Bilton et al (2002) suggests that income, respectability and prestige are characteristics that most people use to differentiate professions from non-professions:

Income test: a ‘profession’ is paid work, in contrast to the amateur or hobbyist, though this is insufficient, since prostitution as the ‘oldest profession’ would be eligible;

Respectability test: professions adhere to high standards of morality, conduct and performance, though many paid, respectable occupations (e.g. learning support worker) are not professions;

Prestige test: refers to the public’s deference to occupations thought to be complex and highly educated.

Alone, none of these ‘lay-tests’ appear sufficient to distinguish professions from non-professions, though collectively, Bilton suggests they are a useful heuristic. Arguably, it is the prestige test, with its connotations of status and public trust (Hoyle, 2001), that has provided some significant insights into the attributes people associate with professions.

Studies of prestige indicate that income, education and societal value are key determinants of an occupation’s perceived position in an occupational hierarchy (Duncan, 1961; Marsh, 1971; Penn, 1975; Chartrand et al, 1987). Penn (1975) defines prestige here as “notions of esteem, honour, reputation, eminence, renown, admiration and acclamation” (p353), which has been variously referred to as a measure of value, standing or desirability of an occupation (Villemez,

1977). Many of these studies, drawing on a structuralist tradition (e.g. Kerr et al, 1960) generally concur with Chartrand et al's (1987) assessment when they assert:

"Prestige data have yielded uniform results both within and across studies employing student and national samples, various occupational sets, and differing operational definitions of prestige."
(Chartrand et al, 1987, p16).

Whilst Marsh (1971) may have been premature in announcing that occupational prestige was "one of the great empirical invariants in sociology" (p214), his work raises questions about the importance of social structure as an influencing variable on 'prestige' judgements. In their own review of six nations including the US, UK and former Soviet Union, Inkeles & Rossie (1956) concluded that consistencies in judgements of occupational prestige reflected:

"...cross-national similarities in social structure which arise from the industrial system and from other common structural features." (p339).

Though Penn (1975) conceded with Kerr et al (1960) that prevailing patterns of social stratification and social change exerted similar effects on industrialising nations, his own analysis of socialist Czechoslovakia and Poland suggested that differences in respondents' prestige judgements were influenced by cultural and political norms. In particular, respondents' hostility to capitalism was used to explain their low prestige rankings for economic and political roles. Penn's contribution is useful, since he shows that prevailing value-systems determine what symbols of prestige society is expected to covet. So, for example:

"Wealth and power, for instance, only become meaningful symbols of worthiness and, therefore, legitimate grounds for the general allocation of prestige...when the dominant value system selects such criteria as acceptable." (Penn, 1975, p353).

In this respect, heuristics such as Bilton et al (2002) can come across as static and susceptible to the charge of cultural relativity. To take one historical example, in the seventeenth century, 'professional' witchfinders were well paid individuals, who were schooled in demonological studies and 'methods of trial' and commissioned by local magistrates as 'expert witnesses' to

interrogate accused witches. For a few years, these were positions of power and prestige, licensed by a religious ideology that legitimised their activities and beliefs (Maxwell-Stuart, 2003). In today's modern world, the notion of a professional witchfinder would incur scepticism, disbelief and ridicule.

The problem is that measures of prestige and respectability rely on human judgement and occupational familiarity. When this happens, they are susceptible to public stereotyping. Instead, it may be more useful to see these variables as criteria people use to compare occupations since the concepts of status and prestige lose their meaning in the absence of difference. Definitions emphasising the themes of 'vocation' and 'public service' have enabled professions to accentuate their exceptionality (Saks, 1995). However, these properties have also been contested (Johnson, 1972; Klegon, 1978; Roth, 1974). In the absence of theoretical consensus, Friedson (1994, p169) concluded that:

"much of the debate about professionalism is clouded by unstated assumptions and inconsistent and incomplete usages".

2.3.2 PROFESSIONALISM

Whilst a profession may be defined as a category of occupation, and a professional someone who belongs to a profession, definitions of professionalism have proved more elusive (Cutcliffe & Wieck, 2008). Many qualities have been singled out for attention over the last few decades, though not everyone agrees this has been worthwhile (see Johnson, 1972; Klegon, 1978). Evans (2008, p25) argues that professionalism "seems generally to be seen as the identification and expression of what is required and expected of members of a profession." If we follow Evans's logic that professionalism is what professions do, then whatever non-professions (including 'aspiring professions') are doing, it cannot be said to be professionalism. Yet, this is not how Hoyle understood the term in 1975 when he defined professionalism as:

"... those strategies and rhetorics employed by members of an occupation in seeking to improve status, salary and conditions." (Hoyle, 1975, p. 315).

Hoyle suggests that *any* occupation, not just professions, may use professionalism to strengthen their claim for higher wages and status. This contrasts with the taxonomic tradition which defines professionalism as a superior form of occupational activity, variously equated with altruistic endeavour (Marshall, 1950), commitment (Hall, 1968), judgement (Coles, 2002), abstraction (Abbott, 1988), client sensitivity (Kuczewski, 2001), dealing with risk (Evetts, 2011) and even a standard of dress (Beaton, 2010). These are claims of *exceptionality* which celebrate the uniqueness of professional work (Davis & Moore, 1949). Some writers have attempted to sketch a professional disposition, for example, Carr (2000) proposed it as an ethical way of thinking and behaving (see Section 2.4.2 Consensus Approaches).

Critical scholars such as Johnson (1972) did much to repudiate this tradition and objected to professions' claims for exceptionality. Instead, professionalism was associated with self-interest (Parkin, 1979), labour market control (Larson, 1977) and ideological manipulation (Roth, 1974). This strain of scholarship presents professions as competitive agents whose primary aim is to exploit existing systems of power and resources to sustain their position and status (see Section 2.4.3 Conflict Approaches).

Some writers have argued for a socio-cultural appreciation of professionalism (Popkewitz, 1993). On this point, Christman (1987) states:

“No professional role exists in a vacuum or grows in isolation. Instead, roles develop to meet the expectations of others” (in Cutcliffe & Wieck, 2008, p500)

As expectations evolve, Christman believes that professionalism may be re-negotiated and re-defined. This lack of 'conceptual fixedness' is often portrayed as a weakness in the research (McCulloch, Helsby & Knight, 2000); at the same time, it seems implausible that a conception of professionalism can be successfully advanced without a consideration of the social conditions in which it is perceived, expressed and understood. If rigorous operationalisation was the key benchmark of sociological endeavour, then our insights on class, power, criminality and mental illness would be impoverished and that is far from the case. Precision is intellectual work, but it should not be an obstacle to generating new insights or influencing public debate.

2.3.3 PROFESSIONALISATION: THE PROCESS OF CLAIM-MAKING

The term '*professionalisation*' describes the process by which occupations seek formal recognition from the state (Wilensky, 1964). The implied promise of greater autonomy, prestige and rewards (both monetary and honorary) in exchange for work carried out expertly and in the public interest suggests professionalisation is an 'attractive' occupational project (Evetts, 2003). Recognition (i.e. the statutory definition and protection of work) is the 'end state' of this project, with progress dependent on a series of conditions (or stages) being met. In the USA, these were defined as the emergence of a full-time occupation, the establishment of university-led training schools, followed by a professional association, legislation and the development of a code of ethics. A 'full' profession, contends Wilensky, is one where all stages have been accomplished.

Medicine and law are often cited as meeting these requirements. However, Johnson (1972) argues this is not a remarkable finding, given the template for professions has traditionally drawn on the attributes of medical and legal occupations. Unfortunately, the same accusations of cultural relativity (e.g. Goode, 1969) and Anglo-centric bias (Johnson, 1972) are never far from Wilensky's model, which is not the same thing as suggesting it offers no value. Ritzer & Walczak (1986) assert that a profession is recognizable only when it has demonstrated the *power* to transform itself and can convince significant others that it has the virtues and qualities deserving of public recognition. This is aligned with Krejsler's (2005) depiction of professionalism and professionalization as a "cultural and political struggle" (p335). The issue of power is central to these propositions, because professionalism is less about discovering universalistic properties and more about the *projection* of a consistent, persuasive image of what the profession does and is about.

What is marketed as 'professional claims' may therefore be a crucial part in our understanding of professionalism. This raises other important questions: What happens when occupations are recognised? Who recognises? What is the authority of those who 'recognise'? And what are they recognising? Dingwall (1976) contends that the process of recognition asks how occupations "seek to establish themselves as 'professions' through certain kinds of appeals" (p347). These appeals are "purposive counters in a process of self-assertion" (Wilding, 1982, p3) used to signal exceptionality. As professions comprise individuals, this thesis asks whether

professionalism in the workplace can also be understood as a claim for recognition. As most studies focus on the macro-world of professions, this thesis fills a gap in the literature by shining a light on the processes by which individuals make professional claims.

2.3.4 PROFESSIONAL STATUS

The status of 'profession' is consistently linked with the improvement of income, prestige, recognition and position (Cutcliffe & Wieck, 2008). Physicians are notable successes, social work has arguably been less successful, teaching has been stuck with the label of semi-profession (Etzioni, 1969). As long ago as 1956, Lieberman wrote:

“There are few things as important to a person as the status of his occupation” (Lieberman, 1956, p453).

Status sometimes refers to a role or a category, but is often synonymous with social position (Bourdieu, 1984). It is positively linked to recognition, pride and achievement, but also associated with social climbing and pretentiousness. Lieberman (1956) argues that status attributions are derived from actual differences in social position, such that:

“Being a doctor carries a higher status than being a ditch-digger; being wealthy carries a higher status than being poor” (Lieberman, 1956, p452).

At the heart of professionalisation is the political project of raising an occupation's status. Professionalism refers to the strategies and paraphernalia that an occupation uses to augment professionalisation (Krejsler, 2005). Yet, rarely is professional status the central object of study in the professions' literature. On the occasions it has entered the frame of public policy work, its use has been infrequent and mostly inconsistent. In the government's White paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, published in 2010, raising the status of the (school)teaching profession is a stated policy objective, enabled by three specific strategies:

- reducing bureaucracy and giving teachers and school leaders more freedom to use their professional judgement.
- encouraging more new teachers into priority subjects using training bursaries of up to £25,000; and
- tax-free scholarships worth £25,000 in maths, chemistry, physics and computing.

(Department for Education, website, accessed 16.12.2016).

Of interest, two of these recommendations are financial, though professions (and especially public welfare professions like teaching) are often framed as altruistic (Saks, 1995). To understand why these recommendations are presented is to identify who the audience is. From the document, it becomes apparent that the current 'teaching profession' is not the main target at all. On page twenty, the paper declares:

"We want to continue to improve the *quality of teachers* and teaching, and to raise the profession's status. Part of the solution will be to recruit more of the most talented people to the profession. Top-performing countries consistently recruit their teachers from the top third of graduates..." (DfE, 2010, p20; *my italics*).

In other words, status is about changing the profile of the occupation. Intimated here is a view that the current workforce is not at the required 'quality'. The message is therefore aimed at those who have *not yet entered* the occupation. It is also clear that the government's target are graduates from the prestigious Russell Group universities:

"...while some countries draw their teachers exclusively from the top tier of graduates, only two per cent of graduates obtaining first class honours degrees from Russell Group universities go on to train to become teachers within six months of graduating from university." (DfE, 2010, p19).

Hargreaves (2010) suggests this policy was designed to emulate the high entry qualifications of Finland, Thailand and Singapore, where teaching is high status. However, in all three countries, teacher certification is an important aspect of this status. What is not clear in the DfE's White paper is whether teaching is seen as an occupational skill at all. If a degree at a prestigious university is sufficient for entry and improved status, the implication is that there is little point investing in the current workforce. One might argue that the DfE's (2012) announcement to allow academies to hire non-certified teachers, describing this as an 'advantage' enjoyed by independent schools, offers confirmation that certification is not valued in schools nor seen as a priority for improved status, despite historical commentators (e.g. Cotgrove, 1958; Chitty, 2004; Tropp, 1957) noting that statutory training significantly advanced the status of schoolteaching in the 20th century.

Lingfield's decision to deregulate teacher training in FE in 2012, alongside FEs continuing lack of occupational entry requirements, indicates that 'graduateness' and certification are not commodities valued for FE work either. In the White Paper *Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances* (2006), Tony Blair argued that professional status should be tied to improved performance. However, eight years later, the workforce report into Further Education published by the former Business Skills & Innovation Department (2014) and the later '*Report of the Independent Panel on Technical Education*' (2016) written by Lord Sainsbury did not mention 'status' at all, suggesting it no longer occupied ministers' attention or priorities, nor was considered a workforce need.

Few studies have exclusively studied teacher status. The work of Hargreaves and colleagues (see Hargreaves, 2010; Hargreaves et al, 2007; 2006) and Hall & Langton (2006), both conducted with schoolteachers, are notable exceptions. In Hargreaves et al (2007), the status of teachers was likened to social workers. About half considered teaching to be a desirable career, with pay a significant factor in this. Teachers gained status from feeling trusted and appreciated, though this was significantly less likely when a school was classified as under-performing. Lastly, the authors found that negative media portrayals were linked to lower teacher ratings of their status.

Hall & Langton (2006), in the New Zealand context, identified three main drivers of teacher status: power, money and fame, with expertise and impact on students acting as secondary influences. The authors concluded that unless expertise and student-centredness led to higher wages, renown or greater control over work, teacher status would not improve. Whilst teachers believed their work was honourable and socially significant, focus groups granted them less respect than doctors and lawyers based on income and reputation.

Perhaps it isn't surprising, therefore, that Lingfield (2012a, 2012b) queried the professional status of FE teachers, and that Hutchinson et al (2014) stated that this lack of status is "causing difficulty attracting younger staff into teaching and lack of suitably qualified applicants" (p12). Low status and turnover have been highlighted by Robson (1998; 2007) and Taubman (2015) and this remains an ongoing problem for the sector (O'Leary, 2020).

2.3.5 PROFESSIONALITY

The distinction between professionalism and professionalism was originally made by Hoyle (1975) who linked the former to teachers' collective public status and the latter to their "knowledge, skills and procedures that teachers use in their work" (Evans, 2008, p26). Building on Hoyle, Evans described professionalism in terms of common occupational characteristics and a focus on the professional community, while *professionalism* referred to an *individual's* professionalism, and more specifically, their beliefs, behaviours and practices.

"...the basic components and constituent elements are essentially singular, since they reflect the individuality representing the individuals who are the constituency of the profession delineated...The singular unit of professionalism - and one of its key constituent elements - is, I suggest, professionalism" (Evans, 2008, p6).

Hoyle distinguished between restricted and extended modes of professionalism. Restricted professionalism reflected an intuitive, practice-based approach to work guided by narrow rules-of-thumb and tradition. Extended professionalism referred to research-informed practices and engagement in theorising, reflection and professional learning. Hoyle envisaged these orientations on a restricted-extended continuum, though in reality, he conceded that teachers' practices were likely to be a hybrid of both orientations (Evans, 2008).

This work informed Evans's (2008) distinctions between *demanding* (e.g. policy recommendations), *prescribed* (e. imposed external standards) and *enacted* professionalism (individual professionalism). Evans further suggested that notions of professionalism were likely to be shaped by prevailing political, cultural and occupational expectations, and were the product of a dynamic interplay between individual agency and environmental structures. This model was seen as an advance on previous conceptualisations because it emphasised the day-to-day practices and decisions of individual practitioners, moving the debate away from structural explanations that portrayed practitioners as political objects and 'policy victims'.

Further work on professionalism (e.g. Horn, 2016) suggested professional practice was a situated activity, demanding judgement, dialogue, sensitivity and ethicality. These are issues of normative validity at odds with the technical discourse embodied in 'excellence' models and

evidence-based pedagogies (Biesta, 2007; 2010). This tension, between technician (objective) and moralist (subjective) perspectives comprising teacher work (Carr, 2000), illustrates the contradictory nature of professional responsibility; on the one hand, someone who offers impartial advice based on established expertise and independent judgement, and on the other, someone required to be attentive to clients, immersed in their specific needs, and invested in their individual success. Arguably, these are tensions not just of professionalism but of professionalism in general.

2.3.6 SUMMARY

Two different focuses have emerged from the debate so far. First, a macro focus whose unit of analysis is the 'profession', which considers issues of professionalisation as the means of improving an occupation's collective status. This has been likened to a political or sociological project that occupations engage in, whose outcome is both uncertain and contested (Englund, 1996). Second, a micro focus on individual competence and action, which Evans (2008) calls professionalism, which is described as the "instantiation" of occupational professionalism at the singular level, whose focus is on improved performance (Frelin, 2013). Frelin augments the debate by considering practice as a social outcome of dialogic engagement, and it is dialogue, she maintains, that underpins professional commitment, harnessed from the cognitive and emotional profits (e.g. intelligence, respect, support, etc) that social interactions facilitate, from which durable relations of trust and belonging are formed. These durable ties, she argues, are what crystallises and sustains the formation of professional communities. Consequently, a focus on practice arguably provides the theoretical glue to connect macro with micro analyses in ways that can explain the emergence of valued (professional) activities and the mobilisation of common occupational interests.

2.4 The Sociology of the Professions

2.4.1 INTRODUCTION

Arguably, few groups have been studied by sociologists with such intensity as the professions. Once the "*prima donna*" of sociological scholarship (Perrow, 1972), the sociology of professions

has now largely disappeared from academic journals and scholarly discourse (Saks, 2016). According to Gorman & Sandefur (2011, p1):

“the study of the professions is associated in many researchers’ minds with a limited number of traditional occupations and with outdated theoretical frameworks that no longer hold much appeal.”

Whilst its decline may be exaggerated (MacDonald, 1995), there remains a malaise in professions scholarship (Saks, 2012). The traditional focus on the ‘professions’ rather than ‘professionalism’ in the literature reflects a long-standing bias of privileging the macro narrative over meso (institutional) and micro perspectives in sociological enquiry. As Abbott (1988) states:

“Most talk less about what professions do than about how they are organised to do it”.

Macro-perspectives such as Functionalism and Marxism confirmed that occupational structures influenced the work of professions. Torres (1991) defines structures as the institutional characteristics, social patterns, functions, rules and demographics that professions comprise. Richard Tawney, in the *Acquisitive Society* (1921, p88) argued that a profession was not simply a collection of individuals doing the same work but an organised group whose work was carried out “in accordance with rules” to control the high standard of work.

Fournier (1999) points to the structural changes in professional work that took place in the post-war period resulting from changing social mobility patterns, new technologies and internationalisation, and argued these imposed new ways of specifying and controlling work. The emergence of large professional service firms in the 20th century increasingly exerted pressures on professional priorities, creating opportunities for goal conflict and value misalignment (Flood, 2011). It is no surprise, therefore, that studies of professional identities and worker resistance came to the forefront of sociological enquiry in the 1960s and 1970s, recognising that professionalism was lived, enacted and often imposed (Fournier, 1999).

A study of professionalism therefore reflects both these traditions; an examination of occupational structures and a consideration of individual agency. These issues and their influence on our understanding of professionalism are variously suggested and explored

under two main headings in this chapter: those of consensus theorists, which focus on the attributes, roles and functions of professions, including the work of Durkheim and Parsons; and those of conflict theorists, who explore relationships of power and legitimacy, drawing variously from Marx, Weber and symbolic interactionism. In concluding this chapter, what is suggested is a 'middle ground' which considers how professionalism emerges in contested institutional spaces, a perspective that is examined in the work of institutional sociology.

2.4.2 CONSENSUS APPROACHES

Consensus perspectives on the 'professions' assert that:

"...professions are a *special* category of occupations which possess unique attributes that distinguish them from other non-professional occupations" (Broadbent, Dietrich & Roberts, 2005, p21, *my italics*)

The accounts are drawn from trait and functionalist traditions and are 'essentialist' in focus. Trait approaches attempt to pinpoint the 'essential' traits that separate professions from non-professions (Johnson, 1972) whereas functionalist approaches promote the 'essential' functional role that professions play in mobilising change and protecting societal norms and values (Klegon, 1978). Trait theories dominated sociological thinking from the 1930s until the 1960s and were focused on answering Wilensky's (1964) pivotal question:

"What are the differences between doctors and carpenters, lawyers and autoworkers, that make us speak of one as professional and deny the label to the other?" (Wilensky, 1964, p138)

The scholarship tends to coalesce around four defining attributes: technical expertise, a service ethic, a high level of autonomy and an organised community (Wilensky, 1964; Wilensky & LeBeaux, 1965; Greenwood, 1957). These are by no means universal or uncontested, and over the years various extensions have been proposed. The early work of Abraham Flexner (1915) suggested professionals were engaged in an intellectual exercise, were learned and altruistic. In the highly influential *Attributes of Professions*, Greenwood (1957) claimed that professions possessed (1) systematic theory, (2) authority, (3) community sanction, (4) ethical codes, and

(5) a professional culture. Even here, Greenwood signals that the difference between ‘professions’ and ‘non-professions’ is one of degree, not of essence, stating that:

“...the true difference between a professional and a nonprofessional occupation is not a qualitative but a quantitative one...these attributes are not the exclusive monopoly of the professions; nonprofessional occupations also possess them, but to a lesser degree” (Greenwood, 1957, p46).

Similarly, Barber (1963) and Hall’s (1968) work on professional behaviours and attitudes suggests that occupations and ‘professions’ differed only by degree (of adoption). Hall developed a professional model comprising autonomy, community, sense of calling, public service and self-regulation, which he claimed as the five essential professional attitudes, which could be measured and used to indicate the degree to which an occupation was professionalised. These attitudes, he maintained emerged and were sustained in occupations that had developed, or at least made progress towards, the structural features identified in Greenwood (1957).

Millerson’s (1964) ‘meta-review’ of twenty-one authors synthesised six essential structural features: (1) a skill based on theoretical knowledge, (2) a period of training, (3) competency certified by examination, (4) a code of conduct, (5) a public orientation, and (6) an organised body of members. Millerson’s work is a curious landmark since it is widely invoked in support of trait approaches, though Millerson himself rejected the concept of a ‘universal’ model. Suspecting the influence of bias in researchers’ interpretations, he writes:

“...authors begin as historians, accountants, lawyers, economists, engineers, philosophers, sociologists, etc. As a result, group affiliations and roles determine the choice of items, and bias. Usually, the measures are presented with their own occupations in mind” (Millerson, 1964, p3).

More pointedly, Johnson (1972) observed that:

The decision to include or exclude ‘elements’ appears also to depend on which occupation one wishes to endow with or deprive of professional status” (Johnson, 1972, pp24-25).

In what turned out to be a devastating critique, Johnson challenged the lack of consensus in trait compilations and used Millerson as corroboration. Reviewing Millerson, Johnson reminds

us that no single attribute is listed by all contributors, no two authors propose the same attributes, and in nine of the twenty-three traits listed, only a single advocate is identified. In fact, the highest scoring attributes (e.g. 'code of ethics', 'organised') were identified in just over half of Millerson's contributors (Millerson, 1964, p5).

Yet Millerson is not an exhaustive empirical review but an uneven collection of citations and selected texts. Nowhere can one find a *systematic* study of physicians, surgeons, dentists or university academics for who, arguably, the professional label is most commonly ascribed. He does include studies from public librarians (Leigh, 1951) and company secretaries (Crew, 1942), neither of which could be claimed to be 'fully professionalised'. Nor are all definitions independent; Bowen's (1955) is derived from other citations listed in the review (e.g. Tawney, 1921).

But perhaps the most problematic observation concerns Millerson's interpretation of his own evidence. Under Cogan, for example, Millerson lists 'skills and theoretical knowledge', 'altruistic service' and 'applied to affairs of others' as attributes. In Cogan's *The Problem of Defining a Profession* (Cogan, 1955), which Millerson cites from, we see that these three qualities are drawn from Cogan's "statement of the essentials" (p107). However, on the same page, Cogan goes on to state that professions demand:

"...arduous training and the practitioner's personal commitment to an exacting ethical code...Both attributes are required, and a failure of either is a failure of profession" (Cogan, 1955, p107).

These two qualities are not listed by Millerson. This may be Cogan's fault for not presenting these together under one crisp passage, but it is clear that Cogan believes these to be important in his definition. Further anomalies can be seen in Bowen (1955), Howitt (1951) and Parsons (1954). Under Bowen, 'training and education' is not listed, despite Bowen claiming that "the practice of management is becoming an art for which one must prepare himself through *education* and experience" (Bowen, 1955, p113, *my italics*). Howitt (1951, p743) identifies the "personal attention of the practitioner to the affairs of the client" but is not listed under "Applied to affairs of others" by Millerson. In Parsons (1954), there is no listing for 'skills and theoretical knowledge' despite this overt contra-indication:

“Technical competence which is one of the principal defining characteristics of the professional status and role is always limited to a particular “field” of *knowledge and skill*. This specificity is essential to the professional pattern...” (Parsons, 1954, p38, *my italics*).

The word ‘theoretical’ used by Millerson does not appear in Parsons’s essay, but we are left in no doubt that his reference to ‘technical competence’ and ‘specificity of function’ (p38) and its association with ‘universalistic’ methods derived from science (p42), would appear to qualify for this definition.

It should be remembered that faith in trait approaches collapsed on publication of Johnson’s critique. But without Millerson, his critique is less imposing. This is not a claim for reinstating the taxonomic approach, but neither does it seem logical to discard it based on Johnson’s argument. At best, Millerson has revealed some important discrepancies in authors’ accounts. At worst, he has been careless, misleading or both. The rejection of a ‘universal typology’, which is intrinsic to taxonomic critiques, may well be justified. However, it does not follow that traits do not exist or cannot be used to differentiate occupations. Drawing on Christman (1987), a view of traits as cultural attributes is plausible, a form of ‘social currency’ that occupations draw on for credibility in particular times and contexts. As the worth of traits changes over time, so do the parameters for their recognition and measurement. This last point is nearly always missing from appraisals of Millerson’s work and Millerson himself never adequately confronts the issue of historicity. Therefore, based on this discussion, it may be reasonable to reconstruct traits as *cultural resources* that occupations can (and do) use to promote their case for special status and privileges.

The role of professions was developed by functionalist accounts that suggested certain professional qualities had a recognised value in society. Their significance is indicated by Parsons (1939, p457) when he claims:

“many of the most important features of our society are to a considerable extent dependent on the smooth functioning of the professions”

Early British sociologists argued that professions were important social institutions that could resist the crude forces of the market and promote community cohesion (Tawney, 1921; Carr-

Saunders & Wilson, 1933). In the same period, Parsons proposed that well-functioning societies created a 'value consensus' to install normative order. In both cases, professions were seen as custodians and propagators of societal values – as moral crusaders, cultural guardians and pioneers of scientific endeavour (Parsons, 1939). For Parsons, in return for playing such an indispensable role, professions were rewarded with high income, status and privileges.

In functionalist orthodoxy, professional work was presented as complex, specialised and intellectually demanding, requiring great skill and dedication in its application, offering the possibility of a superior, morally-regulated service, and always with the 'public interest' in mind (Saks, 1995; Wilensky, 1964). Professions constructed an image of their work as scientific, responsible and ethical. This endowed them with a deserved authority and status, as well as a certain nobility of purpose, as Brante (2011) indicates:

"A profession obtains its status from a central base, that it is a truth regime. Because of its scientific base, a profession is the ultimate link to 'truth' there is no higher authority. This and only this is what makes professions unique" (Brante, 2011, p19).

Alignment with the truth and scientific respectability has been a defining element of the professions' public credibility. And since clients were not in a position to question the expertise of professionals, professions inherited an obligation not to abuse their position, placing trust at the heart of the profession-client relationship. The primacy of the fiduciary relationship over pecuniary gain was one of the signature properties of professional work, as was a profession's objectivity and detachment, which Parsons labelled as 'disinterestedness'. He states:

"The professional man is not thought of as engaged in the pursuit of his personal profit, but in performing services to his patients or clients, or to impersonal values like the advancement of science". (Parsons, 1954, p35)

It painted professions in an extremely flattering light. With great responsibility also came expectations from professions for self-government and a status-reward bargain commensurate with their 'special role'. Parsons (1939) identified self-regulation as a significant marker of public trust and its acquisition became symbolic of a profession's status. Whilst he agreed that professions and businessmen did not differ substantially in motivation or desires, professions as

institutions could be distinguished by their “collegial organisation and shared identity” (Evetts, 2003, p36) and represented an alternative, superior way of doing business.

This last point is significant. Perkin (1990) sees the rise and expansion of the professions as a direct result of the professions’ capacity to publish their work as morally and ethically superior to that performed by business elites and industrialists. Of professions, he contends:

“They live by persuasion and propaganda, by claiming their particular service is indispensable to the client or employer and to society and the state. By this means they hope to raise their status and through it their income, authority and psychic rewards (deference and self-respect)”
(Perkin, 1990, p6).

According to Halliday (1987), this capacity for self-representation, which functionalists saw as unproblematic, disguised the normative appeal of the ‘professional ideal’ (Perkin, 1990). Professions used the professional ideal to promote their own distinctive set of values for practice (Evetts, 2003). However, as Johnson (1972) complains, these idealisations did not reflect reality but a *prescription* of reality. Etzioni’s (1969) distinction between professions (e.g. medicine, law) and semi-professions (e.g. teaching, social work) is a good illustration of what Johnson is referring to. For Etzioni, semi-professions fall short of the medical ‘ideal-type’ because they typically lack in expertise, autonomy and community. It is a distinction that has endured despite the study’s obvious flaws. For one thing, the sampling is narrow and highly selective. In addition, nowhere is the origin of Etzioni’s attributes questioned, nor do researchers ask whether ‘qualifying status’ reflects a process of patriarchal bias rather than objective benchmarking (Witz, 1992).

Trait-functionalist approaches reached their zenith in the 1950s and 1960s, but by the 1970s, they were all but abandoned. Their search for a list of universal empirical attributes, based on a scholarly consensus of what full professions possessed, did not materialise (Johnson, 1972). Capturing much of this frustration, Friedson (1983, p21) commented on the “persistent lack of consensus about which traits are to be emphasised in theorising” which had led to a fragmented scholarship:

“Instead of building a sturdy tower of knowledge, this activity has created a number of scattered huts, some very elegant indeed, but huts nonetheless” (Friedson, 2001, pp4-5)

The 'semantic confusion' that Millerson rightly identified at the commencement of his review is underlined by Klegon (1978, p260) who remarked that:

"There has been a great deal of inconsistency and differing terminology in the various lists of attributes which have been put forth as defining professions, and the attributes which are put forth are difficult to apply to concrete occupations".

Functionalism presented a level of coherence in situating the trait scholarship within a wider sociological field of view, though these were never unified into a singular theoretical project. In the absence of such unification, the atheoretical nature of trait compilations (Johnson, 1972) were unable to avoid the tautological objections imposed by works such as Etzioni (1969) that measured professions like medicine in terms of the traits possessed, but measured the 'value' of such traits by their presence in medicine. It equally begged the question why medicine should be chosen as the 'ideal-type' on which to compare other occupations, and invited allegations of class and gender bias (Brante, 1994; Witz, 1992). The fact that such scholarship was also restricted to certain forms of Anglo-American professions and did not engage with wider international models that recognised different forms of profession-state interaction (Saks, 1995), is evidence of their parochiality. Finally, in their deconstruction of the 'professional ideal' and the realisation that its value lay in what it represented not what it reflected, questions were posed as to how specific knowledge needed to be, how much training was required and how high performance should be set to achieve the status of profession (Klegon, 1978). The demise of the trait-functionalist project meant that these questions were left unanswered.

2.4.3 CONFLICT APPROACHES

The trait-functionalist approach cemented in the public's mind the need for professionals to be well-trained, responsible, service-driven and autonomous in their field of judgement. This image was soon to be severely overhauled by the likes of Friedson (1970), Johnson (1972) and Larson (1977), who reframed 'professions' as "powerful, privileged, self-interested monopolies" (Evetts, 2003, p401) representing a few elitist occupations seeking improved status, salaries and market control (Johnson, 1972; Friedson, 1983). Under trait-functionalist scholarship, argued

Friedson (2001), the concept of profession had become saturated with “pretentious, sometimes sanctimonious overtones” (p13), raising criticisms of sociologists who had:

“...become the dupe of established professions (helping them justify their dominant position and its payoff) and arbiters of occupations on the make” (Roth, 1974, p17).

Reaching its peak in the 1970s, ‘conflict approaches’ depicted professions as being more interested in themselves than their clients, more preoccupied with status than performance and more likely to suppress malpractice than expose it (Larson, 1977; Daniels, 1973; Johnson, 1972; Elliott, 1972). In Friedson’s (2001) view, the goal of professions was to achieve market monopoly, which Larson (1977) described as an occupation’s ‘professional project’. The aim of this project was the right to exclusivity i.e. the right to control work, membership and wages, which enabled occupations to regulate its intake, and to claim legitimacy in its jurisdiction of work (Abbott, 1988). The downside of monopolies, suggested Illich et al (1977), is their undemocratic influence on the definition, regulation and control of public policy-making.

Although some writers (e.g. Halliday, 1987) suggested this was an extreme representation and unnecessarily denigrated much of the good work that professionals performed, this was a minority view. Conflict theorists rejected completely the premise of stable attributes and a view of professions as co-operative institutions, re-constituting the process of professionalization as a form of ‘jurisdictional dispute’ involving competing professions in a wider ecology of interprofessional rivalry and division (Abbott, 1988). Hughes (1958) likened these disputes to projects of ego-enhancement in which dominant voices usually triumphed.

The most significant development in this genre of work was the re-casting of professionalism as a “successful ideology” to create an image of exceptionality (Perkin, 1990; Johnson, 1972; Evetts, 2003; Larson, 1977; Friedson, 1970). By ideology, we refer to “the claims, values, and ideas” that provide the rationale for occupational recognition (Friedson, 2001, p105). This ideology fostered a belief that:

“...certain work is so specialised as to be inaccessible to those lacking the required training and experience...” (Friedson, 2001, p17).

Consequently, the appeals to expertise, service ideal, autonomy and community can all be seen in the context of an ideological promotion. In particular, conflict theorists mounted a sustained assault on the concept of expertise. For Parsons (1939), it was the alignment of professional work with the detached objectivity of scientific principle and method that guaranteed a profession's credibility. Even before the 1970s, the issue of scientific neutrality was being contested. As early as 1937, Max Horkheimer, a former Chair of the famous Frankfurt school, proposed that there was no such thing as knowledge-impartiality or transhistorical truth, since the objects of knowledge were both socially and historically constituted. On the matter of scientific doctrine, he writes:

“The facts which our sense present to us are socially preformed in two ways: through the historical character of the object perceived and through the historical character of the perceiving organ”
(Horkheimer, 1937, in Ingram & Simon-Ingram, 1992, p242).

Horkheimer argued that one cannot stand outside the world and observe it from a distance. As Dall'Alba and Barnacle (2007, p682) assert, “Knowing is inhabited” and cannot be extricated from its ‘conditions of constitution’. Thus, conflict theorists regarded declarations of scientific eminence with suspicion, re-constructing the ‘scientific voice’ as a *socially-pervasive discourse* that provides a covert legitimacy to the maintenance of social inequality, domination and subjugation.

Claims to expertise were reframed as mechanisms for establishing dominance over one's occupational competitors. Pavalko's (1988) description of the American medical profession's attempts to marginalise acupuncture in the 1970s for its embrace of Eastern philosophy and rejection of biomedical doctrines testifies to the internecine warfare engaged in by rival occupations seeking an exclusive jurisdiction (Abbott, 1988). Consensus theorists suggested expertise was complex, esoteric, theoretical, demanded great intellect and could not be mastered without serious application and rigorous training. But it masked the fact that professional work was not always complex or theoretical (Friedson, 2001; Cartwright, 1967) and that definitions of expertise could be intentionally opaque, as the attempt by Wilensky (1964) highlights:

“If the technical base of an occupation consists of a vocabulary that sounds familiar to everyone...or if the base is scientific but so narrow that it can be learned as an asset of rules by most people, then the occupation will have difficulty claiming a monopoly of skill or even a roughly exclusive jurisdiction. In short, there may be an optimal base for professional practice – neither too vague nor too precise, too broad nor too narrow”. (Wilensky, 1964, p148)

Criteria which are “neither too vague nor too precise” enabled professions to press their claims for scientific respectability whilst protecting themselves from external scrutiny (Jamous & Peloille, 1970). Even the term ‘esoteric’ fostered a view of professional knowledge as intellectual, mysterious and difficult to codify (Burns & Haga, 1977). Commenting on the US legal system, Halliday (1987) argued that claims to ‘esoteric knowledge’ rested on an occupation’s ability to *convince* outsiders of their technical superiority:

“...the more a profession can *represent* an area or issue as technical, the more influence it is likely to have...a profession will have influence insofar as it can cultivate the *appearance* of technicality, whatever the reality.” (Halliday, 1987, p45; *original italics*).

As with expertise, the claims for a service ideal, autonomy and a self-regulated community can be judged the same way. For Perkin (1990), the service ideal, which Wilensky (1964) identifies as a principal element of professional work, is no more than an advertisement of moral superiority clothed in the language of ‘calling’. Abbott (1983), pointing to the link between service and status which the service ideal is intended to strengthen, suggests that:

“If service claims assert status by asserting functional importance or necessity, claims of disinterested service augment this assertion by purifying it of ulterior goals. They remove the ambiguity of motive inherent in service for profit or personal gain”. (Abbott, 1983, p867).

In respect of the service ethic, Johnson (1972) argued that whilst it may be an important part of a professional community’s ideology, “it is not so clear that practitioners are necessarily so motivated.” (p25). This is not to say that the service ideal does not reflect things that professionals actually do, for as Wilding (1982) states:

“Reality may be very different from the ideal, but stress on the ideal is not without significance. To be worth making, such a plea must at least contain the appearance of credibility.” (Wilding, 1982, p4)

Even at the client level, it is apparent that the professional needs to inspire their client's trust which demands they present a favourable impression of their service goals. This can be enhanced by a code of ethics. In functionalist terms, the publication of a code of ethics institutionalises this relationship and formalises a commitment to the client. Yet as Abbott (1983) states, a code of ethics enables professions to stand out in the marketplace, through appeals to integrity, honour, probity and security. He writes:

"It seems a truism that claims of superior ethicality...are essentially claims of superior status or honour..."ethical" professionals could at least set themselves apart by proclaiming economic disinterest" (Abbott, 1983, pp865-868).

Claims of ethicality, like the service ideal and expertise, can be seen as 'marketing tools' whose principal design was to project professional legitimacy. At the same time, such claims served an important secondary function by regulating intra-professional demarcations. This brought into critique the concept of the professional community, such as that explicated by Goode (1957), which far from being the moral sanctuaries that Durkheim alluded to, exhibiting a common identity and shared value-system, were sites of jealousy, tension, scheming and division. And far from being meritocratic, as the ideology advertised, they operated by a process of 'social closure' which restricted access to the opportunities and rewards that professional elites enjoy (Parkin, 1972). The purpose of singling out the characteristics which distinguish the chosen group, says Weber, "is always the closure of social and economic opportunities to outsiders" (in Wilding, 1982, p9). Credentialism supplied the mechanism for professions to legitimate this closure, through controlling admissions criteria, standardising professional curricula and through ideological propaganda (Perkin, 1990). For Parkin (1972), professions were places for the recruitment and reproduction of privilege.

Recent evidence from UK social mobility studies suggest that professions are increasingly elitist and have a class-based constitution. The Panel on Fair Access to the Professions report, *Unleashing Aspiration*, suggests that entrance to the UK professions is skewed towards those from higher-income families:

“In nine of the twelve professions recorded, the data shows an increase in people coming from better-off families between the 1958 and 1970 birth cohorts”. (Panel on Fair Access to the Professions, 2009, p19)

This is particularly pronounced in the professions of medicine and law. In 2016, the Social Mobility Commission published its *State of the Nation* report and drew similar conclusions:

“...many of the elite professions being even less representative than the most selective universities. For example, recent London School of Economics research using Labour Force Survey data showed that only 4 per cent of doctors had working-class origins (i.e. parents who were in routine or semi-routine occupations) and only 6 per cent of barristers, 11 per cent of journalists and 12 per cent of solicitors.” (Social Mobility Commission, 2016, p127).

The fact that high-income professions, such as medicine, law and finance, have been associated with a privileged education and upbringing was not lost on critics who presented accounts of professionalization as a class struggle (see Parkin, 1979; Collins, 1979). Yet professionalization on the basis of class alone has been accused of ‘gender blindness’ (Davies, 1996), for promoting masculine cultural ideals at the expense of ‘less prestigious’ qualities such as ‘empathy’ or ‘connectedness’ which have culturally been associated with femininity (Davies, 1996; Andrews & Waerness, 2011; Witz, 1992). With this in mind, Davies (1995; 1996) questions whether the professional model is now ripe for abandonment given its connotations with elitism and paternalism.

Unlike the social closure thesis, Hughes (1958) saw professional work as one that was negotiated for its meaning and significance. The essential point in Hughes’s work, which paved the way for Bourdieu’s later critique of the professions, is that there is nothing intrinsically different between ‘professions’ and other forms of occupation. ‘Profession’ has symbolic value. In other words, it is “a symbol for a desired conception of one’s work, and hence, one’s self”, a means of embellishing one’s worth on the social stage, a form of ‘status-chasing’ (Hughes, 1958, p44). His observations of the medical world, from surgeons to janitors, suggested that *all* people strive to find meaning in their work, noting that:

“even in the lowest occupations people do develop collective pretensions to give their work, and consequently themselves, value in the eyes of each other and of outsiders” (Hughes, 1958, p45)

Hughes, adopting a micro-perspective, concluded that our understanding of professional work was significantly enhanced when you observed what people actually said and did, but such understanding remained obscured when value-laden labels like 'professional ethics' were routinely deployed. His studies of the medical profession, drawing on Cooley's (1902) concept of the 'looking glass self', indicated that work could have significant positive or negative effects for an individual's social identity (Hughes, 1958). In particular, both Mead and Cooley identified the importance of social feedback and recognition from 'significant others' as crucial to identity formation, and its ongoing positive development. Here, Hughes introduces the concept of 'audience' which became a significant theme in Goffman's later asylum studies. As Hughes contends, within the space of 'professional' interactions:

"...one of the most important things about any man is his audience, or his choice of the several available audiences to which he may address his claims to be someone of worth" (Hughes, 1958, p43).

Erving Goffman, a student of Hughes at Chicago University, developed Hughes's concept of audience, arguing that interactions were opportunities for dignifying or discrediting one's identity, and that behaviour was primarily aimed at fostering a 'good impression'. In his seminal text, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Society*, Goffman asserts:

"When an individual appears before others, he knowingly projects a definition of the situation, of which a conception of himself is an important part. When an event occurs which is expressively incompatible with this fostered impression, significant consequences are felt..." (Goffman, 1959, p242)

Goffman's (1959) work on impression management provides the final significant point from conflict theory. He argued that professional work is what *others* see as professional. It is the product of ritual, agreement and negotiation, and one in which human beings constantly strive to present the most flattering image of themselves. Goffman drew attention to the pressures of role compliance and conformity that came with interaction, especially in situations of asymmetric power. Whether work is constituted as professional depends on whether it attracts the patronage of more powerful actors (Strauss et al, 1962). Goffman's work in *Asylums*

indicated that patients would acquiesce to the meanings imposed on them from staff even when they held contrary private views about the meaning of their behaviours (Goffman, 1968). They did so for a variety of reasons: not wishing to lose face, or be challenged, or lose privileges, or simply because it required expending too much effort. Decisions to assert or defend an act as professional may imbue similar deliberations, and of course it may depend on how powerful the opposition is and how established their worldview has become. According to Becker (2003), the 'power to label' is crucial in promoting a certain representation as valid or legitimate:

"What things are called almost always reflects relations of power. People in power call things what they want to, and others have to adjust to that, perhaps using other words of their own in private but accepting in public what they cannot escape" (Becker, 2003, p661)

2.5 Institutions as Professionalising Agents

Much of this discussion has revolved around the structural organisation of professions and their ability to promote a particular ideology of their work. The traditions of Functionalism, Marxism and Weberianism, in their respective ways, have spoken of the attempts that occupations have made to improve their collective status. These are often described as 'grand narratives' (Lyotard, 1984) because they draw on *macro-structural* metanarratives to explain occupational behaviour. However, symbolic interactionists recognised that occupations were also collections of individuals engaging in *micro* practices. Some of these writers (e.g. Rosengren, 2019) imported the notion of 'social script' to acknowledge that subjectivities could reflect localised norms and traditions, as well as personal biography. These, however, were modest attempts to align structure and agency in a literature mostly divided into macro *or* micro theories, with limited integration.

Missing from these 'classical' analyses was a study of organisational dynamics which institutional sociologists argued neglected the 'forgotten middle ground' of institutional life. Institutional culture, they suggested, could both empower or constrain professional projects and was therefore crucial to understanding professionalisation. Muzio, Brock and Suddaby, (2013) believe an institutional approach offers several strengths: first, many professions now

work in institutionalised environments such as large, multi-disciplinary service organisations, placing organisations as distinctive actors in professionalisation processes; second, ‘new professions’ (e.g. human resource managers) have developed professionalisation projects inside organisational fields that *depend* on their institutionalisation; third, most organisations are complex, political spaces with ‘pluralistic logics’ (Singh & Jayanti, 2013) in which professionals illustrate a “schizophrenic ability” (Muzio, et al, 2013) to conform to organisational rules whilst using resources and power to control organisational privileges (DiMaggio, 1991). The study of pharmaceutical sales professionals by Singh & Jayanti (2013) also shows how institutions are active in re-institutionalising agents who are non-compliant with dominant commercial logics. McCann, Granter, Hyde and Hassard’s (2013) ethnographic study of UK paramedics revealed that professionalisation is not always homogeneously experienced inside a profession, but is stratified by power relations, in which frontline paramedics enjoyed few of the benefits of structural professionalisation celebrated by leaders due to managers’ tight control over resources, targets and practices.

The study by McCann et al (2013) illustrates how structural alignment with the professional model does not guarantee enhanced status for frontline practitioners. They write of UK paramedics:

“it possesses the structural trappings of a profession (e.g. training and certification in higher education establishments, research journals, codes of practice, a professional body), and it can be defined as ‘professional’ work if one uses the term in its ‘folk category’, as meaning ‘an avowal of promises’ ...[however], [t]here are many reasons why the senior level professionalisation strategy has so far had limited traction, but fundamentally it comes down to organisational power.” (p771)

Paramedics were engaged in ‘institutional work’ to cope with the day-to-day pressures of frontline activity. This entailed invoking a form of ‘blue collar professionalism’ which emphasised the importance of duty, commitment and social mission. McCann et al (2013) believed that these constructions helped paramedics reclaim their self-worth and dignity in an environment characterised by “frequently unpleasant work and a surprising lack of respect shown by some patients they encounter” (p766). A pre-occupation with cost-benefit rationalities, labour utilisation and a separation of interests between ‘those at the top’ and ‘those from within’ (McClelland, 1990) showed that professionalisation could be a fragmented,

discordant and contradictory experience across a complex service industry, where the power to make changes was unequally distributed.

2.6 Summary

This chapter started by considering the relationship between professionalism and the concept of 'profession', with the latter described as an occupation recognised by the state for its special contribution to society. Recognition was highlighted as a key theme, not least because the state must accept an occupation's claim for exceptionality before passing legislation that grants it the title 'profession'. This brought into view the process of *claim-making*. Claims were described as appeals or warrants that justified an occupation being taken seriously. This process has been subject to extensive sociological debate over the properties and virtues defining professions. Wilensky's (1964) view that professions must be full-time, highly educated and regulated by a professional association and code of ethics, and Hall's (1968) emphasis on autonomy, self-regulation and service, emerged as distinctive characteristics of a professional model that functionalists believed could assess an occupation's degree of professionalisation. These ideas have been robustly challenged (e.g. Friedson, 2001; Johnson, 1972), and continue to provoke sociological disagreement (Saks, 1995). Conflict theorists such as Larson (1997) argued that professional status was linked to cultural and economic privileges clothed in a professional ideology of service, but recent work by Muzio et al (2013) believe these accounts suffer from a professional myopia which ignores the distinctive contributions of organisations and undervalues professional agency.

The work of Hughes (1958) and Goffman (1959) considered that claim-making and the desire for improved status was an important motivation for *all* individuals. Goffman, in particular, recognised the importance of the 'audience' in corroborating individual status claims, and the importance of recognition as the key to whether exceptionality was accepted. He pointed to processes of negotiation and meaning-making in the construction of status and self-worth, and it was often those already in positions of power and authority that ensured certain meanings were sustained. The emphasis on (asymmetric) power relations and their role in the reproduction of status provides the context for introducing Bourdieu's work in Chapter 4.

Certain core arguments are taken forward in this thesis. Debates about professions, professionalism and professionalisation have considered the importance of claim-making as the basis of professional recognition, usually entailing the identification of certain 'professional' attributes that society values. Being noticed, valued or acknowledged, as forms of 'recognition', appear to be integral to the enterprise of improving both occupational and individual status (Abbott, 1988; Goffman, 1959). Drawing together the various sources, this study considers whether the 'professional model', based on autonomy, community, expertise, self-regulation and a service-ethic is an accurate description of professional work inside FE institutions. Acknowledging the contentiousness of this model, this study also examines staff's claims in their own words.

To what extent is there evidence of professionalisation inside FE? One possibility is to examine FE's alignment with the professional model. Traditionally, FE has been a part-time industry (ETF, 2018), and it currently has no system of regulated training or certification, and no professional association that reaches to all parts of the sector. On these criteria, it might not expect to be highly professionalised. However, many teachers have degrees and professional qualifications, as well as occupational competence, and belong to subject-based professional associations (ETF, 2018; IfL, 2009). The survey by Villeneuve-Smith et al (2008) also indicates that the FE workforce has a strong sense of social mission. This may suggest a much stronger suite of professional attitudes. At the same time, FE's reliance on the state as the main purchaser of its services indicates significant state dependency, and as McCann et al (2013) has shown, an environment of state rationing and central targets can limit the impact of internal professional projects, especially where change is not consensual. Some of these questions can start to be answered in the next chapter which looks more closely at the extant research on the FE sector and models of professionalism.

Chapter 3 - Literature Review: Practical & Policy Contexts in Further Education

3.1 Introduction

'There is no calling more noble, no profession more vital and no service more important than teaching' (Michael Gove, in *The Importance of Teaching*, 2010, p7)

Two decades ago, Robson (1998) suggested "the FE teaching profession has made little progress over the last 100 years towards full professional status" (Robson, 1998, p586). Reasons included FE's wide diversity of institutions and curriculum, a lack of recognised expertise, an absence of statutory credentials and policy instability. Today, arguably FE continues to struggle for recognition, reflected in its repeated characterisation as the 'Cinderella sector' (Randle & Brady, 1997a). Daley, Orr & Petrie's double collection of thinkpieces in *'The Principal'* (2017) and *'The Twelve Dancing Princesses'* (2015) suggests little has changed in this time, with declining funding, policy volatility and a hostile political discourse contributors to the sector's continuing low status (Lucas & Crowther, 2016; Donovan, 2019; Mather & Siefert, 2014; Davis, 2018). This is despite evidence that FE staff enjoy working with students and consider their job valuable and worthwhile (Villeneuve-Smith et al, 2008).

This chapter discusses some of the main concepts and variables that FE researchers claim to be important in the study of FE professionalism. To do this, it examines four research traditions: policy, labour process, identity & cultural, and professional learning. A discussion of the contributions and implications of each tradition is presented (see Figure 3.1). While these approaches are not exhaustive, they offer a succinct introduction to the main issues.

3.2 Policy Tradition

Ball (2003, p215) contends that policy has the potential to affect not only what teachers do, but 'who they are', transforming the environment that practitioners inhabit, and redefining how work must be performed. The role of policy is to set goals, describe options and confirm

Fig. 3.1: Overview of Research Traditions and Variables Affecting Professionalism

| <i>Tradition</i> | <i>Overview</i> | <i>Key terms</i> | <i>Possible Variables</i> |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|
| Policy | Examines the impact of policies and policy levers (targets, audit, inspection) on FE practices. | Policy overload, audit, managerialism, marketisation, inspection, improvement, quality, mediation, standards, de-professionalisation, re-professionalisation | Funding, re-structuring, inspection, surveillance, self-regulation, management, standards, quality. |
| Labour Process Theory | Discusses how divisions in labour organise staff's relationship to work and their experience of it as meaningful or alienating. | Power, control, surplus, neo-Taylorism, economisation, intensification, routinisation, compliance, alienation, suffering, de-skilling | Workload, autonomy, exploitation, management, trust, job security, pay, contracts, employment type, stress, burnout, turnover |
| Identity-Cultural | Considers issues of diversity, change, expertise, autonomy and community as indicators of professional status and unity. | identity, diversity, fragmentation, dual professionalism, expertise, autonomy, belonging, communities of practice | Job role, expertise, commitment, autonomy, relationships, community, trust, memberships and participation |
| Professional learning | Considers the importance of learning, teacher education and networking as professionalising opportunities. | CPD, teacher education, expansive-restrictive learning, professional networks, teacher communities, reflection, research | Professional development, networks, professional body, collaboration, support, qualifications, teacher training, reflection, experience |

workforce priorities in clear, unequivocal ways that fit with the intentions of policymakers and political regimes. Policy is therefore an artefact of government which embodies ideology, prescription and power (Ball, 1990), neither benign nor uncontested in its purposes and effects (Poulson, 1998). This has been especially true of the subject of professionalism in the FE sector.

The policy tradition confirms four findings. First, Incorporation in 1993 indelibly changed the structural conditions under which FE institutions operated which had direct consequences for how FE practices would be directed across the sector. Second, the pace and frequency of policy change since then has impacted on the status of FE practitioners. Third, the marketisation of the FE sector introduced new ways of controlling and regulating professional work, which writers have described as both *deprofessionalising* (Randle & Brady, 1997a, 1997b) and *reprofessionalising* (Guile & Lucas, 1999; Lucas & Unwin, 2009; Lucas, 2004a). Finally, policy is not handed down 'oven-ready' for implementation but is mediated by policy actors in light of prevailing values, attitudes and traditions governing their practice (Spours, Coffield & Gregson, 2007).

Before Incorporation, FE policy-making was uneven and opportunistic (Lucas, 2004a), reflecting the sector's low national profile and regional oversight. Incorporation re-established Whitehall as the dominant power in FE decision-making, following the passing of the Further and Higher Education Act (FHEA) in 1992 which, according to Ainley & Bailey (1997), represented an overt attempt by government to marketise the FE system and remove local education authorities from educational decision-making. As Hyland & Merrill (2003, p14) explain:

"Colleges became corporate institutions completely independent of local authority control with governing bodies dominated by representatives from business and industry".

Incorporation introduced a swathe of structural and financial reforms to the FE sector which had immediate implications for the way FE teachers were organised and managed. At the heart of Incorporation was the belief that:

"...financial independence, coupled with the adoption of core business values from the private sector, represented the most effective way forward to raising standards and improving provision" (O'Leary, 2011, p36).

Overnight, Principals became Chief Executives with significantly more power than they had under LEAs (Simmons, 2008), now accountable to a new Further Education and Funding Council (FEFC) for their income. Relatively well-established patterns of collective bargaining were swept away and replaced by self-governance and performative human resource management (HRM) systems designed to secure a more efficient, effective and economic FE service (Hill, 2000).

What emerged in the post-Incorporation era was a series of cost-cutting measures that focused on 'getting more for less' out of the FE teacher (Shain, 1999). Managers installed new contracts which increased teaching loads and administration (Mather, Worrall & Siefert, 2007).

Institutions were required to report against recruitment, retention and results (the 3 'Rs') to secure funding, and new performance and quality assurance strategies were devised to measure staff performance outcomes (Williams, 2004).

These changes were driven by a neoliberal ideology that saw market enterprise as the solution to improving public services. Local authority partnerships, now regarded as inefficient and wasteful (Simmons, 2008), gave way to management-led institutions driving their own competitive agendas, though increasingly, these were subjected to Whitehall target-setting.

Most researchers agree that the scale of change in the last three decades has been substantial (see Coffield, 2013; 2015; Crawley, 2012; Orr & Simmons, 2011). Since the 1980s, the FE sector has been subjected to 28 major pieces of legislation, 48 secretaries of state and no government organisation has survived longer than a decade (Norris & Adam, 2017). To echo Keep (2006), FE has a 'policy problematic' - too many policies, wanting too many changes, in too little time, supported by too little evidence. In 2011, Professor Lorna Unwin, of the Institute for Education, wrote that FE had become:

“...a playground for policymakers for the past 40 years, with countless experiments designed without any underpinning national vision or consensus” (Unwin, 2011, in Shepherd, *Guardian*, 3 March 2011).

References to 'extreme turbulence' (Edward et al, 2007, p155), 'initiative fatigue' (James & Biesta, 2007), 'policy overload' (Hillier, 2006) and 'serial failure' (Hanley & Orr, 2019, p104) have variously described the policy climate of the sector since Incorporation.

In a recent survey of the FE sector, Davis (2018) suggested that policy volatility was viewed by practitioners as both destabilising and frustrating. As one Principal pithily stated:

“A constant barrage of ill-thought-through reform after ill-thought-through reform being introduced by people who are either foolish or arrogant enough to think that: a) the problem they are trying to solve is much simpler than is the case, b) they know exactly how to solve it, and c) nobody else’s view is important or relevant if it is contradictory to a) and b)” (in Davis, 2018, p25).

Policy was judged especially disrespectful when it affected students’ learning, such as a cut in funded course hours or learning support, or when qualifications were labelled as ‘low value’ (see Wolf, 2011). As in Edward et al (2007) ten years earlier, the results of enforced policy change were described as de-motivating and oppressive.

What Hadawi & Crabbe (2018) describe as a ‘democratic deficit’ in FE policymaking is also arguably reproduced inside FE institutions (Humphreys & Hoque, 2007; Maringe, 2012). In the hands of powerful institutional actors, policy goals have been a stimulus for cultural change programmes (Mather, Worrall & Mather, 2012), involving structural re-configuration and loss of staff, as quests for strategic advantage have generated uncertainty, disruption and mistrust across workplaces (Senior et al, 2017; Mather, Worrall & Siefert, 2009). Drawing on Page (2017), Donovan (2019) points to the “decline of trust between the leadership and the led” (p186) as a sign of the rising tensions between the designers and translators of policy and its recipients, in which institutional instability can prove “corrosive” to professional commitment. Consequently, this thesis asks whether recent policy reforms are delivering a committed, self-confident sector.

O’Leary (2011) believes that Incorporation represented a significant transformation in the organisation and regulation of FE practice, marking the replacement of the traditional *bureau-professionalism* (Clarke & Newman, 1997) associated with a pre-Thatcher public sector to an *accountability professionalism* (Barber, 2004) that embraced “new public management” (NPM) based on the principles of privatisation and competition. NPM, as a package of reform tools, fitted with the wider dominant neo-liberal ideology adopted across the developed world, which saw markets as essential mechanisms for economic growth and social transformation

(Taberner, 2018). Whereas bureau-professionals valued autonomy, specialist expertise and a public service orientation (Simkins, 2000), NPM positioned commercial objectives and cost-effectiveness at the heart of business performance (Hood, 1991).

Underpinning the use of NPM techniques was an ideology of *managerialism* which cast organisational activity as rational, controllable and measurable (Hoyle & Wallace, 2005), where the pursuit of “efficiency, effectiveness and excellence” was pivotal (Shepherd, 2018, p1668) and where “better management” (Pollitt, 1990, p1) was expected to solve FE’s quality issues. FE colleges came to resemble bureaucracies to satisfy the demands of audit, setting up management hierarchies and reporting systems to optimise performance, giving rise to what Power (1997) described as the ‘audit culture’. According to Ball (2003), this completely changed the professional environment for educators who were now expected to:

“think about themselves as individuals who calculate about themselves, ‘add value’ to themselves, improve their productivity, strive for excellence and live an existence of calculation” (Ball, 2003, p217).

In this new *performative* culture (Ball, 2003), predicated on measurement, surveillance and profit, FE workers were required to “set aside personal beliefs and commitments” (p215) and re-invent themselves as flexible, enterprising subjects, in which “experience is nothing, productivity is everything” (Ball, 2013, p136).

An ongoing debate in FE is the extent to which these changes empowered institutions to professionalise, and whether the re-balancing of power, from practitioners to the state, was experienced as enabling or disabling. This argument is examined briefly through the impact of three prominent policy directions governments pursued in the name of ‘improving’ FE: *standards, inspection and leadership*.

Before Incorporation, there were no professional standards and approaches to pedagogic development were secondary to notions of occupational competence (Lucas, 2004b). In 1999, The Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO) published FE’s first set of professional standards to develop a consistent approach to practice, following similar developments in schools and the government’s claim that there was “too much poor or

inadequate teaching” in FE (Blunkett, 1998, p2). As a symbol of professionalisation, Lucas (2004a) believes the FENTO standards were a welcome cultural development, following those of established professions. However, as Wallace (2002) and Coffield (2000) have argued, they cultivated a ‘blame’ narrative that attributed variations in teaching quality to “teachers’ deficiencies” (Wallace, 2002, p23), as well as promoting a prescriptive model of teaching practice.

Following criticism from OFSTED, in 2006, Lifelong Learning UK (2006), FENTO’s replacement, produced FE’s second iteration of standards, comprising 14 pages and 190 competency statements (Orr, 2009), and although designed to create “parity of status and professionalism” with schoolteachers (DfES, 2004, p5), these were scrapped by the Lingfield Commission (2012), as was the LLUK, for being overly bureaucratic. In 2014, a third set of standards was produced, this time by the newly established Education and Training Foundation (ETF), comprising a single page of A4 with twenty statements, claiming greater flexibility, but these too have been criticised for their ambiguity (Tummons, 2016).

While ‘standards’ may be considered symbolic artefacts of professionalisation (Day, 1999), Tummons (2016) argues they have operated at the margins of FE teaching practice and proved little more than a compliance exercise for teacher trainees. For Lucas & Unwin (2009), ‘standards’ rarely lead to lasting transformations in practice, while Eraut (1994, 2000) suggested they ignored the tacit dimension of professional judgements, leading to a narrowing of professionalism around competency. Coffield (2000) warns that where standards are too prescriptive, they discourage criticality and can become objects of deprofessionalisation. An important question, therefore, is whether FE staff align their professionalism with a concept of standards given their prominence in political and sector discourse.

OFSTED entered FE as a quality watchdog in 2001 with a mission to support the raising of teaching standards for 16-19 year-olds, merging in 2007 with the Adult Learning Inspectorate to become the sole quality assurer of FE. The combined levers of the Common Inspection (now Educational) Framework (CIF) and the Inspector’s Handbook (OFSTED, 2019), which sets out in detail how OFSTED arrives at its judgements, have come to direct FE pedagogy, through toolkits, ‘good practice’ research and graded observation systems based on the OFSTED 1 to 4

scale, which rates teaching from outstanding to inadequate (O’Leary, 2011; OFSTED, 2019; 2012; Fletcher, 2015). Arguably, OFSTED’s impact on FE practice in the last two decades has been permanent, pervasive and mostly controversial.

On one level, such precision around the expectations of good practice might be regarded as a welcome improvement to a sector that, prior to 2001, had been accused by John Harwood, then Chief Executive of the Learning & Skills Council, of allowing 40% provision to remain inadequate (Hammond, 2003). On the other hand, as Child (2009) maintains, professionalism in FE was increasingly about getting favourable OFSTED judgements. The re-labelling of ‘satisfactory’ to ‘requires improvement’ in 2012 by OFSTED moved the criteria for acceptable performance so that many more FE institutions were now branded ‘under-performing’, inviting further negative publicity (Taubman, 2015) and a renewed emphasis on OFSTED intervention. Mather et al (2007) and Mather & Siefert (2014) argue that compliance with OFSTED standards, and the fear of public shaming, has been indicative of OFSTED’s increasing control of FE practice in which obedience is an overriding expectation.

OFSTED’s increasing influence on teaching and learning in FE, most prominently illustrated by the adoption of graded observation frameworks, radically changed definitions of the professional FE teacher. O’Leary & Smith (2012) suggested that lesson observation schemes mainly stifled creativity and autonomy (and therefore professionalism) as the onus was to produce detailed documents for scrutiny and to reproduce practices that reflected the ‘outstanding’ descriptors of the Inspection Handbook. Quite apart from the fallibility of observer judgements and the unrepresentativeness of ‘showcase lessons’ (Gleeson, Hughes & O’Leary, 2015), Edgington (2016) describes the feelings of failure, guilt and shame that can accompany a ‘poor’ grade as well as their impact on job security, reputation and future job prospects. In 2015, OFSTED abandoned its own practice of grading observations after sustained criticism by the wider sector (O’Leary, 2013a), and is now considering new forms of teacher classification (Allen-Kinross, 2018). While the government continue to position OFSTED as the champion of teaching standards, this study asks whether staff perceive inspection as a mechanism for supporting or undermining professionalism.

Incorporation and financial independence also placed new opportunities and challenges

on FE leaders, and in the first few years, Taubman (2000) suggests FE was characterised by aggressive macho-leadership that set out to re-organise FE business along private sector principles. There was a demand for managers who adopted the “perspectives of the commercial world” (Lobb, 2017, p189), and a rush to change ‘outdated’ contract arrangements equated with former professional practices.

Randle & Brady (1997b) provided one of the first systematic studies of how managerialism penetrated staff lives and practices in the FE sector. FE cultures, they suggested, were transformed into target-setting, budget-driven, flexible working environments, in which service productivity and improvement were the primary goals. Under managerialism, the FE manager assumed the role of ‘reforming agent’ whose goal was to measure, regulate and economise performance to achieve key business objectives (Randle & Brady, 1997b). They observed:

“Many lecturers at Cityshire saw management as obsessed with budgets and business plans against their own concerns for the client.” (p232).

As financial considerations assumed prominence, teachers “felt their judgement and control over the educational process was being displaced by that of managers” (p233). This reduction of professional control, Randle & Brady argued, was akin to a form of *neo-Taylorism*, in which outputs in terms of growth and results (the managerial paradigm), mattered more than the quality of the student experience (the professional paradigm). A professional paradigm, they maintained, referred to “a commitment to ‘public service’ values of altruism and teacher autonomy” (Shain, 1999, p1), and was incompatible with managerialism.

Randle & Brady’s study came at a time of significant structural change in the sector, which saw a loss of more than 20,000 staff and the rise of contract casualisation (Taubman, 2000). Lucas & Crowther (2016) suggest these effects were not always experienced as oppressive by managers, who welcomed freedom from local authorities and a renewed focus on improvement. These changes, they claimed, contributed *not* to a de-professionalisation of staff but arguably to their *re-professionalisation* (see also Shain, 1999). Michael Barber, Tony Blair’s educational advisor, suggested accountability was the *only* basis for improving the professional status of teachers:

“accountability requires that people know what their goals are, that progress towards those goals is measured and that success is rewarded and failure addressed...It is the neglect of failure that undermines the public’s perception of teachers”. (Barber, 2004, pp8-11).

Taubman (2000) suggests that much of the labour conflict witnessed in the 1990s was driven by a management desire to dismantle the former bureau-professional model. According to Goodrham & Hodkinson (2004, p7), the reforms “challenged traditional definitions of autonomy and professional status” by removing spaces for individual judgement, by moving curriculum control into the hands of policymakers, and by weakening the value of expertise and experience.

Escalating expectations on FE leaders have arguably increased pressures to strengthen accountability regimes to improve performance (Lambert, 2011; Savours & Keohane, 2019), encouraging FE leaders to be bold and often brutal with organisational re-design (Lambert, 2011). Since 2010, more than 20,000 teachers have been made redundant (O’Leary, 2020). The analysis of Savours & Keohane (2019), in the tradition of school improvement studies, have promoted the importance of ‘good leaders’ in “driving through improvements in teaching standards and student outcomes” (p4). Attributions of this kind, however, embellish a view that only heroic leaders can ‘get things done’ in FE. This has enabled organisational re-structuring to be positioned as a ‘rite of passage’ in management practice to achieve better business outcomes (Senior et al, 2017; Gleeson et al, 2015). Unsurprisingly, in this milieu, researchers have used taxonomies that reflect the alleged binary positions of FE teachers and managers.

Examples of this come from Evetts (2013) who suggests a division between *occupational professionalism* (allegiance to the collegial group) and *organisational professionalism* (allegiance to employer), terms which Clarke & Newman (1997) distinguish by their reference to self-regulation or accountability. Sachs (2001) refers to ‘*democratic professionalism*’, emphasising local power, and *managerial professionalism*, emphasising central power, as contradictory and antagonistic positions on professionalism that reflect different position-takings inside educational institutions, revolving around issues of control. Similarly, an evolving clash of cultures, or values, between *corporate* and *critical* constructs of professionalism, has been identified by Bathmaker (2006). ‘Corporate’ professionals accepted managerialism, submitted to the need to be ‘reformed’ (Ball, 2003), and defined ‘professional’ in terms of

flexibility and competence; 'critical professionals' valued "relations based upon care and respect" (Avis & Bathmaker, 2004, p308) and engaged with questions of morality and educational empowerment. While these constructs help to simplify positions, they also underestimate the creativity of staff responses.

James & Biesta (2007) use the term 'mediation' to recognise that FE agents do not act as policy automatons but interpret policy and make choices as to how to implement it. Gleeson & Shain's (1999) distinction between 'willing compliers', 'unwilling compliers' and 'strategic compliers' suggested a need to move away from treating FE teachers as "either the recipient of external policy reform or as an empowered agent of professional change" (p446), and instead recognise that practices arose from an 'artful pragmatism', which were attempts by individuals to reconcile external (structural) pressures with their personal belief systems. The concept of mediation recognises that policy enactment is complex, uncertain and reconstructive as policy actors navigate prevailing policy demands and institutional priorities to make sense of competing, and often contradictory, objectives.

Mediation also helps understand policy responses that are unexpected, for example James & Diment's (2003) description of teachers' use of 'underground learning' which entailed giving up their own time to ensure students were not disadvantaged by 'lost' course hours. Mediation also explains processes of '*fabrication*' (Ball, 2003), denoting practices used to improve the presentation of performance. An example is described in Perryman (2009), who observed the constant re-writing of documentation and re-organisation of lessons to ensure that OFSTED inspectors saw only what institutions wanted them to. Fabrications are paradoxical because "they are a way eluding or deflecting direct surveillance" (Ball, 2003, p225) while claiming authenticity. They are:

"versions of an organisation (or person) which does not exist...they are produced purposefully in order 'to be accountable'. Truthfulness is not the point...They are a betrayal... a giving up of claims to authenticity and commitment, an investment in plasticity..." (Ball, 2003, pp224-5).

'Fooling the inspectors' thus became a legitimate exercise for staff to engage with during an OFSTED inspection (Perryman, 2009, p624) despite its purpose as one of deception and fabrication. O'Leary & Smith (2012) observed widespread disenchantment for such initiatives that placed staff in morally compromising positions, evidence of what Shore & Wright (2000)

called 'coercive accountability'. These examples show that what is 'professional' is dependent on dominant ideologies of practice, where context (e.g. inspection) establishes professional legitimacy, even when these conflict with personal views of what is acceptable.

Summary

One can analyse the policy tradition in terms of *economic, cultural* and *social* drivers. Changes in funding operate to prioritise and constrain professional work by establishing the viability of institutional activity. Since 1993, the FE estate has contracted, staff volumes have reduced, and contract casualisation has increased, demanding increasing staff flexibility and efficiencies, and a focus on institutional competitiveness (Taubman, 2000; Williams, 2003; Lupton, Unwin & Thomson, 2015; Belfield et al, 2018). The ability of institutions to respond to this financial agenda has been a contested issue, portrayed as both a *deprofessionalising* experience, because of the perceived trivialisation of pedagogic issues (Randle & Brady, 1997a; 1997b), and a *re-professionalising* experience (Lucas, 2004a) as teachers have been exhorted to improve customer satisfaction and achievement. The heightened emphasis on student outcomes and entrepreneurialism, which a market requires, also acknowledges a need for administrative competence and a responsive curriculum, in which disciplinary traditions and worker autonomy have a diminished role. OFSTED is an increasingly powerful actor in shaping the attitudes and practices expected from FE institutions who must demonstrate proficiency and commitment to the market agenda. The significance of inspection outcomes has coincided with an increase in managerial power, the latter of which has been used to re-design institutions to be 'OFSTED-ready'. Studies of mediation reveal that binary classifications do not capture the complexity of policy responses and instead indicate that policy translation is often contingent on prevailing cultural, leadership and institutional contexts. Collectively, these economic, cultural and social factors are continuing to shape staff attitudes and practices, though how, and to what extent, are questions that this thesis hopes to explore.

3.3 Labour Process Tradition

Labour Process Theory (LPT) provides insight into recent labour reforms inside FE institutions

and examines how power has been exercised to achieve these. Although Reid (2003, p559) declared that LPT had “become a marginal presence in the contemporary literature on teachers’ work” because of its association with Braverman’s de-skilling thesis, it has been revived in FE with a series of papers by Kim Mather and colleagues between 2004 and 2018 charting the effects of policy and managerial change on FE labour (Wang, Mather & Siefert, 2018; Mather & Siefert, 2014; Mather, Worrall & Mather, 2012; Mather & Siefert, 2011; Mather, Worrall & Seifert, 2009; Mather & Siefert, 2004). These accounts have identified workplace control, job insecurity and work intensification as factors that affect perceptions of work, as well as point to inequalities in power and privileges between managers and non-managers.

This section addresses three points. First, it outlines LPT’s Marxist origins and briefly considers Braverman’s adaptation of this theory, its criticisms and counter-arguments. Second, it examines four areas where LPT can help understand the concept of professionalism. Third, it summarises the evidence that FE practitioners have been de-skilled in accordance with Braverman’s criteria.

LPT has its genesis in Marxism (Reid, 2003), which states workers produce capital for a bourgeois elite who profit from their labour. In this system, workers play no role in setting the exchange rate of their labour or choosing how surplus (profit) is extracted, and instead, work is lived as a process of “domination over and exploitation of the producer” (Marx, 1930, p713, in Noon & Blyton, 2007, p239). Inevitably, states Marx, workers are alienated from the process of work. Braverman’s (1974) *“Labour and Monopoly Capital”* resurrected Marx’s analysis of class struggle in the context of modern work relations, stating that since workers did not own the means of producing capital, employers needed to control them to maximise profit. Braverman argued that worker autonomy was being displaced by mechanisation, surveillance and standardisation. What became known as Braverman’s ‘de-skilling thesis’ highlighted the estrangement of the worker from the act of working in which the goal of managers was to exploit them for profit.

Helsby (1995) believes Braverman’s analysis is useful for examining the changes in professional work observed in the last few decades as national governments imposed constraints on public

expenditure and demanded improved services at affordable prices. According to Schon (1983), the installation of the market as the prime mechanism for re-configuring professional work created a 'crisis in confidence' as people questioned the legitimacy of professionals' expertise. Technology, including the internet and social media, has arguably accelerated this crisis, where users can now download 'expert solutions' to solve their problems without seeking professional consultation. Helsby (1995) argues that the erosion of trust, autonomy and status that accompanied the reform of teacher work re-introduces the relevance of Braverman's analysis.

Braverman has been criticised for treating the worker as passive, for suggesting managers were only interested in control, and for arguing that technology always led to de-skilling (Noon & Blyton, 2007). While there are studies that show FE agents have responded to work reforms in various ways, for example, through strategic compliance (Gleeson & Shain, 1999), 'ambiguous accommodation', (Collinson, 2003), 'principled infidelity' (Hoyle & Wallace, 2007) and 'cognitive escape' (Page, 2010), the progressive homogenisation of practice observed in FE through the impact of inspection (Thompson & Wolstencroft, 2018) alongside the general immiseration of FE teachers since Incorporation (Lobb 2017; Smith & O'Leary 2013; Mather et al, 2009; Taubman, 2000), are consistent with Braverman's de-skilling thesis.

Braverman's emphasis on controlling labour to secure greater capital surpluses arguably reflects the realities of many FE institutions seeking financial stability, in which the tools of leadership and managerial target-setting are identified as a 'compelling logic' to improve the quality of FE provision, secure efficiencies and reduce overheads. Against this economic landscape, LPT offers four contributions to the study of professionalism.

First, increases in administrative and audit-related activities have reduced time for pedagogic work. While Jephcote & Salisbury (2009) have argued that FE teachers could be characterised by an 'ethic of care' based on the primacy of student needs (Jephcote & Salisbury, 2009), managers promoted an 'ethic of performance' characterised by profit, efficiency and target-setting (Ball, 2003; Lobb, 2017; Boocock, 2017). This differentiation draws attention to the competing interests and priorities of different staffing groups, as well as explain the decline in teachers' professional commitment observed when managers increased workloads, reduced course hours and restructured staff teams. The reform of teacher labour can be seen as

imposing constraints on teachers' ethic of care by disrupting and constricting pedagogic priorities and interactions (Jephcote & Salisbury, 2009; Jephcote, Salisbury & Rees, 2008; Owen & Ennis, 2005)

Second, work intensification has caused staff to work harder for longer (Taubman, 2000; Williams, 2003; Mather & Siefert, 2014). Work intensification can directly impact on professionalism by creating perceptions of failure generated by unrealistic or ambiguous work expectations (McGill, 1995; Hill, 2000; Lobb, 2017), or indirectly, through its impact on staff health and well-being which can reduce work performance and effort (Gibbon, 1998), or by reducing collaboration which heightens feelings of estrangement, all of which impact negatively on professional commitment (Mather et al, 2007; Humphreys & Hoque, 2007). Mather et al (2007) suggested work intensification was inevitable under managerialism. Staff overloading, through increased teaching loads, increased paperwork and flexible deployment practices, was used to maximise staff productivity, but placed staff in positions they felt undermined their credibility (Mather & Siefert, 2014). Mather et al (2009) also found evidence of 'teacher-pushing', where teachers were "under pressure to go to work even when they were unwell" (p148). Not surprisingly, work intensification has been strongly linked with increases in staff stress, illness and attrition (UCU, 2013; Mather et al, 2007; Edward et al, 2007; Male & May, 1998; Gibbons, 1998; AoC, 2017).

Third, conditions of contract precarity and casualisation (UCU, 2016) have arguably increased job insecurity in the FE sector which can affect professional commitment (Mather & Siefert, 2014; Mather et al, 2011; Donovan, 2019; UCU, 2016). In 2015/16, at the time of this survey, 61% of FE colleges had reported compulsory redundancies (AoC, 2017) with turnover rates increasing in the preceding five years, peaking at 20% for teachers in 2014/15, and almost 25% for teachers in the South-East in the same period (excluding compulsory redundancies). Senior et al (2017) point to the fear of redundancy brought on by a prospective merger and its effects on professional commitment. Given the scale of mergers in the last five years, there is a need to assess whether these are affecting teacher professionalism and retention, both of which may impact on programme continuity and student outcomes (Ronfeldt et al, 2013). Jameson & Hillier (2008) also note the low professional status of many part-timers based on a lack of stability and engagement in college life and the disempowering effects produced by limited

career progression (Swain & Cara, 2010). It is also the case, however, that part-timers choose FE to suit personal circumstances (ibid). As more than 6 in 10 staff work part-time in the FE sector, this thesis offers a timely examination of these potential effects and their implications.

Finally, changes in the labour process have been perceived by many staff as exploitative.

Taubman (2000; 2015) believes that managerialist policies to impose new contracts, heavier teaching timetables and flexible working conditions weakened teaching communities, through a transfer of power to managers and an enforcement of a new economic settlement. Exploitation describes teachers' concerns in Edward et al (2007) when managers did not consult over policy changes, and in Mather et al (2012) where SMT change initiatives were perceived as deliberate acts of destabilisation to obtain staff compliance. In Edwards et al (2001), managers redefined overwork as 'inefficiencies', and equated professionalism with 'flexibility', while teachers construed this as "being ready to do anything and work all hours" (p376). In Humphreys & Hoque's (2007) study of Delta College, SMT's rhetoric of participation was not matched by its autocratic approach to decision-making, leading to a loss of job control. Staff's inability to control their time, workload, expertise or job security fits squarely with a Braverman theory of *neo-Taylorist* relations.

Braverman used the term 'deskilling' to describe the increasing routinisation and mechanisation of modern labour. The work of Randle & Brady (1997a; 1997b) in the aftermath of Incorporation suggested that elements of Braverman's de-skilling thesis could be applied to FE work reforms. Nowhere, according to Randle & Brady, was this more explicit than in the reduction to teacher autonomy, identifying this with teachers' *de-professionalisation*. The unilateral increase in administrative duties; the repatriation of curriculum design and teaching approaches from teachers to managers; and the downgrading or replacement of teachers' roles with cheaper (and often less qualified) assessors, were all given as examples of the deskilling and degradation of teacher work. Braverman also confronts labour as 'alienated activity', as in Humphreys & Hoque (2007) and Maringe (2012) whose description of teachers as marginalised and lacking a critical voice, chime with Marxian allusions to estrangement and depersonalisation (Orr, 2012). At the same time, as Orr (2012) maintains, teachers saw their work as opportunity to challenge society's failings and derived fulfilment from this. Villeneuve-Smith et al's (2008) survey of FE teachers also testifies to the enjoyment and pride derived from

their interactions with students. This indicates that staff do not necessarily accept or submit to managerialism uncritically but find ways of resisting their alienation and re-defining their work to restore meaning and status to it (Orr, 2012).

One of the drawbacks of Braverman's analysis is that its transfer to a service-related occupation such as teaching makes it vulnerable to criticisms of behavioural determinism. It is clear from the research outlined that worker resistance to top-down policy directives takes many and varied forms, contrary to a Braverman thesis. LPT also has a tendency to dichotomise staff relations into 'them and us' categories (e.g. managers and teachers), when arguably the experiences of both are more nuanced than this. Lobb's (2017) reflections on middle managers and Davis's (2018) survey of FE staff (including senior managers) show that the experience of managers is not homogenous in FE, with both groups expressing resistance to aspects of government policymaking. Arguably, it is the state that owns the means of production, through central funding, but Braverman offers no credible theorisation of the state's relationship with institutions and staff. Finally, in returning to the main criticism, there is no place for students in a LPT theory, yet as Lobb (2017) highlights, the role of students as performative agents (e.g. rating teachers' performance) have a major role in how staff experience professionalism.

Summary

The scale of structural change since Incorporation has caused the FE sector to become smaller, leaner and less financially secure, re-shaping the workforce to satisfy new *economic* imperatives and leading to a significant increase in part-time, variable hours and agency work across the sector (Williams, 2003; UCU, 2016). Taubman (2000; 2015) suggests these changes were designed to control wage increases by replacing expensive, experienced staff with cheaper, unqualified ones. Jameson & Hillier (2008) and Edwards et al (2001) argue that the desire to optimise human resources led to the casualisation of a large section of the FE workforce. Staff complaints of marginalisation (Jameson & Hillier, 2008), alienation (Orr, 2012) and exploitation (Mather et al, 2009) are consistent with a Braverman's Marxist interpretation of capitalist relations. Mather et al (2009; 2011) and Mather & Siefert (2014) highlighted the *cultural* change in FE institutions these actions triggered, in which acceptance of job insecurity, work intensification and flexibilisation was an expectation of managerialist policy regimes.

Arguably, increased workloads and financial cuts have also reduced the *social* opportunities for collaborative decision-making and networking. The impact of inspection, which encourages conformity to external benchmarks, and the expansion of performance management techniques, are illustrations of the transfer of power from teachers to managers, leading to allegations of de-skilling and a 'culture of mistrust' (Donovan, 2019), conditions which are predicted by a Braverman analysis.

3.4 Professional Identity and Cultural Tradition

Professional identity is considered important in occupational work because of its implications for staff commitment, resilience and retention (Trede, 2012; Price, 2010). Research indicates that strong professional identities are associated with employees enjoying their work, feeling valued by colleagues and experiencing high levels of work integration (Maringe, 2012; Gilbert, 2016; Humphreys & Hoque, 2007). Conversely, a weak professional identity has been linked to difficulties in professional commitment and employee retention (Kyriacou & Kunc, 2007; Ingersoll et al, 2014; Madsen et al, 2009; Gilbert, 2016).

This section briefly examines the links between professional identity and professionalism. It then considers the relationship between professional identity and three variables that are argued to affect its coherence: diversity, expertise and autonomy (Robson, 1998). Finally, the concept of professional identity is explored using Lave & Wenger's (1991) concept of 'communities of practice', in which professionalism is theorised as a socialised phenomenon.

The cognate literature rarely makes explicit the links between professionalism and professional identity. This may be because, as Trede (2012, p162) reports, it is "slippery and fluid", and therefore difficult to operationalise. Robson (1998, p586) suggests that professional identity answers the question "who am I/ we as a professional?" Shaw & Timmons (2010) define it as the internal values, beliefs and ideologies guiding professional action (i.e. identity is *inward-facing*), in contrast to professionalism, which Gannt, Natt & Madison (2015) define in terms adherence to external standards (i.e. professionalism is *outward-facing*). While Trede (2012) argues that both concepts are more complex and inter-dependent than these representations

permit, their intersection has been commonly explored in FE research through the narratives people use to justify their professional practice (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999).

Certain properties, according to Robson (1998), Bathmaker & Avis (2005) and Jephcote & Salisbury (2009) appear to be central to a successful 'FE identity': an 'ethic of care' (i.e. student orientation), a desire to make a contribution, job autonomy, respect from colleagues, management support, job recognition, stability and security, and a desire for subject credibility, to name a few. However, since the 1970s, researchers agree that professionals have "faced unprecedented challenges: to their autonomy, to the validity of any ethical view of their calling, to their relatively privileged status and economic position, and to the legitimacy of their claims to expertise" (Beck & Young, 2005, p183). This has also been the case in FE (Gleeson & Shain, 1999; Williams, 2003) which, under Incorporation, became less stable with the constant re-making and abolition of job roles, courses and institutions to improve productivity (Gleeson et al, 2005). This climate led Robson (1998; 2007) to claim that the sector's professional identity was fragmented. It is a claim that has been re-asserted in subsequent FE research (see Lingfield, 2012a; Price, 2010; Bee, 2016).

Robson (1998) identified three reasons responsible for this fragmentation which are relevant to this discussion. First, the diversity of FE, with its many roles, curricula and settings, prevented a commonality of purpose from emerging; second, expertise in FE was varied, diffuse and contested; and third, the increasingly prescribed nature of FE work inhibited autonomy, creativity and professional growth. These reasons are now explored.

The breadth and variety of courses within FE institutions has been hailed as one the sector's defining strengths (Crawley, 2012; James, 2017). However, this diversity is also considered to be the cause of the sector's diffuse identity (see Foster, 2005). Lord Lingfield's final report on professionalism remarked that:

"A consistent sense of professionalism among all FE lecturers might always prove elusive, given the diversity and scale of the sector" (Lingfield, 2012a, p21)

In recognising organisations like FE institutions as complex social systems, researchers have moved away from Cooley's (1902) notion of a 'singular self', and instead speak of a 'plurality of

identities' to reflect the varied roles of FE educators (Colley & James, 2005). Jephcote et al (2008), for example, suggested that "being a teacher was a case of being pushed and pulled in different directions" (p170). Clow (2001) argued this diversity generated different forms of professionalism including an *ex-officio* professionalism based on prior occupational identity and a *holistic* professionalism, embracing an 'ethic of care' for students (see also Jephcote & Salisbury, 2009), all linked to the specific contexts that respondents worked in. Clow maintained that it was "no great surprise that the diversity of FE produces a diversity of constructions of professionalism" (Clow, 2001, p407), but suggested the lack of a shared culture was unlikely to create a unified sector capable of mobilising a collective voice.

The concept of expertise is central to discussions of professional identity (Bostock, 2019). Lucas & Unwin (2009) suggested that for most of FE's history, teachers defined their professionalism in terms of vocational expertise and experience (Clow's '*ex-officio professionalism*'). Page's (2013, p822) description of FE colleges as "factionalised workplaces of vocational tribes" illustrates that subject identification is still important to many staff. To quote Viskovic & Robson (2001), this is because:

"their credibility (with students and colleagues) is intimately bound up with their industrial and commercial experiences. Understandably, they often express a need to remain conversant with industrial norms and practices." (p222).

Subject allegiances have, in part, been explained in terms of the opportunism surrounding staff employment in FE. Gleeson et al (2005) reported that:

"Entering FE is, for many, less a career choice or pathway than an opportunity at a particular moment in time." (Gleeson et al, 2005, p449).

They reported teachers "sliding into FE" for economic reasons with no sense of social mission (see Le Gallais, 2006, for an exception). In contrast, Guile & Lucas's (1999) concept of the '*learning professional*' emphasised a wider role for FE teachers, focussing on pedagogic skills, commitment and the value of working democratically as partners with students, parents and other stakeholders. Lucas (2004a) suggests that FE's historical failure to develop a 'student

perspective' was a significant reason why FE teachers lost ministerial confidence in the 1970s and 1980s. Putting the student first, Lucas maintained, improved FE's professional status.

The 'student-first' perspective, was incorporated into new 'dual identity' models of professionalism in the late 1990s and 2000s to recognise the value of subject *and* pedagogic expertise in FE professionalism (Peel, 2005; Robson, 1998, 2002, 2007). While subject expertise was associated with subject qualifications and occupational currency, pedagogic expertise was linked to the acquisition of teaching qualifications. Gleeson & Mardle (1980) found that qualified teachers perceived their status and expertise to be superior to non-qualified teachers, which they linked to the scarcity value of 'qualified status' and its connotation with academic achievement. However, Best, Ade-Ojo & McKelvey (2019) argued it was the *perceived legitimacy* of qualifications that supported professional status. Their study of trained FE teachers working in schools revealed that staff did not believe they were treated with equivalent professional status because school colleagues considered FE training to be inferior to schools. Avis & Bathmaker (2006) found their trainees defined 'professional' in terms of the *quality of their pedagogic relations* not their teaching certificate. These findings suggest it is not clear how, or if, qualifications support professional status. Given the debates surrounding their professionalising potential, this issue is explored.

Page's (2013) study of construction teachers shows how the marginalisation of occupational expertise can present challenges to a stable professional identity. Page describes the anxiety teachers experienced as they were required to conform to their institution's model of a 'good teacher', where the attributes that secured their appointment (e.g. attitudes, language and norms relating to the building site) were challenged by managers as inappropriate. As Page (2013) notes:

"the transition from building site to the college *does* involve contradictions with prior identity...what is considered compatible and incompatible...is, to a large extent, determined by the HoCs [Head of Curriculum]" (*original italics*)

A similar point is raised by Lucas (2004a) in respect of strategies to flexibilise the workforce. Both Robson (1998) and Edwards et al (2001) described the attraction of flexibility as a cost-

reduction strategy that pushed some staff outside their zone of expertise. Mather et al (2007) described how FE managers had created a:

“factory system of production where standardisation in the form of modularisation has taken place and subject specialists are expected to teach outside their specialism to fill up their timetables in order to keep costs down” (p122).

Beck & Young (2005), drawing on Bernstein, argued that when subject allegiances are broken, such as re-assigning staff to non-expert disciplines, credibility is exposed. Flexibilisation threatens professional status by rendering hard-earned knowledge obsolete which can weaken subject authority and damage student relations (Jephcote & Salisbury, 2009). The degree to which FE teachers work flexibly across non-expert disciplines is therefore of interest as the FE sector engages in further re-organisation to achieve financial efficiencies.

As Mather et al (2007) and Mather et al (2009) have highlighted, many of these changes to FE teaching practices were not controlled by FE teachers. However, Robson (2007) suggests that autonomy remains a pivotal concept in theorisations of professionalism. Gleeson & James (2007) outline why autonomy was important to the FE teachers they studied:

A sense of autonomy was valued highly – not for its own sake, but because of the necessity for continual adaptation to different learners and circumstances, the opportunity to deal with the unexpected and the serendipitous in student learning, and for solving problems (Gleeson & James, 2007, p. 457).

Arguably, the ‘autonomous professional’ has been a dominant image of teaching for most of the post-war period (Hargreaves, 2000), embodied in a form of *social trustee professionalism* (Brint, 1994) that embraced partnership and public service, but which gradually fell into disrepute in the 1970s when ministers suggested teachers had ignored the needs of industry (Callaghan, 1976). While Coffield et al (2008) have criticised this suggestion, ministers’ focus on the “perceived deficiencies of FE” (Simmons & Thompson, 2008, p610) helped to establish a new system of centralised control where:

“the autonomy of teachers has been progressively eroded and replaced by a machinery of targets, measurement and control” (Simmons & Thompson, 2008, pp601-2)

Commentaries by Boocock (2017) and Bailey (2014) show how power asymmetries between managers and teachers have led to further reductions in teacher autonomy and a greater centralisation of SMT power. In Bee's (2016) study of maritime teachers, autonomy was reduced in several ways: by prescribing how to plan modules and lesson plans; being dictated by timetabling protocols; and being told to increase class sizes by SMT to raise profitability even when this conflicted with maritime guidelines. These restrictions reinforced an atmosphere of low trust between teachers and managers and, "As a consequence, the lecturers in this study [did] not feel they [were] being treated as professionals" (Bee, 2016, p90).

Restrictions on autonomy, especially relating to the classroom, have been reported to have a debilitating effect on commitment (Price, 2010; Mather et al, 2009). Troman & Woods (2001) have previously argued that autonomy and commitment represent the main 'psychic rewards' of teaching, and that coupled with a strong social mission, can compensate for any perceived deficits in material rewards (Hall, 1969). In one large-scale study of FE teachers, it was concluded that:

"intrinsic job satisfaction is primarily influenced by factors directly related to the education and care of learners rather than to the matters concerning college management, systems and structures..." (Owen & Davies, 2002, p.43)

In FE, commitment is present when there is a "primary focus upon the needs of the student" (Price, 2010, p25). This 'ethic of care' is strongly linked to concepts of FE professionalism (Jephcote & Salisbury, 2009; Avis & Bathmaker, 2004; 2006; James & Biesta, 2007). Middle managers, senior managers and governors also appear to use a 'service' vocabulary to justify organisational strategy, though these were not always aligned with teachers' priorities (Briggs, 2005; Dad; 2016; Hill & James, 2013; 2017). These contradictory positions suggest that structural position may influence how concepts of service are imagined.

The concept of 'communities of practice' (CoPs), introduced by Lave & Wenger (1991) recognises that professional identities do not form in a vacuum, but in specific social and cultural conditions, constructed in relation to other stakeholders and subject to negotiation as social circumstances change. It borrows from an understanding of social identity theory (Turner

& Tajfel, 1986) which explains how individuals derive status from group membership. In CoPs, this is explained in terms of *legitimate peripheral participation*, which Wenger (1998) states, secures professional validation and status amongst a professional peer group. CoPs, argues Wenger, focus on the degree to which actors share common interests, customs and practices that are meaningful to them (e.g. a 'joint enterprise'), and through dialogue and negotiation, communities of 'like-minded' individuals come to see themselves as functioning communities.

When applied to FE, the concept of CoP has been used to explain the transition of novice practitioners to experienced professionals (see Salisbury & Jephcote, 2010; Bathmaker & Avis, 2005; Viskovic & Robson, 2001). Bathmaker & Avis (2005) found that new teacher trainees desired to be accepted and recognised by their community of peers, and strove to adopt practices they believed the community valued; at the same time, the communities they joined were often at odds with the values impressed on trainees during training, which led to their marginalisation, or *peripherality*, which can impair identity formation (Wenger, 1998). A functioning CoP, such as the one theorised in Salisbury & Jephcote's (2010) study of an animal care department, shows how FE staff followed accepted norms on student care, teaching methods, vocabularies and dresswear, which strengthened their professional identity. When participation is impaired, for example, through staff's isolation from the CoP, or through unclear rules of engagement (Bathmaker & Avis, 2013), identity development is obstructed. Critics of CoPs suggest it is not a realistic description of FE where structural disruption prevents stable communities from emerging (Colley, James & Diment, 2007). While a concept of community is therefore suggested as an important variable in professionalism, the degree to which a recognisable professional community exists in FE is contestable (Page, 2013).

Summary

The marketisation of FE has forced providers to constantly revise their budgets, structures and curriculum to remain competitive. These *economic* demands have increased workforce diversity and generated new forms of professionalism (Clow, 2001), reflecting the many different cultures, contexts and ecologies that staff inhabit and practice in. The financial precarity that has accompanied marketisation (Taubman, 2000; 2015) has also re-defined the concept of expertise, away from occupational knowledge and experience and towards pedagogic skills and

flexibility, a move towards 'deliverology' in Ball's (1990) terms, in which subject centredness is replaced with a new 'student-first culture' based on customer centredness. This *cultural* transition requires teachers to leave behind past occupational identities and customs, but as Page (2013) highlights, the requirement for institutional conformity can cause anxiety and insecurity, not least because vocational staff rely on their technical credibility. Wenger (1998) maintains that participation and common systems of practice can strengthen groups and develop strong *social* affiliations; however, research also suggests that FE's culture of instability and flexible management prevents the emergence of strong professional communities. This research provides a further opportunity to re-assess the strength and coherence of FE's professional identity in what has been a turbulent decade of change.

3.5 Professional Learning Tradition

Influential thinktanks such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation & Development (OECD) insist that it is a "professional obligation of every teacher to be engaged in a career-long quest for better practice" (OECD, 2013, p67). Day (2009) suggests that the modern teacher is expected to engage in lifelong learning, to upskill, revise and renew their practice to ensure services meet changing student needs. Evans (2008) believes that professional learning, through the acquisition of credentials and skills, alongside improved stakeholder confidence and service quality, can enhance an occupation's professional status. Not surprisingly, teacher professionalism has been closely linked to professional learning (Ifanti & Fotopoulou, 2011; Evans 2008).

This section considers three professional learning issues which have relevance to the experience of FE professionalism. First, it explores how concepts of learning and development have changed with emerging market ideologies and asks whether these have enhanced or restricted staff's capacity to professionalise. Second, it reviews recent debates on the efficacy of teacher training as a mechanism for professionalising. Third, it considers the potential effects of institutional culture on the development of FE learning practices.

It is somewhat surprising that little agreement exists on what people mean by 'professional learning' (Evans, 2008), though connotations with growth and an assumption that learning can

be tacit as well as formal (Lucas & Unwin, 2009; Ifanti & Fotopoulou, 2011) suggest it may be preferable to 'professional development', the latter often held synonymous with discrete events such as training courses and conferences (Watson & Michael, 2016). However, Orr (2008) notes that it is the concept of '*continuing professional development*' (CPD for short) that has dominated recent policy discourse in FE, emerging in the 1990s at a time of fundamental structural change.

In the aftermath of Incorporation, there was little investment in 'CPD' due to a major drop in central funding, with colleges spending between 0.15% and 2% of their budgets on staff development (Lucas, Nasta & Rogers, 2012). Increased workloads, casualised contracts and a hostile labour climate limited staff's ability to secure institutional investment for CPD (Broad, 2015; Taubman, 2000) and saw staff withdrawing their time and good will from CPD engagement (Kerfoot & Whitehead, 1998; Taubman, 2000). Orr (2008) notes a cultural change with the publication of New Labour's White Paper *Success for All (2002)* which established CPD as a professional priority after declaring there was "too much poor provision" in FE (p4). The Paper confirmed government expectations that FE teachers must embrace a relentless pursuit of self-improvement, and through a discourse of professionalism, tied this to FE's future legitimacy as a respected profession. This message was re-iterated in the DfES's publication '*Equipping our teachers for the future*' in 2004:

"We want all teachers to commit to lifelong professional development, so their skills are always up-to-date as the needs of learners change." (DfES, 2004, p4).

Increasingly, notions of personal development were subordinated to, and subsumed within, organisational development initiatives and CPD budgets were directed to the achievement of central targets (Orr, 2008).

The regulation and codification of CPD reached its zenith with the passing of the Education and Training Act 2007, which amongst its objectives, was the implementation of a new 30 hour CPD tariff for FE teachers on a pro-rata basis. The Institute for Learning (2009), FE's former professional body, promoted the tariff on the basis it paralleled other established professions

like medicine; however, Mather & Siefert (2014) argued that CPD became a compliance exercise of recording CPD time irrespective of its quality.

“Lecturers were resentful of this incursion into what they regarded as their professional ability to determine their own subject needs, rather than ‘how to teach’ workshops, underpinned by a more general lack of interest in college-based ‘tick-box’ approaches to professional development”. (Mather & Siefert, 2014, p103).

Broad (2015) suggested this changed CPD into a performative exercise whose focus was compliance with external demands. In her study of FE teachers’ choices in 2009-10, what teachers valued, and what they did, were often in tension. Teachers most valued opportunities to update their subject expertise, improve teaching skills and address curriculum changes; they least valued CPD events geared to new government policies and legislation. While just over half of respondents suggested they could access the CPD they needed, workload and lack of funding remained significant barriers for many others:

“many teachers found it difficult to engage with CPD...even when CPD was funded by the organisation it tended to be influenced by organisational needs rather than self-identified professional need... some teachers have little control over decision-making regarding CPD activities that are funded by the organisation.” (Broad, 2015, p25).

While Broad’s study is an illustration of how structural constraints (e.g. funding cuts, inspection standards, time) controlled formal opportunities to update and train, it is also a demonstration of how teachers used their agency to find alternative ways of developing, for example, by engaging in free networks or sharing resources with colleagues. Even here, part-time working, location and management support could all function as barriers to CPD access (Broad, 2015; Hodgkinson, Biesta & James, 2008; Jameson & Hillier, 2008). In Lloyd & Payne’s (2012) study of English and Welsh hairdressing teachers, part-time teachers did not enjoy the same access to CPD as their full-time colleagues, being used to cover classes when full-time staff attended CPD training. Given these inequalities of access, this study asks whether part-time workers lack the professionalising opportunities of full-time staff.

In recognising the scope of professional learning as either personal choice or compliance, Kennedy (2005) distinguishes between transmissive and transformational opportunities

(Kennedy, 2005). In the former, teacher development is focused on the technical and functional attributes of work. In the latter, learning is focused on changing teachers' attitudes and theories-in-use (Schon, 1983). Orr (2009) argues that whilst the rhetoric of FE learning has promoted the transformative elements like reflection and collaboration, the reality has been the adoption of prescribed practices and strategies, which Lucas & Unwin (2009) argue have had limited sustainable impact.

This thesis therefore comes at an important juncture. Both nationally (e.g. Broad, 2015) and internationally (e.g. Misra, 2011), engagement in CPD, and the importance of learning to professional practice (Evans, 2008; IfL, 2013), is considered to be inseparable from teacher professionalism. However, the prescriptive content of much of the CPD agenda in FE institutions suggests that what could be professionalising is often experienced quite differently. In a climate of continuing volatility and concerns for service quality, this thesis considers whether professional development is acting to support or undermine individual professionalism.

Teacher training has been identified as an important professionalising lever by a number of FE writers (e.g. Clow, 2001; Lucas, 2004a; 2004b; Nasta, 2007; Springbett, 2018; Parry, 1966). Lucas (2004a) uses the term 'benign neglect' to describe the lack of coherence across teacher training programmes before 1993. Until 2001, attempts to legislate for teaching qualifications proved unsuccessful, and unlike schools, politicians sought to preserve the ability of FE institutions to recruit industry experts without qualified status. As a result, a majority of FE teachers in the post-war period remained unqualified (Gomoluch & Bailey, 2010).

In 2007, the New Labour government argued that qualified status, like schools, should be an important aspiration for FE teachers, introducing the new Award, Certificate and Diploma qualifications, and a new Qualified Teacher in Learning & Skills (QTLS) 'licence', similar to the QTS for schoolteachers. The Institute for Learning (IfL) was appointed as the official professional body in FE responsible for monitoring staff qualifications and training.

In 2012, the Lingfield (2012b) Commission abolished the statutory duty introduced by the 2007 regulations for FE teachers to be qualified, along with the CPD tariff and IfL, on the grounds that

it was up to employers how staff should be trained. Lingfield argued that the Regulations had not led to a consistency of practice, nor had the QTLS license been an effective instrument for improvement (citing only 15% of teachers who had achieved this by 2012). OFSTED's admission of "no sound, causal link" between regulation and performance (Lingfield, 2012b, p16) confirmed for the Commission that the Regulations were impotent.

"It is at least arguable that most of the national effort has been made in the wrong place: towards standards, regulations and compulsion...The 2007 Regulations are no longer fit-for-purpose" (p14, p22).

At the same time as Lingfield, a second report also published by the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) in March 2012 came to a very different conclusion. Amongst its methods, this report drew on the comments of 229 interviews from FE providers and associated stakeholders, and concluded that:

"There is evidence that good progress has been made towards ensuring a qualified and expert teaching profession...New entrants gain a quicker and more effective grounding in key teaching skills such as lesson planning, planning schemes of work and understanding and responding to different lesson preferences..." (BIS, 2012, p7).

On the issue of professionalism, the report stated that:

"The Regulations have contributed to the creation of a professional FE environment in which there is an expectation for all staff to be skilled and qualified...the case for compliance has largely been won." (BIS, 2012, p8, p11).

It is not known whether the respective authors of these two reports were aware of their differences, given the similarities in sampling. In Lingfield's final report published in October 2012, it made no mention of the earlier BIS report.

Lingfield's (2012b) report contained several paradoxes. He accepted that the status of schools and universities was higher than FE, but spent no time examining how enforcement (schools) or the emphasis on expertise (universities) may have contributed to this increased status. Lingfield saw no irony in relocating responsibility for training and CPD back to employers, despite spending much of the report criticising the lack of employer support for staff. His suggestion

that FE and HE might work in similar ways was inherently contradictory, not least his own recognition that HE staff were distinctively research-focused, as opposed to FE staff whom he argued should be vocationally-focused. His suggestion that the Learning & Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) should assume the responsibilities of the IfL may have been approached seriously, had LSIS itself not been announced for closure in December 2012, one month later.

In contrast, BIS (2012) argued that the benefits of enforcement included the expectation of a fully-qualified workforce; clear career and training pathways for new recruits; increased trainee confidence; and parity of esteem with schoolteachers. IfL's response to Lingfield's decision to revoke the 2007 articles in June 2012, based on a survey of 5,000 members, found that 87% of members wanted to keep a system of mandatory training, and a further 80% stated its removal would "de-professionalise the sector" (IfL, 2012, p4).

"The overwhelming majority associate being regarded as professional with the requirement to hold a teaching qualification, just as other professionals, such as accountants and nurses, need to be qualified." (Fazaeli, in NIACE, 2012, p13).

BIS (2012) reported an increase in teacher training enrolments after 2007 (Crawley, 2012). Whilst Lingfield accepted that it was 'common-sense' to expect investment in training to lead to improvements in teaching performance and inspection grades, he did not consider the possibility that enforcement had increased levels of engagement in teacher training and contributed to the improved quality Lingfield himself had commented on. Arguably, Lingfield's work was completed at the interim stage of the report, where the most decisive outcomes were achieved: abolition of the IfL (which had a membership of 180,000 at its height), removal of statutory training and the dissolution of a national CPD scheme, which some argued seriously undermined FE's professional status (Hillier & Appleby, 2012).

Lingfield was uncomplimentary about the impact of the QTLS. However, the Society of Education & Training, the membership arm of FE's newest professional body, the Education & Training Foundation, continues to promote the QTLS as "the badge of professionalism for post-14 education and training...helping practitioners advance in their careers and demonstrate their expertise and experience to colleagues" (SET website, 2020). This is achieved on submission of a portfolio showing recent completion of relevant CPD and reflection on practice. According to

research by Martin Reid, the Director of SET, the QTLS is linked to increased promotions, job satisfaction and confidence, and ultimately to “better performance and recognition” (Reid, 2018). While the QTLS is marketed as proof of “good professional standing” (SET website, 2020), confirmed by an individual’s registration on the SET’s professional status register, just over a third (22,000) FE teachers have achieved this, suggesting it is not an aspiration for most staff. The timing of this survey provides an opportunity to see whether the QTLS is seen as a lever for professionalisation.

In neither Lingfield’s interim nor final reports into professionalism was there mention of ‘reflection’, despite its longstanding connotations with FE professionalism (Roffey-Barentsen & Malthouse, 2013). More than thirty-five years ago, Schon (1983) promoted reflection as a mechanism to improve practice, which enabled teachers to examine, re-think and challenge their existing theories-in-use. ‘Reflective practice’, he maintained, developed from experience and was linked to the development of expertise and judgement. Tsang (2011) writes:

“Being a reflective practitioner is a highly desirable attribute for professionals because it signifies quality assurance through a sustained cyclical process of self-examination, self-evaluation, self-directed learning, enlightenment, self-optimization and transformation.” (p1)

Practitioners, she stated, “need to know how to learn, how to enable learning, to be self-aware and self-critique, to construct their own meanings and perspectives, as well as to consider contexts and experiences in light of learning” (ibid). One responsibility of professional bodies is arguably to facilitate this dialogue and reflection (Noordegraaf, 2011); however, FE has lacked a unified professional body and therefore, these opportunities have lacked reach and sponsorship.

In contrast, Day (2000) has suggested that much of the discourse on reflection is romanticised and unlike the reality of modern educational establishments. In FE, increased workloads, unstable staff teams and under-developed professional networks squeeze time available for reflection (Orr, 2008; Mather & Siefert, 2014). Mather et al’s (2007) likening of the FE labour process to a Fordist assembly plant, and Lucas & Unwin’s (2009) description of FE teachers as ‘productive workers’, both attest to an environment where the rhetoric of reflection does not equate to real opportunities for staff dialogue and re-development of practice and has become,

in Orr & Simmons's (2011) terms "an element of management doxa in many FE colleges...used to control teachers' practice" (p8). This may be because, as Eraut (2004) notes, reflection does not offer 'hard' evidence of impact, and why Orr & Simmons (2009, p8) have argued that reflective practice has been "reduced to a performative exercise designed to meet centralised targets".

Fuller & Unwin (2003) have used a restrictive-expansive typology to consider different cultural approaches to learning. Their case studies of UK apprenticeships suggested that managerial practices were often associated with narrow, technicist definitions of professionalism based on achieving competencies and targets. O'Leary (2011) described this as a '*restrictive*' learning environment where staff are not supported or given time to study or learn (see also Hobson et al, 2015). This is to be contrasted with an *expansive* learning environment that encourages staff to think, reflect and experiment, allocating time and resources to create new learning opportunities, with a focus on staff working 'across boundaries' to share knowledge with colleagues (Orr & Simmons, 2011).

The restrictive-expansive typology provides a useful lens for explaining the lack of a research culture in FE, despite 11% of HE students now studying at an FE institution (AoC, 2020). Grieve & McGinley (2009), in the Scottish FE context, found that teachers who studied at Masters level and engaged in scholarly reflection, believed it encouraged them to think more deeply about theory-practice links and "raised their confidence in developing pedagogy" (p171). However, as Scaife (2004) explains, structural instability, and a culture of audit, has undermined approaches to develop a research-based pedagogy in FE. James & Biesta (2007) reported a similar antagonism towards FE research which saw the loss of college researchers from their study as managers raised objections to their involvement. Lea & Simmons (2012) commented that FE cultures were resistant to scholarly interest in pedagogy and did not generate the conditions needed for staff engagement.

Appleby & Hillier's (2012) investigations of practice-based networks found that opportunities to participate, reflect and research with colleagues enhanced the experience of professionalism. These are described by the authors as "a space for open dialogue and critical engagement" (p35) which can develop *critical professionalism* (Bathmaker, 2006). According to Appleby &

Hillier, practice-based networks do this in three specific ways: as a means of keeping up-to-date and exchanging useful information about the sector; through collaboration with peers offering a ‘risk free forum’ for testing ideas and supported professional discussion”; and as a dialogic network where “the act of dialogue itself was felt to be positive, stimulating and proactive” (p36), promoting a sense of solidarity and belonging.

According to Weatherby & Mycroft (2015), these are independent spaces for critical thought, interrogation and support with sector colleagues, enriching new forms of *collaborative professionalism* (Whitty, 2008) or *collegial professionalism* (Hargreaves, 2000), linked to notions of colleague consultation and inter-disciplinary working which can energise the creativity and resourcefulness of teachers in times of instability, and so strengthen identity. Hillier (2015) describes how successful practice-based networks can lead to shared projects and publications, further research and policy-testing. Because of their local character, however, networks were often fragile and under-funded (Appleby & Hillier, 2012). Many also lacked institutional support and sponsorship (Hillier, 2015; James & Biesta, 2007), and therefore, could not guarantee a reliable membership. As such, their impact on practitioners may be parochial and limited. Of interest, then, is to see whether professional networks are currently acting as professionalising spaces across the sector.

Summary

Professional learning is often constructed as an essential component of professionalism because of the need to maintain currency in a fast-changing professional environment (Ifanti & Fotopoulou, 2011; Watson & Michael, 2016). Professional learning in FE has been driven by *economic* agendas, in terms of the overall volume of CPD supported, and in terms of who accesses it, with some groups (e.g. part-timers) less likely to benefit (Jameson & Hillier, 2008). There has also been a clear *cultural* motivation in FE institutions to meet inspection priorities and legislative changes which has changed the type of learning now considered legitimate. The use of the term ‘CPD’ has reframed teacher development around the correction of perceived deficiencies in teacher competence and organisational strategy (Orr, 2008), and as managerial agendas have attained prominence (Thompson & Wolstencroft, 2018; Lobb, 2017), the possibilities for following transformational development strategies have narrowed. The lack of

agency in decisions to deregulate teacher training appear to be contrary to what most professions understand by the term 'professionalism' (Lester, 2011). Between the 'cracks and crevices' of national policy agendas, practice-based networks have provided an agentic space for sustaining critical forms of professionalism. Arguably, these *social* spaces have encouraged reflection, collaboration and research, though as Hillier & Appleby (2012) conclude, their success, alongside other forms of learning such as teacher training and mentoring, have depended on supportive institutional cultures.

3.6 Research Traditions – A Summary

The chapter started off by acknowledging the problems that FE has experienced in gaining professional recognition. It then moved into a detailed examination of four research traditions in FE. The policy tradition charted the rise of managerialism since Incorporation in 1993, describing reforms to the priorities and practices of FE institutions in response to new financial autonomies and targets. These reforms, which have been considerable, witnessed a centralisation of SMT power and the curtailment of teacher autonomy (Randle & Brady, 1997a, 1997b; Taubman, 2000; 2015). The concept of mediation suggested that the effects of policy reform on professionalism were not simply the products of structures or agency, but an *interplay* of the two. The Labour Process tradition invited a re-consideration of Braverman's (1974) de-skilling thesis and drew on the extensive work of Kim Mather and colleagues over the last fifteen years. These studies both confirmed and extended the analysis of the policy tradition by illustrating the effects of labour reforms on work intensification and how this led to increased job insecurity and ill-health. The Identity and Cultural tradition recognised the under-theorised nature of professional identity and professionalism in FE research, but also considered how identity has been impacted by the sector's diversity, constructions of expertise and struggle for autonomy under managerialist conditions. While the CoP concept has promoted the benefits of dialogue, participation and shared assumptions as elements of professionalism, it also has limitations when applied to FE (Page, 2013; Colley & James, 2007). Finally, the professional learning tradition considered the various ways learning and development have been conceptualised, and how debates surrounding teacher training,

reflection and networking have highlighted the importance of institutional culture as an empowering or constraining agent on professionalism.

Throughout these four traditions, the role of government, management and teachers have been a consistent focus. Policy change, it has been argued, is not benign or value-neutral. Why policy is developed, how it is communicated, and the manner of its enforcement are political choices born out of specific interests and the power to impose those interests. As Ball (2008, p5) states, policy discourses privilege certain ideas and exclude others, mobilising and classifying particular claims as obvious, common sense and 'true'. Policies are specific, practical regimes of truth (Foucault, 1977) that serve a rhetorical function of seeking to persuade, motivate and inculcate (Power, 1997). The discourse of professionalism, therefore, has revolved around constructions of legitimacy and illegitimacy (Finlayson, 2003). Occupations with low status, which FE is believed to be (Colley et al, 2007), have arguably struggled to impress this legitimacy. This raises questions about how FE begins to change the dominant narratives surrounding its value, acceptability and performance. Power is therefore an inextricable component of the professionalism debate. The relationship between power and professionalism is explored in Chapter 4 with the introduction of Bourdieu's conceptual framework which focuses on the processes by which certain constructions of professionalism and FE work prevail.

Chapter 4 - Re-Conceptualising Professionalism: The Work of Pierre Bourdieu

4.1 Introduction

Bourdieu was a formidable theoriser and social philosopher whose work output extends into many social fields, and in particular, those of economics, law, journalism, the arts, politics, education and religion. The value of using Bourdieu to a study of education is captured by Grenfell & James (1998) when they write that:

“...whilst we do not wish to insist that a Bourdieuan approach is always or automatically the best way to research educational phenomena... [our conviction] is that research in terms of Bourdieu’s theory of practice offers insights and understandings not readily visible in other approaches” (p2)

Bourdieu provides two important contributions to the study of professionalism: first, it offers a theoretical framework for understanding the dynamics of professional fields and their interplay with other stakeholders and broader fields of power; and second, it provides a set of investigative tools to explore how actors understand their social world.

Bourdieu recognises that organisations are ‘sites of struggle’ (Avis, 2003) in which actors’ positions are constantly open to challenge from wider structural, economic and political influences (Emirbayer & Johnson, 2008). His theory captures the messiness of the FE world, including what Tipton (1973) highlighted was the ‘interest-politics’ of FE work (James & Biesta, 2007). FE organisations are places that inspire allegiances and jealousies, promote and constrain opportunity, and demand compromise (Dad, 2016; Gleeson & Mardle, 1980).

4.2 Bourdieu and the Concept of Professionalism

Bourdieu effectively disowned the concept of professionalism and his writings on the subject remain sparse (Schinkel & Noordegraaf, 2011). His most substantive critique on the matter can be found in his book ‘*An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*’ (1992) with Loic Wacquant where he argues that terms like ‘profession’ are concepts that:

“...sociologists use without thinking about them too much because they are the social categories of understanding shared by a whole society.” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p241).

Bourdieu calls for the rejection of occupational categories such as ‘profession’ which he saw as stereotypical, since it conjures up images of privilege and entitlement (Swartz, 2012). Although it conveys an “appearance of neutrality” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p242), Bourdieu states it is a product of bureaucratic invention which obscures the struggle embodied in its construction (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). This appearance is made all the more credible because of the paraphernalia that surrounds it - directories, bibliographies, library lists, databases and training centres – artefacts that are called on to promote an occupation’s superior status. Borrowing from Howard Becker, Bourdieu suggests:

“Profession” is a folk concept which has been uncritically smuggled into scientific language and which imports into it a whole social unconscious. It is the *social product* of a historical work of construction of a group and of a *representation* of groups that has surreptitiously slipped into the science of this group”. (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp-242-243).

It is the task of sociology, reminds Bourdieu, to scrutinise the constructions of social actors and not to accept ‘pregiven’ objects or ‘prenotions’ as a *prima facie* substitution for social reality (Sterne, 2003). In doing so, Bourdieu asks us to remember that such constructions may be motivated and incomplete. The term ‘profession’, he suggests, is one such object. By extension, ‘professionalism’ might be considered another.

4.3 The Structure-Agency Problematic

Throughout his lifetime, Bourdieu was engaged in efforts to solve the structure-agency problematic in sociology and philosophy. To borrow from Durkheim, social reality can be understood at its most trivial as being divided between ‘things and persons’ (Durkheim, 1938; in Simpson, 1963, p32). Bourdieu strongly disapproved of the distinction between structuralist (objectivist) and agentic (subjectivist) approaches to the study of social behaviour, regarding this as an “unnecessary and misleading separation of scholarship” (Green, 2012, p505). On the

one side, structuralist approaches emphasised the social, economic, political and historical conditions that determine and circumscribe human responses, in which:

“...social life must be explained, not by the conception of those who participate in it, but by the deep causes which lie outside of consciousness” (Durkheim, 1957, in Bourdieu, 1989, p15)

In contrast, agentic or subjectivist approaches privileged the experience of the individual over all else, conceiving of human beings as unique, conscious, reflexive, autonomous and unpredictable, free to make choices and overcome social disadvantage. Structuralists failed to appreciate that individuals could be dynamic and interpretative, whilst subjectivists could not explain the persistence of social inequality. Bourdieu sought to break away from both approaches. Instead, he proposed that agents are engaged in a form of ‘double structuration’ of their social world: agents construct their reality and are in turn influenced (structured) by the opportunities and constraints imposed by their social circumstances. Bourdieu (1989, p15) presents the substance of his case as follows:

“on the one hand, the objective structures that the sociologist constructs, in the objectivist moment, by setting aside the subjective representations of the agents, form the basis for these representations and constitute the structural constraints that bear upon interactions; but, on the other hand, these representations must also be taken into consideration particularly if one wants to account for the daily struggles, individual and collective, which purport to transform or to preserve these structures. This means that the two moments, the objectivist and the subjectivist, stand in a dialectical relationship.”

Bourdieu argued that human practices are not created in a social vacuum but are themselves historical products, manifested in a particular time and space, and bearing the ‘imprint’ of previous cultural traditions. Such practices can be creative and improvised. It is this interpenetration, between agent and structure, that Bourdieu sees as essential for capturing the ‘truth’ of social phenomena (Green, 2012).

4.4 Bourdieu's Thinking Tools

4.4.1 THE CONCEPT OF FIELD

In what clearly is a resurrection of Durkheim, Bourdieu declares:

“Social reality exists, so to speak, twice, in *things* and in *minds*, in fields and habitus, outside and inside of agents” (Bourdieu, 1992, p127, *my italics*).

Bourdieu's concept of '*field*' is based on a relational logic. Actors in the same social space can be distinguished from all others by their *relational proximity*, degrees of similarity and difference that make some groups appear coherent and obvious (e.g. professions, classes, subcultures, etc) and others diffuse and fragmented (Bourdieu, 1984). It is through difference that actors occupy different 'objective' positions in this social space (Mohr, 2013). Some differences are held in higher esteem than others, though their 'worth' in the 'social market' varies with context. For example, medical skills are valued in a hospital setting but they have little currency for a concert orchestra. One's social position therefore depends on what commodities or attributes are valorised within a specific social arena. Differences that attract 'symbolic value' in this way are labelled by Bourdieu as 'profits of distinction'. In its totality, Bourdieu's social world is one that:

“...can be represented as a space (with several dimensions) constructed on the basis of principles of differentiation or distribution constituted by the set of properties active within the social universe in question, i.e. capable of conferring strength, power within that universe, on their holder. Agents and groups of agents are thus defined by their relative positions within that space.” (Bourdieu, 1985, p724).

At a glance, we can begin to appreciate how Bourdieu might approach the concept of professionalism. To be 'a professional' is to be someone who is recognised as possessing properties that others perceive as desirable (distinctive) in a specific field. As societies, cultures, fashions and tastes change, so do the properties that confer a sense of strength (or power) to individuals. Their transitional nature denotes their arbitrariness, conveying no intrinsic worth in themselves, but valued as a marketable currency in a particular time and space. For

Bourdieu, it is these *relational differences* between actors which define their respective positions in a particular *social field*. A field is thus:

“a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions”

(Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p97)

A field is also dynamic and competitive. He uses it in two specific senses, as both a:

“field of forces, whose necessity is imposed on agents who are engaged in it, and as a field of struggles within which agents confront each other” (Bourdieu, 1998, p32).

Some positions give agents access to resources and entitlements; others are much less likely to. As a result, these positions are constantly contested, with actors employing different strategies or practices to maintain or improve their position.

“Every field, for Bourdieu, is an area of conflict; social life itself is a constant struggle for position, as actors seek (consciously and unconsciously) to weave around the formidable constraints that social structure sets against them.” (DiMaggio, 1979, p1463).

What actors contest is the right to assert the primacy of their world-view on the social field. This is a “symbolic struggle” between different classes and class factions with differential powers to claim a ‘right of legitimacy’ (Mohr, 2013). The strength of one’s claim is directly dependent on one’s social position in the field, and the opportunities and constraints inscribed in this position relative to one’s competitors. This ideological struggle, Bourdieu states, is basic to all social organisations, and is fundamental to an understanding of social divisions in the workplace.

Importantly, fields are not stand-alone but inter-penetrate with other fields on the social stage (Friedland, 2009). Bourdieu paints society as a “network of fields” (Gatrell et al, 2004) which are connected to a more ambiguous, but highly influential ‘field of power’, which Thomson & Holdsworth (2003, p382) define as:

“a terrain of class struggle, skewed in favour of and by powerful elites embedded in corporate offices, gated communities and significant political and bureaucratic positions”

Whilst Bourdieu argues that each social field is specialised and relatively autonomous, operating according to its own regulative logics which are “specific and irreducible to those that regulate(s) other fields” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p97), there remain certain *homologies* between them – shared knowledge, investments, cultural statuses and interests – in which some actors or collections of actors are able to advance their cause and reproduce their advantages more efficiently and successfully than others (Thomson & Holdsworth, 2003). Since the field of power is “the sum of all fields” (Thomson & Holdsworth, 2003, p382), each individual field, by virtue of its homology with the ‘field of power’ becomes a site of ‘internal contestation’ and a continuation of the (re)production of privilege, status or distinction.

Bourdieu’s work invites us to see professional work as a social field which overcomes the static conception of professions as particular occupational structures or products of interaction. He suggests that by examining the objective positions that comprise a field, it can help understand the rules and logics that stratify social relations. A field, then, is a microcosm of the forces that structure the wider social world. Bourdieu argues that entities like professions are not stand-alone phenomena but are subject to changing economic, political and cultural contexts. This enables researchers to study the conditions of social existence that propel and constrain individuals inside FE institutions. It also allows FE to be positioned as one of many actors in an education sector where resourcing is limited and where players do not have equal influence on priorities. Unlike traditional sociological theory, a Bourdieusian approach considers how professionalisation may be pursued and experienced by *individuals*, in which agency is foregrounded. Occupations are conceived not as an assemblage of shared, harmonious interests but as a competitive arena, in which power to define what is professional and legitimate is contested and dispersed unequally.

This thesis follows Sahin-Dikmen’s (2013) proposal that professionalism, and professional culture:

“is a construction...that expresses the interests and the vision of the powerful groups in a field...perceptions, views and actions are seen to have a social foundation, which means that we can and should ask *who* the holders of particular views and beliefs are and where they are situated in different fields of the social world.” (p20, *original italics*).

4.4.2 THE CONCEPT OF HABITUS:

Bourdieu invokes the notion of '*habitus*' to explain why some actors are highly attuned and matched to the 'rules of the game', in which social recognition comes easy, whilst other actors struggle to achieve synchrony and feel like a 'fish out of water' (James & Biesta, 2007). Whereas Bourdieu defined a field as a social space of objective relations, he defines habitus as:

"A system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks..." (Bourdieu, 1971, p83).

Habitus is a socially constituted system of dispositions that orient an individual's "thoughts, perceptions, expressions and actions" (Bourdieu, 1990, p55). It is the "property of the social agent" (Maton, 2008, p51), being both a product of one's history and socialisation (particularly in childhood) and modified by an individual's encounters with the social world (DiMaggio, 1979). In particular, it is a person's class habitus, established in the family, that gives habitus its core structure (Bourdieu, 1973). It informs views, opinions, beliefs and ways of perceiving the social world (Mohr, 2013). It embodies what is accepted, valued and assumed in a given social space. It generates observed views and potentialities for practice consistent with such views, though it is neither fixed nor permanent, and may be changed by unexpected situations and improvisations (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). Importantly, it represents the nexus between structure and agency, neither deterministic nor totalising (DiMaggio, 1979). Summarising habitus, Bourdieu states:

"on one side it is a relation of conditioning; the field structures the habitus...On the other side, it is a relation of knowledge or cognitive construction. Habitus contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p127)

4.4.3 THE CONCEPT OF CAPITAL

According to Bourdieu, all fields are structures of power (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992). In each one, whether artistic, educational, scientific, political, professional or some other social practice, actors compete over 'the specific profits that are at stake in the field ...' (Bourdieu and

Wacquant, 1992, p97). These profits are known as '*capitals*' – attributes, opportunities, possessions and resources that help preserve, maintain and improve one's social position (DiMaggio, 1979).

Expanding on Marx's capital as 'economic exchange', Bourdieu nominates three main forms of capital: *economic* (money, stocks and property); *cultural* (e.g. aesthetic tastes, preferences and dispositions, as well as forms of knowledge and language); and *social* (networks and affiliations, including kinship ties and community investments). Later, he was to add a fourth type, *symbolic* capital, which functions like Weber's concept of status, and equates to:

"prestige, reputation, fame..." and is the form assumed by the other capitals when they are perceived and recognised as legitimate" (Bourdieu, 1989, p17).

Using the metaphor of a 'social market', Bourdieu introduces the notion of *convertibility*, where capital can be converted from one form (usually symbolic) into another more lucrative form (e.g. economic). In this way, educational qualifications can be cashed in for lucrative jobs; social ties give access to privileged cultural associations; family wealth can buy elite schooling experiences, etc. Whilst such exchanges are not exclusively economic, their 'motivation' always has an economic derivation (Bourdieu, 1986). Thus, when a profession raises a claim of expertise (symbolic capital) based on specialist qualifications (cultural capital), Bourdieu invites us to see these claims as opportunities to secure further economic advantages, which further increases a profession's status. At the same time, other stakeholders seek to deprive professions of their symbolic advantages and press their own claims for recognition and legitimacy (Mohr, 2013).

Within each field, then, actors manoeuvre to improve their stocks of capital. Capital has a fundamental importance in Bourdieu's sociology because of his insistence that:

"It is...impossible to account for the structure and functioning of the social world unless one reintroduces capital in all its forms" (Bourdieu, 1986, p46).

Summarising Bourdieu's position, DiMaggio (1979) confirms that:

“The objective of human activity is the accumulation and monopolisation of different kinds of capital.” (DiMaggio, 1979, p1463).

Consequently, it is an actor’s ‘capital endowment’ that determines their relative position in a social field (Emirbayer & Williams, 2005). However, according to Bourdieu (1984), this endowment is not shared equally, with some actors more generously positioned than others, underscoring the hierarchical structure of fields. It is the accumulation, possession and loss of capital which determines people’s status (and therefore position) in the field (Bourdieu, 1986). High capital holders use their resources to assert their power and control over the field to gain status enhancements, whilst low capital holders have less power and influence over the conditions that govern their existence. In other words, high capital holders are more likely to dominate low capital holders because they have greater opportunities to exploit the field to their advantage (Blunden, 2004).

Thus, how capital is profiled across a social field provides an insight into the relative statuses of actors positioned within it. And so:

“...the structure of the distribution of the different types and subtypes of capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the social world, i.e. the set of constraints, inscribed in the very reality of that world, which govern its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices” (Bourdieu, 1986, *The Forms of Capital*, p46)

Since capital is the lubricant for successful practice, Bourdieu suggests that its accrual, translation and deployment is the locus of all field behaviour (Bourdieu, 1986). Social practices, as field-specific activities, are theorised as ‘capital-raising strategies’ that offer opportunities for improved social recognition (Schinkel & Noordegraaf, 2011). Yet, fields are not ‘free for all’s; like a ‘game’, they operate to specific logics or rules that dictate how capital can be used to benefit actors in the field of play. Each field has its own unique set of “rules, histories, star players, legends and lore” for doing this (Thomson, 2008, p69). The logic of the ‘game’ acts ‘beneath the surface’ to keep the game ‘on track’ and depends on each player’s implicit acceptance of its representation and obligations. The fact that some players are better equipped than others to play the game and effect success (through the acquisition and deployment of capital) is not consciously grasped by participants, since actors consider their

potentialities for acting and succeeding as being determined by their respective talents, merits or 'natural gifts', unaware that such attributes are themselves socially and culturally 'positioned', and therefore arbitrary. It is the power to assert a 'cultural arbitrary' as a legitimate property or endeavour that illustrates the exercise of agent power.

4.5 Introducing 'Professional' Capital

As Bourdieu rarely spoke of 'professions', neither did he discuss '*professional capital*'. It was Hargreaves & Fullan (2012) that popularised the notion in their publication '*Professional Capital: Transforming Teaching in Every School*', which joined the legion of texts setting out the 'teacher quality problem'. The authors coined the term 'professional capital' to speak of a particular approach to improving teaching performance, one that was focused on increasing teachers' commitment, planning and competence, and through networks and professional development, to increase their status.

While Davies (2013) has praised the authors' focus on "teacher liaison, peer critique and support" (p144) as a means of revitalising teacher networks and confidence that waned under accountability regimes, the concept is narrowly conceived in relation to organisational improvement, as Procaccini's (2012, p516) review of Hargreaves & Fullan's book illustrates:

"The power of "professional capital" resides in harnessing the energy, enthusiasm and capabilities of teachers as a whole toward *predetermined school goals*. In creating this synergistic model, individual teachers will gain competence and respectability" (*my italics*).

Like many school improvement approaches, teacher respectability seems to be conditional on teachers' acquiescence to externally conceived goals. Hargreaves & Fullan are unclear on the relative involvement of teachers in their own transformation, and their concept of professional capital is more than a little slippery. Three constituent capitals - *human*, *social* and *decisional* – are presented as combining to achieve the parent concept, though in what proportions, under what circumstances and through what processes, remains unclear. Alongside a narrative of de-contextualisation, which presents professionalism as unproblematic and open to technocratic

intervention, the approach has limited scope for explaining issues of power, conflict and inequality that characterise FE work, and is not pursued further.

Schinkel & Noordegraaf (2011) provide a more promising line of enquiry. Their use of 'professional capital' draws directly from Bourdieu's framework to suggest professionalism is a form of symbolic capital. To remind us, Bourdieu defines symbolic capital as:

"...any property (any form of capital whether physical, economic, cultural, or social) when it is perceived by social agents endowed with categories of perception which cause them to know and to recognise it and give it value". (Bourdieu, 1998, p47).

Schinkel & Noordegraaf (2011) describe how new public management strategies in the 1980s and 1990s cast social trustee models of professionalism (Brint, 1994) as an economic and cultural liability. Within public institutions, they observed that state 'rationing' of resources and the installation of quasi-markets altered professional priorities. As these institutions were forced to re-structure their economic profile, the need for expensive professionals became less compelling. They explain that when crises in the field emerge, they provide new opportunities for contestants to improve or lose their social position, which creates new struggles for symbolic power.

In their study of Dutch healthcare workers, Noordegraaf & Schinkel (2011) observed that struggles for symbolic status between managers and professionals were struggles over resources and the right to determine jurisdictions of work. Expertise, service and autonomy were therefore 'sites of struggle'. By controlling their definition, managers controlled what was official and legitimate. Officialization, suggests Bourdieu (1998) embodies the power to separate and reify properties dominant interests seek to valorise and protect. Codification is the process by these properties are recognised as legitimate and rendered as 'true'. In *Pascalian Meditations*, Bourdieu was keen to stress the significance of recognition as the primary mechanism that allows individuals to validate their worth in a professional field (Bourdieu, 2000).

"...there is no worse dispossession, no worse privation...than that of the losers in the symbolic struggle for recognition...This struggle is not reducible to a Goffmanian battle to present a favourable

representation of oneself: it is competition for a power that can only be won from others competing for the same power, a power over others that derives its existence from others, from their perception and appreciation.” (Bourdieu, 2000, p241).

‘Professional capital’ acknowledges that professionalism is a struggle for symbolic power, in which agents’ recognition and status is at stake. Consequently, it is argued that Bourdieu’s capital approach can serve as an important complement to current theorisations of professional work. It is an approach that considers both the economic and socio-cultural dimensions of work, and how these influence professional experiences. It allows us to derive specific predictions based on the possession of different forms of capital. By examining the relative contribution of each capital (volume), as well as the effects of different compositions of capitals (capital structure), Bourdieu enables researchers to ‘peek behind the curtain’ to explore professional struggle. This exploration begins with a more detailed summary of Bourdieu’s three capitals: economic, cultural and social.

4.6 Economic Capital

Economic capital refers to wealth, property or income, and other financial assets such as shares, bonds and patents (Paccoud, Nazroo & Liest, 2020). For Bourdieu (1986), it is “at the root of all other forms of capital” because of its universal currency across fields (p252). He argues that those with higher economic capital also tend to enjoy higher social status, through their increased capacity to buy opportunities, training or cultural goods (e.g. promotions, cars, luxury holidays, etc). According to Bourdieu, all actions have economic consequences (Grenfell, 2008), even if this is not immediately perceptible. He uses the term *misrecognition* to describe actions which appear economically disinterested (e.g. volunteering to be a departmental spokesperson) but which have latent economic motivations (e.g. recommended for promotion).

Arguably, misrecognition applies to occupations that call themselves ‘vocations’, such as physicians, which trade on an image of virtue and selflessness, while simultaneously commanding a high salary and status. For example, The Royal College of Physicians’ publication in 2005 entitled *Doctors in Society: Medical Professionalism in a Changing World*, declared that:

“Medicine is a *vocation* in which a doctor’s knowledge, clinical skills, and judgement are put in the service of protecting and restoring human well-being.” (p9, *my italics*)

Labelling an occupation as a ‘vocation’ depicts the relationship between occupation and practitioner as one of deep devotion and attachment (Heyes, 2005). In its typical characterisation, a ‘vocation’ is a ‘calling’ that:

“provides meaning at work and authentic engagement in work. Such a belief, identity and commitment is not reducible to self-interest, especially given the responsibilities inherent in public service” (Bowman, 2012, p48).

People in ‘vocations’ are said to go ‘beyond the call of duty’ to perform their role and express a desire to perform the role above all others (Heyes, 2005; Buijs, 2005). Those with a vocational mission are not expected to be motivated by economic rewards, and for those that are, there is a question mark over their commitment.

‘Vocation’, however, is an example of what Bourdieu means by a ‘site of struggle’. Arguably, physicians have drawn on this label to mark out their special role to society, namely, the promotion of health, healing and well-being (Abbott, 1988), aligned to a ‘calling from God’ (Greater, 2009). However, vocation has also come to characterise a subset of ‘caring professions’ linked to low pay. Thus, for Cutcliffe & Wieck (2008), calling nursing a ‘vocation’ has meant:

“there was no imperative to pay nurses a fair and just salary because the very act of nursing was seen as the reward in and of itself” (Cutcliffe & Wieck, 2008, p502).

Likewise, in the case of teachers, Carr (2000) asserts:

“...there can be little doubt that teaching has often been regarded as a vocation, that it has also been regarded as the kind of occupation which people enter for love rather than money, and that it has frequently been woefully paid” (Carr, 2000, p11).

Heyes (2005) suggested that by raising salaries, vocations like nursing could recruit the ‘wrong sort’ of public servant, while lowly paid nurses were more likely to overperform because of

their intrinsic motivation. This is an argument for not raising salaries, despite Goode's (1957) belief that public servants, like doctors, need high salaries to ensure dedication to public service. Income is therefore the professions 'white elephant'. For physicians, a high salary rewards public service (Davis & Moore, 1949); for nurses and teachers, a high salary detracts from public service. It is not surprising, therefore, that researchers have considered these differences in terms of class inequalities, in which middle-class physicians enjoy the economic fruits of their labour, while nurses and teachers are exploited for theirs (Cutcliffe & Wieck, 2008; Wilding, 1982; Dingwall & Lewis, 1983). Despite this, research has consistently found a significant positive correlation between income and occupational status (Garbin & Bates, 1961; Duncan, 1961; Villemez, 1977; Curry & Walling, 1984; Attneave, 1951). Hall (1969), quoting Vroom, acknowledges that:

"wages are an "indisputable source of desire of people to work" ...[and]... contain connotations for one's social status and general style of life" (Hall, 1969, pp37-38).

While Bourdieu did not produce a precise definition of economic capital (Neveu, 2018), the concept has been since operationalised in different ways. Paccoud et al (2020), in their study of health inequalities, used a measure of household wealth (summing total financial assets and bank accounts). In her study of Jamaican boys' university aspirations, Stockfelt (2016) used socio-economic status, parental occupations and district as proxies. Baoyan & Minggang's (2015) defined it in terms of money spent on children's schooling, while Mirowsky & Ross (2001) used a measure of 'economic hardship' that asked individuals to rate their ability to pay bills, food/household goods and medical care. Pinxten & Lievens (2014) distinguished between *material* economic capital (measuring actual income) and *psychosocial* economic capital (perception of living comfortably), the latter describing "the social meaning of differences in the available amount of economic capital" (p1098). In professional settings, this might refer to actual levels of income and workplace resourcing, as well as perceptions of economic equity or hardship.

So what does this mean for FE teachers? In the FE sector, there is both recognition that teachers have joined the sector for instrumental reasons (Gleeson et al, 2005) as well as

evidence of them 'giving back' to the community (Villeneuve-Smith et al, 2008). The impact of economic drivers of professionalism is therefore inconclusive.

If income is a source of professional status, then the comparative position of FE salaries relative to other education sectors and occupations is worth reflecting on. Recent international benchmarking efforts, such as the OECD's *Education at a Glance 2016*, show general teacher salaries in the UK to have declined in real terms between 2010 and 2014 whilst rising in 19 of 29 OECD nations over the same period (OECD, 2016). The median at £27,768 is approximately £3.5k less than the OECD average (ibid) despite year-on-year increases in salaries for UK professional, scientific and technical occupations since 2008 (ONS, 2016).

In FE, income has been a site of contestation since Incorporation in 1993 (Shain, 1999; Taubman, 2000) where pay disparities with schoolteachers and HE lecturers have progressively widened. Currently, the average (median) salary for an FE teacher is £31,754.00, significantly below the £44,135 for university lecturers and below £35,642 for secondary schoolteachers, though marginally higher than the £30,793 for primary school teachers (ONS, 2016). In the wider professions, FE teachers are paid significantly less well than aircraft pilots, medical practitioners, police officers, pharmacists and paramedics; about the same as veterinarians, social workers and midwives, but higher than nurses and probation officers (ONS, 2016).

Even within FE itself, there are large disparities between senior managers, heads of department, teachers and curriculum support workers (Reed, 2016). In 2013/14, as the number of Principals earning £200k trebled to twelve (Offord, 2015a), the Association of Colleges pay settlement for FE teachers came in at 0.7% (AoC, 2014) prompting a series of strikes from teaching and non-teaching unions. With cuts to the adult learning budget of almost 40% since 2010 (Okolosie, 2015) under the label of 'austerity', the principal of NESCOL college saw her salary increase by 120% from £150,000 to £331,000 (though it was rumoured to be as high as £363,000), making her the highest ever paid principal of an FE college, at the same time that her staff received a pay freeze and saw a 17% loss in real earnings over the preceding six years (Weich, in Guardian, 17 March 2016). Given these economic divisions, these may have a direct effect on perceived professionalism.

4.7 Cultural Capital

In his studies of the French education system in the 1960s with Jean-Claude Passeron (e.g. Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), Bourdieu alleged that schools were not meritocratic but systems of social reproduction favouring middle-class over working-class students, even after equalising for economic differences. He concluded that differences in children's cultural habits and dispositions, whose origins were rooted in their family upbringing, must be responsible for differences in school success. These 'habits and dispositions', suggested Bourdieu, comprised a resource that generated 'profits' for individual holders, which he labelled 'cultural capital' and which could be passed on through generations.

Cultural capital denotes forms of 'non-economic' cultural acquisitions, of language, attitudes, manners, deportment, artistic tastes and other patterns of consumption, as well as knowledge and experience acquired over time (English & Bolton, 2016). According to Bourdieu, cultural capital exists in three forms:

“...the *embodied* state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the *objectified* state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc)...; and in the *institutionalised* state...as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications...”
(Bourdieu, 1986, p47, *original italics*).

Elsewhere, in *Distinction* (1984), Bourdieu describes cultural capital in terms of knowledge, skills and know-how. He maintained it was powerful institutions (e.g. academia, political elites, cultural leaders) that could define what is culturally legitimate and acceptable, and through their dominance and their power to define what is acceptable, social hierarchies are reproduced. Those that wish to advance in the social system must possess attributes that are valued in the prevailing orthodoxy, where alignment is a sign of 'cultural competence'.

Since Bourdieu's initial work, many researchers have attempted to operationalise cultural capital. Some measures appear to draw consensus. For example, education is seen as a default proxy for *institutionalised* capital (Pinxten & Lievens, 2014; Paccoud et al, 2020).

“In modern society, education has become an important stepping-stone for obtaining social status, and is the core element of cultural capital” (Hong & Zhao, 2015, p6).

Cultural capital has been specifically linked to attaining qualifications (see Jackson, 2017; Jaeger, 2010; Robinson & Garnier, 1985; Brown et al, 2016; Hong & Zhao, 2015; Cheadle, 2008; Roscigno and Ainsworth-Darnell 1999). Bourdieu suggested that credentials were important symbols of cultural competence in societies that valued academic progress. Bourdieu predicted that graduate professions enjoyed higher status than non-graduate ones, and professions with the highest proportion of entrees from prestigious universities commanded highest status of all. Empirical corroboration in the UK was highlighted in a study by the Panel for Fair Access to the Professions (2009) who found that:

“...although 7% population attended an independent school, well over half members of many professionals did so; 75% judges, 70% finance directors, 45% top civil servants, 32% MPs; 50% barristers and solicitor attended independent schools” (Panel for Fair Access to the Professions, 2009).

Other research taps into Bourdieu’s concept of *embodied* cultural capital (ECC), which links social position with differences in cultural participation. For example, Pinxten & Lievens (2014) defined ECC in terms of participation in concerts, musicals or museums. These measures of cultural competence are also used in DiMaggio (1982) and Wildhagen (2009). Alternatively, Paccoud et al (2020) measured ECC using parent education as the indicative variable. Measures of both embodied and *objectified* forms of cultural capital have included reading habits and literary climate (Cheung and Andersen 2003; De Graaf, de Graaf, and Kraaykamp 2000; Georg 2004), educational home resources (Downey 1995; Roscigno and Ainsworth-Darnell 1999; Gustafsson, Hansen & Rosén, 2011) and participation in extra-curricular activities (Kaufman and Gabler 2004; Lareau 2003).

Spaaij (2012) states that “Cultural capital is developed in...workplace training and informal learning” (p79). In a teaching context, cultural capital can refer to teachers’ “knowledge, pedagogical skills and experience” (Woolhouse, Bartle, Hunt & Balmer, 2013, p61) and their engagement with professional development (Kapitulik et al, 2016). It includes both improving expertise and the cultural resources available for staff to do this (Spaaij, 2012). Cheung &

Andersen (2003) use the term 'scholarly cultural capital' to describe cultural activities that facilitate an individual's learning. Broad (2015) has shown that FE teachers value opportunities to update their subject knowledge and teaching skills, while Rivera (2015) has argued that greater access to prized cultural opportunities (like CPD events and networks) is likely to be associated with higher cultural capital (see also Jackson, 2017). Coulson's (2010) study of 17 professional musicians suggested that while early music education was important, it was individuals' participation in music networks, which drew them into contact with fellow musicians and experts, that both helped develop their musical skills and confidence, and strengthened their intrinsic motivation for a music career.

Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital is relevant to a study of professionalism in FE teachers in several ways. FE does not have minimum entry qualifications, and de-regulation means that teachers no longer need a teaching qualification. Two possibilities emerge from this. First, as Bourdieu suggested, higher qualification holders may enjoy a status advantage over their unqualified colleagues, by virtue of their success in higher education and the rarity of their credentials. Or second, since de-regulation has changed the dynamics of the field, it may have devalued the currency of qualifications, including teaching certificates, so that qualifications no longer accrue their expected capital. These matters are examined.

Whether professional development is regarded as a means of advancing one's professional career (and therefore status) is also questionable. The ascendancy of transmission models of professional development in FE (Orr, 2008) suggest this could be a site of struggle for practitioners. Investment in staff may reinforce maxims that 'staff are our greatest asset' and enhance opportunities for job growth and promotion (Maykels, 2015). Alternatively, with tightening economic resources, staff are unlikely to study whatever they choose. Evidence from Jameson & Hillier (2008) indicates that CPD is a contested arena with part-time staff often disadvantaged. This suggests opportunities to develop cultural capital may not be equally distributed.

4.8 Social Capital

Social capital has received generous attention by researchers in the last few decades. Song

(2013) distinguishes between two schools of thought: in the first, Bourdieu's account uses social capital to describe a property of *individuals*; in the second, the American tradition, represented by Coleman and Putnam, theorise social capital as a property of *communities*. While acknowledging the significant merits of the latter, it is the former that informs this study.

According to Bourdieu, social capital refers to the sum of resources obtained from a "a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu, 1986, p251). Paraphrasing Bourdieu, Nahapiet & Ghoshal (1998, p243) suggest it "comprises both the network and the assets that may be mobilized through that network" (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 243). Consequently, its acquisition "requires habituation to the moral norms of a community and, in its context, the acquisition of virtues like loyalty, honesty and dependability ..." (Fukuyama, 1995, pp26–27).

In contrast, the work of Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1993, 2000) focused on group networks and neighbourhoods. Coleman's study of US schools identified two forms of social capital: 'social bonds' (relationships with those 'like us') and 'social bridges' (relationships with those 'not like us') which he linked to several important benefits including social belonging and status attainment. Bonding and bridging are examples of horizontal networks: bonding is about the study of relationships within homogenous groups, whereas bridging is the study of relationships between heterogeneous groups (Field, 2003). Michael Woolcock (2000), a social scientist at the World Bank, argued this conception was too narrow and identified a third form— 'social linking' - to recognise the value of vertical networking. Linking capital, arguably the most profitable, refers to relationships with those who have power, which enables individuals to leverage institutional resources well beyond their immediate work radius (Woolcock, 2000).

Other models have been proposed. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) described a tripartite framework comprising structural (networks), cognitive (shared narratives) and relational (trust, norms and obligations) components. This is similar to Putnam's (1993) emphasis on 'norms, networks and trust'. Networks are central in Song's (2011) theorisation, while Baker-Doyle and Yoon (2011) found that network strength (i.e. shared purpose) depends on how expertise is shared across a group. With constant changes to team membership, this capacity is impaired

and weakens social capital. Carpiano (2006) identified social support, cohesion and a sense of community as resources generated from high social capital environments.

Some overlap with Lave & Wenger's (1991) concept of communities of practice (CoP) is inescapable. Networks, trust, social support, recognition and status (Hunt, 2006; Brehm & Rahn, 1997; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988; Wenger, 1998) are all properties argued to be integral to a vibrant CoP. Social engagements at work can take many forms - socialisation practices, group rituals, language codes, institutional policies and norms – all ways that the social world regulates and institutionalises social engagements, leading, as Bourdieu claims, to an unconscious acceptance of social differences and hierarchies and a 'sense of one's place' (Bourdieu, 1993). Bridwell-Mitchell & Cooc (2016) suggest that collegial communities can be important sources of teacher social capital.

Higher social capital has been linked to improved autonomy, commitment, burnout, turnover and self-efficacy (Hunt, 2006; Bridwell-Mitchell & Cooc, 2016). Bonding has been empirically correlated with improved teacher engagement (Hasinoff & Mandzuk, 2005) and organizational resilience (Field, 2003). Bridging capital has been positively related to improved professional learning (Forbes, 2005; Bridwell-Mitchell & Cooc, 2016), while linking capital can increase levels of resourcing and support (Grootaert et al, 2004) and improve access to decision-making circles (Narayan & Pritchett, 2000). Social capital can strengthen professional communities through enhanced knowledge sharing, improved co-operation and problem-solving (Coburn & Russell, 2008) and is linked to lower turnover intentions (Bridwell-Mitchell & Cooc, 2016). Social capital can also be negative, for example, Portes & Landolt (1996, 2000) and Silkoset (2008) identified problems with the way social capital may be manipulated to preserve the status quo: through exclusion of outsiders, suppression of 'lone voices', increased conformity, increased outgroup hostility and negative impact on creativity.

As in cultural capital, measurement of social capital takes different forms. Partly, this is a problem with Bourdieu's original concept which he never described how to measure. In her review of population survey measures, Harper (2002) identified network mapping, trust, social support and participation in community organisations as typical indicators. Lillbacka (2006) tested an individual measure based on Coleman's work which examined respondents' social

ties, trust in others and self-efficacy, which he identified as stable attributes of social capital, though membership of voluntary organisations was not significant. Fandino et al (2015) drew on Nahapiet & Ghoshal's model to create an organisational measure which tapped into the stability of networks, information exchange, quality of relationships and trust. Consistent with a multi-dimensional approach, Kouvonen, Kivimaki, Vahtera, Oksanen, Elovainio, Cox, Virtanen, Pentti, Cox and Wilkinson (2006) developed a scale for measuring social capital in Finnish workplaces, using items that measured bonding, bridging and linking capital, as well as structural and cognitive components. Later work by Oksanen, Kawachi, Kouvonen, Takao, Suzuki, Virtanen, Pentti, Kivimaki and Vahtera (2013) confirmed that social capital could be categorised as horizontal (colleagues) and vertical (manager) dimensions, each influenced by distinctive workplace characteristics. Subsequent use of this scale by Firouzbakht, Aram, Ebadi, Nia, Oksanen, Kouvonen & Riahi (2018) with Iranian nurses confirmed the reliability of these factors, which they labelled "group cohesion" (examining participation) and 'committed management' (examining trust), though no such examination of social capital appears to have been undertaken in the English Further Education system.

What are the implications for FE? Many actors struggle to legitimately enter their social world, in which social engagements promise membership, constrain authority or lead to exclusion (Wenger, 1998). An actor's degree of 'embeddedness' within a group, which supposes an acceptance of its norms and rules, is therefore not only likely to improve their access to social capital but strengthen professionalism. Membership of a group becomes self-reinforcing and a place of legitimisation, identity and recognition amongst fellow peers (Coleman, 1998).

The economic volatility of the FE environment (Unwin, 2011) and the significant structural re-organisation of the FE estate under the Area Review Process from 2015 onwards, are both factors that have disrupted and re-configured existing work arrangements, and with the loss of thousands of staff since 2010, it remains to be seen whether stocks of social capital are high across the sector. Donovan (2019) states that:

"the increased presence of the FE Commissioner and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) has forced Governing Boards in FE to become preoccupied by the precarity of their financial position to avoid the risk of college closure due to financial ill-health." (p194)

Donovan argues this has created a culture of distrust between policymakers and practitioners that underlies policy decisions such as Area Reviews. This, she argues, also extends to relations between senior managers and other staff in which organisational re-structuring has become commonplace in the sector. Davis's (2018) survey of FE, on behalf of the Policy Consortium, reported negative responses to the enforced structural change leveraged by Area Reviews. For example, one teacher who was going through a merger complained of:

"mass teacher redundancies and disenfranchisement of teachers' voices...There are no positives for learners..." (p49)

Another senior manager branded Area Reviews:

"...a colossal waste of money, [distracting] senior teams from doing the day job, [excluding] a significant proportion of the sector...and the mergers themselves have cost an awful lot of money."
(Davis, 2018, p38).

This is to be contrasted with the FE Commissioner's letter to FE colleges in 2016 which wrote:

"It is encouraging that colleges are now seeing the area reviews as an opportunity rather than a threat and engaging fully in endeavouring to provide a stronger and more resilient sector at a time when it is most needed." (Collins, 2016).

Davis (2018) highlights the significant disparities between 'official' statements on policy decisions and practitioners' actual experiences, as well as the actual disruption caused by the Area Review process, to suggest there is little evidence of a buoyant 'togetherness' that a high social capital environment might predict. Mather et al (2011) also points to inequalities in teacher and SMT views on organisational cohesion, which may indicate that social capital is not equally distributed inside FE institutions.

4.9 Applying Bourdieu to Further Education

Bourdieu's work was not systematically applied to the study of FE professionalism until the publication of the Transforming Learning Cultures (TLC) in Further Education project (James &

Biesta, 2007). Carried out between 2001 and 2005, it remains the largest longitudinal study of learning in FE and adopted a unique cultural approach to explain the practices observed across 19 different learning sites. Summarising these findings, James & Biesta (2007) identified the impact of inadequate and unstable funding regimes, and the homogenising effects of audit on staff teaching, as practice was focused on student achievement and inspection targets.

Bourdieu's work, the authors claimed, provided a rich framework to explain these findings. The irony, as Bourdieu (1998, p20) states, is that when people aim for outstanding in a competitive field, "everyone copies each other in an attempt to get ahead...The search for exclusivity, which elsewhere leads to originality and singularity, yields uniformity and banality." Both James & Biesta (2007) and O'Leary (2011) argue that the effect of OFSTED has been one of normalisation and conformity on FE practice.

Bourdieu's sociology, with its emphasis on conflictual relations and social hierarchies, illuminates how policy and institutional change can affect professional participation. Bourdieu's analytic framework arguably offers a comprehensive account of the main observations that FE scholarship has converged on in respect of FE professionalism. Four 'points of consensus' are presented below:

1. Professionalism is important to FE practitioners (IfL, 2009) but is a contested concept, experienced in different ways depending on one's position, role or working context (James & Biesta, 2007, Colley et al, 2003; Spenceley, 2006; Jamieson & Hillier, 2008; Clow, 2001; Bee, 2016);
2. FE institutions, excluding small private companies, tend to be hierarchised and segmented structures, and often referred to as 'bureaucratic' (Clow, 2001; Spenceley, 2006; James & Biesta, 2007), circumscribing what staff can do at work;
3. FE work sites are places where resources and funding are limited and limiting, which can affect how practitioners define their priorities and carry out their work practices (Mather & Siefert, 2014; Mather et al, 2009; Dad, 2016; Gleeson & Shain, 1999; Shain, 1999; Shain & Gleeson, 1999; Lobb, 2017; Tipton, 1973; Gleeson & Mardle, 1980);

4. FE work cultures are commonly conceived as sites of struggle between different stakeholders: between managers and teachers (Page, 2010; 2013), between teachers and learners (Villeneuve-Smith, Munoz & McKenzie, 2008), between inspectors and principals (Offord, 2016; Offord & Roberston, 2016; Summers, 2012), between FE representatives and officials (Camden, 2016; Burke, 2016; Offord & Robertson, 2016), between researchers and consultants (see O’Leary, 2014) and between institutions (Gleeson & Mardle, 1980).

Colley, James & Diment’s study of early years and engineering learning sites suggested that it was neither structure nor agency alone, but a combination of both, that explained differences in professional participation. FE agents, they argued, were constantly striving for legitimacy, both in terms of meeting external demands (policy, inspection, audit) and through improvisations to meet changing student needs. Bourdieu’s concepts of ‘field’ and ‘habitus’ arguably offer a more subtle representation of the complex realities of professional life in FE (Gleeson & James, 2007). It is a framework that recognises that professional practices and ideologies have both internal and external drivers. It also situates agents’ behaviour within a wider set of economic, political and cultural forces that influence, change, unsettle and re-position professional priorities. This study therefore agrees with Avis (2007, p80) when he writes:

“Bourdieuian tools refuse a simple duality between agency and structure and offer a way to develop nuanced and complex accounts of learning cultures”.

4.10 Summary

This chapter started by establishing the relevance of a Bourdieusian framework to an FE system described as fragmentary, tribal and conflict-ridden. It proceeded to discuss Bourdieu’s disenchantment with the term ‘profession’, and then examined the structure-agency debate that has dominated sociological discourse. Bourdieu’s concepts of field and habitus were discussed as a reconciliation of this ‘structure-agency problematic’, alongside his concept of capital that is central to this thesis’s investigation of professionalism. The relevance of Bourdieu’s notion of symbolic capital was next established and was argued to be the most informing and relevant theorisation of what has been labelled ‘professional capital’. A review of the concepts of economic, cultural and social capital was then conducted which included

reflections on some of the key variables eligible as measures. Finally, a short reflection on how Bourdieu's work has influenced the study of FE professionalism was undertaken. This study concurs with Brookfield's (2005, p5) view that "a theory is useful to the extent that it provides us with understandings that illuminate what we observe and experience". Bourdieu's theory provides the toolkit that enables this understanding.

Chapter 5 - Methodology

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I develop a set of hypotheses from the research questions in Chapter 1. Next, I explain the reasons why Bourdieu was the most appropriate framework for this thesis. I then outline some general methodological considerations for researchers before giving a more detailed explication of Bourdieu's conceptual framework. This is followed by a report on what took place, the sample profile, the research instruments, the procedure that was carried out and the ethical issues that were prompted during the research process. Finally, I outline a description of the data analysis methods used in this study. Where the term 'professionalism' is used (for brevity), the reader is reminded that what is being measured is perceived professionalism.

5.2 The Research Aim

5.2.1 HYPOTHESES & RESEARCH MODEL

Testable hypotheses that could be examined statistically were developed using the following research questions (see Figure 5.1a and 5.1b).

Fig. 5.1a: Research Questions and Hypotheses

| Research Question | Hypothesis |
|---|--|
| Are FE staff highly professionalised? | <p>Hypothesis 1: Professionalism* will significantly vary with employment type, education and professional membership</p> <p>Hypothesis 2: Professionalism* will significantly vary with career and employer attitudes</p> |
| How does professionalism vary with capital? | <p>Hypothesis 3: Professionalism* will significantly vary with work status (symbolic capital)</p> <p>Hypothesis 4: Professionalism* will significantly vary in relation to measures of economic, cultural and social capital</p> |

**Professionalism is measured using the Hall professionalism scale (HPS)*

| Research Question | Hypothesis |
|--|--|
| How does professionalism vary with position in the FE field? | <p>Hypothesis 5: Professionalism* will significantly vary in relation to the structural characteristics of the FE workplace</p> <p>Hypothesis 6: Constructions of professionalism will be related to structural position in the FE Field</p> |

**Professionalism is measured using the Hall professionalism scale (HPS)*

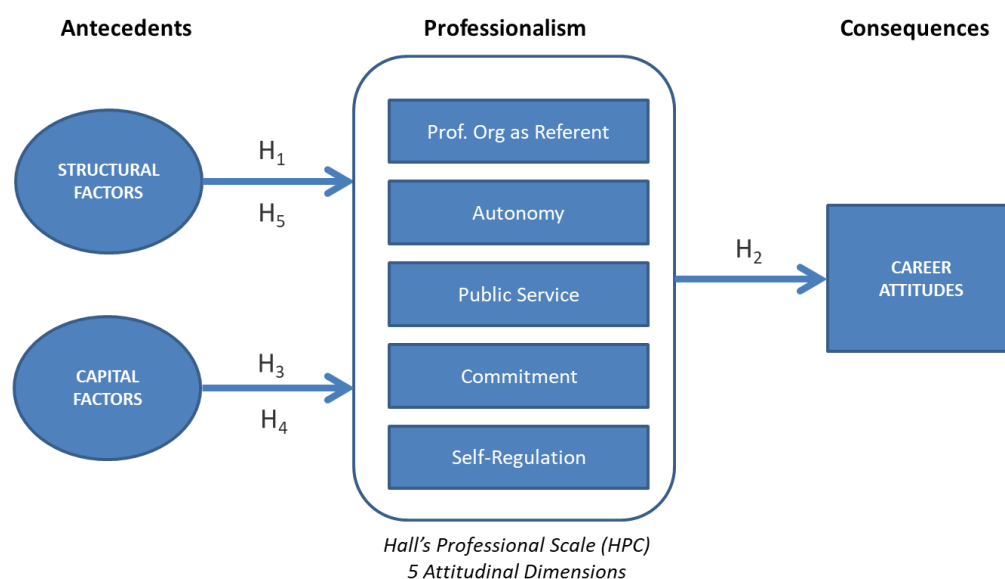
In addition, the following question was examined as part of a detailed narrative analysis of respondent qualitative data.

Fig. 5.1b: Research Questions and Hypotheses

| Research Question | Hypothesis |
|--|--|
| What practices support or weaken FE professionalism? | Hypothesis 7: Factors that Improve or weaken professionalism can be understood in terms of economic, cultural and social capital |

Figure 5.2. presents an overview of the relationships that were tested. These relationships are formalised in Hypotheses 1-5 (denoted as H₁, H₂, H₃, H₄, H₅) and examined in Chapter 6. Hypothesis 6 was assessed from a coding of qualitative data and is considered in the same chapter. Qualitative analysis (Hypothesis 7) develops and elaborates on these relationships (see Chapter 7). Though neither hypothesis 6 or 7 depend on statistical verification, both make predictions based on Bourdieu’s framework, and so are phrased accordingly.

Fig. 5.2: Overview of the Research Model



As this study is exploratory, it considers the relationships that are immediately suggested by the research questions. Other approaches are possible, for example the use of structural equation modelling to reveal moderating effects of variables on specified relationships (Garson, 2009), but these were considered outside the scope of the existing investigation.

5.3 Choice of Conceptual Framework

5.3.1 PHILOSOPHICAL POSITIONING – ONTOLOGY & EPISTEMOLOGY

Although Bourdieu never openly conceded this, his conceptual framework could be said to nest within a critical realist (CR) tradition (Bhaskar, 1978) because of certain shared ontological and epistemological assumptions: first, that the real world exists independently of our perceptions, beliefs and theories-in-use (a commitment to *ontological realism*); and second, that reality can never be truly known, only interpreted and constructed by individual actors (a form of *epistemological relativism*). CR differs from positivism because it accepts that social reality may be perceived in multiple ways. It differs from social constructivism by acknowledging a ‘world of things’ that exist beyond the symbolic (Danermark et al, 2002). It allows for the consideration of actors as historical and political objects that are subject to mechanisms of manipulation “beyond the surface” (Cooper, 2012, p8) whilst conceptualising their beliefs and attitudes as points of intersection at a particular time, place and context. CR therefore offers “a more coherent, accountable and enabling philosophy of practice” because it has an objective of providing insight into the interrelationships between structures and individual action (Pocock, 2015, p167), aims that are consistent with Bourdieu’s sociology. Both acknowledge the ‘stratified reality’ of social life (Vandenburgh, 1999) and the need for *methodological pluralism* to capture the complexities of social phenomena (Zachariadis, Scott & Barrett, 2013).

5.4 A Bourdieusian Framework – Linking Theory & Method

5.4.1 USING A BOURDIEUSIAN FIELD ANALYSIS

Chapter 2 suggested professionalism was a contested phenomenon and revolved around a claim of superior status. Chapter 3 argued that FE workplaces were varied, hierarchical,

resource-limited and spaces of conflict. After Grenfell & James (1998), Chapter 4 argued that a Bourdieusian approach provided the closest 'fit' and greatest explanatory power for these observations. Bourdieu's concept of *field* enables the researcher to establish who has power and status in this field. His concept of *habitus* helps us to understand why practitioners hold specific views about their professionalism. His concept of *capital* explains why certain actors and ideas come to dominate social reality.

Bourdieu believed that individuals do not exist in isolation but in relation with each other. His construction of a field as a "system of relations" asserts that social phenomena cannot be understood outside the wider social environment (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p106). Just as the terms 'artist' and 'scientist' are meaningless without artistic or scientific fields, 'FE professionals' must be understood in relation to the 'FE field':

"The notion of field reminds us that the true object of social science is not the individual...It is the field which is primary and must be the focus of the research operations. This does not imply that individuals are mere "illusions", that they do not exist: they exist as *agents*...who are socially constituted as active and acting in the field under consideration by the fact that they possess the necessary properties to be effective, to produce effects, in this field. And it is knowledge of the field itself in which they evolve that allows us best to grasp the roots of their singularity, their *point of view* or position (in a field) from which their particular vision of the world...is constructed" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p107; *original italics*).

A Bourdieusian field analysis involves "three necessary and internally connected moments" (Wacquant 1989, p40). First, it explores the relationship between the field (FE) and the wider field of power (see Chapter 3); second, it maps the positions of agents and their relationships (a *topographical project* – see Chapter 6); and third, it analyses the habitus of agents (a *dispositional project* – see Chapters 6 and 7). All three 'moments' drive the research process for this study.

5.4.2 CHOICE OF RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Quantitative and qualitative approaches are both significant to this research exercise since they respectively deal with Bourdieu's demand for combining objective and subjective analysis to explain social reality (Bourdieu, 1984). Bourdieu's work in *Distinction* (1984) provided

compelling testimony for the mixing of quantitative and qualitative methods. Borrowing from Creswell (2003) and Silverman (2000), 'quantitative' and 'qualitative' are described below:

| Quantitative Approaches | Qualitative Approaches |
|--|---|
| The goal is to test theories or hypotheses, gather descriptive information, or examine relationships among variables. Data is typically closed-ended, categorised, ranked or captured in such a way that it can be subjected to statistical analysis and generalised to a wider target population. Often associated with a positivist research paradigm. | The goal is to explore meaning, particularly those pertaining to people's definitions, assumptions and beliefs about their social situations. Data consists of open-ended information (e.g. through interviews, focus groups, observations, open questionnaires, etc) which is then aggregated into themes. Often associated with an interpretivist paradigm. |

There were elements from both positivist and interpretative traditions in this study. Each approach presents a distinctive view of the world and uses different tools to apprehend reality. A positivist uses instruments to measure data and establish causal laws in order to make predictions about behaviour (Creswell, 2003). An interpretivist values in-depth exploration of individual subjectivities and considers how individuals construct meaning from experience. Whilst noting their polarity, Bourdieu was keen to promote the 'complimentary revelations' each approach could yield (Hardy & Bryman, 2004).

From this, it was decided that a mixed method design most accurately reflected the intentions of this investigation. In mixed methods research:

"the world is not exclusively quantitative or qualitative; it is not an either/or world but a mixed world'
(Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2011, p22).

A mixed methods design fits squarely within a Bourdieusian field analysis approach because it treats social phenomena as empirical *and* exploratory problems (Silva et al, 2009). Like Bourdieu, choice of methods is less about theoretical prescription and more about combining tools in innovative ways to best illuminate the research question (Lee & Sarker, 2008). This approach is consistent with the study's two-fold aim to empirically investigate professionalism in the FE field and to explore respondents' beliefs about what it means to be 'professional'.

5.5 A Mixed Methods Approach: Rationale & Justification

5.5.1 RELEVANCE OF MIXED METHODS DESIGNS TO RESEARCH QUESTION

Mixed methods designs are increasingly popular in the social sciences (Cameron, 2010; Niglas, 2009; Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). Cameron's (2010) review of the vocational education and training (VET) literature revealed that 15% of all papers/articles and 22% of all empirical papers/articles used a mixed methods design. Mixed methods designs describe:

“research in which the investigator collects, analyses, mixes, and draws inferences from both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or a program of inquiry” (Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 2006, in Cameron, 2010, p26).

Creswell & Plano-Clark (2007) have argued that mixed-methods approaches provide a more complete and informed understanding of the research object than is possible with single-method inquiries. This is because they:

1. *Reduce ‘inappropriate uncertainty’* (Robson, 2002) by engaging in multiple opportunities for triangulating data (Denzin, 1978). Such designs offset the respective weaknesses of each individual method (Gorard & Taylor, 1989), and shed light on matters of causality, process, context and intention (Dudwick et al, 2006).
2. *Provide complementarity* which enables the researcher to develop ‘thicker descriptions’ of the social world being investigated (Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989). Each method provides additional explanatory power not covered by single-method approaches (Lincoln & Guba, 1994).
3. *Enable expansion and development*, in which earlier findings are used iteratively to explore, test and challenge emerging explanations or theories (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007), or used to refine future research exercises.

In summary, a combined mixed-methods approach supports the study's aims in three respects: the exploration of a complex social phenomenon; the production of new insights; and the establishment of empirical relationships.

5.5.2 SEQUENCING OF METHODS

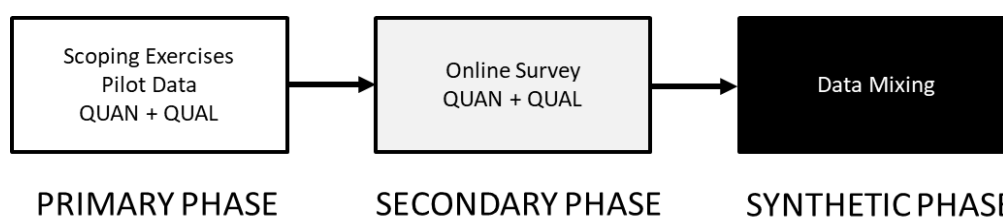
Creswell (2003) distinguishes between sequential and concurrent mixed-method designs. In the former, quantitative and qualitative methods are employed in serial combination; in the latter, they are employed in parallel or nested formats (see Figure 5.3 for a summary).

Fig. 5.3: Most popular design choices for mixed methods approaches (Creswell, 2003)

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Sequential Explanatory</p> <p>Quantitative method is <u>followed</u> by qualitative method</p> | <p>Concurrent Triangulation</p> <p>Quantitative and qualitative methods conducted at the same time</p> |
| <p>Sequential Exploratory</p> <p>Qualitative method is <u>followed</u> by quantitative method</p> | <p>Concurrent Nested</p> <p>One less prominent method is contained within the predominant method</p> |

Originally, the plan was to run a large online survey followed by qualitative interviews and focus groups in a sequential explanatory design. However, the latter were dropped due to the richness of the survey data collected, with the design resorting to a concurrent nested model. The final design, including the scoping (pilot) data phase, is presented in Figure 5.4.

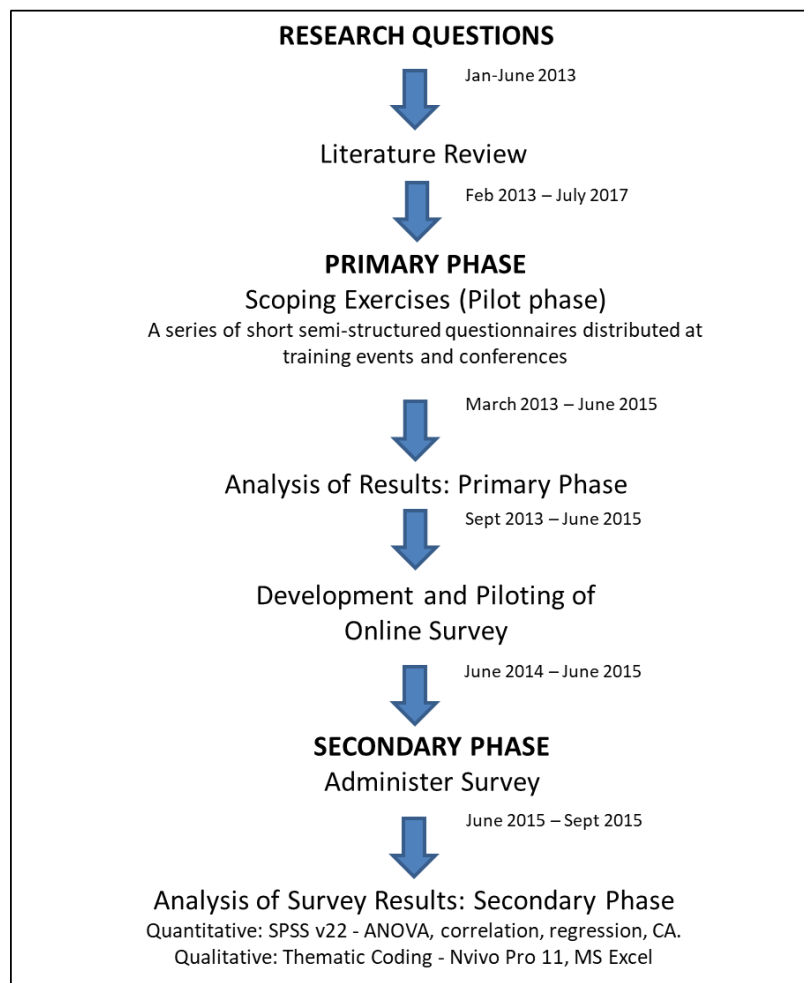
Fig. 5.4: Overview of Design Sequence



- *Primary phase:* A series of small-scale semi-structured questionnaires to collect pilot data to inform the design of the main survey (see Appendix 1; results not reported here).
- *Secondary phase:* A large online survey to examine the empirical relations between (perceived) professionalism and selected variables, with a series of open-text opportunities to collect interpretative data on respondent dispositions (see Appendix 2).

An overview of the research plan is presented in Figure 5.5.

Fig. 5.5: Overview of Research Plan



5.6 Primary Phase – The Scoping (Pilot) Exercises

5.6.1 METHODOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION

A set of scoping exercises were developed with three objectives in mind:

1. To explore the term ‘professionalism’ and how this was understood by an FE audience;
2. To solicit themes that required further elaboration in the main survey;
3. To test the efficacy of certain question items for the main survey.

I collectively refer to these as ‘scoping exercises’ because they are used to establish the scope (content and breadth) of the online survey.

5.6.2 SELECTION OF TOOLS FOR SCOPING EXERCISES

The suitability of a range of qualitative methods were juxtaposed against the objectives of the primary (pilot) phase. Here, issues of coverage and convenience were important considerations. Noting Silverman (2000), the following methods were *rejected*:

- *Structured and Participant Observations*: Observations provide rich, naturalised data in authentic settings, but are expensive on researcher time, can entail lengthy access negotiations, use limited samples and can generate mistrust and impressionistic behaviours.
- *Focus Groups*: Similarly, focus groups consume significant time, in terms of staff availability and researcher access; they can also inhibit individuals from being honest with views, and do not guarantee diversity of coverage.
- *Interviews*: In theory, a large number of interviews could provide extensive background material for an online survey, but they are expensive on staff and researcher time, and therefore were not considered feasible.

Instead, *semi-structured questionnaires* were selected as a more flexible method of achieving the pilot objectives. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2000, p248) describe the semi-structured questionnaire as a “powerful tool” for capturing participants’ opinions and beliefs which “sets the agenda but does not presuppose the response”. Benefits including being:

- Easy to administer to a wide range of staff groups;
- Sensitive to participants’ availability;
- Useful opportunities to test specific question items;
- Useful for collecting information on a range of issues relevant to the research questions;

5.6.3 CONSTRUCTION OF SCOPING QUESTIONNAIRES

The scoping exercises were exploratory, designed to stimulate lines of enquiry, test emerging themes and trial question forms. Several formats were used between March 2013 and June

2015 (see Appendix 1). Each questionnaire was brief and focused on just one or two themes, starting off general, and becoming more specific over time. In total, five main themes were investigated (drawing on the literature and personal experience):

| |
|--|
| 1. Issues Affecting the FE sector |
| This questionnaire aimed to provide participants with a wide range of elements that the literature and personal experience suggested may be influential in the experience of professionalism. |
| 2. Definitions of Professionalism |
| Participants were asked for definitions of professionalism and then asked to compare their occupation's professionalism to other occupations on a sliding scale from similar to different, with justifications. |
| 3. Reactions to the Lingfield Report on Teacher Training and Professionalism |
| A controversial report, published in March 2012 (interim) and October 2012 (final report), representing the most recent government review of FE professionalism. It was noted for its decision to remove the need for teachers to be qualified. Participants were asked for their opinion on a number of consequences that might be implicated by this report. |
| 4. Professionalism & Professional Status |
| Participants gave their comments to four questions on professionalism that looked at meanings of professionalism, occupational status comparisons and actions to improve FE's professional status. |
| 5. Reputation and Prestige of FE sector |
| Participants were asked for definitions of reputation and then asked to compare the reputation of a list of occupations with the role of the FE teacher |

Copies of selected questionnaires can be found in Appendix 1.

Examples of Quantitative Questions:

Several different 'convergent' questions were trialled. Here is one of several varieties of Likert-style questions used under "Issues Affecting the FE sector" (Figure 5.6).

Fig. 5.6: Extract from Scoping Exercise: “Issues Affecting the FE Sector”

Issues that Concern You:

Please rate the following issues in terms of how damaging you think they are for the FE sector:

| Please Tick | Very Serious | | | | Not Serious |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Funding Cuts | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Job Redundancies | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Teacher Morale | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student Fees | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lack of Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Poor Management | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student Discipline/Behaviour | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student Literacy | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Teacher's ICT Skills | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Observation Grading of Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Unqualified Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 48 hour Notice Inspections | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

This question helped to map out issues that FE agents felt strongly about in their work. For example, the exercise conducted on March 2014 found that respondents were most concerned about funding, morale, teachers' maths & literacy and job redundancies (all with mean scores at 4.0 or above, n=29).

Examples of Qualitative Questions:

Whilst all the scoping questionnaires had some provision for qualitative comment, the most significant of these exercises was the one carried out in March 2015 on the topic of professionalism and professional status. In this exercise, there were four questions:

- When we describe someone as 'professional', what does that mean to you?
- How would you characterise the professional status of FE teachers relative to other professions in the UK?
- Do we need to improve the professional status of FE teachers? Please explain?
- If you could wave a magic wand, what one thing would you change to improve the professional status of FE teachers?

These questions captured respondents' viewpoints. 27 responses were received, of which 26 were usable. Some were brief, others more developed. The data was used to feed into the final draft of the survey prior to its launch on 24 June 2015.

5.7 Secondary (Main) Phase: Online Survey

5.7.1 A METHODOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATION

In line with Bourdieu's field approach, a survey was an appropriate choice of method for this investigation. The survey had four purposes:

- to explore differences in perceived professionalism between different FE staffing groups;
- to test empirical relationships between perceived professionalism and selected variables;
- to generate data which could be used to map the social positions of FE agents to a topographical map of the FE field; and
- to explore the professional habitus of FE staff.

Purposes of the Online Survey

A survey can be a useful exploratory tool where the intention is to reveal relationships between different variables. Consequently, surveys are an ideal method for exploring a complex issue or for testing propositions in the form of hypotheses (Creswell, 2003). Surveys can collect large data samples with relative ease (Kelley et al, 2003), and the assurance of anonymity can encourage greater disclosure of sensitive viewpoints (Creswell, 2003).

Online surveys have distinct advantages over traditional postal formats because they can usually handle very large sample sizes over a short timeframe (Weber & Bradley, 2005). O'Leary's (2013a) survey on lesson observation (3958 responses) and Rogers et al (2016) on prison educators (mailshot to 1300 staff) are recent FE examples. They tend to be less expensive on time and money than postal surveys (Sheehan & Hoy, 1999) and because responses are collected in 'real-time', this enhances the researcher's capability to manage response rates and follow-up (Tse, 1998; Fricker & Schonlau, 2002). Online surveys permit error

checking, automatic data entry, minimise transcription errors and facilitate data analysis (Fricker & Schonlau, 2002). They protect the participant's anonymity easily and can be completed at the respondent's convenience. In the best examples, respondents can save their responses in various stages of completion, which responds to the need to be flexible with busy practitioners. No other method can provide this scope or capability and was therefore deemed ideal for the FE audience (Rubin & Babbie, 2009).

A survey can also be an appropriate tool to explore the professional habitus. Habitus comprises the values, preferences and dispositions that inform practical action. Methods that tap into respondents' propensities to think and feel in certain ways are all attempts to gain access to the habitus. Precedent for measuring habitus empirically via survey can be found, for example, in Johnson (2014) on religious civic orientations and Hong & Zhao (2015) on parental orientations towards schooling. Unlike Hong & Zhao who used a three-item closed question set, this study used four open-ended questions. In part, this recognised the work on narratives by Davey (2009), Stringfellow, McMeeking & Maclean (2015) and Stewart (2001) who suggest open-ended enquiry can be a fruitful opportunity to explore organisational practices. These questions had a practical focus, since the orientation of habitus is practical, for example:

Q41 What aspects of your job role support/ enhance your sense of 'being a professional' in Further Education?

Q42 What aspects of your job role diminish/ undermine your sense of 'being a professional' in Further Education?

Both questions are expressed as a 'sense of being a professional' in recognition of Bourdieu's definition of habitus as 'a feel for the game'. Their purpose was to:

- reveal insights into people's practical ideologies, values and ambitions at work (Wetherell et al, 1987; Sommerlad, 2007)
- assess how change impacts on established ways of thinking and working (Stringfellow, McMeeking & Maclean, 2015);
- illuminate broader issues of power and control within the respondent's organisation (Fawkes, 2015).

5.7.2 CONSTRUCTION OF THE ONLINE SURVEY

The survey aimed to achieve two main goals: first, a substantial quantitative exercise to test specific hypotheses relating to professionalism and capital, and to map the existing empirical relations between FE agents; and second, to use narrative (qualitative) opportunities for respondents to discuss what they understood by the term 'professional'.

A great many literature sources were used to compile categories of practice where professionalism might be prominent for FE practitioners. Some of the most helpful include that of Bacon et al (2000) who suggested a focus on:

- 'Roles and orientations' possessed by teachers regarding their work;
- 'Intentions' which focuses on what teachers want to achieve through their actions;
- 'Outcomes and consequences' which examine the impact of teacher decisions and actions.

Further engagement with the FE and schools literature on professional status (see for example Day et al, 2006; Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000; Beijaard, 1995; Hargreaves et al, 2007; Hall & Langton, 2006; Colley et al, 2003; James & Biesta, 2007; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996; Hargreaves, 1994), and findings from the scoping exercises, produced six survey categories:

- Personal Details
- Employment
- Subject Knowledge & Professional Development
- Views as a Professional
- Work Relationships
- Work Motivation & Intentions.

In total, there were 42 questions, though some (e.g. Q26) comprised additional sub-questions. The length fell somewhere between existing FE surveys; for example, Villeneuve-Smith, Munoz & McKenzie (2008) used a 26-item questionnaire for their FE satisfaction survey; Jameson & Hillier's (2006) study of part-time FE staff used a 23-item questionnaire (some with multiple

response categories); Rogers et al's (2016) study of prison educators used a 71-item questionnaire. In the end two competing objectives dictated the final length: a survey that represented the key issues identified, and one that was not burdensome to complete. It aimed for a completion time of 15-20 minutes, with average response times indicating this was achieved.

5.7.3 SURVEY ITEMS, EXTANT RESEARCH AND CODING PROTOCOLS

Survey construction requires both content and construct validity. To maximise both, Figure 5.7 provides an outline of the research supporting each question item. A word version of the original survey can be found in Appendix 2.

Fig. 5.7: Survey Items, Supporting Research and Coding Protocols

| <i>Survey Items:</i> | <i>Supporting Research</i> | <i>Coding</i> |
|--|--|---|
| Section A: PERSONAL DETAILS | | |
| Gender | Witz (1992); Hugman (1992), Plous & Neptune (1997); ONS (2016); Tropp (1957) | Male=1, Female=2, No Declared Gender=3 |
| Ethnicity | Dhillon (2015); Offord (2015b); UCU (2016b) | Categories coded 1 to 8 (combined into two categories: 1 = white; 2 = non-white) |
| Age | Venables (1967), Tipton (1973); Gleeson & Mardle (1980); Avis, Bathmaker & Parsons (2002); Parker (2000) | Categories coded 1 to 6 (due to small numbers in U25 & 25-34, these were combined into 4 age categories: 1 = U35s, 2 = 35-44, 3=45-54, 4= 55+ |
| Highest Qualification (Education) | Gleeson & Mardle (1980); Bourdieu (1988; 1984), Toh et al (1996) | Categories coded 1 to 5 (final categories after combination were: 1= None, 2 = Below level 3; 3=Pre-Degree, 4=Degree, 5= Postgraduate 6=Doctorate) |
| Teaching Qualification (Certification) | Greenwood (1957); Goode (1969); Springbett (2018); Robson (1998; 2007), Gleeson & Mardle (1980) | Categories coded: 1 = no qualification 2=partially qualified (all qualifications below Level 5), 3 = fully qualified (Level 5 or higher – 1 or two year recognised teaching courses) |
| Professional Memberships & Groups | Appleby & Hillier (2012); Lave & Wenger (1991); Wenger (1998) | Categories coded 1 = no membership, 2 = membership. These were combined into two groups: 1 = less than 2 memberships; 3 or higher memberships |
| Experience | Peters & Waterman (1982); Spenceley (2006); Avis et al (2002); Bathmaker & Avis (2005); Wenger (1998); | Categories coded: (1=0-1yrs, 2=2-4 yrs, 3= 5-9 yrs, 4=10-19 yrs, 5=20+ years); these were reduced to four categories by combining 0-1 yrs and 2-4 yrs due to small numbers (1=0-4, 2=5-9, 3=10-19, 4=20+) |

*only those variables used in the final analysis are included

| <i>Survey Items:</i> | <i>Supporting Research</i> | <i>Coding</i> |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Section B: EMPLOYMENT | | |
| Years at Organisation | Spenceley (2006); Avis et al (2002); Bathmaker & Avis (2005) | Text insert, then categorised into 6 groups: (1=0.3 yrs, 2=4-5 yrs, 3=5-19 yrs, 4=10-15 yrs, 5=15-20 yrs, 6=20+ yrs). |
| Type of Organisation | Sharp (2011); Lumby (2003); UCU (2016a); OFSTED (2014; 2015); Hoyle (2001) | Categories coded 1 to 7 (GFE & Tertiary groups combined for analysis) |
| Contract & Employment Type | Jameson & Hillier (2006; 2008); Lingfield (2012); Edwards et al (2001); Swain & Cara (2010) | Contract: 1 = permanent, 2 = temporary; Employment type: 1 = full-time, 2= part-time> 0.5; 3 = part-time<0.5; 4 = casual & agency (combined category) for small numbers) |
| Job Role/ Title Responsibility | Villeneuve-Smith, Munoz & McKenzie (2008); Bacon et al (2000); Clow (2001) | Categories coded: 1 = curriculum support worker (combining LSWs, assessors, trainers and technicians with teaching due to small numbers); 2 = teacher; 3 = middle manager; 4 = SMT |
| Paid Fairly (economic capital) | Villeneuve-Smith, Munoz & McKenzie (2008); Clow (2001); Spenceley (2006); Taubman (2000) | Categories coded 1 (low) to 5 (high) |

*only those variables used in the final analysis are included

| <i>Survey Items:</i> | <i>Supporting Research</i> | <i>Coding</i> |
|--|---|--|
| Section C: SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | | |
| Teaching Non-Subject Specialism | Bernstein (2002); Clow (2001); Mather et al (2007); Mather et al (2009); | Two coding methods used: (1) Regression analysis: Categories coded: (1=never to 7=high), (2) CA analysis: binary coding used (1 = taught on 'unqualified' courses; 0 – never taught) |
| Attitudes towards subject & ITT qualifications | Bristow (1970); Gleeson & Mardle (1980); Hanley & Orr; Lucas (2004a; 2004b); Lucas & Unwin (2009) | Categories coded 1 (low) to 5 (high) |
| Professional Development | Unwin et al (2007); Eraut (1994); Crowther (2013; Hargreaves & Fullan (2012); Evans (2008) | Categories coded 1 (low) to 5 (high) |

*only those variables used in the final analysis are included

| <i>Survey Items:</i> | <i>Supporting Research</i> | <i>Coding</i> |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|
| Section D: VIEWS AS A PROFESSIONAL | | |
| Professionalism Definitions | Item included based on findings from the study's scoping exercises | Responses were coded thematically. |
| Professionalism | Hall (1968) – see discussion of instrumentation | Categories coded 1 (low) to 5 (high) |

| | | |
|------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Commitment | Day et al (2006); Kelchtermans (2005), Villeneuve-Smith et al (2008), Jephcote & Salisbury (2009); Blau (1985), Swailes (2003) | Categories coded 1 (low) to 5 (high) |
|------------|--|--------------------------------------|

*only those variables used in the final analysis are included

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <i>Survey Items:</i> | <i>Supporting Research</i> | <i>Coding</i> |
| Section E: WORK RELATIONSHIPS | | |
| Social Capital (Q30 & Q32) | Kouvonen et al (2006) | Categories coded 1 (low) to 5 (high) |

*only those variables used in the final analysis are included

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| <i>Survey Items:</i> | <i>Supporting Research</i> | <i>Coding</i> |
| Section F: WORK MOTIVATION AND FUTURE INTENTIONS | | |
| Work Status | Robson (1998; 2002; 2007); Clow (2001); Spenceley (2006); Jameson & Hillier (2006; 2008) | Categories coded 1 (low) to 5 (high) |
| Future & Career Intentions | Villeneuve-Smith, Munoz & McKenzie (2008) | Future Intentions: 0 = stay to 100 is leave organisation Career Intentions 1=Definitely Stay, 5=Definitely Leave |
| Recommend Organisation & Career | Villeneuve-Smith, Munoz & McKenzie (2008) | Categories coded 1 (low) to 5(high) |

*only those variables used in the final analysis are included

Whilst there were clear strengths to using an online survey in terms of content coverage, distribution and response management, an awareness of the limitations helped to guide its construction and avoid common pitfalls.

5.7.4 PROBLEMS WITH SURVEYS AND THEIR PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Fricker & Schonlau (2002) cite four common problems to using online surveys: *response rates*, *timings*, *coverage* and *response quality*.

Response Rates

Results are mixed on whether online surveys are more likely to attract higher response rates than postal surveys. The meta-studies of Manfreda et al (2008) and Shih & Fan (2009) suggested response rates for online surveys were slightly lower. Earlier studies have suggested

the reverse (e.g. Zhang, 2000; Pealer et al, 2001). According to Manfreda et al (2008), respondents may be less willing to answer online surveys owing to the rise in online spam.

A number of design considerations can be manipulated to improve response rates. Drawing on Scantron (2014) and Fricker & Schonlau (2002), Figure 5.8 presents the main ways researchers have done this and their relevance to this study.

Fig. 5.8: Strategies for Improving Response Rates

| Improvement Considered | Actioned (Y/N) | Action Implemented |
|------------------------------|----------------|---|
| Use of Incentives | N | None used |
| Cover Letter Requesting Help | Y | See Appendix 3, 4 and 5. |
| Statement of Salience | Y | See Examples in Appendix 3 from Page 1 of the Online Survey |
| Length of Survey | Y | Pilot testing of survey length and items on two discrete occasions, alongside feedback on navigation for online pilot. |
| 'Stamp' of credibility | Y | All correspondence was prefixed by either a written or verbal statement that the research was approved with the University of Brighton and supervised by Professor Yvonne Hillier and Dr Nadia Edmond (see Appendix 2). |
| Assurance of Confidentiality | Y | Written and verbal instructions to respondents, both in pilot testing and in the management of the online survey, gave assurances to the respondent's confidentiality |

Timings

Online surveys can be completed in a fraction of the time allocated to postal surveys (Salant & Dillman, 1994; Fricker & Schonlau, 2002). However, they also have hidden time costs which must be budgeted for. These include:

- choosing an appropriate online platform for survey hosting;
- designing the content items including any path-dependencies (which may presuppose some programming and/or training as well as time to familiarise with the functionality);
- testing and piloting the online environment.

When these are taken into consideration, the total time cost for running online surveys can be considerable, requiring a clear timetable for implementation. In this investigation, between

August 2014 and Dec 2014, six months was allocated for the researcher's orientation and completion of the first draft of the online survey.

Coverage

Partial coverage is the most widely recognised shortcoming of online surveys (Fricker & Schonlau, 2002). Coverage is necessarily restricted to those who have computers with e-mail or internet access. Participation in such surveys implies a basic level of digital literacy which should not be presupposed for all FE staff. Those who do not have access to computers or prefer other forms of contact (e.g. by phone) may be omitted from the study which has implications for the representativeness of the findings. In the case of FE practitioners, this might apply to staff without a permanently allocated computer, or where staff infrequently visit their workplace, or where staff work in small provider environments that do not have reliable access to the internet (e.g. motor vehicle workshops, agricultural settings, construction sites, hairdressing salons, etc).

Despite these concerns, the emerging digital trends in both the FE sector and the population at large suggest that connectivity is more widespread than ever before:

- FE staff's access to internet-ready desktop PCs in their work environment has been steadily improving for a number of years (BECTA, 2010; 2003; FELTAG, 2014).
- In the wider population, 8 in 10 people are now going online every day (ONS, 2016);
- Use of portable devices to access online content has almost doubled in the last five years (ONS, 2016);
- Portable devices (mobiles and smartphones) are the preferred ways for adults to gain online access (ONS, 2016); and
- 20% of adults now access the internet from Smart TVs (ONS, 2016).

To maximise coverage, two practical issues were considered: first, a need to find multiple outlets to post/advertise the survey to maximise the possibility of staff notification and access; and second, ensuring that the survey design was compliant with portable display environments, a factor in choosing the *Fluid* survey platform.

Response Quality – Validity and Reliability

Due to the convergent nature of quantitative data sets, surveys tend to have strong reliability but weaker validity (Weber & Bradley, 2005). The strong reliability refers to the opportunities of testing and re-testing participants on the same data instruments to see if scores remain consistent (Creswell, 2003). This is generally a straight-forward process which is easy to replicate under the same conditions as the original testing procedure. In terms of validity, surveys can be artificial instruments if qualitative enquiry is not undertaken to triangulate findings. Babbie (2007) raises the following general criticisms of survey instruments:

1. Scores that relate to people's opinions can only ever be claimed to be approximations – issues seldom take the form of strongly agreeing, agreeing, neutral, disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with a specific statement;
2. Surveys cannot 'draw out' opinions using follow-ups and probing as researchers can do in comprehensive qualitative inquiries.

Both matters could be said to challenge a survey's validity (Creswell & Miller, 2000). These criticisms have been offset by:

1. Using accepted scales and questions in most cases that have a clear record of usage and credibility in educational research, with the advantage that many comments can be analysed systematically in a relatively short space of time.
2. Incorporating opportunities for qualitative responses that triangulate and elaborate on the quantitative data.

Following Creswell (2003), validity of the online survey was strengthened in four specific ways. First, the survey demonstrated a 'clear line of sight' between survey content and the theoretical work informing it (improving construct validity). Second, it covered the salient issues represented in the literature (improving content validity). Third, items were written succinctly, using where appropriate, the exact wording of the original instruments from where they were drawn, and validated in pilot-testing prior to deployment (improving internal and external validity). Fourth, open-ended questions enhanced the explanatory power of the survey's quantitative results (improving triangulation).

5.8 Instrumentation and Variables

5.8.1 CHOOSING A MEASUREMENT TOOL: HALL'S PROFESSIONALISM SCALE

Few meta-reviews on the efficacy of professionalism 'measurement tools' have been carried out by researchers. The medical reviews undertaken by Veloski et al (2005) and Arnold (2002) both highlighted the chasm between the many studies that seek to improve professionalism and the paucity of valid measurement tools to explore this. Drawing on Arnold (2002) and Swailes (2003), this study set three criteria for tool selection:

- the need to use an instrument that has applicability and generalisability to occupational groups such as teachers/ FE teachers;
- an instrument that has been regularly used by researchers over the last few decades;
- an instrument that, by its regular deployment and review, has gained the confidence of researchers.

Of those reviewed, Hall's (1968) professionalism scale (HPS) was the best known (Swailes, 2003). In its revised form (see Snizek, 1972), it is a well-established instrument for measuring professionalism in a range of occupational settings including teachers, university academics, auditors, priests, nurses, accountants, building professionals, engineers, police, scientists and pharmacists (Hall, 1968; Snizek, 1972; Kalbers and Fogarty, 1995; Bryman, 1985; Wynd, 2003; Chan, Chan & Scott, 2007; Hussey et al, 2011; Carlan & Lewis, 2009; Mat & Zabidi, 2010).

The HPS measures the strength of individual's professional attitudes on five dimensions (or subscales). These are:

- *Professional Organisation as Referent*: the view that one's professional association and informal colleague groupings are the major source of ideas and judgments for guiding work practices;
- *Belief in Public Service*: the indispensability of the profession and the public good that the work does;
- *Belief in Self-Regulation*: the view that the person best qualified to judge the work of a professional is a fellow professional; a belief in colleague control;

- *Sense of Calling*: the dedication of the professional to their work (commitment); the view that a person would choose this work even if it provided fewer extrinsic rewards;
- *Autonomy*: a view that the practitioner should make their own decisions without interference from external pressures such as clients, employers or other workers.

Hall's original scale was composed of 50 items. Snizek (1972) re-tested this and found that a 25-item scale achieved improved empirical fit with Hall's 5 component model boasting superior construct validity. It is this version which has widespread acceptability amongst researchers (Snizek, 1972; Swailes, 2003). Shorter variations of Snizek's reworked scale have been proposed in Bryman (1985), Swailes (2003), Wimmer (2007) and Loftus & Price (2016).

Hall's scale establishes the degree-of-fit between occupations and the classical 'professional model' (Hall, 1968; Hall, 1969). Hall indicated that high scores suggested a highly professionalised occupation. Whilst Hall did not specify what this meant in raw scores, the work of Carlan & Lewis (2009) suggests scores much higher than the mid-point.

5.8.2 MAIN VARIABLES

Professionalism Variables:

Professionalism: In this study, a shortened version of Snizek's 25-item questionnaire was used – a 15 item scale – which is suggested empirically in Swailes (2003) and Wimmer (2007) and satisfies the need for utility (being part of a larger survey to participants). Each subscale consisted of 3 scale items (see Appendix 9). The wording of scale items follows Scailes (2003).

The HPC uses a Likert scale (1 to 5) comprising questions with five possible answers, ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Items 26.5, 26.6, 26.8, 26.9, 26.11, 26.12, 26.13 were reverse coded. Agreement with the scale items measures higher professionalism, except in reverse-scored items. As in Wynd (2003) and Carlan & Lewis (2009), scale scores are combined to produce a total mean score for professionalism.

Commitment: Blau's 5-item commitment scale (Blau, 1985) was used as a measure of professional commitment (Swailes, 2003) and was a proxy for Hall's 'sense of calling' subscale.

It was included as a separate measure within the survey. It follows a 5-point Likert scale (1=low, 5=high). Reverse coding on items: 27.1, 27.3, 27.5.

Capital Variables:

Economic Capital: In “Forms of capital”, economic capital is held synonymous with money because it is “immediately and directly convertible” (Bourdieu, 1986, p47). Both Pinxten & Lievens (2014) and Paccoud et al (2020) warn about using actual income as a measure of economic capital because of the high likelihood of missing values, as staff are reluctant to disclose. The use of pay unfairness as a proxy for economic capital draws on Pinxten & Lievens (2014) ‘psychosocial’ interpretation in which the social meaning of economic differences (e.g. feelings of injustice; being exploited; dissatisfaction) can adversely affect professionalism. Taubman (2000; 2015) suggests that it is the perceived unfairness of pay (e.g. between teachers and managers, or between FE and the wider education sector) that motivates staff to strike, withdraw good-will or change jobs in FE.

Kim et al (2019) and Tyler & Lind (1992) argue that actual pay levels are strongly correlated with pay fairness; those on low pay rate their fairness as low even if they are paid the same as colleagues, while high earners tend to judge themselves as fairly paid even if their pay is (unfairly) higher than equivalent others. Scarpello & Campbell (1983) have previously argued that single item measures of pay fairness are more reliable indicators than multiple-item scales. Wanous et al (1997) and Nagy (2002) have both shown a relatively high concordance between single-item and multiple item scales (0.63 and 0.72 respectively). Adapting Nagy, economic capital is measured by the question: “*I am paid fairly for the job that I do*” using a 1-5 Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Cultural Capital: Bourdieu defined cultural capital in three forms: institutionalised, embodied and objectified forms. This study used measures of institutionalised and embodied forms (see Figure 5.9).

Fig. 5.9: Cultural Capital Scale

| Item |
|--|
| Q4 Highest Qualification |
| Q5 Highest Level of Teacher Certification |
| Q23.1 FE teachers should hold a relevant subject qualification |
| Q23.2 FE teachers should hold a teaching qualification |
| Q24.1 Regular opportunities to update teaching skills |
| Q24.2 Regular opportunities to update subject specialism |
| Q24.3 Regularly consulted about professional development needs |
| Q24.4 My professional development needs are taken seriously by my line manager |

To measure institutionalised capital, items capturing respondents' education and teacher certification were utilised. Education responses were scored in six categories (1=none, 2= Up to Level 3, 3 = Pre-Degree (levels 4 and 5), 4 = Degree, 5 = Masters, 6= PHD), working on the assumption that education is a 'positional good' and that cultural capital increases as the level of qualification (and therefore its scarcity) increases (Paccoud, Nazroo & Liest, 2019). Teacher certification responses were scored under three categories (1= not qualified, 2 = part qualified, 3 = fully-qualified). Fully qualified referred to the possession of a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), Certificate in Education, Diploma in Teaching (DTLLs), Specialist Level 5 Literacy, Numeracy or ESOL qualification or a Bachelor-in-Education (BEd). Part-qualified referred to teaching, assessing or recognised learning-development qualifications that were not full-teaching qualifications.

To measure embodied capital, six items were used to test respondents' attitudes towards the quality of their professional learning environment. These drew on Spaaij's (2012) view that cultural capital develops from participation in learning contexts such as workplace training. Beliefs about qualification and access to professional development indicate the degree to which an individual is both invested in, and has access to, opportunities for developing skills, competencies and cognitions. Questions 23.1 and 23.2 measure beliefs in holding qualifications (1=low to 5=high). Questions 24.1 -24.4 measure attitudes towards participation in organisational learning opportunities (1=low to 5=high). Responses were converted to Z-scores to combine as one scale, with higher scores denoting higher levels of cultural capital.

Social Capital: This instrument has been validated by Kouvonen et al (2006) and comprises 8 items on a 1-5 Likert scale (see Figure 5.10). Kouvonen et al (2006) have previously used

composite scores for social capital by aggregating the scores of individual items, with higher scores denoting higher social capital. The original scale was used to measure aspects of all three forms of social capital: bonding (items 3, 4 and 5), bridging (items 6 and 7) and linking (items 1, 2 and 8), as well as cognitive (items 3,5 and 8) and structural (items 1,2,4,6 and 7) components identified in Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998). Later work by Kouvonen et al (2008) suggested social capital comprised horizontal (Q30.1-30.5) and vertical components (Q32.1-32.3). The instrument is tested against all three possibilities (see Appendix 9).

Fig. 5.10: Social Capital Scale (Kouvonen et al, 2006)

| Item |
|---|
| 30.1 We have a 'we are together' attitude |
| 30.2 People keep each other informed about workrelated issues in the work unit |
| 30.3 People feel understood and accepted by each other |
| 30.4 Members of the work unit build on each other's ideas to achieve the best outcome |
| 30.5 People in the work unit co-operate in order to help develop and apply new ideas |
| 32.1 Our supervisor treats us with kindness and consideration |
| 32.2 Our supervisor shows concern for our rights as an employee |
| 32.3 We can trust our supervisor |

Work Status (Symbolic Capital): This scale was adapted from Jameson & Hillier (2006) and Hill (2000). It consisted of 9 question items asking respondents how much they felt valued by different stakeholders, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Item scores were combined to produce an overall total score on professional status, where higher scores denoted higher status (see Figure 5.11).

Fig. 5.11: Work Status Scale

| Item |
|--|
| 35.1 I feel valued by senior managers |
| 35.2 I feel valued by my line manager |
| 35.3 I feel valued by my full-time colleagues |
| 35.4 I feel valued by my part-time colleagues |
| 35.5 I feel valued by support staff colleagues |
| 35.6 I feel valued by my learners |
| 35.7 I feel valued by the general public |
| 35.8 I feel valued by Government |
| 35.9 I feel valued by OFSTED |

Career Attitude Variables:

Four career attitude variables were highlighted for empirical attention, all of which were adapted from Villeneuve-Smith, Munoz & Mckenzie (2008):

Turnover Intention: Measures a person's desire to leave their organisation on a Likert scale from 1 (Not at all) to 100 (Very much).

Career Intentions: Measures a person's intention to leave the FE sector completely within the next five years using a Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

Recommendation of Organisation as a Place to Work: Measures the extent to which a person would recommend their organisation as a place of work using a Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

Recommendation of Career as an FE teacher: Measures the extent to which a person would recommend their career to others using a Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

Structural Variables

Six demographic and twelve occupational variables were used in analyses of the structural factors affecting perceived professionalism. Coding for variables is presented in Section 5.7.3.

Demographic (Q1 Gender, Q2 Ethnicity, Q3, Age, Q4 Education, Q5 Certification, Q7 Experience)

Occupational (Q6.1-6.5 Memberships of Trade Unions, Professional Associations, External Forums, Internal Committees and Work Clubs; Q9 Organisational Tenure (career years); Q10 Organisational Type; Q11 Contract Type; Q12 Employment Type; Q13 Job Role; Q15 Weekly Teaching Hours; Q22 Teaching on a Non-Specialist Subject – 1 (never) to 7 (high))

5.9 Pilot Testing of Survey

Pilot testing means finding out if your survey will work in the “real world” by trying it out first on a few people. The purpose is to make sure that everyone in the sample not only understands the questions but understands them in the same way. In particular, a pilot test can:

- Check the clarity of each question;
- Check the clarity of the instructions given to participants at the start;
- Identify ambiguities or errors in presentation, sequencing or in-survey instructions to participants;

- Check the length of time the survey takes to complete.

First Pilot Exercise – The Print Version

The first pilot of questionnaire items was carried on 5th June 2014 with a group of 10 Year 2 DTLLS (Diploma in Teaching in Lifelong Learning students) at the researcher's place of occupation (an FE college on the South coast). The aim of this exercise was:

- To provide feedback on the clarity and simplicity of the questions;
- To review areas of professionalism that staff felt were missing from the question set;
- To check the instructions on the participant cover letter were clear and convincing in order to persuade people to participate.

The feedback (9 responses) is summarised in Appendix 6. The participant letter was shortened, and a decision to remove two key questions was taken, with some minor modifications made to other questions. Following Jameson & Hillier (2006), the personal details section was re-located to the back of the survey.

Second Pilot Exercise – The Online Version

The second pilot test was carried out with the online survey platform. With an online survey, additional checks must be considered:

- The clarity and comfort of the presentation of the survey on the screen, including the total number of questions that can be presented before scrolling down;
- Checking the survey's functionality for errors;
- Checking that data is recorded and coded correctly.

On 16 June 2015, 7 staff trainees on a Certificate in Education course at the researcher's place of occupation were asked to 'road test' the online survey. Participants were asked to evaluate each section of the survey for clarity and user-experience. Following this, four key changes to the final questionnaire were made:

- The relocation of the 'Personal Details' section to the front page (participants suggested its appearance at the end of the survey was disorientating);
- A correction to the word limit function on the open-ended text boxes (participants felt that a limit of 250 characters was not sufficient for their comments);
- A change in the presentation of the 'Subject Knowledge' section in which options fell below the scroll line and proved difficult to recall (questions that fell below the scroll line required participants to return to the top of the screen to check response categories, which made this section more time-consuming and harder to complete, so this section was presented on a new online page);
- Reduction of the survey by three questions due to reduce completion time (to ensure the survey complied with its expected duration of 15-20 minutes).

5.10 Sampling & Distribution

5.10.1 OVERVIEW OF SAMPLING ISSUES IN THE FE SECTOR

Ideally, researchers aim to use probability (random) sampling because of the ability to make direct sample-to-population generalisations. However, when a target population cannot be clearly defined, representativeness cannot be guaranteed (Trochim, 2006). In this study, the target population referred to staff with a teaching, management or curriculum support role in the English FE sector who worked in the following types of institutions:

- General Further Education Colleges
- Sixth Form Colleges
- Adult Education Colleges
- Work-based Learning Providers
- Independent Colleges
- Specialist Colleges (e.g. Land-based, Drama, Art)
- Prison Education

Unfortunately, it is almost impossible to be precise about the numbers of FE staff who work across the sector. Workforce data statistics are notoriously sketchy and incomplete (ETF,

2014; 2015a; 2015b; 2017; Hutchinson et al, 2014). This is because:

- There is no mandatory or standardised system of collecting FE staff data;
- Many smaller organisations do not hold government contracts and remain largely invisible from official listings (Simpson, 2009);
- Existing workforce surveys are based on voluntary submissions (ETF, 2019, 2018; 2014).

Consequently, attempts to estimate the target population in FE are tentative at best.

5.10.2 CHOICE OF SAMPLING STRATEGY

Without a so-called 'master list' of staff in the FE sector, probability sampling (e.g. random, stratified, clustering, quota) was ruled out in favour of non-probability sampling. The two most popular forms are *purposive sampling* and *convenience sampling*. Purposive sampling was discounted on the grounds that samples were not pre-selected. Therefore, convenience sampling was chosen based on staff availability. Trochim (2006) argues that convenience sampling has gained widespread acceptance in the social sciences. Creswell (2003) sees its advantages as:

- Encouraging maximum participation and coverage;
- Reducing the time taken to search for suitable participants;
- Greater flexibility to plan around the schedules of busy participants;
- More economical on time and budgets than other sampling methods.

There are also drawbacks to convenience samples. Since the participants are self-selecting (both in the scoping exercises and main survey), the samples may hold characteristics that distinguish them from the target population which prevents standard generalisation (e.g. they are more motivated, more disgruntled, etc). This form of volunteer bias risks distorting the findings, either by exaggerating or minimising a property held by the target audience. However, it was felt that these concerns were outweighed by the method's many advantages.

5.10.3 PRIMARY PHASE - SCOPING EXERCISES AND SAMPLING:

Scoping exercises sampled attendees on a number of external training and conferencing events that took place between March 2013 and June 2015 in the South of England. A majority of staff came from colleges in the South of England and London; some were also drawn from colleges and specialist institutions in the Midlands and the North; and a few worked in colleges from the East and West of England, and from Wales. As all participants were attending professional development events, there is a possibility of respondent bias e.g. staff may be motivated, or be mandated to attend, or work in financially secure work environments which are supportive of professional development, factors that may influence responses towards the questionnaire items. Notwithstanding, scoping exercises were treated as exploratory. Figure 5.12 provides a brief overview of the samples from each scoping exercise. In total, 163 responses were received.

Fig. 5.12: Scoping Exercises, Samples and Details

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Topic & Data Type</i> | <i>Number</i> | <i>Respondent Details</i> |
|-------------------------------|---|---------------|--|
| 22 nd March 2013 | Reaction to Lord Lingfield's Final Report Quantitative with qualitative option | 8 | Location: Guildford Drawn from a sample of 96 delegates at a national professional development conference; mix of lecturers, managers and senior managers; from sixth form and FE colleges, and a small number of private providers including FE consultants and members of professional FE associations; participants drawn from across the South, Midlands & North, with some representation from the East of England |
| 30 th August 2013 | Definitions and Ideas of Professionalism Quantitative & some qualitative data | 29 | Location: a large General Further Education College in Surrey. Mainly an audience of full-time and part-time lecturing staff with some staff on management responsibilities. Researcher travelled to college site |
| 25 th October 2013 | Issues Affecting the FE Sector Quantitative data | 22 | Location: A large sixth form college located in the South of England Researcher travelled to college site |
| 21 st March 2014 | Issues Affecting the FE Sector Quantitative data | 29 | Location: Guildford Drawn from a sample of 78 delegates at a national professional development conference; mix of lecturers, managers and senior managers; from sixth form and FE colleges, and a small number of private providers including FE consultants and members of professional FE associations; participants drawn from across the South, Midlands & North, with some representation from the East of England |

| | | | |
|---|--|----|---|
| 21 st March 2014 | Professions, Prestige and Status Quantitative data | 17 | Location: Guildford Drawn from a sample of 78 delegates at a professional development conference; mix of lecturers, managers and senior managers; from sixth form and FE colleges, and a small number of private providers including FE consultants and members of professional FE associations; participants drawn from across the South, Midlands & North, with some representation from the East of England |
| 26 th March 2015 | Professionalism and Professional Status Qualitative data | 27 | Location: London Drawn from a sample of 99 attendees at a national professional development conference; mix of lecturers, managers and senior managers from sixth form and FE colleges, and a small number of private providers including FE consultants and members of professional FE associations |
| 9 th June 2015 16 th June 2015 18 th June 2015 25 th June 2015 | Reputation of FE Teachers Qualitative and Quantitative data | 31 | Location: Croydon Mix of teachers and managers from sixth form and FE colleges in London & the South, with a few from colleges from the West of England, attending a series of third party professional development events |

Procedure

The researcher attended each of these events. The questionnaire was circulated to attendees at the start of the day, with a verbal instruction on what their purpose was, and how their data was to be used. While names were added to the questionnaires on a majority of occasions, all participants were notified of the confidentiality of the data and its compliance with University of Brighton research guidelines. Questionnaires were collected at the end of the day's event and transferred to an excel spreadsheet for data analysis, with names removed.

5.10.4 SECONDARY PHASE – MAIN SURVEY AND SAMPLING

The survey was designed and hosted using the *Fluid* surveys software platform and data was stored on a secure server managed by the same company. A baseline target of 300 respondents was set for the online survey which is an appropriate size for factor analysis (Comrey & Lee, 1992). Therefore, multiple distribution channels for the survey were sought.

Figure 5.13 presents a list of these organisations including details of the target audience and date of circulation. These included the Education & Training Foundation (ETF), the Association of Employer Learning Providers (AELP), the University College Union (UCU) and a number of

smaller research networks such as the London Learning & Skills Research Network. The survey was opened on 24th June 2015 and was finally closed on 28th Sept 2015.

Fig. 5.13: Survey Distribution Strategy

| Organisation | Target Audience & Format | Total Possible Circulation | Date Published/Sent to Membership |
|--|--|--|---|
| [XXXX] Consultant and Author | Published to her CPD noticeboard on website. | 1500+ twitter followers | 24.06.15 |
| TELL (Teacher Educators in Lifelong Learning Group] | Teacher training and research community. Comprises FE and HE teacher trainers and researchers. Published to website and promoted in circulars. | Reported in Jan 2016, the TELL group had 220 members who represent the teacher training community across FE and HE institutions. | 26.06.15 |
| FE Community (FE News) | A national online blog and news outlet for the FE community | 64 views | Published June 28, 2015 |
| UCET (University Council for Educating Teachers), Chair | Orientated to higher education staff. ITT trainers work with FE staff. | Represents ITT staff from over 130+ universities | e-mailed 29.06.15 |
| Brighton University ITT Consortium | Represents 6 colleges in the university ITT partnership | 6-12 ITT staff plus others to recommend. | e-mailed late June 2015 |
| Linked In | All contacts on the researcher's Linked In network - professional community | More than 500 connections | Sent July 2015 |
| Newbubbles Ltd, Private CPD & Conferencing Company | e-mailed link and cover letter to all staff on mailing list, approximating to 6000 responses. A second e-mail to all staff development managers with a request to circulate to all staff. | 6,000. Approx. on mailing list, teaching staff at all levels of the organisation. 250 staff development managers listed on database. | e-mailed on following dates: 06.07.15-09.07.15 |
| ETF (Education & Training Foundation) | The professional association for Further Education | The whole FE sector (those on its membership list/ directory). At the time, its membership arm had 17,000 members. | Blog written to advertise survey, published 08.07.15 on ETF website |
| Westminster CPD Group, lead convenor | HE and FE network community | July newsletter circulated to 20+ members | Sent 11.07.15 |
| LSRN [Learning & Skills Research Network], London, lead convenor | Learning & Skills Research Network, e-mailed as circular to membership. | 50+ members | e-mailed 24.07.15 |

| | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| AELP (Association of Employer Learning Providers) | Represents members of the work-based learning community | Circa 3,500 members | August newsletter, sector connect, issue 95, p3, sent 31.07.15 |
| UCU, Policy Officer | E-mail link embedded in monthly circular went out in the Friday email to all members and in the email to Branch officers The Campaign Update email which is sent out to members every Friday | 116,000 members and branch officers | 11.09.2015 |

5.11 Ethical Issues

O’Leary (2011), citing Gorard and Taylor (2004), suggests that ethics should be viewed in terms of the ‘quality’ and ‘rigour’ of the research, placing a responsibility on researchers to choose methodologies “to obtain the ‘best answer’ to the study’s research questions” (p194). On these terms, a mixed methods approach provides part of this study’s ethical justification.

Given the sample characteristics, and the purpose of the research, it was anticipated that this study would not raise serious ethical concerns. Although participant responses demonstrated that professionalism was both an emotive and contested topic, these were not believed to be issues that threatened their well-being. That said, it was important that the survey’s construction and accompanying instructions were sensitive to the potential for participants to react negatively to the exercise. All questions and instruments were subject to the critical scrutiny of my supervisors and other knowledgeable staff at the University of Brighton.

This study complied with the University of Brighton’s ethical policy for research. A summary of the issues is presented below. Appendix 7 refers to the completed ethics checklist for research approval.

Informed Consent:

An ‘informed consent’ letter, by e-mail – as part of this invitation – was attached to the front of the survey setting out the expectations of the research process. All participants were asked to

respond to a link in these instructions confirming their intention to participate.

- Note is taken of BERA's guidance (2011, p5) on informed consent: "Researchers must take the steps necessary to ensure that all participants in the research understand the process in which they are to be engaged, including why their participation is necessary, how it will be used and how and to whom it will be reported" (this guidance was incorporated into participants' invitation to participate and accompanying instructions).

Online survey: On the front page was a statement about the purpose of the project, how the data was used and stored and a statement of anonymity and consent. By taking part in the survey, participant consent was assumed.

Management of Data

A data analysis plan was produced in line with the recommendations made in Glasow (2005).

These guidelines establish that:

- Survey data should be stored on a private and secure web server which is password protected;
- Participant data should be anonymized;
- Data should only be shared with those who are directly involved with the research process;
- Data should be kept for its intended (and approved) use only, with personalised data deleted 6 months after PhD approval.

Confidentiality & Privacy

A number of considerations to ensure confidentiality were implemented:

- Participant names were not required by the online survey. Each participant was automatically assigned a unique reference number by the software;
- A standard confidentiality / privacy statement was agreed and added to each flyer, document or correspondence where there was an invitation to participate;

- Data storage was compliant with the Data Protection Act 1998 (prevailing legislation). As such, it was not intended for sharing or dissemination in its raw state outside of the research process, though its usage was intended for publication in anonymous form.

Insider Research

The researcher, who worked for a Sussex based FE College, was aware of the potential ‘conflict of interest’ issues in sending out ‘invitations to participate’. This was addressed with a covering statement which read: ‘This is an independent PHD research project that is being undertaken at the Doctoral College, University of Brighton’.

As the researcher has many years of working in FE, there was an awareness that these experiences could undermine the integrity of the study in terms of ‘contamination’. Mason (1996) identifies the need for reflexivity to redress this, requiring the researcher to constantly check findings, examine possible sources of error and bias, and engage iteratively with the data to confirm emerging findings.

5.12 Data Analysis

5.12.1 COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES

Data was collected between June 2015 and September 2015. Figure 5.14 presents the response rate based on total completions as a proportion of total responses.

Fig. 5.14: Response Totals and Completion Rates

| Total Responses | Total Useable Responses | Total Useable Completions | Partial Useable Completions | Zero completions | % Completion |
|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| 536 | 461 | 320 | 141 | 56 | 60%** |

**Data drawn from Fluid Surveys Online Software
 **based on completed questionnaires only/ total responses*

In total 536 questionnaires were received. 19 were from university staff and were therefore excluded. There were 56 zero completions. This left 320 fully completed questionnaires, with a

60% completion rate (it was not possible to estimate the response rate from the target population as this was not known). Statistical data was calculated from the full set of 461 useable responses, using SPSS protocols for missing data – see '*missing data*'.

5.12.2 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

Data Analysis Tools

The raw data from the Fluid Surveys online platform was imported into SPSS v22, Nvivo Pro 11 and MS Excel for further analysis.

To use parametric tests, which offer greater statistical power than non-parametric tests (Field, 2013), certain assumptions were made:

- The data was treated as 'interval'. This is in keeping with previous research using Hall's professionalism scale (see Wynd, 2003; Carlan & Lewis, 2009). Though Likert scales are attitudinal and use ordinal data (as intervals between rating indicators cannot be presumed to be metrically equal), the use of parametric testing is common in the analysis of Likert scale data (Lubke & Muthen, 2004; Wadgave & Khairnar, 2016), especially where ratings are scored and aggregated to produce a summed scale, as in Hall's professionalism scale and Kouvonen et al's (2006) social capital scale;
- The data was normally distributed (see Section 6.3.1). Plots for all scales in this study followed a bell-shaped curve;
- Samples did not differ greatly in terms of their variance (tested using Levene's equal variance test).

In addition, using a large number of data cases means that there can be some violation of these assumptions without compromising the use of parametric tests (Field, 2013).

Given that the population is not well-defined, there was no presumption of representativeness between the findings for this sample and the general FE population. As the sample was non-random, the findings refer explicitly to the sample alone.

Quantitative Tests

A mix of data tools were used in this study. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was employed to test the five-factor structure of Hall's questionnaire. Pearson's 'R' correlations examined the empirical relationships between professionalism (HPS scores) and career attitudes and capitals. Three forms of regression analysis considered the effects of capital on professionalism: Binomial regression (the effect of capital volume on professionalism), multinomial regression (the effect of capital structure on professionalism) and stepwise regression (main structural predictors of professionalism). In respect of capital structure, a K-means cluster analysis with squared Euclidean distance and Ward's algorithm was used to group respondents based on volume and composition of capital at individual level. Scales were z-standardised to ensure comparability. Four clusters based on different combinations of 'high' or 'low' economic and socio-cultural capital were used. 'High' or 'low' capital was determined by comparing an individual's score to the capital mean. Socio-cultural capital recognises Bourdieu's distinction between material and no-material forms of capital and was calculated by averaging the z-standardised social and cultural capitals. One-way ANOVAs and t-tests were used to examine differences in professionalism (HPS scores) for selected structural variables. Chi-tests of association were used to examine the composition of different membership groups. Following Bourdieu (1984), correspondence analysis (CA) was used to examine the relationships between respondents' structural position and their professional habitus, using selected structural properties and coded dispositions to Q25 ('what does professional mean to you?'). Details of the coding for this exercise are presented in 6.9.1. Coding used for the CA calculation is presented in section 6.9.2

Corrections to tests took the following approach:

- ANOVA used the Tukey HSD test and Levene's test of equal variance
- Interaction/Main effects were examined using the Bonferroni correction
- Chi-squared tests are corrected using the Bonferroni method
- Frequencies in correspondence tables were weighted and standardised using a process of symmetric normalisation.

Coding protocols for all variables are highlighted in section 5.7.3.

Significance

If a statistical test indicates that the difference/ association between samples is large enough

that it is unlikely to be caused by chance/ randomness, a 'statistically significant' difference or association is concluded. Commonly, this is when the probability value (p-value) is less than 5% (or 0.05), or to be specific, when a researcher is confident that the difference has a 5% or less chance that it was caused by chance factors. A 0.05 level of significance is the default level accepted for non-directional hypotheses. Non-directional hypotheses (sometimes called two-tailed hypotheses) are ones that predict a difference or association, but do not indicate which direction this difference/ association will fall. Two-tailed hypotheses are usual when the study is exploratory (as this one is) and where there are no clear empirical or theoretical reasons for choosing a directional (one-tailed) hypothesis.

Qualitative Analysis

The use of Nvivo Pro 11 and MS Excel were used to code the qualitative data, using nodes to represent key themes and arranging these hierarchically. This process adapted an open coding protocol by Miles & Huberman (1994) which entailed:

- The researcher searching through the statements relating to the relevant question and coding each word, phrase or idea to a category;
- Refining/ developing categories to fit new themes/data;
- Developing parent codes that summarised offspring codes using a manual postcard system (chosen for its flexibility and ease of use);
- Entering final codes into MS Excel and re-checking these against 10% of the dataset for accuracy/reliability. Where categories and codes misaligned, these were amended;
- Developing nodes in Nvivo Pro 11 to represent the key themes, and cross-referencing responses against demographic and occupational variables (imported from Excel) to investigate similarities/differences between staffing groups.

Non-Response Bias

Non-response bias is a potential issue for all surveys (Atif, Richards & Bilgin, 2012) and occurs

when there is a risk of differences between actual and potential respondents. Respondents might be more motivated, more interested or may be in situations that make full participation more likely, all of which can introduce bias. Unfortunately, these effects are difficult to estimate. One recommendation is to follow-up non-respondents to establish the reasons for non-participation (Porter & Whitcomb, 2005); however, due to time constraints, this was not performed here.

Missing Data

Missing data was planned for in advance. Participants were required to complete one section of the survey before moving to the next section. Open ended (text-based) responses were exempted from this and remained voluntary.

In respect of the statistical analysis, SPSS protocols to retain listwise deletion were observed. In accordance with reported good practice (Bakker & Wicherts, 2014), outliers were left in the data analysis and reporting.

5.12.3 RELIABILITY DATA FOR MAIN SCALES

When considering a scale in a new context, it should be re-tested for internal consistency (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). The practice of using Cronbach's alpha test for measuring scale consistency is well-established (Gliem & Gliem, 2003; Tavakol & Dennick, 2011; De Vaus, 2002). Reported in Gliem & Gliem (2003), Nunnally (1978) suggests 0.7 is a conventional threshold for the reliability of scales in educational research, while Saraph, Benson & Schroeder (1989) and Garson (2009) believe 0.6 is acceptable for exploratory research.

Hall's Professionalism Scale (HPS) - Reliability

Figure 5.15 presents the alpha-coefficients for the 15-item Hall's professionalism (HPS) scale. Q26.5, Q26.6, Q26.8, Q26.9, Q26.11, Q26.12 & Q26.13 were reverse scored.

Fig. 5.15: Reliability Data for Professionalism Scale and Subscales (Cronbach scores)

| Scale | N* | Mean | SD | Cronbach | Cronbach (if 1 item deleted) |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|-----------------|---|
| Hall (original scale) | 346 | 3.18 | 5.76 | 0.60 | 0.61 |
| Blau-Hall (composite scale) | 346 | 3.24 | 7.67 | 0.73 | 0.75 |
| Autonomy (AT) | 346 | 2.78 | 2.14 | 0.47 | 0.54 |
| Profession-as-Referent (PR) | 346 | 3.26 | 2.04 | 0.36 | 0.40 |
| Belief in Public Service (PS) | 346 | 3.36 | 1.95 | 0.44 | 0.39 |
| Belief in Self-Regulation (SR) | 346 | 3.20 | 1.97 | 0.42 | 0.47 |
| Sense of Calling (SC) | 346 | 3.29 | 2.02 | 0.46 | 0.49 |
| Commitment (Blau Scale) | 346 | 3.25 | 4.49 | 0.84 | 0.83 |

*N=valid cases

The overall reliability for the HPS was 0.60, which improved to 0.61 with item deletion. This is lower than other reported studies using the HPS (Hall, 1968; Snizek, 1972; Carlan & Lewis, 2009; Swailes, 2003; Wynd & Gotschall, 2000), though consistent with the 0.65 reported in Snizek's (1972) initial pilot of 33 university teaching faculty. While the scale exceeded the 0.6 cut-off, EFA did not produce a clean five-factor structure. Following Swailes (2003), Blau's 5-item commitment scale was substituted for Hall's Sense of Calling subscale, raising the overall reliability for HPS (Blau-Hall) to 0.73. This composite scale was subsequently used in this study.

Reliability estimates of Hall's original subscales ranged from borderline to poor (0.36 to 0.47), in contrast to the high reliability of Blau's commitment scale of 0.84. Item deletion only modestly improved the reliability of PR and SR subscales, but substantively raised the AT scale to 0.54. Scailes (2003) states that alpha is dependent on the length of the scale, increases with longer scales, but is less reliable for shortened scales (De Vaus, 2002). In respect of short scales, Dall'Oglio et al (2010) confirm a reliability of 0.5 as acceptable. Therefore, it verified confidence in the use of two of the five subscales: commitment and autonomy (with the removal of Q26.11). PS, SR and PR scales did not achieve acceptable reliability and were not reported on.

Cultural Capital Scale - Reliability

8 items comprised the cultural capital scale (Q4, 5, 23.1, 23.2, 24.1, 24.2, 24.3, 24.4). Section 5.8.2 (p138) gives details of the scale.

Fig. 5.16: Reliability Coefficient - Cultural Capital Scale

| Scale | N* | Mean | SD | Cronbach | Cronbach (if 1 item deleted) |
|------------------------|-----|------|------|----------|---------------------------------|
| Cultural Capital Scale | 366 | N/A | 4.14 | 0.67 | 0.72 |

*N=valid cases

Scale items converted to Z-scores

An alpha coefficient of 0.67 (see Fig. 5.16) suggested that the scale had acceptable reliability as an exploratory tool (Sharma & Wagh, 2019; Saraph et al, 1989). It was decided not to eliminate Q4 (Highest Education Qualifications) despite being the weakest item, as this would have undermined the measure's construct validity.

Social Capital – Reliability

The social capital from Kouvonen et al (2006) comprised 8 items (Q30.1, Q30.2, Q30.3, Q30.4, Q30.5, Q32.1, Q32.2, Q32.3). The measure “taps several key aspects of [social capital] including membership in local networks, trust, collective action, diversity and tolerance” (Kouvonen et al, 2006, p259). The alpha coefficient is presented in Figure 5.17. A figure of 0.91 suggested that the scale had high reliability.

Fig. 5.17: Reliability Coefficient - Social Capital Scale

| Scale | N* | Mean | SD | Cronbach | Cronbach (if 1 item deleted) |
|----------------------|-----|------|------|----------|---------------------------------|
| Social Capital Scale | 342 | 3.6 | 7.37 | 0.91 | 0.9 |

*N=valid cases

Symbolic Capital

The symbolic capital scale was adapted from items in Jameson & Hillier (2006) and Hill (2000) and comprised 9 items (Q35.1 to 35.9; See Section 5.8.2, p139). A figure of 0.71 suggested that the scale had good reliability (see Fig. 5.18).

Fig. 5.18: Reliability Coefficient – Symbolic Capital (Work Status) Scale

| Scale | N* | Mean | SD | Cronbach | Cronbach (if 1 item deleted) |
|------------------------|-----|------|------|----------|---------------------------------|
| Symbolic Capital Scale | 257 | 3.26 | 4.78 | 0.71 | 0.72 |

*N=valid cases

5.12.4 FACTOR ANALYSIS OF HALL'S PROFESSIONALISM SCALE

Exploratory Factor Analysis was conducted to test the five-factor structure of Hall's professionalism scale. Appendix 9 sets out the considerations and procedure for undertaking this. The results only are reproduced here.

Using the original 15 item questionnaire, exploratory factor analysis (using Principal Axis) with oblique rotation revealed five factors with an eigenvalue of 1.00 or above accounting for 53.4% of variance (KMO=0.65; Bartlett (105) = 578.23; $p < 0.01$). The factor structure proved to be unstable, with only 1 of 5 factors (Public Service) achieving the desired 3 item loadings of 0.3 or above. Sense of Calling (SC), Profession-as-Referent (PR) and Self-Regulation (SR) had only two item loadings above 0.3, while SC and SR subscales both had crossloadings above 0.3.

Re-running the model by substituting Blau's commitment scale in for Hall's SC subscale restored the five factor structure (KMO=0.77; Bartlett (136) = 1230.92, $p < 0.01$) accounting for 55% total variance, though loadings were weaker than those reported in Swailes (2003) and Wimmer (2007). Factor 3 (self-regulation) was less stable, with item Q26.3 loading weakly at 0.17 (< 0.3), and with a significant cross-loading of 0.45 from Q26.12 (PR subscale).

5.13 Summary

This chapter started with a statement of the research aims and hypotheses, the latter developing out of the core questions generated from the literature review (Chapters 2-4). It then moved on to the study's choice of conceptual framework and the rationale for using a Bourdieusian field analysis to investigate professionalism. It provided two methodological foci: a mapping of the social positions of FE agents and an exploration of

agents' professional habitus. Following this, justification for a mixed methods analysis was made including the reasons for adopting a concurrent nested design. Primary (scoping exercises) and secondary (main survey) methods were then explored in detail, examining their rationale and construction. Sampling and survey distribution were next discussed. Finally, methods of data collection and relevant ethical considerations were explained, including statistical tests and scale reliabilities. Hall's professionalism scale was strengthened by substituting Blau's 5-item commitment scale for Hall's 'sense of calling' subscale to improve the overall reliability of the HPS. Only commitment and autonomy achieved reliability out of Hall's subscales. The remaining subscales – public service, profession-as-referent and self-regulation - were dropped from the final analysis. The next chapter moves on to presenting the findings of the quantitative data generated by the main survey.

Chapter 6 - Analysis of Quantitative Findings

6.1 Introduction and Headline Findings

The previous chapter discussed the study's research design, methodological framework and rationale for data collection. This chapter begins with an overview of the headline findings against the six hypotheses tested in this chapter. Following this, an examination of each hypothesis is undertaken. The chapter concludes with a summary of the findings.

HEADLINE FINDINGS:

The reporting of quantitative data is organised around the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Professionalism* will significantly vary with employment contract, education and professional membership

This hypothesis was partially supported. Professionalism was significantly higher for members of professional associations than non-members. There was no main effect of employment, highest educational qualification or teacher certification on professionalism.

Hypothesis 2: Professionalism* will significantly vary with career and employer attitudes

This hypothesis was supported. Professionalism was significantly positively correlated with career intentions and employer and career recommendations. Professionalism was significantly negatively correlated with turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 3: Professionalism* will significantly vary with work status (symbolic capital)

This hypothesis was supported. Professionalism was significantly positively correlated with work status (symbolic capital).

Hypothesis 4: Professionalism* will significantly vary in relation to differences in economic, cultural and social capital

This hypothesis was supported. Economic, cultural and social capital were significant predictors of professionalism.

Hypothesis 5: Professionalism* will significantly vary in relation to structural characteristics of the FE workplace.

This hypothesis was supported. There was a significant effect of job role, trade union membership, internal committee membership, teaching load and 'non-specialist' teaching on professionalism.

Hypothesis 6: Constructions of professionalism will vary with social position in the FE field

This hypothesis was supported. FE staff construct professionalism in one of three main ways: expertise, service or compliance, with preferences dependent on their position in the FE field.

**Professionalism refers to self-ratings on Hall's Professionalism Scale (HPS)*

6.2 Sample Profile

6.2.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Figure 6.1 gives an overview of the sample profile broken down by demographic and occupational characteristics.

Demographic Profile:

A majority of FE respondents were female (65%), white (91%) and aged 45 and over (74%). The gender and ethnicity splits were broadly in line with the national profile (Education & Training Foundation, 2019), but the sample in this study was slightly older (around a fifth report as U35 nationally compared to 8% in this survey (ETF, 2018)).

Respondents were well-educated, with 96% of respondents holding a qualification higher than a Level 3, much higher than the national profile estimate of 79% (ETF, 2019, p51). 84% teachers held a main qualification at Level 6 or higher, approximately 50% higher than national estimations (ETF, 2019, p51).

84% had a recognised *full* teaching qualification (e.g. PGCE, Certificate in Education or Level 5 Diploma), higher than the 66% reported nationally* (ETF, 2017, p29). The number of certified staff rises to 88.4% after including part-qualified. 'Other' teaching qualifications included City & Guilds TLDB awards and university certificates. Only 2% reported no relevant teaching qualification compared to 10% in the FE workforce (ETF, 2019, p52). 9 in 10 respondents had five or more years' experience working in FE; 7 in 10 had ten years or more.

**National estimations vary between 60-80% depending on provider type, sampling frame and whether staff 'working towards qualification' are included (see LLUK, 2011; Hutchinson et al, 2014, ETF, 2015; BIS, 2012).*

Fig. 6.1: Sample Profile

| <i>Demographic Characteristics</i> | | | <i>Occupational Characteristics</i> | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|----------|--|----------|----------|
| <i>Characteristic</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>Characteristic</i> | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> |
| Gender | 346 | | Organisational Tenure | 345 | |
| Male | 117 | 34% | 0-3 years | 56 | 16% |
| Female | 225 | 65% | 4-5 years | 24 | 7% |
| Prefer Not to Say | 4 | 1% | 5-10 years | 123 | 36% |
| Ethnicity | 346 | | 10-15 years | 66 | 19% |
| Non-White | 22 | 6% | 15-20 years | 34 | 10% |
| White | 315 | 91% | 20+ years | 42 | 12% |
| Other | 9 | 3% | FE Setting | 346 | |
| Age | 345 | | GFE & Tertiary Colleges | 292 | 84% |
| U35 | 26 | 8% | Sixth Form Colleges | 22 | 6% |
| 35-44 | 65 | 19% | Adult & Community Provide | 12 | 3% |
| 45-54 | 138 | 40% | Work-based Learning | 8 | 2% |
| 55+ | 116 | 34% | Specialist | 8 | 2% |
| Education | 340 | | Other | 4 | 1% |
| Up to Level 3 | 14 | 4% | Contract Status | 346 | |
| Pre-Degree (Levels 4, 5) | 41 | 12% | Permanent | 312 | 90% |
| Degree (Level 6) | 116 | 34% | Temporary | 34 | 10% |
| Masters (Level 7) | 150 | 44% | Employment Status | 335 | |
| Doctorate (Level 8) | 19 | 6% | Full-time | 228 | 68% |
| Certification (Teaching Qual) | 346 | | Part-time > 0.5 | 76 | 23% |
| Fully-Qualified | 296 | 84% | Part-time < 0.5 | 9 | 3% |
| Partly Qualified | 15 | 4% | Casual & Agency | 22 | 7% |
| None | 5 | 2% | Work Role | 346 | |
| Other | 30 | 10% | Senior Manager | 31 | 9% |
| Experience (in FE) | 346 | | Middle Manager | 69 | 20% |
| 0-4 years | 29 | 8% | Teacher | 225 | 65% |
| 5-9 years | 79 | 23% | Workplace Assessor | 3 | 1% |
| 10-19 years | 151 | 44% | Learning Support | 5 | 1% |
| 20+ years | 87 | 25% | Technician with Teaching | 1 | 0% |
| | | | Trainer/Instructor | 6 | 2% |
| | | | Other | 6 | 2% |
| | | | Teaching on Non-Specialist Area | 378 | |
| | | | Yes | 191 | 51% |
| | | | No | 187 | 49% |
| | | | Teaching Hours | 251 | |
| | | | < 15 hours per week | 84 | 33% |
| | | | > 15 hours per week | 167 | 67% |

Note: Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number

Sample profile is based on the entire respondent set. Sample sizes may therefore be different to those quoted in specific statistical tests

Occupational Profile:

The average tenure of respondents at their main organisation was 124 months, or just over 10 years, ranging from just a few months to more than 20 years. Almost a quarter had 5 years or less; just over a third had between 5 and 10 years; and more than 40% had 10+ years. The majority of respondents (84%) were drawn from General Further Education Colleges and Tertiary Institutions, with the remainder (16%) from sixth form colleges, adult community learning providers, private training providers, offender education and specialist colleges (e.g. land-based, arts, drama), and a small number of independent consultants (not shown). Therefore, this study does not claim to represent the full breadth of FE work.

The vast majority of respondents had permanent contracts (90%) and more than two-thirds of respondents were full-time. Almost two-thirds (65%) of respondents were teachers while just under a third (29%) occupied management positions. This is higher than the national profile (ETF, 2017), but expectedly so, as the study did not include business support staff who represent 15% of all contracts. **Learning support workers, trainers, assessors and technicians with teaching were grouped as 'curriculum support workers' (due to low sample sizes). These roles are linked by their curriculum focus but have a narrower set of curriculum responsibilities than teachers and are usually paid less.*

Approximately half (51%) of respondents claimed to have taught on a programme they felt unqualified to teach, while two-thirds taught more than 15 hours per week.

Professional Memberships:

Staff were asked about their membership of five different work-based organisations: professional bodies, trade unions, external forums, internal committees and work social clubs (see Figure 6.2).

Fig. 6.2: Percentage Membership of Occupational Bodies, Networks or Clubs

| <i>Characteristic</i> | <i>Y</i> | <i>N</i> |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|
| At least one membership | 90% | 10% |
| Professional Body | 44% | 56% |
| TU Membership | 64% | 36% |
| External Forum | 41% | 59% |
| Internal Committee | 34% | 66% |
| Work Social Club | 4% | 96% |

N=400

Coding: Member = 1, Non-Member=0

9 in 10 FE respondents were members of at least one professional group. Less than half of FE respondents (44%) belonged to a professional body, suggesting that these did not play an influential role for most staff. Members of professional bodies had longer tenure ($\chi^2=12.26$, $p=0.031$) and were more highly educated [$\chi^2(4) =12.57$, $p=0.014$] than non-members.

The sample was highly unionised. Almost two-thirds were in a trade union compared to 48% in the wider education sector (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 2019). Significant differences in age [$\chi^2[3] = 13.92$, $p=0.003$], tenure [$\chi^2[5] = 28.54$, $p<0.001$] and job role [$\chi^2[3] = 30.1$, $p<0.001$] were found. There were fewer U35s, new starters and managers amongst members, but higher numbers of older staff (> 45 years), teachers and those of mid-tenure (5-15 years).

Only 4 in 10 respondents were members of external forums or networks. Managers were significantly more likely to attend these than teachers [$\chi^2[3] = 43.96$, $p<0.001$]. Middle managers were over-represented by 60%, and senior managers by almost 65% (against the expected average). Conversely, teachers were under-represented by almost 40%. Attendees were significantly more likely to be full-time than part-time [$\chi^2[3] = 17.57$, $p=0.001$] and on lower weekly teaching loads [$\chi^2[1] = 8.94$, $p=0.003$].

Just over 3 in 10 staff sit on internal committees. Expectedly, managers were over-represented [$\chi^2[3] = 65.39$, $p<0.001$], while those on higher teaching loads [$\chi^2[1] = 12.77$, $p<0.001$] and part-time contracts [$\chi^2[3] = 16.99$, $p=0.001$] were significantly under-represented. Members were better educated [$\chi^2[4] = 12.90$, $p=0.012$] and more experienced [$\chi^2[3] = 10.33$, $p=0.016$]; however, there were no differences in age, tenure or trade union membership with non-members. Few respondents stated they belonged to a work social club.

6.3 Headline Findings – Are FE Staff Highly Professionalised?

6.3.1 PROFESSIONALISM

Professional attitudes for FE staff were higher-than-average (see Figure 6.3) with an overall mean of 3.24 (>midpoint=3). Just over half (53%) scored above the mean. Although this

suggested that FE staff perceived themselves as ‘professional’, it did *not* indicate strong alignment with Hall’s professional model. Given Hall’s assertion that stronger attitudes were correspondent with higher levels of professionalisation, this result offered little compelling evidence that FE staff were highly professionalised.

Fig. 6.3: Professionalism: Headline Data and Skewness Measures

| Measure | N | Mean | SD | Skewness ^a | Kurtosis ^b |
|-------------------|-----|------|-----|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Professionalism | 346 | 3.24 | .45 | -.34 | -.02 |
| <i>Dimensions</i> | | | | | |
| Commitment | 346 | 3.48 | .90 | -.47 | -.17 |
| Autonomy | 346 | 2.96 | .93 | .01 | -.51 |

Note: Mean represents a scale of 1 (low est) to 5 (highest)

^a. Standard error of skewness statistic = 0.13

^b. Standard error of kurtosis statistic = 0.26

Note: Professionalism scores were slightly negatively skewed but fell within accepted parameters for skewness (± 2) and kurtosis (± 3) and meant that the data could be treated as normally distributed (George & Mallery, 2010).

Commitment was the strongest of the five dimensions measured (M=3.48), while autonomy was the weakest (M=2.96). The results for belief in public service (M=3.36), self-regulation (M=3.29) and profession-as-referent (M=3.26) are not reported due to low reliability (Cronbach <0.50).

6.3.2 COMMITMENT

The FE sample has a higher than average commitment (M=3.48, n=324). 65% scored higher than the scale midpoint while more than a quarter (27%) scored below. Closer inspection of the scale’s items, however, reveals a mixed response set (see Figure 6.4).

Fig. 6.4: Response Profiles for FE Staff on the Blau Commitment Scale

Dimension: Commitment

| Question Item | Mean | Agree | Disagree | Neither |
|--|------|-------|----------|---------|
| Q27.5 I am disappointed that I ever entered my profession* | 3.95 | 8% | 74% | 18% |
| Q27.2 I definitely want to make a career in the profession I am in. | 3.73 | 63% | 12% | 35% |
| Q27.4 I like this profession too well to give it up. | 3.45 | 55% | 20% | 25% |
| Q27.3 If I could do it all over again, I would not choose the same profession* | 3.26 | 27% | 50% | 23% |
| Q27.1 If I could go into a profession other than the one I am in and which paid the same I probably would* | 3.01 | 38% | 33% | 29% |

*Items are reverse scored

Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole figure and may not total 100%

Items organised from highest to lowest mean

Almost three-quarters (74%) did not regret entering the FE sector (Q27.5) and just under two-thirds (63%) wanted to develop an FE career (Q27.2). However, just over a half (55%) liked their work enough to stay in their FE post (Q27.4) with almost 2 in 5 (38%) prepared to leave for a better salary (Q27.1). There is no compelling evidence that FE staff exhibited a strong sense of calling, with only half indicating they would make the same career choice again (Q27.3).

6.3.3 AUTONOMY

Autonomy is rated negatively ($M=2.96$, $n=324$). Around a third (35%) believed they worked under autonomous conditions (i.e. scores > 3), while almost 40% stated the opposite. However, item inspection shows variation in responses, with Q26.6 rated more positively than Q26.15 (see Figure 6.5).

Fig. 6.5: Response Profiles for FE Staff on Autonomy Scale

| <i>Dimension: Autonomy</i> | | | | |
|--|------|-------|----------|---------|
| Question Item | Mean | Agree | Disagree | Neither |
| Q26.6 I don't have much opportunity to exercise judgement* | 3.23 | 28% | 47% | 25% |
| Q26.15 I am my own boss in nearly every work-related situation | 2.70 | 30% | 51% | 21% |

*items are reverse scored

Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole figure and may not total 100%

More than a quarter (28%) agreed there was little opportunity to exercise judgement (Q26.6). This rises to 53% who did not disagree. The weakest item was Q26.15 in which less than a third suggested they had full autonomy.

6.3.4 COMPARISON WITH OTHER PROFESSIONS

There is no precedent in FE on which to assess the strength of these attitudes. However, a comparison of means showed that FE professional attitudes were *weaker* than comparable professions measured using the Hall scale (see Figure 6.6).

Fig. 6.6: Comparison of Means for Studies of Professionalism Using Hall's Scale (1976-2016)

| <i>Researchers</i> | <i>Year</i> | <i>Professional Group</i> | <i>Items</i> | <i>Likert Type</i> | <i>Sample</i> | <i>M</i> |
|---|-------------|---|--------------|--------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Plaster, E* | 1979 | Physicians (US) | 25 | 5-point | 10 | 4.15 |
| Loftus, J & Price, K* | 2016 | Police Officers (US) | 10 | 5-point | 278 | 4.09 |
| Hampton, D.L. & Hampton, G.M [†] | 2000 | Nurse-Midwives (US) | 23 | 7-point*** | 654** | 4.01 |
| Mat, N & Zabidi, Z* | 2010 | University lecturers (Malaysia) | 19 | 5-point | 239 | 3.96 |
| Plaster, E* | 1979 | Attorneys/ Lawyers (US) | 25 | 5-point | 11 | 3.67 |
| Plaster, E | 1979 | Teachers-Experienced (US) | 25 | 5-point | 49 | 3.62 |
| Plaster, E* | 1979 | Accountants (US) | 25 | 5-point | 9 | 3.61 |
| Miller, J & Fry, L* | 1976 | Law Enforcement (US) | 25 | 5-point | 136 | 3.55 |
| Plaster, E | 1979 | Teachers-Novices (US) | 25 | 5-point | 33 | 3.51 |
| Wynd, C.A & Gotschall, W. | 2000 | Nurses-Army Reserve (US) | 25 | 5-point | 57 | 3.46 |
| Plaster, E* | 1979 | University lecturers (US) | 25 | 5-point | 13 | 3.45 |
| Carlan, P & Lewis, J* | 2009 | Police Officers (US) | 25 | 5-point | 1114 | 3.44 |
| Schriner, J & Harris, I* | 1984 | Nurse Educators (US) | 25 | 5-point | 387 | 3.42 |
| Schafer, W, Park, LJ & Liao, W* | 2002 | Management Accountants | 20 | 5-point | 319 | 3.42 |
| Bartol, K* | 1979 | Computer Scientists (US) | 20 | 7-point*** | 159 | 3.41 |
| Hausner, J.A. | 2002 | Nursing (US) | 25 | 5-point | 584 | 3.33 |
| Wynd, C.A. | 2003 | Nurses (US) | 25 | 5-point | 774 | 3.33 |
| Chan, A, Chan, E, & Scott, D | 2007 | Architects, Engineers & Surveyors (Mixed) | 25 | 5-point | 510 | 3.32 |
| This study (Blau-Hall) | 2020 | FE Staff | 16 | 5-point | 346 | 3.24 |
| Yang, I, Kim, Y & Kim, K | 2016 | Oncology Nurses (Korea) | 25 | 5-point | 285 | 3.12 |

*means calculated using available data

**sample generated from Table 6, p224

***7-point scales have been adjusted to a 5-point scaling system for comparison

Nineteen studies of occupations measured using Hall's scale carried out between 1976 and 2016 were compared (those that reported mean scores). FE staff were placed second from bottom in this list, below scores for doctors (Plaster, 1979), nurses (Wynd, 2003; Hausner, 2002), university lecturers (Plaster, 1979; Mat & Zabidi, 2010), police officers (Carlan & Lewis, 2009; Loftus & Price, 2016) and accountants (Plaster, 1979). These results (although mainly conducted in the US) indicated that FE staff may be less professionalised than comparable 'professional' occupations.

6.3.5 SUMMARY





FE respondents rated their professionalism positively. However, a mean score only modestly above the scale midpoint suggests these attitudes were not strong. While commitment (the highest of the scale's five dimensions) scored above the scale midpoint, autonomy fell below. Item analysis showed that many staff were not strongly attached to their occupation and did not experience autonomy at work.

6.4 Hypothesis 1: Testing FE Against the Professional Model

Wilensky (1964), and later Hall (1968, 1969), suggested that highly professionalised occupations tended to be full-time, university-educated, linked to active professional associations and bound by a code of ethics. This supposed three groups that should have stronger professional attitudes:

- Full-time staff
- Highly educated/ qualified staff
- Members of professional associations

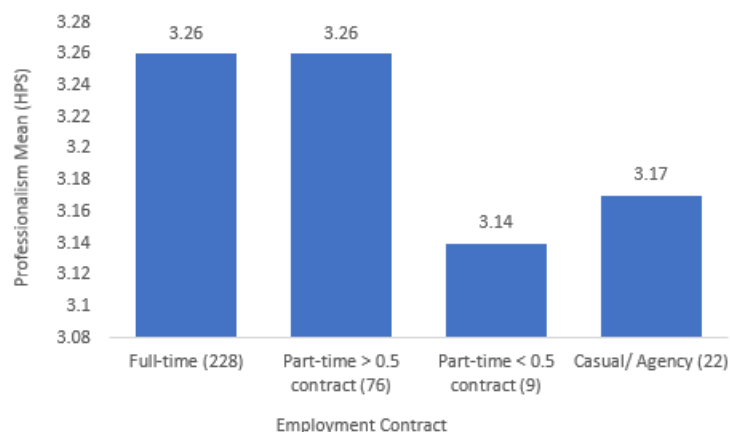
These three groups were tested to establish whether Wilensky's argument applied to FE.

| Employment Contract | Highest Qualification | Teacher Certification | Professional Membership |
|--|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |  |
| Not significant | Not significant | Not significant | Significant |
| x | x | x | ✓ |

6.4.1 EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

Full-time ($M=3.26$) and part-time staff ($M=3.26$) with contracts larger than 0.5 scored higher on the HPS than those on smaller (3.14) and casual/ agency contracts (3.17). However, a one-way ANOVA found these differences were not significant, $F [3, 331] = 0.49, p=0.69$.

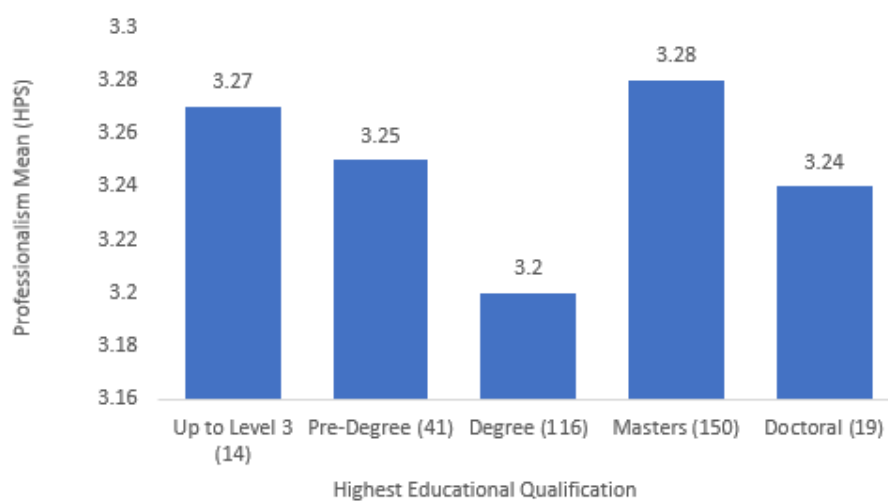
Fig. 6.7: Employment Contract and Professionalism Mean Scores (n=335)



6.4.2 EDUCATION AND TEACHER CERTIFICATION

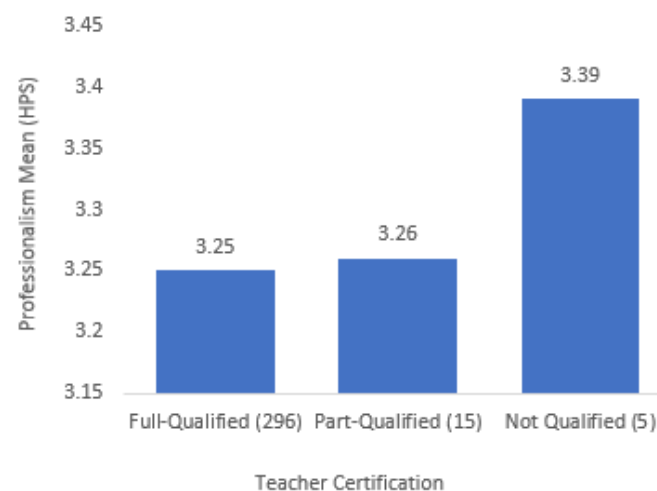
Highest Educational Qualification: There was no obvious link between education and professionalism scores, with a range of 0.08 between the highest and lowest categories. Those with a Masters qualification had the highest scores ($M=3.28$) while those with degrees were lowest ($M=3.20$). A one-way ANOVA confirmed there were no significant differences, $F [4,335] = 0.46$, $p=0.76$.

Fig. 6.8: Highest Qualification and Professionalism Mean Scores (n=340)



If high qualifications supported high professionalism, those with PhDs should be highest on the HPS and those with a Level 3 qualification or below should be lowest. This was *not* the case. The pattern suggested by Wilensky is therefore not supported in this study.

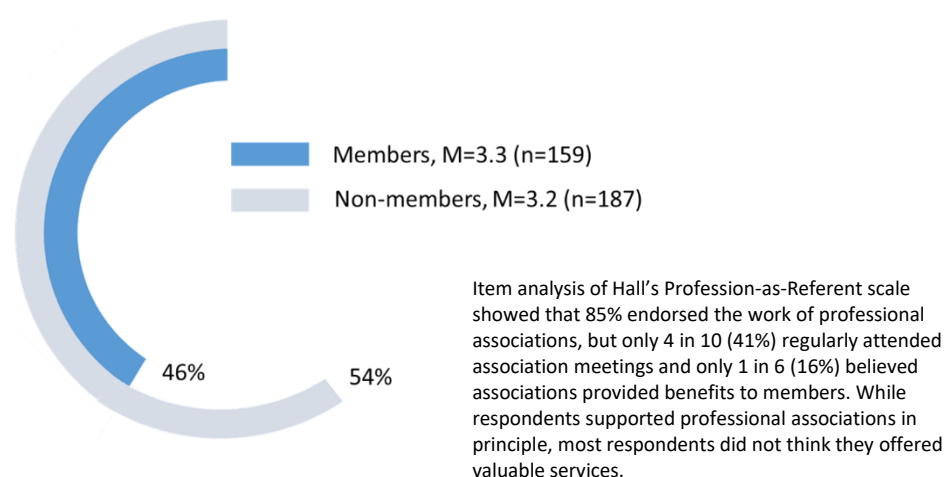
Teacher Certification: In classical professionalism, those who are professionally certified are more likely to have stronger professional attitudes. This result was *not* borne out by the findings. The reverse was found, with unqualified staff expressing the highest HPS scores, and fully-qualified staff the lowest (see Figure 6.9). However, samples sizes in part-time and unqualified groups were small. A one-way ANOVA found these differences were not significant, $F [2, 313] = 0.30$, $p=0.74$.

Fig. 6.9: Teacher Certification and Professionalism Mean Scores (n=340)

*excludes qualifications in 'other' (n=24)

6.4.3 PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Professional Associations: Of the respondents who completed the HPS scale, less than half (46%) belonged to professional associations (see Fig. 6.10). The study did not collect data on which professional associations respondents referred to, so the proportion who belong to an FE professional body maybe even fewer. An independent t-test found the differences in professionalism between members and non-members to be significant, $t(344) = -2.16, p = 0.032$. Members of professional bodies had significantly stronger professional attitudes than non-members.

Fig. 6.10: Professional Body Membership and Professionalism Mean Scores (n=346)

6.4.4 SUMMARY

The professional model drew on Wilensky's view that full-time, qualified staff who were trained in their professional work, and belonged to a professional association, would be expected to

demonstrate stronger professional attitudes. Except professional associations, FE staff who exhibited these properties did *not* have significantly higher HPS scores. While members of a professional body scored significantly higher on the HPS than non-members, this study did not identify which associations respondents belonged to, and so it cannot be asserted that the enhanced HPS scores were the product of an FE membership body.

6.5 Hypothesis 2: Professionalism will significantly vary with career and employer attitudes

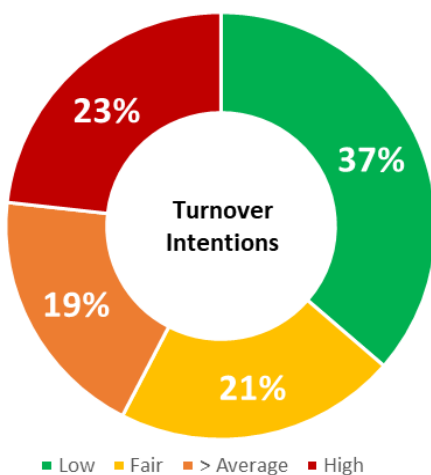
A highly professionalised workforce is likely to show a strong attachment to their career and employer. Hypothesis 2 tested this proposition.

6.5.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Four career attitudes were explored: turnover intentions, career intentions, recommend organisation and recommend career. Descriptive statistics for each variable are presented in Figure 6.11.

Fig. 6.11: Descriptive Statistics for Four Career Attitudes in FE Sample

4 in 10 want to leave their organisation

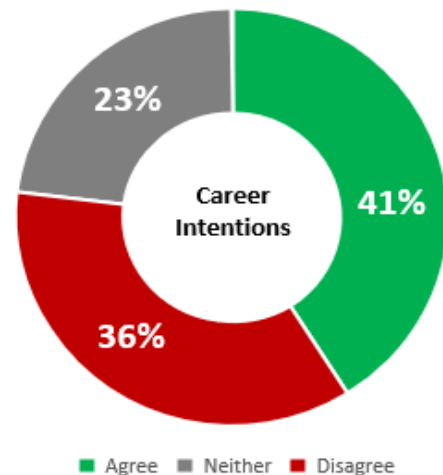


Q Please indicate the extent to which you want to leave your current organisation

N=319

134 staff expressed a strong desire to leave their employer

4 in 10 see themselves working in FE five years from now



Q Can you see yourself working in FE five years from now?

N=337

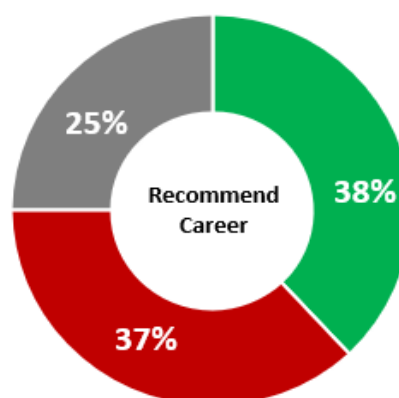
121 staff expected to leave the FE sector within the next five years

4 in 10 would recommend their employer as a positive place to work



■ Agree ■ Neither ■ Disagree

4 in 10 would recommend a career in FE teaching



■ Agree ■ Neither ■ Disagree

Q I would recommend my organisation as a place of work

N=334

214 staff would *not* positively endorse their employer as a place of work

Q I would recommend a career as a FE teacher to others

N=333

206 staff do *not* positively endorse a career as an FE teacher to outsiders

In rounding figures, percentages may not total 100%

Coding: Turnover Intentions (1=Want to stay, 100=Want to leave, reported by quartiles); career intentions (1=Leave, 5=Stay); recommend organisation (1=do not recommend, 5=highly recommend); recommend career (1=do not recommend, 5=highly recommend)
Likert scoring: 1+2 = % negative; 3 = % neutral; 4+5 = % positive

Summary of Profile

Approximately 4 in 10 showed a strong inclination to stay with their employer, while another 4 in 10 expressed a desire to leave (including a minor number who were changing jobs). Similarly, only 4 in 10 individuals suggested they would stay in their careers in the next five years, while over a third expected to leave their career altogether. Just over a third recommended their employer as a place of work and recommended a career in FE teaching. These results do not show an occupational group that is strongly attached to their occupation or employer.

6.5.2 INFERENCEAL STATISTICS

To test the relationships between professionalism and each of the career variables, Pearson’s *r* correlations were performed (see Figure 6.12)

Fig. 6.12: Inter-Correlation Matrix: Professionalism, Subscales and Career Variables

| Variable | PROF | COMM | AUT | TURN | CAR | REC ORG | REC CAR |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------|
| Professionalism | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| Commitment | N/A | 1.00 | | | | | |
| Autonomy | N/A | 0.35** | 1.00 | | | | |
| Turnover Intentions | -0.53** | -0.59** | -0.42** | 1.00 | | | |
| Career Intentions | 0.43** | 0.54** | 0.21** | -0.54** | 1.00 | | |
| Recommend ORG | 0.56** | 0.48** | 0.39** | -0.59** | 0.47** | 1.00 | |
| Recommend Career | 0.55** | 0.57** | 0.34** | -0.45** | 0.45** | 0.56** | 1.00 |

N = 333-346, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01

turnover intentions (1 = stay, 100 = leave); career intentions (1=leave, 5= stay); recommend organisation (1=low , 5=high); recommend career (1=low , 5=high);

All four outcome variables were highly correlated with professionalism, commitment and autonomy ($p<0.01$). The size of these correlation coefficients suggest professionalism is a *substantial* influence on the formation of attitudes towards one's employer and career. **These findings support Hypothesis 2.** Employer recommendation is significantly related to an individuals' desire to remain in the sector ($r=0.47$, $p<0.01$) and likelihood of recommending a career in FE teaching ($r=0.56$, $p<0.01$). This suggests that what happens inside FE institutions is linked to the attractiveness of FE as a career.

Linear regression analysis established that professionalism was a significant predictor of turnover intentions ($R^2=0.28$, $p<0.001$), career intentions ($R^2=0.19$, $p<0.001$), employer recommendation ($R^2=0.31$, $p<0.001$) and career recommendation ($R^2=0.31$, $p<0.001$) (see Figure 6.13). This suggests that supporting professionalism is likely to strengthen the bond between employee and employer and decrease the likelihood of exiting the FE sector.

Commitment was also a significant predictor of turnover intentions ($R^2=0.35$, $p<0.01$), career intentions ($R^2=0.29$, $p<0.01$), employer recommendation ($R^2=0.23$, $p<0.01$) and career recommendation ($R^2=0.32$, $p<0.01$). Likewise, autonomy was a significant predictor of turnover intentions ($R^2=0.18$, $p<0.01$), career intentions ($R^2=0.04$, $p<0.01$), employer recommendation ($R^2=0.15$, $p<0.01$) and career recommendation ($R^2=0.11$, $p<0.01$). While commitment tends to be the strongest predictor of respondents' career attitudes, autonomy has the biggest impact on intentions to leave FE.

Fig. 6.13: Multiple Regression Analysis for Professionalism and Career Variables

| | TURN | | CAR | | REC ORG | | REC CAR | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| | β | <i>t</i> | β | <i>t</i> | β | <i>t</i> | β | <i>t</i> |
| Professionalism | -41.3 | -11.22** | 1.20 | 8.80** | 1.48 | 12.23** | 1.45 | 12.04** |
| Constant | 181.47** | | -0.85 | | -1.86** | | -1.75** | |
| <i>R</i> | 0.53 | | 0.43 | | 0.56 | | 0.55 | |
| <i>R</i> ² | 0.28 | | 0.19 | | 0.31 | | 0.31 | |
| <i>F</i> | 125.87** | | 77.48** | | 149.52** | | 144.94** | |
| Commitment | -0.59 | -12.93** | 0.75 | 11.69** | 0.63 | 9.84** | 0.75 | 12.59** |
| Constant | 127.04** | | 0.45 | | 0.75** | | 0.33** | |
| <i>R</i> | 0.59 | | 0.54 | | 0.48 | | 0.57 | |
| <i>R</i> ² | 0.35 | | 0.29 | | 0.23 | | 0.32 | |
| <i>F</i> | 167.15** | | 136.63** | | 96.87** | | 158.39** | |
| Autonomy | -15.79 | -16.01** | 0.29 | 3.91** | 0.51 | 7.77** | 0.44 | 6.53** |
| Constant | 94.54** | | 9.85** | | 1.44** | | 1.65** | |
| <i>R</i> | 0.42 | | 0.21 | | 0.39 | | 0.34 | |
| <i>R</i> ² | 0.18 | | 0.04 | | 0.15 | | 0.11 | |
| <i>F</i> | 68.35** | | 15.31** | | 60.37** | | 42.61** | |

N = 333-346, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01

Professionalism (1=low, 5=high); commitment (1=low, 5=high); autonomy (1=low, 5=high);

turnover intentions (1 =stay, 100 =leave); career intentions (1=leave, 5=stay); recommend organisation (1=low, 5=high);

recommend career (1=low, 5=high)

6.5.3 SUMMARY

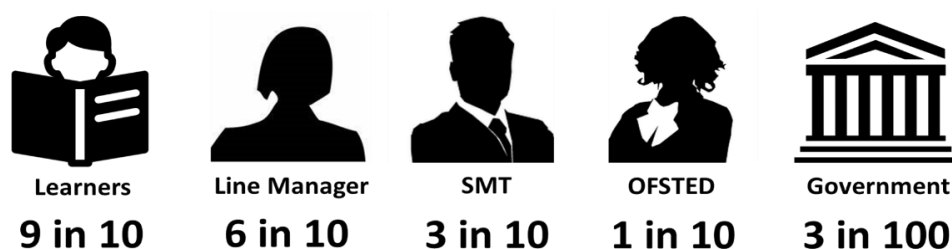
Professionalism was significantly associated with key career variables and is a barometer for the quality of attachment between individual, employer and career. High professionalism indicated a strong attachment, while low professionalism pointed to a weakened attachment.

Commitment was a significant predictor of attitudes towards employer and occupation; high commitment increases positive attitudes towards both and decreases turnover intentions; low commitment was significantly associated with a desire to leave FE employment. Conditions of high autonomy were significantly more likely to strengthen employer attachment and commitment to one's career, while low autonomy significantly increased the desire to quit FE.

6.6 Hypothesis 3: Professionalism will significantly vary with work status (symbolic capital)

Respondents answered 9 questions on the extent they felt valued at work by different stakeholders (see Figure 6.14).

6.6.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS



Who do you feel valued by?

*rounded up to the nearest 10

Fig. 6.14: Mean Scores for Work Status Items

| Status Items | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Agree</i> | <i>Disagree</i> |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-----------------|
| I feel valued by: | | | | |
| All | 3.29 | 0.54 | | |
| Learners | 4.27 | 0.72 | 89% | 2% |
| Full-time Colleagues | 4.12 | 0.79 | 86% | 4% |
| Part-time Colleagues | 4.09 | 0.83 | 83% | 5% |
| Support Colleagues | 3.85 | 0.88 | 72% | 6% |
| Line Managers | 3.62 | 1.29 | 64% | 22% |
| General Public | 2.90 | 0.92 | 23% | 30% |
| Senior Managers | 2.56 | 1.30 | 27% | 51% |
| OFSTED | 2.36 | 1.02 | 14% | 53% |
| Government | 1.70 | 0.85 | 3% | 81% |

N=310-335

Coding (1=Strongly Disagree, 5 Strongly Agree); (% Disagree = 1+2, % Disagree = 4+5)

FE respondents felt most valued by learners, with almost 9 in 10 agreeing this. More than 8 in 10 felt valued by curriculum colleagues (full-time, part-time), while almost two-thirds confirmed they were valued by line managers. Conversely, 8 in 10 did not believe government valued their work, while over 5 in 10 respondents did not feel valued by OFSTED or senior managers. Less than a quarter believed their work was positively valued by the general public. Overall, a majority of FE staff felt under-recognised by senior teams, external regulators and ministers, and indicated concern with FE's public reputation.

6.6.2 INFERENCE STATISTICS

Bivariate analysis (see Figure 6.15) confirmed a significant positive correlation between professionalism and work status ($r=0.54$, $p<0.01$). **This supports Hypothesis 3.**

Fig. 6.15: Pearson's Moment Coefficients for Professionalism and Work Status

| Item | PROF | COMM | AUT |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Symbolic Capital (Mean) | 0.54** | 0.46** | 0.23** |
| 35.1 I feel valued by senior managers | 0.49** | 0.42** | 0.18** |
| 35.2 I feel valued by my line manager | 0.41** | 0.37** | 0.23** |
| 35.3 I feel valued by my full-time colleagues | 0.22** | 0.17** | 0.17** |
| 35.4 I feel valued by my part-time colleagues | 0.20** | 0.10 | 0.18** |
| 35.5 I feel valued by support staff colleagues | 0.28** | 0.21** | 0.12* |
| 35.6 I feel valued by my learners | 0.20** | 0.21** | 0.05 |
| 35.7 I feel valued by the general public | 0.26** | 0.17** | 0.03 |
| 35.8 I feel valued by Government | 0.21** | 0.21** | 0.03 |
| 35.9 I feel valued by OFSTED | 0.25** | 0.22** | 0.07 |

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Coding: Questions 35.1 to 35.9 (1=not valued, 5=highly valued)

The two strongest correlations with professionalism were items 35.1 (feeling valued by senior managers, $r=0.49$, $p<0.01$) and 35.2 (feeling valued by line managers, $r=0.41$, $p<0.01$). These items have the highest correlations with commitment ($r=0.42$, $p<0.01$; $r=0.37$, $p<0.01$) and autonomy ($r=0.18$, $p<0.01$; $r=0.23$, $p<0.01$). Being valued by managers has substantially positive implications for improving professionalism.

6.6.3 SUMMARY

Professionalism was significantly positively correlated with work status (symbolic capital). Respondents felt valued most by learners and colleagues, but least by government and OFSTED. FE staff also felt undervalued by the public which may be suggestive of a negative media image, though this was not explored further. The data implicates management practices in the experience of professionalism (see Chapter 7). While almost two-thirds of respondents believed they were valued by line managers, over half of respondents did not believe they were valued by SMT. It suggested SMT and line managers had a discrete impact on practitioners at work.

6.7 Hypothesis 4: Professionalism will significantly vary in relation to differences in capital

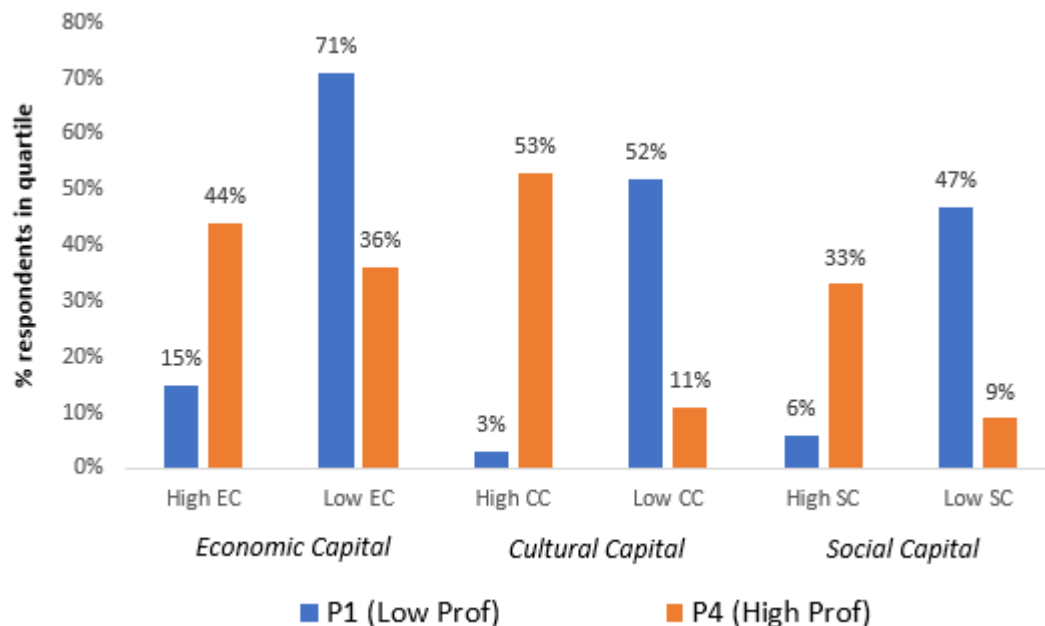
This hypothesis identifies relationships between professionalism and capital. In line with Bourdieu's (1984) predictions, it investigates two propositions:

1. That professionalism will increase with higher *volumes* of capital
2. That professionalism will vary with the *structure* of capital.

6.7.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS – VOLUME OF CAPITAL

Figure 6.16 presents the distribution of high and low capital holders (economic, cultural, social) across highest (P4) and lowest (P1) quartiles on the HPS. For example, under 'economic capital', while only 15% of respondents in P1 believed they were fairly paid, this rose to 44% for respondents in P4, almost three times the number.

Fig. 6.16: Distribution of High and Low Capitals Across Lowest (P1) and Highest (P4) Professionalism Quartiles



Twice the number of respondents in P1 believed they were *unfairly* paid (economic capital) as those in P4. Almost five times the number in P1 expressed negative views about professional learning opportunities (cultural capital) and work relationships (social capital) than in P4. The greatest differences between P1s and P4s related to volumes of cultural capital. Those with

high cultural capital were almost 18 times more likely to be in P4 than P1. These results suggested that education and learning opportunities were major influencers on the experience of professionalism. The distribution of capital is consistent with the argument that high professionalism (P4) is associated with higher stocks of economic, cultural and social capital.

6.7.2 INFERENCE STATISTICS - VOLUME OF CAPITAL (ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, SOCIAL)

Pearson's R correlations and binomial regression analysis were used to test the effects of volume of capital on professionalism.

Correlational Analysis - Capital and Professionalism

Bivariate analysis (see Figure 6.17) confirmed significant positive correlations between professionalism and measures of economic ($r=0.29$, $p<0.01$), cultural ($r=0.45$, $p<0.01$), social ($r=0.45$, $p<0.01$) and symbolic capital ($r=0.54$, $p<0.01$). **This supports Hypothesis 4 that professionalism significantly varies with differences in capital.**

Fig. 6.17: Pearson's Moment Correlations for Professionalism, Subscales and Capital (Means)

| Capital | PROF | COMM | AUT |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Economic Capital | 0.29** | 0.29** | 0.12* |
| Cultural Capital | 0.45** | 0.34** | 0.25** |
| Social Capital | 0.45** | 0.36** | 0.30** |
| Symbolic Capital (Status) | 0.54** | 0.46** | 0.23** |

N=337 to 346, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Coding: Economic capital (1=low, 5=high); cultural capital (converted to Z scores);

Social capital (1=low, 5=high); symbolic capital (1=low, 5=high)

All four capitals were significantly positively associated with professionalism, commitment and autonomy ($p<0.01$). Cultural and social capital had high coefficients and indicated a stronger association with professionalism than economic capital. Higher volumes of capital were also associated with higher commitment and autonomy.

Regression Analysis – Capital and Professionalism

A binary logistic (binomial) regression analysis was used to assess the relative contribution of each capital (economic, cultural, social) on the odds of scoring high/ low professionalism

(defined as above/ below the HPS mean). Symbolic capital is not included as it is a form of converted capital. As in Pinxten & Lievens (2014) and Paccoud et al (2020), capital variables were added in simultaneously into the regression (see Figure 6.18).

All three capitals significantly increased the likelihood of scoring high professionalism. Cultural capital had the largest impact (OR = 3.27, 95% CI = 1.84-5.79), increasing the odds of 'high' professionalism by more than three times. In comparison, social capital increased the odds by 86% (OR=1.86, CI = 1.40-2.50). For economic capital, the value was 31% (OR=1.31, CI = 1.10-1.70). This confirmed that volumes of cultural capital have the highest effects on professionalism, while economic capital had the lowest.

Fig. 6.18: Associations of Economic, Cultural and Social Capital on Professionalism (HPS)

| | Types of capitals | | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| | <i>Economic capital</i> | | <i>Cultural capital</i> | | <i>Social capital</i> | |
| | <i>OR</i> | <i>95% CI</i> | <i>OR</i> | <i>95% CI</i> | <i>OR</i> | <i>95% CI</i> |
| Professionalism | 1.31* | (1.01, 1.70) | 3.27** | (1.84, 5.79) | 1.86** | (1.4, 2.50) |
| Commitment | 1.36* | (1.06, 1.74) | 1.99** | (1.18, 3.36) | 1.49** | (1.14, 1.95) |
| Autonomy | 1.23 | (0.95, 1.59) | 1.57 | (0.90, 2.72) | 2.19** | (1.58, 3.04) |

N=342, *p<0.05; **p<0.01)

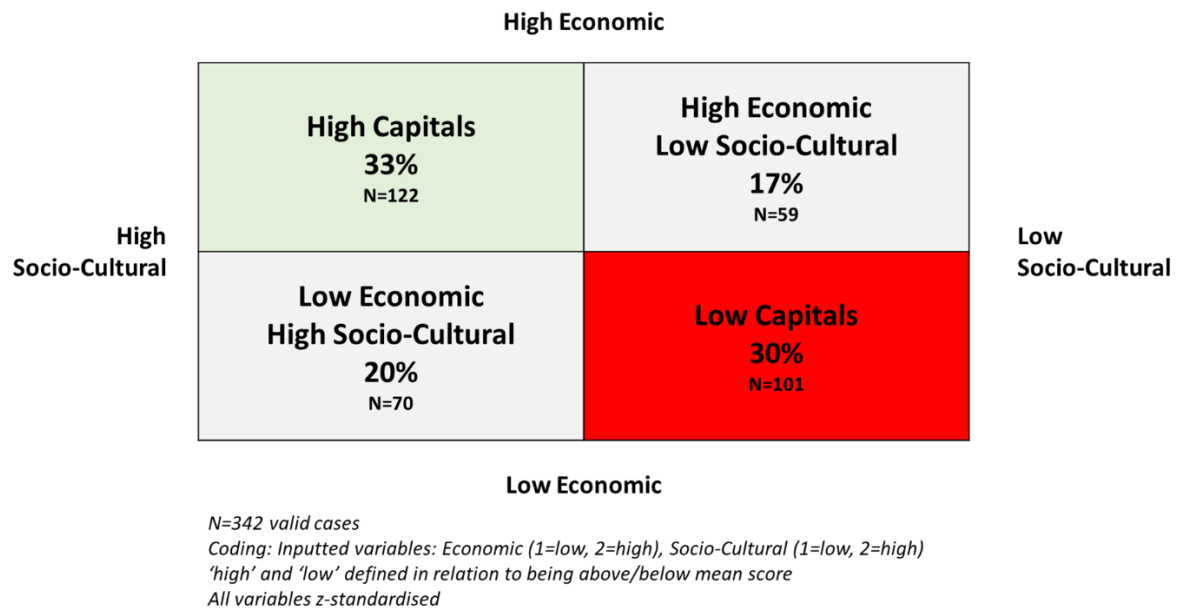
Coding: Professionalism (1=Low, 2=High); Commitment (1=Low, 2=High); Autonomy (1=Low, 2=High)

Economic, Cultural and Social capital were z-standardised

Binary logistic regression

6.7.3 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS - STRUCTURE OF CAPITAL (ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, SOCIAL)

A K-cluster analysis (with squared Euclidean distance and Ward's algorithm) was used to classify individuals according to the type of capital they possessed. This assigned individuals to clusters based on combinations of high or low capitals. To ensure comparability between scales, capital variables were z-standardised. Following Paccoud et al (2020), which drew on Bourdieu's distinction between material (economic) and non-material (social and cultural, called socio-cultural capital), four clusters were created (see Figure 6.19 and 6.20).

Fig. 6.19: Four Clusters Based on Combinations of Economic and Socio-Cultural Capital

The structure of capital varied across the sample. A third of respondents score highly on all three capitals (economic, cultural, social). Another third had low capital, leaving a final third with mixed levels of economic and socio-cultural capital. The implications of these divisions in capital are considered in section 6.7.4.

Fig. 6.20: Means and Standard Deviations of Z-standardised Capitals for the Four Capital Structures

| Cluster | | Cluster 1 (112) | | Cluster 2 (101) | | Cluster 3 (59) | | Cluster 4 (70) | |
|------------------|--|---|------|--|------|---|------|---|------|
| | | <i>High economic, cultural and social capital</i> | | <i>Low economic, cultural and social capital</i> | | <i>High economic, low cultural and social capital</i> | | <i>Low economic, high cultural and social capital</i> | |
| | | M | SD | M | SD | M | SD | M | SD |
| Economic capital | | 0.90 | 0.58 | -0.94 | 0.41 | 0.70 | 0.46 | -0.81 | 0.37 |
| Cultural capital | | 0.36 | 0.37 | -0.38 | 0.43 | -0.26 | 0.39 | 0.17 | 0.44 |
| Social capital | | 0.72 | 0.48 | -0.97 | 0.83 | -0.54 | 0.65 | 0.69 | 0.52 |

Clusters - coding: socio-cultural capital = average z-mean of z-standardised social and cultural capital scales

K-cluster method in SPSSv22

6.7.4 INFERENCE STATISTICS - STRUCTURE OF CAPITAL (ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, SOCIAL)

Figure 6.21 presents the results of the multinomial regression analysis of the likelihood of each cluster's association with 'high' HPS scores, and two subscales. The regression is suitable for dependent variables with more than two nominal categories.

Fig. 6.21: Multinomial Regression Analysis of Professionalism and Four Capital Structures

| | Capital Structure (ref category = low volume of ALL capitals) | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---------------|---|---------------|--|---------------|
| | <i>High volume of all capitals</i> | | <i>High economic, low social/cultural capital</i> | | <i>Low economic high social/cultural capital</i> | |
| | <i>OR</i> | <i>95% CI</i> | <i>OR</i> | <i>95% CI</i> | <i>OR</i> | <i>95% CI</i> |
| Professionalism | 4.62** | (3.12, 6.82) | 1.29 | (0.91, 1.83) | 2.29** | (1.59, 3.30) |
| Commitment | 2.75** | (1.90, 3.98) | 1.20 | (0.85, 1.68) | 1.56** | (1.10, 2.21) |
| Autonomy | 2.94** | (2.03, 4.26) | 1.40 | (0.97, 2.03) | 2.18** | (1.50, 3.16) |

Coding: Professionalism (1=low, 5=high), Commitment (1=low, 5=high); Autonomy (1=low, 5=high), all predictor variables = z standardised Capital Structure (1=High capital; 2=low capital; 3=high economic, low social/cultural; 4=low economic, high social/cultural 95% confidence intervals from multinomial logistic regression

High capital* produced the greatest gains in professionalism. Compared to those with low capital, high capital holders were almost 5 times more likely to score 'high' professionalism (OR=4.62, CI = 3.12, 6.82). Those with low economic capital and high socio-cultural capital were more than twice as likely to score 'high' professionalism (OR=2.29, CI=1.59-3.30). The odds reduce for those with high economic, low socio-cultural capital, but were still 29% more likely to score 'high' professionalism than those of low capital (OR=1.29, CI=0.91-1.83). While increases in professionalism are achieved with increases in one or more capitals, socio-cultural capital appears to have a stronger effect than economic capital. High capital increased the odds of higher commitment and autonomy by almost 3 times. These gains appear to be mostly from increases in socio-cultural capital.

**What is measured is perceived capital*

6.7.5 SUMMARY

Professionalism (HPS scores) was significantly positively correlated with (perceived) economic, cultural and social capital and all capitals were significant predictors of professionalism. Results

indicate that professionalism was related to the *volume* of capital. Cultural capital was the strongest predictor of professionalism, increasing the odds of high scores by more than three times. All three capitals were significantly correlated with commitment and autonomy. Having high volumes of economic and socio-cultural capital increased the odds of high HPS scores by almost 5 times compared to low capital holders. High socio-cultural capital has much higher effects on professionalism, commitment and autonomy than high economic capital. Not only does this suggest that professionalism is also related to the *structure* of capital but focusing on improving socio-cultural capital is likely to be an effective strategy for improving professionalism.

6.8 Hypothesis 5: Professionalism will significantly vary in relation to the structural characteristics of the FE workplace

Hypothesis 5 investigated the effect of 18 structural factors on HPS scores. Structural factors incorporated:

- *6 demographic variables* (gender, ethnicity, age, experience, education, teacher certification)
- *12 occupational variables* (tenure, FE setting, contract type, employment type, job role, teaching load, teaching on non-specialist subjects, professional body membership, trade union membership, external forum membership, internal committee membership, work club membership).

6.8.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS - STRUCTURAL VARIABLES

Figure 6.22 presents the ten highest and lowest mean HPS scores across the 18 structural variables.

Fig. 6.22: Highest and Lowest HPS Scores for FE Structure

| <i>Top Ten Structural Factors</i> | | | <i>Bottom Ten Structural Factors</i> | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|--------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| <i>Characteristic</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Characteristic</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| Senior Manager | 3.66 | 0.40 | Teacher | 3.17 | 0.43 |
| Specialist Providers | 3.51 | 0.41 | Male | 3.15 | 0.42 |
| Sixth Forms | 3.47 | 0.40 | 45-54 | 3.14 | 0.46 |
| Work Club Member - Yes | 3.47 | 0.31 | Temporary Contracts | 3.14 | 0.45 |
| 20 years' tenure | 3.42 | 0.41 | Part-time contracts <0.5 | 3.14 | 0.41 |
| Internal Committee Member - Yes | 3.41 | 0.45 | 5-9 years' experience | 3.13 | 0.40 |
| Learning Support | 3.40 | 0.45 | Teaching Loads>15 hours/ week | 3.13 | 0.45 |
| Teacher Certification: Not Qualified | 3.39 | 0.33 | 4-5 years tenure | 3.08 | 0.5 |
| Trade Union - No | 3.39 | 0.40 | Adult & Community Providers | 3.08 | 0.39 |
| 20+ years' experience | 3.37 | 0.44 | Workplace Assessor | 3.02 | 0.63 |

Top Ten Structural Factors

Senior Managers had the highest HPS scores (M=3.66, n=31). At the other end of the job hierarchy, learning support workers also scored highly (M=3.40, n=4). Specialist providers and Sixth Forms, which occupy niche corners in the FE market, had the highest HPS scores of the major FE settings (M=3.51, M=3.47). Membership of work clubs (M=3.47) and internal committees (M=3.41) were also high scorers, as were those with the longest experience (M=3.37) and organisational tenure (M=3.42). Trade union membership had a negative impact on professionalism (M=3.39 for non-members vs M=3.17 for members). As discussed in section 6.4.2, uncertified respondents had higher HPS scores than fully certified respondents (M=3.39 vs M=3.25).

Bottom Ten Structural Factors

The weakest professional attitudes were expressed by workplace assessors (M=3.08) though the sample was small (n=3). Also found in the bottom ten were teachers (M=3.17), with lower scores coming from those on higher teaching loads (M=3.13). Staff on temporary contracts (M=3.14), part-time contracts <0.5 fraction (M=3.14) and casual & agency contracts (M=3.17, not shown) suggested that less substantial and less secure contracts negatively affected self-ratings. Males (M=3.15), those aged 45-54 years (M=3.14) and those in mid-career (5-9 years,

M=3.13) were also low scorers, as were respondents with 4-5 years' tenure (M= 3.08). Adult & Community providers (M=3.08) had the lowest scores of the major FE settings investigated.

The following inferential analysis does not explore these rankings (which lies outside the scope of this thesis), and instead restricts the analysis to the outputs of the stepwise regression analysis (section 6.8.2).

6.8.2 INFERENCE STATISTICS - STRUCTURAL VARIABLES

Stepwise Analysis

All eighteen structural variables were entered into a stepwise regression model to identify variables that significantly predict respondents' HPS scores. Stepwise regression is useful when there are many predictor variables. Variables are automatically entered in sequence and retained in the model if they achieve significance (see Figure 6.23).

Fig. 6.23: Results of the Stepwise Regression Analysis of 18 Structural Variables on Professionalism (HPS)

| Structural Variable | β | SE B | Beta | <i>t</i> | <i>p</i> |
|----------------------------------|---------|------|-------|----------------|----------|
| Job Role | 0.11 | 0.04 | 0.19 | 3.10* | 0.002 |
| Internal Committee Membership | 0.17 | 0.05 | 0.18 | 3.16** | 0.002 |
| Trade Union Membership | -0.12 | 0.05 | -0.12 | -2.27* | 0.025 |
| Weekly Teaching Hours | -0.04 | 0.02 | -0.14 | -2.17* | 0.028 |
| Non-Specialist teaching (counts) | -0.04 | 0.02 | -0.11 | -2.08* | 0.035 |
| Constant | | | | 18.51** | |
| <i>R</i> | | | 0.45 | | |
| <i>R</i> ² | | | 0.20 | | |
| <i>Adjusted R</i> ² | | | 0.19 | | |
| <i>F</i> | | | | 14.50** | |

N=291, **p*<0.05, ***p*<0.01

Professionalism (1=low , 5=high);

job role (4=SMT, 3=MM, 2=Teacher, 1=curriculum support); trade union membership (1=yes, 0=no);

internal committee membership (1=yes, 0=no); weekly teaching hrs (1<15 hours; 2=>15 hours);

non-specialist (0=low , 7=high)

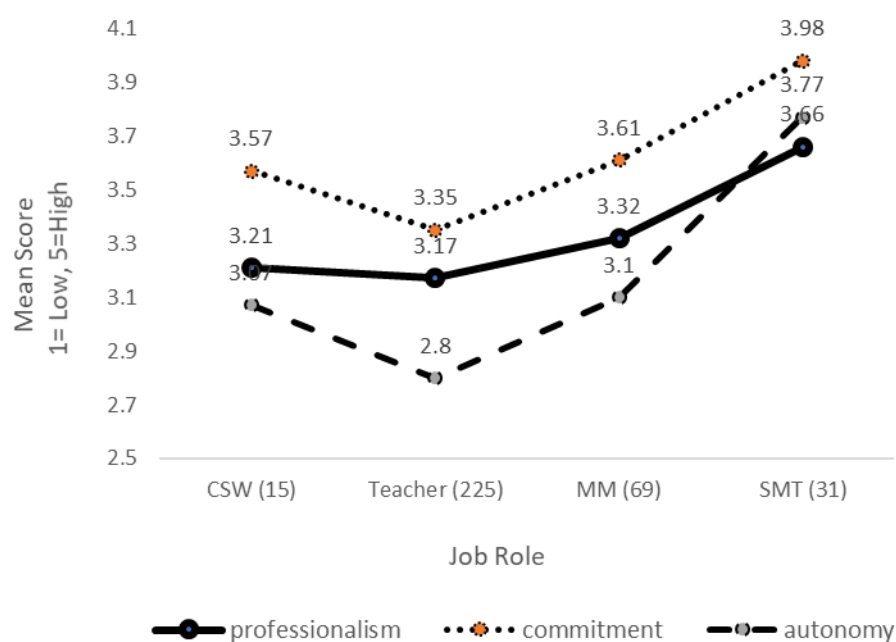
Five structural factors were significant predictors of professionalism: Job role, committee membership, trade union membership, weekly teaching hours and non-specialist teaching [F = 14.50, Adjusted R² = 0.20, *p*<0.01], accounting for 20% variance. **This supported Hypothesis 5.**

Job role had the highest predictive power, followed by committee membership, with both positively related to HPS scores. Trade union membership, high weekly teaching loads and higher frequency of non-specialist teaching had negative effects on HPS scores.

6.8.3 JOB ROLE, PROFESSIONALISM AND CAPITAL

Figure 6.24 illustrates professionalism, commitment and autonomy scores for job role, and shows that teachers scored lowest, while SMT scored the highest.

Fig. 6.24: Job Role and Mean Scores for Professionalism (HPS), Commitment and Autonomy



A one-way ANOVA showed that these differences were significant (Figure 6.25), for professionalism $F [3, 336] = 13.04, p < 0.001$; for commitment, $F [3, 336] = 5.54, p < 0.001$; and for autonomy, $F [3, 336] = 12.34, p < 0.001$. The size of these effects suggests that job role has a more profound effect on autonomy than commitment. Post-tukey tests found that SMT scored significantly higher on professionalism than teachers ($p < 0.001$), CSWs ($p = 0.005$) and middle managers ($p = 0.002$); significantly higher on commitment than teachers ($p = 0.01$) and significantly higher on autonomy than teachers ($p < 0.001$) and middle managers ($p = 0.002$)

Fig. 6.25: ANOVA Results for Job Role: Professionalism, Commitment & Autonomy

| | PROF | COMM | AUT |
|----------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Job Role | 13.04** | 5.54** | 12.34** |

N=340, *p<0.05, **p<0.01

Coding: (1=Curriculum support worker, 2=Teacher, 3=Middle Manager, 4=Senior Manager)

Figure 6.26 confirms a higher percentage of managers in quartiles 3 and 4 (higher professionalism) than non-managers.

Fig. 6.26: Job Role and % Proportions in Professionalism Quartiles (HPS)

| | Professionalism Quartiles | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| | P1 | P2 | P3 | P4 |
| CSW (n=15) | 33% | 27% | 20% | 20% |
| Teacher (n=225) | 30% | 30% | 25% | 16% |
| Middle Manager (n=69) | 17% | 30% | 17% | 35% |
| Senior Manager (n=31) | 6% | 3% | 35% | 55% |

Rounding up means % may not add up to 100

3 in 10 teachers were in the lowest quartile (P1). This is five times the proportion of senior managers and almost twice the proportion of middle managers. A third of CSWs, albeit a small group, were in P1. In contrast, 1 in 6 teachers were in the highest quartile (P4) compared to 1 in 3 middle managers and 1 in 2 senior managers. Those in management ranks have significantly stronger professional attitudes than non-managers.

Job Role and Volume of Capital

Using SMT as the reference category, a multinomial regression was carried out and found that job role significantly predicted the odds of scoring high economic and cultural capital (see Figure 6.27). Teachers were one third as likely as SMT to rate their pay as fair (OR=0.33, CI 0.20-0.56). They were five times less likely than SMT to rate their education and learning environment at work as positive (OR=0.20, CI 0.07, 0.61, p<0.01). For CSWs, the learning climate (cultural capital) is much worse, around one twentieth as likely as SMT to rate this highly (OR=0.06, CI 0.01, 0.30, p<0.01). Middle managers significantly differed from SMT on economic capital only, around half as likely to rate their pay as fair (OR=0.45, CI 0.26-0.78, p<0.01).

Fig. 6.27: Multinomial Regression Analysis for Job Role and Professionalism

Types of capitals, Ref Category = Senior Manager

| | <i>Economic Capital</i> | | <i>Cultural Capital</i> | | <i>Social Capital</i> | |
|----------------|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| | <i>OR</i> | <i>95% CI</i> | <i>OR</i> | <i>95% CI</i> | <i>OR</i> | <i>95% CI</i> |
| CSW | 0.34** | (0.16, 0.74) | 0.06** | (0.01, 0.30) | 1.07 | (0.47, 2.45) |
| Teacher | 0.33** | (0.20, 0.56) | 0.20** | (0.07, 0.61) | 0.83 | (0.45, 2.45) |
| Middle Manager | 0.45** | (0.26, 0.78) | 0.45 | (0.14, 1.45) | 0.92 | (0.48, 1.78) |

N=336 valid cases, *p<0.05, **p<0.01

Coding: (1=Curriculum support worker, 2=Teacher, 3=Middle Manager, 4=Senior Manager)

Economic, Cultural and Social capital were z-standardised

Multinomial distribution

Inspection of correlation coefficients across the four capital scales identified the following five items with the strongest relationships with professionalism (see Figure 6.28). These items all referred to *management*.

Fig. 6.28: The Top Five Capital Variables and Professionalism

| Top 5 Capital Items | PROF |
|--|--------|
| I feel valued by Senior Managers ^a | 0.49** |
| I am regularly consulted about my CPD needs ^a | 0.47** |
| My CPD needs are taken seriously by my line manager ^a | 0.46** |
| We can trust our supervisor ^b | 0.43** |
| I feel valued by my line manager ^a | 0.41** |

N=310 to 346, *p<0.05, **p<0.01

^a Coding (1=Strongly Disagree, 5 Strongly Agree)^b Coding (1=Fully Disagree, 5 = Fully Agree)

The strongest relationship with professionalism was the degree to which respondents felt valued by senior managers ($r=0.49$, $p<0.01$). The importance of 'being valued' (or recognition) reinforces this thesis's conceptualisation of professionalism as a form of symbolic capital. Being consulted on CPD needs ($r=0.47$, $p<0.01$) and having these needs taken seriously by line managers ($r=0.46$, $p<0.01$) underlined the importance of cultural capital. Trust in line managers and being valued by them indicated the importance of *vertical* social capital effects ($r=0.43$, $p<0.01$; $r=0.41$, $p<0.01$).

One-way ANOVAs confirmed that all five variables significantly differentiated those in the highest (P4) from the lowest(P1) quartiles ($p<0.001$).

6.8.4 COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP, TRADE UNIONISM, TEACHING HOURS AND NON-SPECIALIST TEACHING

Being members of internal committees had a positive effect on professionalism. Conversely, trade union membership, high teaching loads (>15 hours per week) and non-specialist teaching had a negative impact. Committee membership and trade union membership had equally strong effects, but in opposite directions. Trade union membership exerted the strongest negative effect on commitment and autonomy. Autonomy was negatively affected by higher weekly teaching loads (see Figure 6.29).

Fig. 6.29: One-Way ANOVAs of Structural Variables (except Job Role) on Professionalism, Commitment and Autonomy

| | PROF | COMM | AUT |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Committee Membership | 4.76** | 3.03** | 3.57** |
| Trade Union membership | 4.32** | 3.69** | 5.62** |
| Weekly teaching hours | 4.76** | 3.29** | 4.82** |
| Non-specialist teaching | 3.81** | 3.15** | 2.52* |

N=336=346, *p<0.05, **p<0.01

Figure 6.29 confirms that committee members scored significantly higher professionalism ($t [344] = 4.76, p < 0.001$), commitment ($t [344] = 3.03, p = 0.003$) and autonomy ($t [344] = 3.57, p < 0.001$) than non-members. Trade union members scored significantly lower on professionalism ($t [344] = 4.32, p < 0.001$), commitment ($t [344] = 3.69, p < 0.001$) and autonomy ($t [344] = 5.62, p < 0.001$) than non-members. Those on *more* than 15 hours per week teaching had significantly *lower* scores on professionalism ($t (344) = 4.76, p < 0.001$), commitment ($t [344] = 3.29, p = 0.001$) and autonomy ($t [344] = 4.82, p < 0.001$) than those with fewer teaching hours. Teaching on non-specialist programmes (which respondents felt untrained for) also significantly reduced professionalism scores ($t [342] = 3.81, p < 0.001$) and ratings of commitment ($t [342] = 3.15, p = 0.002$) and autonomy ($t [342] = 2.52, p < 0.05$).

6.8.5 STRUCTURAL VARIABLES AND CAPITAL STRUCTURE

The effects of these five structural variables can be interpreted in terms of their capital structure (see Figure 6.30).

Fig. 6.30: Results of Multinomial Regression Analysis on Structural Variables with Capital Structure

| | Types of capitals, Reference category - low capital | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--------------|---|--------------|--|--------------|
| | <i>High volume of all capitals</i> | | <i>High economic, low social/cultural capital</i> | | <i>Low economic high social/cultural capital</i> | |
| | OR | 95% CI | OR | 95% CI | OR | 95% CI |
| Job Role | 0.22** | (0.10, 0.49) | 0.69 | (0.26, 1.88) | 0.50 | (0.21, 1.23) |
| Committee Membership | 0.75 | (0.37, 1.54) | 0.74 | (0.34, 1.63) | 0.64 | (0.31, 1.34) |
| Trade Union Membership | 3.63** | (1.84, 7.16) | 0.77 | (0.32, 1.85) | 2.25* | (1.10, 6.61) |
| Weekly teaching hours | 1.43 | (0.74, 2.77) | 0.99 | (0.48, 2.06) | 1.03 | (0.52, 2.06) |
| Non-specialist teaching | 3.26** | (1.73, 6.12) | 1.97 | (0.99, 3.89) | 2.10* | (1.10, 4.02) |

N=334 valid cases, *p<0.05; **p<0.01)

Coding: Job Role (1=non-manager, 2=manager); Committee membership (1=non-member, 2=member); Trade union membership (1=non-member 2=member); weekly teaching hours (1=<15 hours; 2=>15 hours); non-specialist teaching (1=never, 2=yes-no-specialist teaching)

Notes: categories in *italics* are zero, therefore OR figures reflect difference with italicised category, e.g. 0.22 for Job role (high capital) reports the likelihood of non-managers being in the 'high volume of all capital' group compared to managers.

Multinomial regression

Using the same clusters as before, each of the five main structural variables was examined for their likely capital structure. Three variables were significant. In the case of job role, non-managers were 5 times less likely to have high economic and socio-cultural capital as managers (OR=0.22, CI 0.10, 0.49). These results also suggested that socio-cultural capital was less easy to acquire for non-managers (OR=0.50, CI 0.21, 1.23) than economic capital (OR=0.69, CI 0.26, 1.88) when compared to managers. Those with high capital were over three times more likely to be non-union members and to have *never* taught on 'non-specialist' courses. These groups were also more likely to have higher socio-cultural capital (OR=2.25, CI 1.10, 6.61; OR=2.10, CI 1.10, 4.02). The results support interventions to increase socio-cultural capital as the most likely way to improve work status.

6.8.6 SUMMARY

18 structural variables were examined for their effects on professionalism (HPS scores). Stepwise regression analysis yielded five significant predictors in order of magnitude: job role, internal committee membership, trade union membership, weekly teaching loads and non-specialist teaching. Focusing on the most significant of these variables, job role, the top five capital measures were all about FE management, suggesting that manager respect, trust and support for development were significant issues that differentiated perceptions of professionalism.

6.9 Hypothesis 6: Constructions of Professionalism will be related to structural position in the FE Field

Bourdieu suggested that the substance of habitus reflected the conditions of its construction. Following Bourdieu, this hypothesis predicted that respondents' constructions of professionalism would correspond to their structural position in the FE field. This hypothesis used respondents' free-text responses to the question **"What does the term 'professional' mean to you?"** (within the context of your working role and duties) (Q25) which were coded to produce a set of main professionalism themes. This hypothesis provided the raw data for the study's analytic framework and is therefore a significant section in this chapter's analysis.

6.9.1 DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS – WHAT IS PROFESSIONAL?

Coding of Question 25 – What does Professional Mean?

308 respondents (67% of the survey sample) submitted responses, with answers ranging from single words to several lines. These were analysed and coded for their substantive themes or ideas. As an example, respondent 248 defined 'professional' as:

"...having a high degree of autonomy to make decisions about my work and my learners¹ based on my experience² and my research³. It also means behaving well⁴, and treating my learners and colleagues with respect and fairly"⁵

Statements given by respondents could be single ideas or, like this one, a combination of several ideas. In the above statement, five ideas were identified: ¹autonomy, ² experience, ³engagement in research, ⁴personal conduct/ behaviour and ⁵sensitivity/ respect for others. These ideas were turned into categories, which were then adjusted, combined or replaced as the coding process proceeded, arriving at a series of main themes.

Main Themes

In total, 1102 discrete items were coded (see Figures 6.31 and 6.32) which yielded 94 elements, 35 sub-categories and 13 main themes. In order of frequency, these were: expertise (45% of sample), standards (38%), students & service (32%), personal conduct (31%), role and organisation (26%), community (24%), personal qualities (22%), and recognition (19%), continuous improvement (18%), experience (15%), autonomy (11%), pay & career (7%) and conformity (2%) (see Figure 6.33).

Fig. 6.31: Schematic Overview of Coding Process

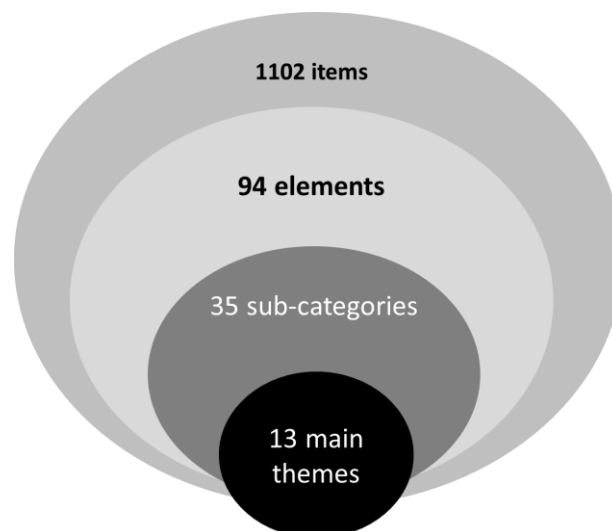


Fig. 6.32: What is 'Professional'? Main themes and Components

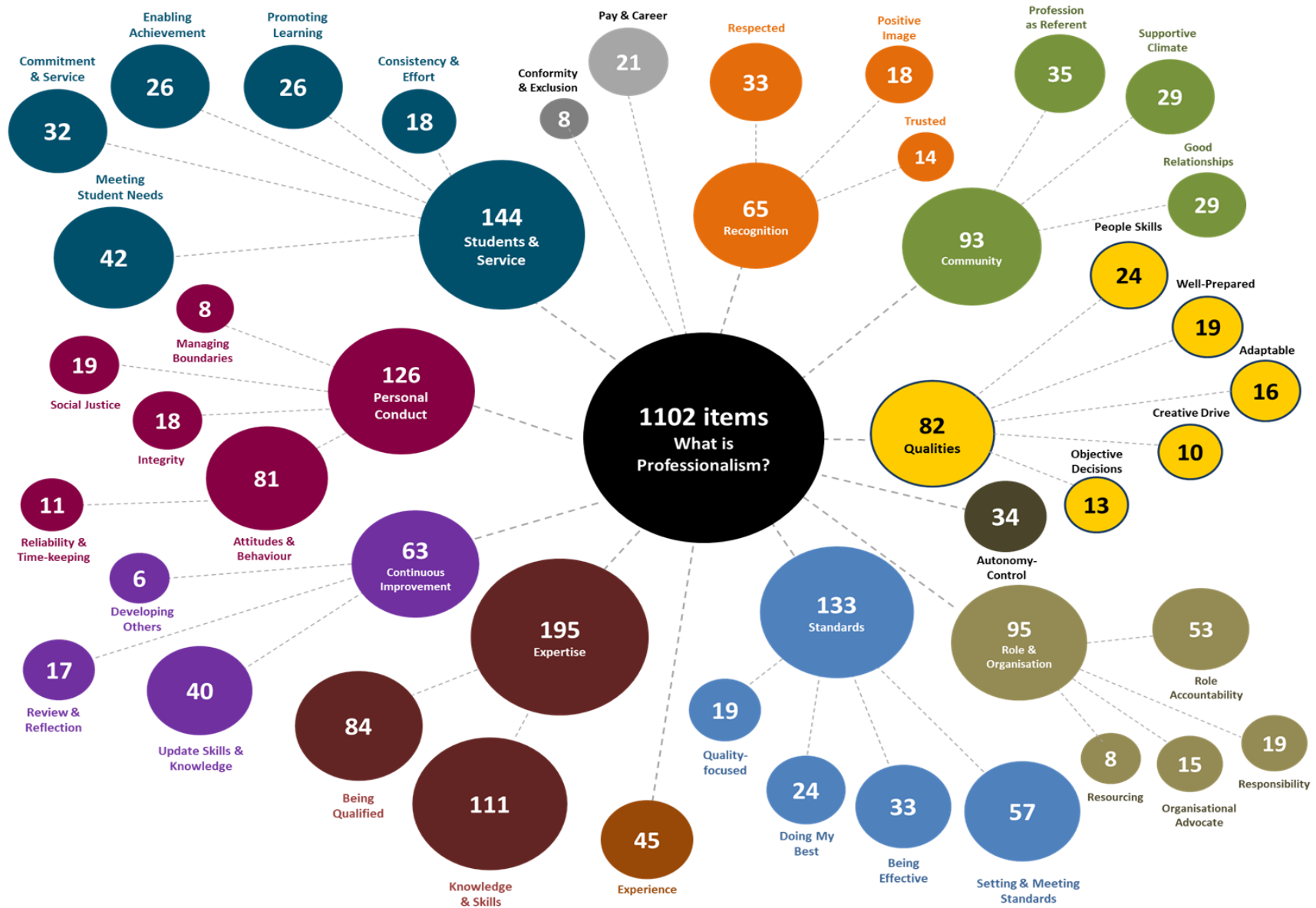
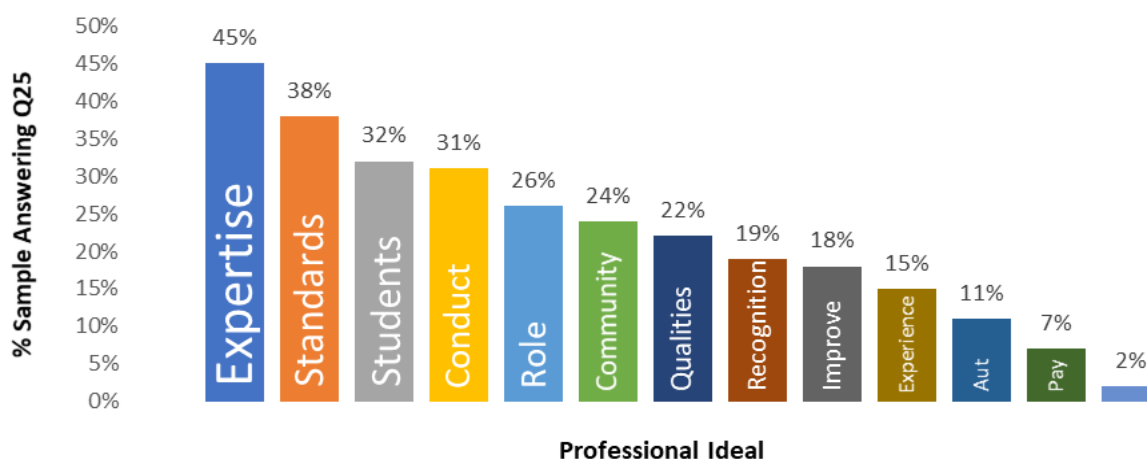


Fig. 6.33: Most and Least Common Themes in FE Definitions of ‘Professional’



Expertise, standards and students were the most frequently highlighted attributes. Surprisingly, autonomy and pay were not widely cited. These themes were best-fit representations of the many, complex narratives given by respondents. While Hall’s themes can be seen entwined in these categories (e.g. community encompasses his concept of ‘profession-as-referent’), it was clear that definitions extended and added to Hall’s concepts. Figure 6.34 provides a summary of the themes, subcategories and exemplars mentioned by more than 15% of the sample.

Fig. 6.34: Professional Themes – ‘What dos Professional Mean?’ (in your job context)

| Primary Theme | N (% persons) | % of Total Items | Description, Subcategories and Example |
|---------------|---------------|------------------|---|
| Expertise | 45% | 18% | Statements about the possession of expertise, knowledge, skills, qualifications, training and achievements in research Subcategories: Knowledge & Skills, Being Qualified |
| | | | <i>Example:</i> “Professional means that the tutor has both qualifications and experience related to both their specialist subject area and teaching (respondent 83) |
| Standards | 38% | 12% | Statements about standards, competence, performance, doing one’s best, quality, effectiveness and ‘being like industry’. Subcategories: Setting & Meeting Standards, Being Effective, Doing My Best, Quality-focused |
| | | | <i>Example:</i> “Being able to teach to the best of my ability and uphold industry standards” (respondent 160) |

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----|-----|--|
| Students & Service | 32% | 13% | Statements that highlight commitment, service, meeting student needs, putting students first, student achievement. Subcategories: Meeting Student Needs, Commitment & Service, Enabling Achievement, Promoting Learning, Consistency & Effort |
| | | | <i>Example:</i> "To empower students and help them achieve a level of knowledge and skills that are commensurate with a recognised national level of achievement" (respondent 144) |
| Personal Conduct | 31% | 11% | Statements that referenced personal conduct, behaviour, values & attitudes, dress/ appearance, maintaining boundaries. Subcategories: Attitudes & Approach, Integrity, Social Justice, Managing Boundaries |
| | | | <i>Example:</i> "That you behave in a way that is accepted as ethical" (respondent 227) |
| Role & Organisation | 26% | 9% | Statements about roles & responsibilities at work, including accountability, responsibility, loyalty and resourcing. Subcategories: Role Accountability, Responsibility, Organisational Advocate, Resource Allocation |
| | | | <i>Example:</i> "carrying out my duties to ensure that the organization is best prepared and resourced to carry out its duty to the highest standards" (respondent 214) |
| Community | 24% | 9% | Statements about professional community, regulation, codes of (ethical) practice, collegiality, respecting others and fair treatment. Subcategories: Good Relationships, Profession as Referent, Supportive Climate |
| | | | <i>Example:</i> "A person who shows a strong and committed engagement with the purpose, morals and ethics of their profession" (respondent 217) |
| Personal Qualities | 22% | 8% | Statements focused on personal qualities, attributes and capacities that an individual possesses/should possess to support their work. Subcategories: People Skills, Well-Prepared, Adaptable, Creative Drive, Objective Decisions |
| | | | <i>Example:</i> "Being organised, arriving on time, being prepared, being nicely dressed..." (respondent 284) |
| Recognition | 19% | 6% | Statements that exclusively refer to being recognised, respected/ valued by others, making a good impression, being a role-model, and trust. Subcategories: Being Respected, Positive Image, Being Trusted |
| | | | <i>Example:</i> "It means being treated with respect by managers who value a subject specialism and industry experience" (respondent 333). |

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----|----|--|
| Continuous Improvement | 18% | 6% | Statements about professional development and reflection, developing others, improving processes. Subcategories: Update Skills & Knowledge, Review & Reflection, Developing Others |
| | | | <i>Example:</i> "The ability, and requirement, to reflect on personal practice and to continually develop that practice. This process also involves reflecting on the experiences of learners and work undertaken with other colleagues" (respondent 238) |

6.9.2 INFERENCE STATISTICS – MAPPING THE FE FIELD USING CORRESPONDENCE ANALYSIS

Explanation & Coding

A two-way correspondence analysis (CA) was used to explore the relationship between professionalism themes (variable 1) and respondent properties (variable 2). CA is a useful geometric approach for visualising how two sets of categoric variables are related in low-dimensional space (Fietze & Boyd, 2017). CA is constructed from a contingency table which examines how variables co-occur (see Figure 6.35 for an overview; see Appendix 11 for original contingency table).

Fig. 6.35: Overview of CA Contingency Table

| | | Professionalism themes | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| | | CAT A | CAT B | CAT C | CAT D |
| Respondent Properties | CAT 1 | | | | |
| | CAT 2 | | | | |
| | CAT 3 | | | | |
| | CAT 4 | | | | |

HPS Scores generated for category-category pairing

Variables, categories and coding procedures are presented in Figure 6.36. Variable 1 (professionalism themes) consisted of 12 active categories. Variable 2 (respondent properties) consisted of 14 active categories with 44 sub-categories. Commitment and autonomy (7 subcategories) were supplementary (they are components of the HPS scale) and were projected into the display as passive variables.

Fig. 6.36: Categorical Coding for CA variables

| | |
|---|--|
| <u>Active Variables</u> | |
| Variable 1 - Professionalism themes (definitions) | All themes except 'conformity' were entered (due to small sample size). |
| Variable 2 – Respondent Properties 1. Professionalism (HPS) 2. Social capital 3. Cultural capital 4. Status/ Symbolic capital 5. Turnover intentions | Entered as quartiles (values assigned 1, 2, 3 or 4 based on HPS score) |
| 6. Economic capital 7. Career intentions 8. Recommend organisation 9. Recommend employer (These were single item measures) | Assigned values 1 (low – combining original ratings 1+2), 2 (moderate – original rating = 3) or 3 (high - combining original ratings 4 and 5) |
| 10. Job Role 11. Trade union membership 12. Committee membership 13. Non-specialist teaching 14. Teaching load | Job role (1=CSW, 2=Teacher, 3=Middle Manager 4=SMT); Trade Union Membership (1=yes, 0=no); Committee membership (1=yes, 0=no) Non-specialist teaching (1=yes, 0=no) and teaching load (1= <15 hours/week; 2= >15 hours/week) |
| <u>Supplementary Variables</u> | |
| Commitment | Entered as quartiles (values assigned 1, 2, 3 or 4 based on HPS score). |
| Autonomy | Three values used 1 (low - bottom 25%), 2 (moderate - middle 50%) and 3 (high - top 25%). Quartiles 2 and 3 presented the same value and therefore quartiles unsuitable. |

Statistical Results

The correspondence map (see Figures 6.37a and 6.37b) offers an acceptable representation of correspondences in two dimensions, with an overall retention of 56.1%. The trace inertia of 2.9% (sum of observed eigenvalues) suggested a weak association between rows (respondent properties) and columns (professionalism themes); a chi-test of association was not significant [$\chi^2(473) = 437.83, p > 0.05$]. Glynn's (2014) point is useful here when he states that the purpose of the CA map is not necessarily to achieve significance but to explore relationships between variables.

Fig. 6.37a: Two-Way Correspondence Plot Mapping Definitions of Professional to Selected Respondent Properties

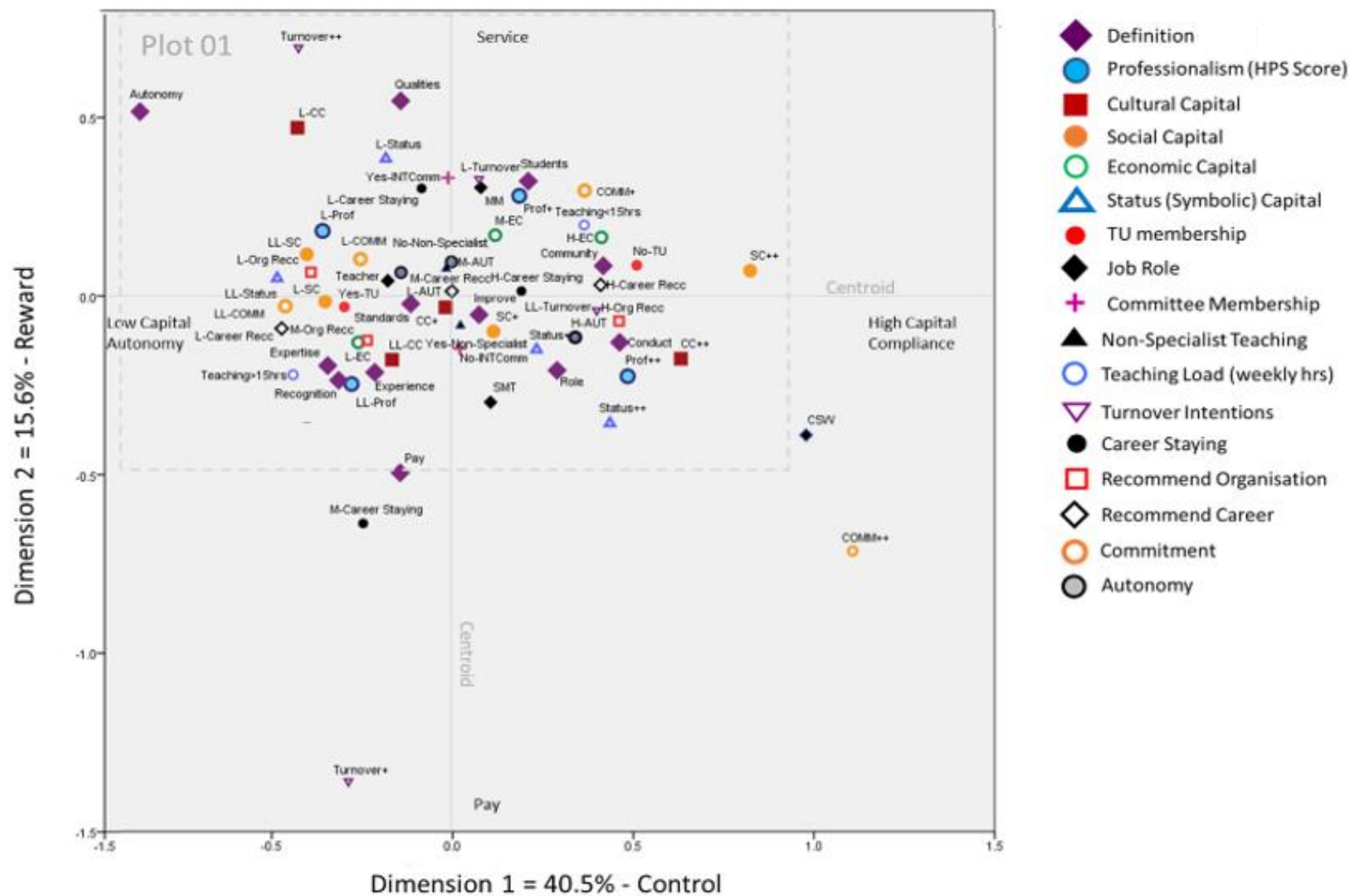
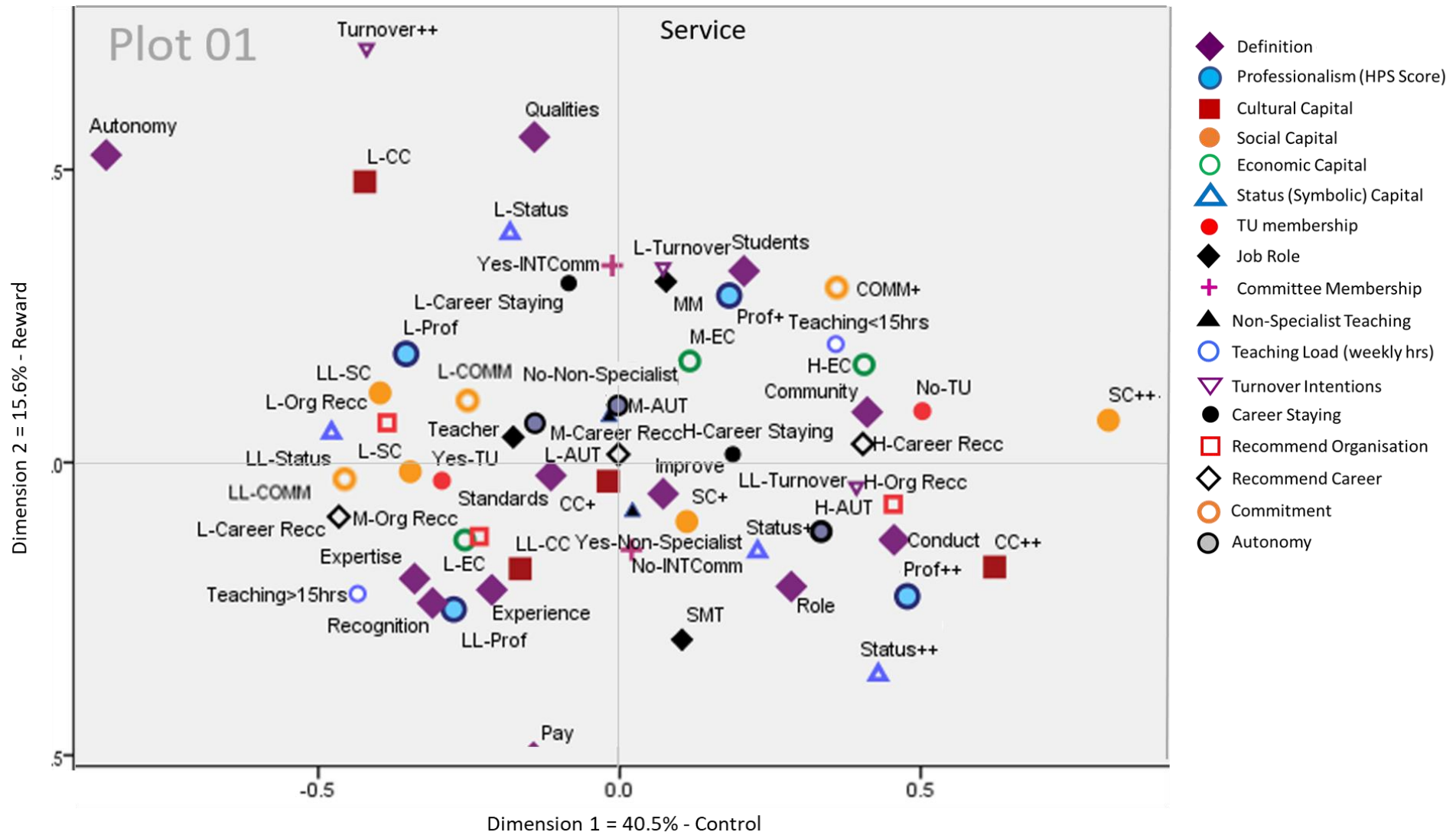


Fig. 6.37b: Close-Up of Selected Region of CA Map Highlighting the Most Significant Clusters and Relationships



Labelling Dimensions

Labels for dimension 1 (40.5%) and dimension 2 (15.6%) follow Benzecri's (1992, p405) advice that "interpreting an axis amounts to finding out what is similar, on the one hand, between all the elements figuring on the right [or top] of the origin and, on the other hand, between all that is written on the left [or bottom]; and expressing with conciseness and precision the contrast (or opposition) between the two extremes". Labels were based on variables that contributed most to the inertia of their respective dimensions (see Figure 6.38).

Fig. 6.38: Highest Contributors (Definitions) to Dimension Variance

| Dimension 1 - Control | Score on Dimension | | Positive |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|----------|
| | Negative | | |
| Autonomy | -0.87 | Conduct | 0.46 |
| Expertise | -0.35 | Community | 0.42 |
| Recognition | -0.32 | | |

Whereas autonomy emphasises independence over the work task, 'conduct' and 'community' emphasise behaviour that conforms to external expectations. This is further reinforced by the plot of 'role' on the right side of the field (which stresses accountability). In both cases, these reflect issues of control.

| Dimension 2 - Reward | Score on Dimension | | Positive |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------|----------|
| | Negative | | |
| Pay | -0.50 | Qualities | 0.55 |
| Recognition | -0.24 | Autonomy | 0.52 |
| | | Students | 0.32 |

Pay is the extreme pole at the bottom of the CA map and indicates a concern for material rewards and promotion. At the top of the map is a more diffuse group made up of 'Qualities', 'Autonomy' and 'Students' which described 'professional' in terms of psychic rewards (e.g. a service/ pedagogic ethic).

Interpreting Dimensions

Distances between plot points reflect degrees of similarity or difference, with closer plots more likely to share similar attributes. Points at the origin have little or no ability to differentiate individuals on dimensions (see for example, 'standards'). Strong relationships are indicated by acute angles subtended between two variables through the origin (e.g. 'expertise' and 'experience'), while obtuse angles indicate much weaker associations (e.g. 'autonomy' and 'role').

Dimension 1 - Control

Negative (left) side:

The left-side is dominated by low scores for the HPS, capital and career/ employer attitudes. These individuals were most likely to describe professional in terms of 'expertise', 'autonomy' and 'experience'. They were also most likely to be teachers and trade unionists (for example, 69% teachers and 69% trade unionists referred to expertise compared to 48% senior managers and 53% of non-members). Individuals on this side scored lowest on autonomy and lower on commitment.

Positive (right) side:

The right side of the field is characterised by high HPS scores, capital and positivity towards career and employer. Individuals were most likely to define professionalism in terms of 'conduct', 'community' and 'role', which are arguably concerned with compliance to external standards. These individuals were most likely to be managers (for example, 52% of senior managers refer to 'role' compared to 27% teachers who answered Q25) and had higher autonomy and commitment scores.

Dimension 2: Reward

Negative (bottom) side:

The bottom half of the map was dominated by 'pay', and to a lesser extent 'recognition', followed by 'experience'. This emphasised an orientation towards the material rewards of FE professionalism, though numbers for 'pay' were small (n=21), which raises questions about the plot's reliability. While teachers appear to show a modest commitment to service, it is important to note the CA map represents a best-fit imagination of all variable associations. Many teachers identified students in definitions of professional (47%), with only CSWs higher (at 69%). However, more teachers cited expertise, so plots reflect these relative differences in geometric space.

Positive (top) side:

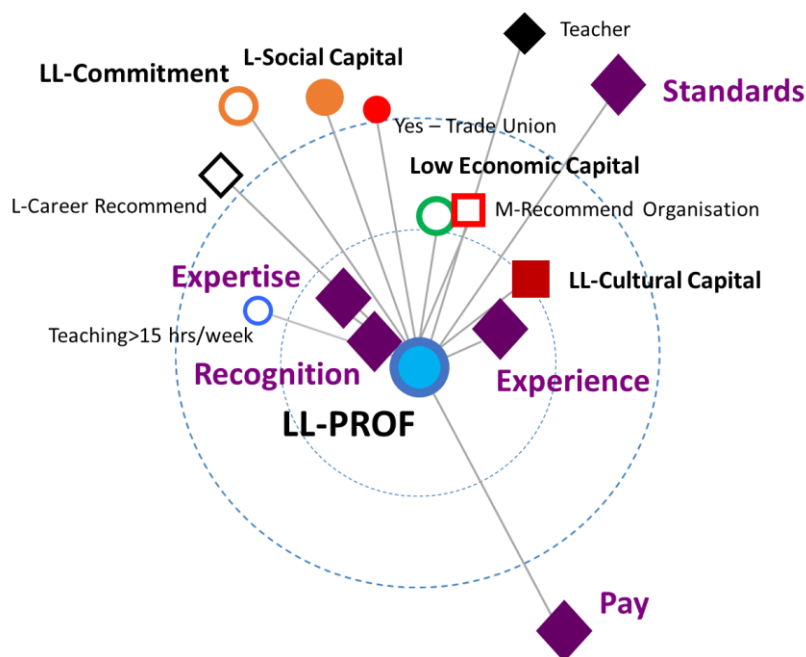
'Qualities' and 'autonomy' were most likely to distinguish individuals in the top part of the map, followed by 'students'. These themes refer to matters of pedagogy, commitment and student support, underpinned by a 'service' disposition orientated towards the 'psychic' (non-material) rewards' of teaching (Avis & Bathmaker, 2004; 2006). When pay is perceived as unfair, individuals were less likely to define professionalism in terms of 'service'. Committee membership and avoiding teaching on non-specialist courses were associated with an improved service focus.

Low and High Professionalism

The clusters of variables around low HPS scores (P1) and high HPS scores (P4) highlighted profound differences in professional dispositions held by individuals in these two quartiles (see Figures 6.39 and 6.40 – starplots are useful for illustrating central clusters on complex CA maps).

Low Professionalism (P1) – the bottom 25%

Fig 6.39: Starplot - Low Professionalism (P1)



**Dotted lines are for presentational purposes only*

“I get no training, I have been de-skilled to the point of being unemployable”

(respondent 226, teacher)

“Constant scrutiny from Management, treating us like children and showing no trust”

(respondent 132, teacher).

“Being told what and how to teach by people much less qualified/experienced”

(respondent 436, teacher).



Teacher
1 in 4



Curriculum Support
1 in 4



Middle Manager
1 in 8



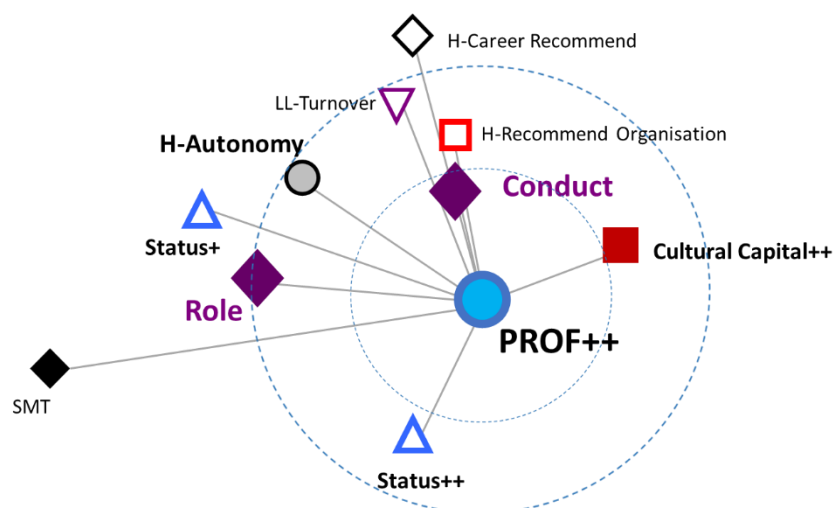
SMT
1 in 16

Who is in the bottom 25% professionalism?

Those who scored lowest on Hall’s professionalism scale (HPS) were mostly likely to define professionalism in terms of ‘expertise’, ‘recognition’, ‘experience’ and to a lesser extent, ‘standards’. Low HPS scores were strongly linked to low socio-cultural capital and economic capital. This revealed an obvious paradox, namely, that expertise was co-located with low cultural capital. The close pairing of ‘expertise’ with ‘recognition’, and its nearby association with low status (see Figure 6.37b) indicates that those who spoke of professionalism as ‘expertise’ did not feel valued at work and did not rate their learning opportunities positively. Of interest, and also concern, teachers were most likely to express low professionalism (5 times as many teachers were in P1 than senior managers; conversely, almost 4 times as many senior managers were in P4).

High Professionalism (P4) – the top 25%

Fig.6.40: Starplot - High Professionalism (P4)



**Dotted lines are for presentational purposes only*

“Being encouraged to be creative” (respondent 29, middle manager)

“The important of success for my organisation” (respondent 33, teacher)

“He/she should be reflective, to facilitate personal and professional development, and be committed to their role and education” (respondent 285, teacher)



Strikingly, high professionalism (HPS) and high cultural capital were strongly associated, suggesting that opportunities to acquire valuable knowledge, skills and qualifications could be professionalising experiences (corroborated in Chapter 7). As predicted, high professionalism and high status were closely related, both clustering with ‘role’ and ‘conduct’ (emphasising compliance with external expectations). Individuals were strongly attached to their employer and career and were least likely to quit their employment.

Clusters for high and low HPS scorers were fundamentally different and suggested different professional habituses (see Figure 6.41). Though based on a snapshot of variables, it revealed two groups with very different professional experiences and intentions.

Fig. 6.41: Professional Habitus – A Summary of Attributes for Low (P1) and High (P4) Professionalism (HPS)

| <i>Attribute</i> | <i>Low Professionalism (P1) (bottom 25%)</i> | <i>High Professionalism (P4) (top 25%)</i> |
|------------------|---|--|
| Preference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expertise, recognition, experience – emphasis is on the possession of valuable skills and knowledge. 68% of this group refer to expertise, 24% higher than any other theme. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role, conduct and community - emphasis is on accountability and compliance. Responses range from 9% to 14% higher on these themes compared to P1. |
| Capital | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural, social and economic capital is low. Associated with restrictive learning opportunities. Low status. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High cultural capital – associated with expansive learning opportunities, and overall higher economic and social capital. High status indicates that |

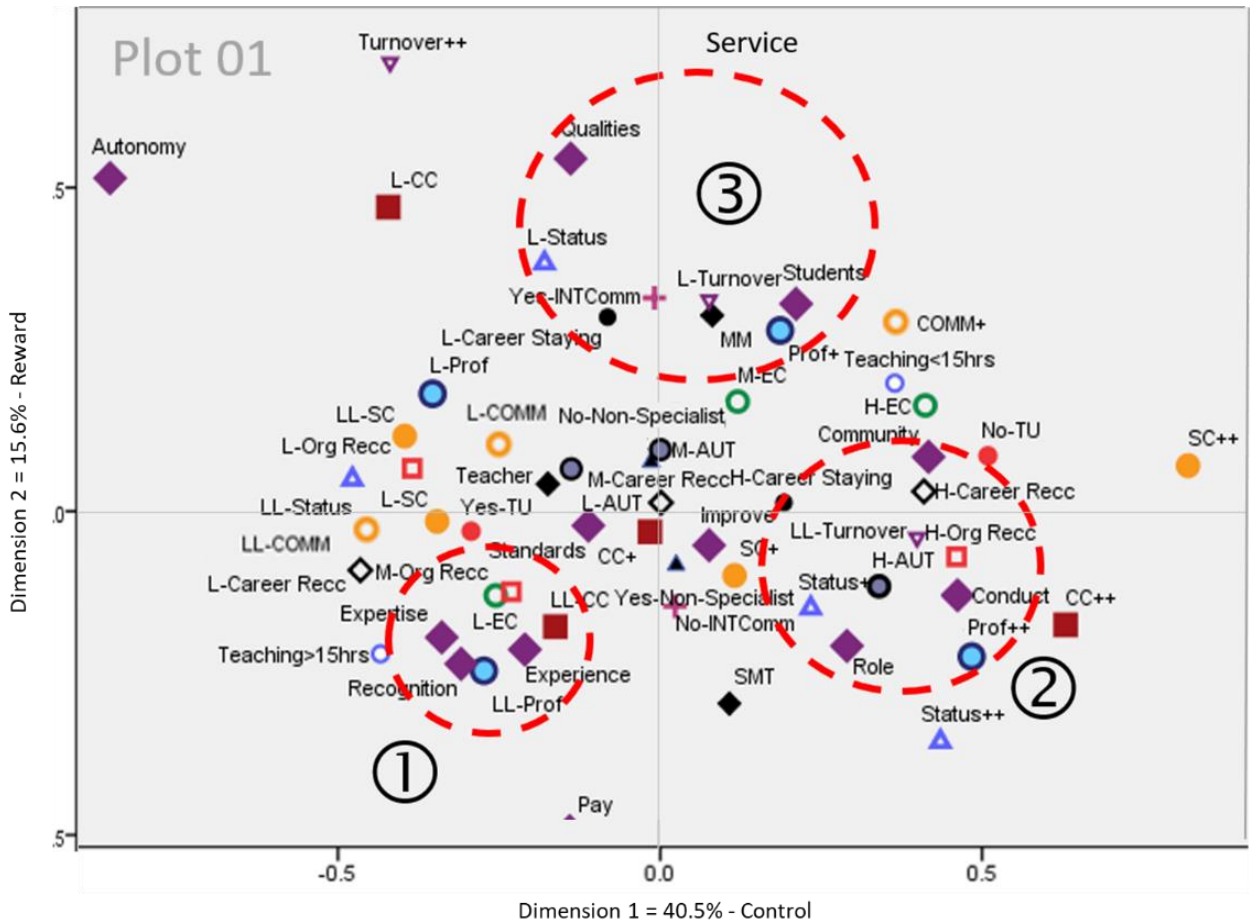
| | | |
|--------------------|---|--|
| | indicates feelings of low value and recognition. | individuals feel highly valued at work. |
| Job Role | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most likely to be teachers on high teaching loads (five times higher than senior managers) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most likely to be senior managers (almost four times higher than teachers) |
| Management Trust | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low trust | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High trust |
| Career Attitudes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weak attachment to career and least likely to recommend FE teaching to others. Occupational commitment is weak. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong attachment to career and most likely to recommend FE teaching to others. Occupational commitment is strong. |
| Employer Attitudes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attitudes are mostly negative towards the employer, though some are moderate. There is a strong desire to leave FE employment, though high turnover intentions are not exclusive to this group. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attitudes strongly endorse the employer as a place of work. This group is least likely to think of leaving their employment. |
| Control | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals measured poorly on autonomy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals measured highly on autonomy |

P1s felt strongly undervalued and were most likely to rate their work environment as restrictive, autocratic, low trust and unstable. P1s valued expertise and experience, but their low status suggests these qualities were not recognised in themselves. Conversely, those with high HPS scores framed their employment as one of opportunity, learning, autonomy and high trust. While a mix of job roles populated both P1 and P4 groups, 1 in 4 teachers were in P1s compared to just 1 in 16 SMT, while almost four times as many SMT members were in P4 as teachers. When it comes to professionalism, teachers and SMT were deeply divided, corresponding to very different professional habituses.

6.9.3 THE EMERGENCE OF AN ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK – EXPERTISE, SERVICE & COMPLIANCE (THE ESC MODEL)

Correspondence mapping suggested *three* related clusters of themes (see Figure 6.42). These are labelled 1, 2 and 3 based on how tightly formed clusters were.

Fig. 6.42: Three Discursive Clusters: Expertise, Compliance & Service



Three clusters: description and rationale

Cluster 1, labelled 'expertise', was derived from:

- the tight clustering of expertise, experience and recognition in the bottom-left of the map
- the prominence of expertise in definitions

Cluster 2, labelled 'compliance', was derived from:

- the coalition between role, conduct and (to a lesser extent) community on the right side of the map
- a shared emphasis on accountability, rule-following and external expectations

- the high frequency of comments that relate to ‘conduct’, ‘role’ and ‘community’ in respondent definitions

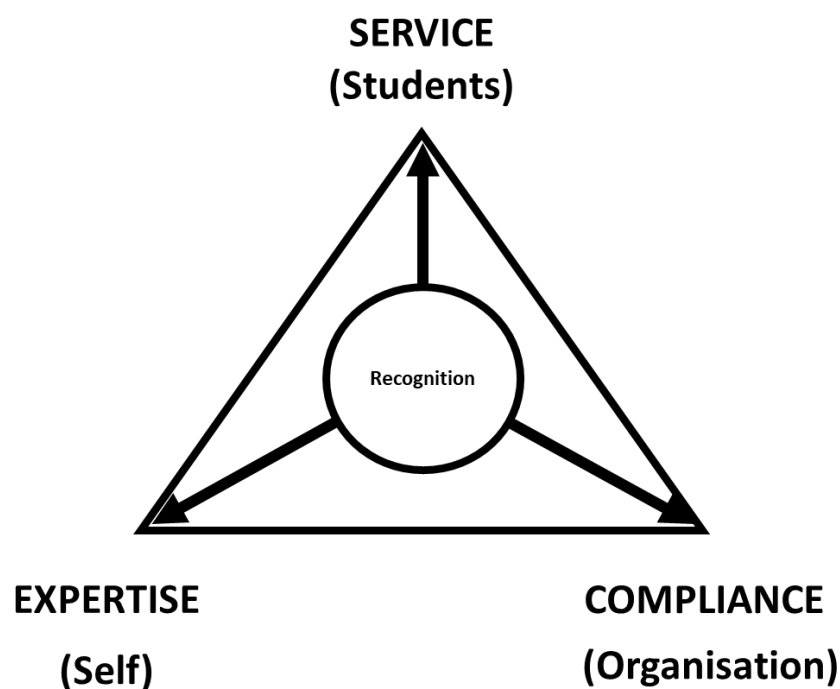
Cluster 3, labelled ‘service’, was derived from:

- the relative proximity of ‘students’ and ‘qualities’ in the top half of the map
- a shared emphasis on pedagogy, caring and commitment across comments
- the large number of responses falling in the ‘student’ category

The map not only plots the structural positions of FE agents, it maps respondents’ *dispositional space*. Dispositions formed three recognisable clusters: expertise, compliance and service.

These clusters are referred to here as ‘**professional schemas**’, whose objects of focus are the self, the organisation and the students respectively. Figure 6.43 provides a simplified representation of the three schemas identified in respondent narratives.

Fig. 6.43: Tripartite Framework – Three Professional Schemas



Professional schemas were envisaged as propensities to think about professionalism rather than discrete ingroup-outgroups, reflecting the fact that many respondents’ definitions included multiple ideas from one or more schemas.

Expertise

Respondents who perceived ‘professional’ mostly in terms of ‘expertise’ were more likely to identify ‘recognised qualifications’, subject knowledge or pedagogic skills as valued properties.

Professional was about:

“knowledge of subject, formal training, *recognised* qualifications, experience and competent.” (respondent 517, CSW; *my italics*); and

“He/she is competent in their subject knowledge and skilled in the art of teaching” (respondent 285, teacher).

“*Recognised qualifications* giving status and credibility with other educational sectors”. (respondent 295, SMT)

“knowing how to be able to deliver your subject specialism to your learners” (respondent 240, teacher)

The phrase ‘recognised qualifications’ indicated it was important for credentials to have standing in the wider FE field. There were consistent links with experience and competence. The term ‘dual professionalism’ was rarely used (only twice) by respondents, but a ‘dual identity’ could be detected in comments, for example, a need for “substantial knowledge and practical engagement in a subject” (respondent 199, teacher). Experience (as opposed to qualifications or desk-based study) was also strongly allied to ‘expertise’, and suggested tension between different views. For example:

“Professional as far as I'm concerned means professional competence and knowledge gathered through experience and real work activity, not read out of a book” (respondent 192, teacher).

Compliance

Respondents who used a ‘compliance’ schema commonly situated professional within an organisational context, acknowledging the importance of accountability, external standards and loyalty. For example:

“Understanding my role. Understanding my *organisation's* priorities. Carrying out my duties to ensure that the *organization* is best prepared and resourced to carry out its duty to the highest standards...That is what professional means to me, congruency of action to organisational aims”. (respondent 214, senior manager; *my italics*)

“Professionals *conform* to the standards of a profession”
(respondent 291, senior manager, *my italics*).

“completing the tasks required in my job role *without grumbling* and to a high standard”
(respondent 185, teacher; *my italics*).

“fulfilling my role in *accordance with my employer's requirements*”
(respondent 113, staff development, *my italics*)

Senior managers were proportionately more likely to identify with a compliance schema than other roles. Supporting organisational initiatives, acting as an ambassador and ensuring completion of priorities and targets were underlying priorities.

Service

Respondents who spoke of ‘service’ identified students, a caring disposition and the importance of creating a positive and enabling learning environment as major properties. These comments captured the enthusiasm, commitment and dedication that came with ‘putting students first’, as well as a desire to empower students and improve the quality of their learning experience. A professional was someone who was:

“Dedicated and committed. Prepared to go the extra mile. Put student first, always” (respondent 29, middle manager)

“Someone who can *appreciate the needs of all learners*, respect their differences and encourage an environment of respect, tolerance and personal growth” (respondent 166, teacher, *my italics*)

“Going the extra mile for the students that I work with to ensure that their experience within the course is positive, meaningful, and rewarding. My sole objective is to help all students meet their potential and succeed” (respondent 150, teacher)

“Being supportive and caring of all students, regardless of background, gender, ethnicity, SES, sexuality, or religious beliefs” (respondent 122, teacher)

Expressions of ‘love’ indicated the intensity of respondents’ attachment to their job role:

“I love working in FE. Although the fiscal and political climate is really hard at the moment, *nothing would stop me* trying to do the best for our students and making a difference to people's lives”. (respondent 248, senior manager, *my italics*)

These expressions mostly came from respondents scoring above the HPS mid-point, though not exclusively so. For some, ‘love’ for students was claimed in spite of negative employer views. Although the term ‘vocation’ was rarely used, it was apparent in statements of personal dedication and sacrifice, in which “The job is much more than a pay cheque” (respondent 74, teacher) which requires “giving 100% performance to the students” (respondent 99, middle manager). ‘Professional’ services needed staff who were people-orientated, adaptive and organised. Successful services were mostly discussed in terms of the achievement of ‘hard measures’ like pass rates and “progression to employment or further training” (respondent 68, middle manager). In contrast, there were hardly any references to student creativity, curiosity, civic awareness or imagination.

Professionalism as Symbolic Capital: The Importance of Recognition.

Recognition was important for properties to function as professionalising claims. The need for ‘recognisable’ qualifications were symbolic markers of achievement and competence in one’s subject field, with links made between subject currency and credibility. For example,

“Having a high level of up to date knowledge of my subject, which is *recognized* [sic] and allows me a degree of autonomy in my role” (respondent 8, teacher; *my italics*)

“Someone who is *respected* for their knowledge and the work that they do” (respondent 123, teacher; *my italics*)

“Treating somebody as a professional means *trusting* them to carry out a good job as they are the expert and specialist” (respondent 132, CSW).

“It means being treated with respect by *managers who value a subject specialism* and industry experience” (respondent 333, teacher; *my italics*).

It was not unusual for expertise and recognition to be discursively paired with concepts of autonomy and trust. Autonomy was often reported as ‘trust in expertise’. Both trust and autonomy can be seen as manifestations of recognition. Another teacher suggested it was:

“A person with a degree or similar...and is able and allowed to take responsibility for their work. This person is valued by their employers and society...” (respondent 297, teacher).

Compliance could be professionalising when there was a tangible impact for the respondent’s reputation. Professional could mean completing work which:

“makes an excellent *impression* of the organisation for whom you work.”
(respondent 96, middle manager; *my italics*)

Or entailed:

“role modelling behaviour and expectations” (respondent 240, CSW)

“conduct in [a] manner that draws respect from others” (respondent 265, middle manager)

These comments spoke of the importance of setting an example and promoting individual and institutional reputations.

The need for recognition was also detected in ‘service’ responses, and often narrated through references to respect and public appreciation. These included:

“Respect for the responsibility of my occupation. People recognising how the majority of teachers do go above and beyond their job descriptions in order to benefit their students”
(respondent 156, middle manager)

“being somebody the students can aspire to” (respondent 244, middle manager)

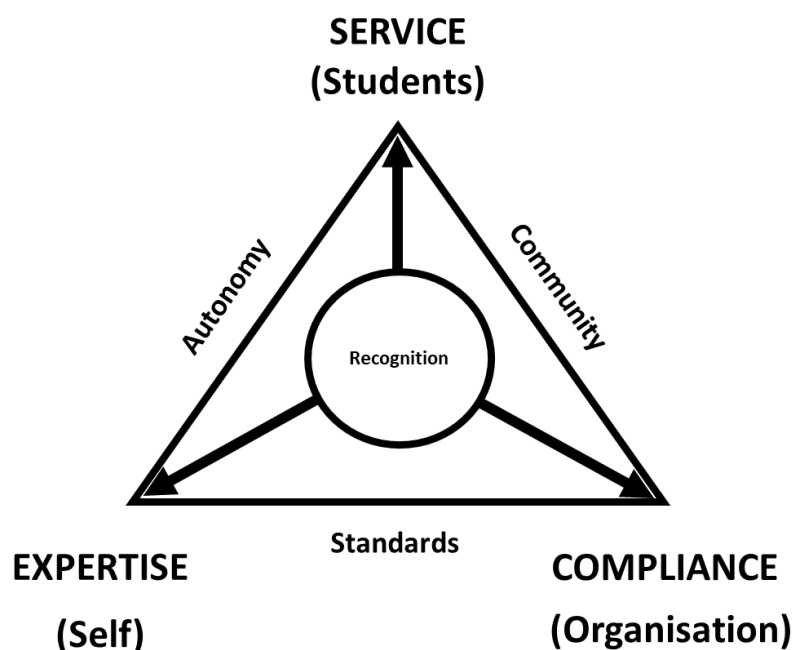
“Professional should give others confidence regarding the standard and quality of what you do” (respondent 263, CSW).

As discussed earlier, some of these comments were standalone, while others drew on multiple schemas, illustrating the eclectic nature of professionalism. These schemas were envisaged as intersecting, overlapping and sometimes discordant narratives, speaking to different professional priorities and experiences.

Narrative Links: Autonomy, Standards and Community

In reality, discursive patterns were complex and contradictory, and did not form neat groupings. The concepts of autonomy, community and standards (see Figure 6.44), however, provided meaningful connections between the main schemas.

Fig. 6.44: Tripartite Framework - Main Ideas and Connections



Discursive links were drawn directly from the CA plot (see Figures 6.37a, 6.37b). Autonomy, although a smaller sample of comments, was the strongest differentiator on dimension 1 ('control'), and strongly paired with both expertise and student pedagogy. The next quote is illustrative of this connection:

"I am qualified to higher Education level in my subject specialism and I am able to work *independently* on the development of my courses and learners...I can work *undirected* and with the authority to make informed decisions independent of others in the development of students within my care" (respondent 203, teacher, *my italics*)

'Standards' attracted the second highest frequency of comments in Q25, next to 'expertise', and the two were commonly paired discursively. Standards could be mentioned generically but usually referred to notions of competence, quality and effectiveness. Improving expertise was suggested as a mechanism for meeting and exceeding high standards.

"A professional role is one which demands that you work to professional standards at all times.... that you continually update your skills and expertise within the profession by continuous professional development" (respondent 189, senior manager).

"having the skills and qualities to fulfil your role with competence and confidence"
(respondent 230, middle manager)

Community related to the importance of relationships, which included students, colleagues and professional associations. While there were discursive links with both compliance and service schemas, there was a clear tension, on the one hand emphasising adherence to community rules (compliance), and on the other, referring to collaboration and relationship-building (service). Prescribed ways of working, for example, 'not allowing silos to exist' or "working to rules and regulations in an objective way" (respondent 151, teacher), reflected the compliance orientations of communities. References to duty, ethics and engagement with external agencies pointed to a 'service' orientation. A sense of belonging to one's organisation or occupation, along with the unity this promoted, underpinned community narratives. Arguably, it is this desire for unity that links compliance with service.

“Professionalism is not just related to daily practice...it is how educators are seen through others’ eyes, for example, politicians, business leaders and parents etc. and how they feel about the profession.” (respondent 46, middle manager)

“Professionals are the modern-day knights, tied to their codes of chivalry, and trying to manage conflicts of duty. We all have a duty to each other, and professionals exemplify this...No code of conduct or strong principles = poor professionalism” (respondent 310, CSW)

“Working as a cohesive team, not allowing silos to exist, where each department works in isolation” (respondent 100, teacher)

6.9.4 SUMMARY

Hypothesis 6 analysed the study’s qualitative responses to the question: *What does professional mean to you?* 13 main professional themes were identified, the range of which suggested that FE professionalism may be more nuanced than Hall theorised. Excluding ‘conformity’ (owing to small numbers), these themes were plotted on a correspondence map to visualise their relationship with professionalism (HPS), capital and five structural variables: job role, committee membership, trade union membership, teaching load and non-specialist teaching. The resulting plot suggested an acceptable representation of these relationships in two-dimensional space, with plots varying by control and reward orientation. Three clusters on the map provided the raw data for the analytic framework based on expertise, compliance and service schemas. Depending on submissions, individuals were likely to inhabit one or more schemas to varying degrees and intensities. The model can therefore be seen as a way of representing an individual’s orientation in 2-dimensional space. The model envisaged professionalism as a dynamic interpretative space where constructions were responsive to an individual’s structural position in the FE field. The results showed that an expertise schema was held by those with the lowest professionalism and capital. In contrast, those aligned to a compliance schema expressed the strongest professional attitudes and capital. The final model, which is an abstraction of the CA analysis, confirmed that recognition is important for properties to function as capital. The model suggests that professional habitus is correspondent with an individual’s structural position.

6.10 Main Summary

FE appears to be moderately professionalised with a mean score ($M = 3.24$) only slightly above the mid-point of Hall's scale. Two subscales were also reported on: commitment and autonomy. Overall, commitment was positively scored, though this varied across scale items and staff category, with managers scoring more highly than non-managers. A significant minority of respondents rated their commitment negatively. The mean score for autonomy was below the midpoint, with only 35% rating this positively. Those with the lowest scores were *most* likely to advocate autonomy as a characteristic of professional work. Conversely, there was little mention of autonomy amongst high scorers. Senior managers had the highest commitment and autonomy of all four staffing groups. Teachers had the lowest scores on both scales.

In testing the fit with Wilensky's professionalisation model, only membership of professional associations had a significant positive uplift on professionalism (HPS scores). There were no effects of employment type, education level or certification, contrary to Wilensky's predictions. Professionalism was also significantly linked to positive appraisals of one's employer and career; however, only a minority expressed positive views, while a significant minority were contemplating leaving the sector. These results did not suggest that most staff were strongly attached to their occupation.

One reason may be the lack of recognition that many staff reported. Professionalism was significantly correlated with work status. While learners and colleagues were sources of recognition and value, most did not express this about senior managers, government and OFSTED, and overall, respondents did not believe the public were positive about FE.

Professionalism was found to be significantly positively correlated with measures of economic, cultural and social capital. This confirmed that professionalism is related to the *volume* of capital. Cultural capital proved to be the strongest discriminator, with high cultural capital linked to positive assessments of the institution's learning climate. Professionalism was also linked to the *structure* of capital. All three capitals combined to produce net positive effects on professionalism. However, the findings showed that socio-cultural capital was found to have a

stronger impact than economic capital, and this is where strategies for improving professionalism are predicted to produce the greatest gains.

Five structural variables were identified as having significant predictive effects on professionalism, accounting for 20% of score variance. Job role was the strongest variable and confirmed that professionalism was a hierarchised experience. Senior managers were significantly more likely than other staffing groups to be in the highest quartile for HPS scores. Senior managers were also found to have significantly higher volumes of capital than teachers, with teachers 5 times more likely to be in the lowest quartile for HPS scores.

Structural variables, along with HPS scores and capital scores were plotted on a two-dimensional correspondence map, and although not significant, was an acceptable representation of relations in geometric space. This map showed that capital, status and professionalism were consistently orientated around issues of control and reward, in line with a capital perspective of professional status. This yielded three clusters which provided the raw data for the tripartite analytic framework. Here, three professional schemas were suggested, those relating to expertise, service and compliance (the ESC model). These schemas represented the major ways respondents constructed the term 'professional'. High capital holders were more likely to adopt a compliance schema. Constructions were shown to be based on social position in the FE field and were suggested as the main ways professionalism was contested by FE respondents.

Chapter 7 – Factors that Enhance and Weaken Professionalism

7.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 examined the key relationships between professionalism and capital and explored how FE agents interpreted the term ‘professional’. A summary of the main findings are highlighted in Figure 7.1.

Fig. 7.1: An Overview of Main Quantitative Findings

- HPS scores for FE respondents did not suggest FE respondents were strongly professionalised, though members of professional associations scored significantly higher than non-members.
- Professionalism was significantly positively correlated with a desire to stay in FE and with positive recommendations for employer and career. It was significantly negatively correlated with turnover intentions.
- Professionalism (HPS scores) were significantly correlated with work status (a measure of symbolic capital).
- Professionalism was significantly positively correlated with measures of economic, cultural and social capital. Those with high capital were 5 times more likely to score high professionalism as low capital.
- Socio-cultural (non-material) capital exerted stronger effects on professionalism than economic (material) capital. Cultural capital exerted the strongest effects and was related to differences in professional learning attitudes.
- 5 structural variables exerted significant effects on professionalism scores. Job role had the strongest impact, followed by committee membership, trade union membership, teaching load and exposure to non-specialist teaching.
- The coding of qualitative responses showed that respondents constructed professionalism using three main professional schemas: expertise, service and compliance. These were dynamic, and inter-penetrating logics informing perceptions. Schemas were related to the respondents’ structural position in the FE field.

This chapter helps to understand and explain these findings. It was motivated in answering the following question: **What practices support or weaken professionalism?** It prompted the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 7: Factors that improve or weaken professionalism can be understood in terms of economic, cultural and social capital

The evidence collected in this chapter supported Hypothesis 7. The findings are drawn from Q41 (factors that enhanced professionalism) and Q42 (factors that diminished professionalism) and are supplemented by Q18 (comments about the FE role). Just over 60% of the sample submitted comments to Q41 and Q42. Cultural and social capital, though not economic capital, were implicated in factors enhancing professionalism. Conversely, all three capitals were useful in explaining factors that weakened professionalism (see Figures 7.2 and 7.3).

Fig. 7.2: Factors Enhancing Professionalism - Capital Type, Theme Names and Theme Elements

| Capital Type | Theme Name | Theme Elements |
|---------------------|---|--|
| Cultural | Acquiring/ Improving Skills & Knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Being qualified and credible ● Acquiring new skills and knowledge ● Exercising autonomy |
| Cultural | Giving Skills & Knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Possessing desirable expertise ● Giving skills and knowledge to others |
| Socio-Cultural | Service & Sacrifice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Caring as a virtue ● Going that 'extra mile' ● Enabling students to achieve ● Redemption & compensation |
| Social | Approval-Seeking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Feedback from students ● Feedback from managers, colleagues and external parties |
| Social | Exchanging Skills & Information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Making contacts and networking ● Being consulted by others |

Fig. 7.3: Factors Weakening Professionalism - Capital Type, Theme Names and Theme Elements

| Capital Type | Theme Name | Theme Elements |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Cultural | Contesting cultural capital | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Policy assault ● Criticisms of the data culture ● Disrespecting expertise |

| | | |
|----------|-----------------------------|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Restrictive autonomy |
| Social | Contesting social capital | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Being excluded by managers ● Being criticised and threatened ● Disruption to teams |
| Economic | Contesting economic capital | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work intensification and teacher-pushing ● Pay and exploitative practices |

These themes and their components are now discussed in-depth in this chapter.

7.2 Factors that Enhance Professionalism

7.2.1 THEME 1: CULTURAL CAPITAL - ACQUIRING SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

This theme demonstrated that individuals who improved their own skills and knowledge were more likely to gain advantages in their organisation. These advantages could be new positions or extended responsibilities, positive student feedback or greater personal confidence to make decisions. Opportunities to develop expertise were chances to acquire cultural capital which could accelerate being:

“...viewed by management as a valued member of the team with specialist skills and not just a member of staff with a number” (respondent 51, teacher)

Three subthemes were identified which strengthened professionalism. Being qualified and credible; acquiring new knowledge and skills; and exercising autonomy. In all three cases, possessing expertise did not appear to be sufficient to generate strong professional attitudes. Expertise needed to be recognised to accrue status advantages. These results concur with the findings on expertise in Sections 6.9.2 and 6.9.3.

Being Qualified and Credible

‘Being qualified and credible’ was important for “keeping up to date with employer needs and educational changes” (respondent 363, CSW). This was especially relevant to teachers.

Teachers associated credibility with:

“...being suitably qualified, updating knowledge and skills, being current with your *subject knowledge* (respondent 406, teacher; *my italics*)

Respondents spoke of qualifications as a means of achieving credibility and facilitating deeper connections between practitioner and subject, offering job enrichment, as well as cultivating advanced skills and qualities. One teacher acknowledged that “Doing an MA in educational research greatly enhanced my teaching, relationship with learners, understanding of education and sense of personal progress” (respondent 453, teacher). Links with industry were highly valued by vocational staff for “being able to share relevant, up to date resources and provide learners with realistic goals and expectations” (respondent 68, middle manager) so that students felt prepared and confident about entering their chosen industry.

“I undertake, and ensure my team do, *regular industry updates*, forums etc...[and] develop links with industry [to] create a range of opportunities for all learners”. (respondent 68, middle manager, *my italics*).

Teaching qualifications were less frequently mentioned as drivers of professionalism. Where identified, they were linked to higher standards of pedagogy and better student learning experiences. Those who were teacher qualified compared themselves favourably on competence and status to those deemed ‘unqualified’.

Acquiring New Skills and Knowledge

Professional development was highly valued when it encouraged staff to ‘be more like industry’ because it addressed concerns about being ‘out of date’ which threatened their

credibility. Organisations that were committed to developing staff generated positive accounts of professionalism. One middle manager suggested that:

“Placing importance on CPD ensures working practices are current and staff feel valued, this in turn ensures students are well supported” (respondent 196, middle manager).

However, respondents also complained that these opportunities were limited and often contrived around organisational agendas. Respondents therefore saw the need “to engage in training that I have elected to do rather than having it forced upon me” (respondent 513, teacher), and criticised the “mostly inadequate irrelevant Ofsted box ticking in house training/development days” (respondent 517, CSW). Training orientated towards OFSTED was not seen as a genuine investment in people’s expertise but a compliance exercise to satisfy managers. Enforced training ran contrary to most people’s view of professionalism.

‘Being like industry’ not only developed respondent’s cultural capital (by fine-tuning their expertise), it also enhanced teachers’ social capital through “engagement with external practitioners and organisations that can, and do, lead to career launching opportunities” for students, in turn reinforcing the teachers’ vocational credibility with students (respondent 150, teacher, *my italics*). Holding events where staff could meet and network, and therefore build their social capital, was one of the ways organisations could support a positive staff development climate. Some highlighted “opportunities to research” (respondent 169, senior manager) as an essential part of developing a professional attitude towards one’s work.

“I take my role extremely seriously and spend a great deal of time researching to keep abreast of my specialist subjects and of teaching and learning theory” (respondent 225, teacher).

However, time for research was not a common experience and did not sustain an impression of FE as a research-based culture. Line managers were regarded as important players in supporting the organisation’s learning culture and were considered gatekeepers of learning and research opportunities:

“My line manager is very supportive, and over the summer gave me tasks that were beyond the scope of my current role at the college, but that were related to the additional literacy work that I do in my other part time job as a Dyslexia Tutor. This made me feel valued professionally, and I enjoyed working on this specific project. Undertaking this project has also led to the opportunity of doing some HE literacy support teaching cover within the college, which will be a valuable addition to my professional CV.” (respondent 447, CSW)

The ‘extra tasks’ were not viewed as a burden but a job enrichment opportunity, which advanced the respondent’s current role and led to new job responsibilities, with the effect of enhancing the individual’s overall standing in the FE field. In this case, “the opportunity of doing some HE literacy support” was highly valued.

Exercising Autonomy

By acquiring cultural capital, individuals described the enhanced social recognition this generated. Expertise came with expectations of job autonomy, which was cited as an important indicator of recognition. Teachers valued:

“Autonomy in planning my lessons, creating my resources and managing my PPA [personal preparation and administration] time. Being trusted by my managers to carry out my duties without being micromanaged. Being trusted by my managers and colleagues to always put the learners’ needs first. (respondent 304)

“Being able to make my own decisions.” (respondent 286), “Having the ability to choose what I do and when I do it” (respondent 181) and having a “High level of autonomy in coursework development and delivery” (respondent 35) were given as examples of enhancing professionalism. Holding expertise that managers valued was associated with greater trust and autonomy at work. Another referred to being:

“respected for knowledge and competence by management, colleagues [which meant being] able to make decisions about my own work, workload, support I give to which students.” (respondent 388, CSW).

Terms such as ‘allowed’ characterised autonomy as a management gift, for example “Being *allowed* to develop teaching ideas, learning materials and share good practice” (respondent 201, *my italics*). This showed how autonomy was linked to power relations. References to ‘freedom’ affirmed this view, for example, “Freedom to design schemes of work and plan lessons for classes (respondent 167, teacher), “Freedom to deliver the content how I see fit to suit the learners needs” (respondent 204, teacher), and perhaps tellingly, “The freedom to teach uninterrupted for *some* of the time” (respondent 324, middle manager, *my italics*). While autonomy was valued, it was constructed as a privilege that managers bestowed.

Summary

Acquiring new knowledge, skills or qualifications were a means of gaining cultural capital because they supported credibility and expert status. Credibility was mostly linked to currency in one’s subject field, and to a lesser extent, teaching qualifications. It is the recognition of expertise that generates privileges at work: job enrichment opportunities, greater job autonomy and manager trust, all of which can enhance a person’s reputation. Opportunities to develop expertise, for example through professional development, were therefore greatly valued.

7.2.2 THEME 2: CULTURAL CAPITAL - GIVING SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE

Possessing Desirable Expertise

High cultural capital holders were more likely to possess advanced subject specialist, pedagogic or managerial expertise which was coveted by less experienced colleagues. In providing support to others, FE agents demonstrated their expertise to others which

brought recognition; and by helping others, it showed individuals valued the organisation and its mission, which could produce further positive affirmations and status improvement. Supporting others was equated directly with enhancing professionalism:

“My role supports others in their practice, therefore professionalism is never far from the forefront of what I do” (respondent 238, senior manager)

In giving advice, coaching mentees, or modelling behaviour, holders bestowed important knowledge, and therefore capital, onto others. Imparting capital, in turn, validated the individual’s professional status. Being asked to support others based on specialist expertise was perceived as a personal honour that entailed:

“Recognition from colleagues, to the extent of being asked to guide and support other members of the team” (respondent 90, instruction support worker).

These ‘acts of nomination’ could be exercised informally, for example, by teachers sharing lesson materials with colleagues who asked for help, or formally when staff were enlisted into whole-college staff development or quality improvement functions. For one teacher, it was an:

“Acknowledgement of my knowledge and skills by being asked to deliver staff development activities to the staff body” (respondent 285, teacher).

Giving Skills and Knowledge to Others

Enriching the experiences of others, at work or in the classroom, were motives attested to by respondents who valued ‘developing others’:

“The staff development role that I have enables me *to help staff grow and develop* in their own knowledge and expertise. My role is to help staff develop their teaching, learning and assessment skills and for me, *to help them enjoy the work that they do*” (respondent 113, staff development practitioner, *my italics*)

The assignment of 'official' titles and accreditations also augmented an individual's status. In these 'official' capacities, staff valued their role as custodians of organisational standards and improvement:

"I am *Lead Practitioner* [in] English and Maths. My role is to work in a supportive capacity with Partners to achieve and maintain standards of excellence across Teaching, Learning and Assessment and ensure that excellence in training is achieved for all learners. I carry out developmental observations and work with teaching staff where areas of improvement are highlighted" (respondent 1, middle manager, *my italics*).

Titles such as 'Lead Practitioner', 'Advanced Practitioner', 'Learning Coach' and 'Lead IV' carried symbolic status by virtue of their expertise-giving function. Connections with terms like 'excellence' and 'quality improvement' cemented this status, enabling respondents to take an official role in the 'improvement of others'. The scarcity of these roles added to their sense of organisational significance, through their participation in 'elite' organisational events:

"Being the *only teacher educator* in my organization, I work very closely with the HEI [Higher Education Institute] of the programme I run, and this makes me feel very professional as I contribute to their staff development sessions and am involved with their conferences" (respondent 8, teacher trainer, *my italics*)

Summary

In the FE field, expertise is a major source of advantage. It lubricates individual recognition and reputation, and more widely, can support organisational competitiveness. Cultural capital that is passed to less experienced workers in the form of advice, skills or knowledge can provide new staff with valuable resources to support their position, which in turn can lead to enhanced credibility and future opportunities to demonstrate expertise. Interactions also benefit expert-givers in terms of improved cultural capital (exchange of ideas), social

capital (influence) and symbolic capital (admiration and respect of those they coach, train or mentor).

7.2.3 THEME 3: SOCIO-CULTURAL CAPITAL – SERVICE & SACRIFICE

The theme of 'service & sacrifice' considered elements of cultural and social capital, the former linked to specific attitudes and values about students and pedagogy, the latter reflecting the quality of student relationships and interactions.

Caring as a Virtue

This element reflected a mix of attitudes (cultural capital) and interactions (social capital) around the importance of caring, commitment and selflessness that FE workers (especially teachers) claimed as evidence of their dedication to 'putting the learner first'. Attitudes and deeds that conveyed a sense of devotion, duty and personal sacrifice carried significance, and therefore capital in an FE organisation where people's claims functioned as 'virtue-signalling'. An excellent example of this is provided by one teacher who pointed out that:

"I got good results basically because I am extremely committed to my role and covered 2 classes simultaneously for 6 months" (respondent 385).

Classroom interaction with students was greatly valued. Respondents identified "Working with the students" (respondent 147, teacher) and "My relationship with students" (respondent 150, teacher) as factors that enhanced professionalism. Caring was regarded as an intrinsic property of these relationships and was demonstrated in comments that valued the "pastoral care for my students" (respondent 101, teacher) and "Working with my team to ensure that the learners have *every* opportunity to achieve" (respondent 116, middle manager *my italics*). Underpinning this was a clear sense of commitment to developing learners and helping them succeed, singling out the importance of:

“Teaching and preparing our young people for the future either in employment or further study in University... We [i.e. teachers] essentially mould their futures. I really love the job...” (respondent 100, teacher).

Going that Extra Mile

Devotion to the task, even under hardship, is a traditional characterisation of ‘vocation’. Although the term itself was rarely used by respondents, its association with altruism and selflessness was self-evident:

“I love working in FE. Although the fiscal and political climate is really hard at the moment, *nothing would stop me* trying to do the best for our students and making a difference to people's lives.” (respondent 248, senior manager, *my italics*)

Another responded: “We are brilliant teachers and are in it for the learners and not the money! (respondent 138, middle manager). ‘Vocation’ was demonstrated by a willingness to make personal sacrifices:

“I work mainly with level 1 and 2 students from deprived areas, they *need* to be taught, they need to come into college every day. I also spend a lot of my own money (my husband was made redundant so I do not have a great household income - and now my wage has been cut) to buy things for the students - otherwise they would not be able to do the work they *need* to do.” (respondent 151, teacher, *my italics*)

In such cases, providing a good service to students was constructed as a *moral* obligation, where working ‘beyond the call of duty’ offered direct evidence of ‘putting students first’. This commitment included making personal sacrifices, even if these came with ‘costs’ to respondents. Fulfilling student expectations and maintaining a high-quality service under conditions of tight resourcing were regarded as honourable. Examples included working across two roles simultaneously and stepping up to a higher role in an interim capacity, tasks unlikely to be remunerated, but which ensured students were not disadvantaged by funding and staffing cuts.

Enabling Students to Achieve

Enabling students to “achieve” was an important element of professionalism. Achievement, which took several forms, underscored staff’s belief they were making a valuable contribution to learners and wider society, with staff expressing pride in these accomplishments. One teacher spoke of their “track record” (respondent 66) in developing “managers of the future”, while another referred to:

“the sense of knowing your contribution to the organisation is effectively changing students’ lives - it's a very empowering feeling” (respondent 345)

Respondents highlighted “Preparing students for HE” (respondent 423, teacher), “Enabling young people to achieve their career ambitions” (respondent 352, middle manager) and “Teaching and training individuals and seeing them progress as engineers and citizens” (respondent 139, middle manager) as examples of their ‘transformative’ role. ‘Making a difference’ and ‘changing student lives’ were identified across different roles:

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Teacher | “ <i>Making a</i> [difference] to the lives of young people outside of the classroom” (respondent 123) |
| Curriculum Support Worker | “the sense of achievement when a learner succeeds - knowing that I have <i>made a difference</i> and that <i>the learners’ life has been improved</i> ” (respondent 190) |
| Middle Manager | “The chance to <i>change lives</i> ” (respondent 152) |
| Senior Manager | “ <i>Making a difference</i> to people's lives. Standing up for those who are less fortunate than me” (respondent 248) |

Respondents saw themselves as ‘life-changers’ and ‘improvement agents’ which gave individuals opportunities for professional satisfaction and validation. More than a third

contained the terms ‘success’ ‘succeeded’, ‘excellence’ and ‘achievement’. This was ill-defined in some cases, but in others it related to specific outcomes such as:

“Their successes in regional, national, and international competitions and awards and on into employment and self-employment.” (respondent 150, teacher)

Enabling students to achieve, which was often characterised in terms of pass rates, retention, attendance and progression (the so-called ‘hard’ outcomes), may be unsurprising in a culture where self-assessment and inspection are dominant orthodoxies. However, progression to higher education or employment was not just a student success story but a symbol of a teachers’ success and competence in their role.

Redemption and Compensation

For those who worked in GFE colleges and Adult & Community institutions, who were a majority in this survey, respondents drew on a concept of ‘the disadvantaged learner’. Positioning students as ‘failures of the school system’ enabled respondents to accentuate the social significance of their role.

“I believe that I have a passion for teaching others to become valued and skilled in life, and enjoy the challenge of supporting those that have *little self-belief* in themselves and watching them progress. I am *only* here because I value learners gaining life skills.”
(respondent 99, middle manager, *my italics*)

‘Redemption narratives’, like this one, hinted at the agency teachers invested in their roles. “Enabling students to achieve well *because* of my subject knowledge and teaching skills” (respondent 47, teacher, *my italics*) and claiming “*it is my planning* that enables students to pass their exams and progress.” (respondent 306, teacher, *my italics*) were further examples. Another senior manager celebrated “The results *we* achieve for learners” (respondent 81, senior manager, *my italics*). In these instances, teachers and managers saw

themselves as instruments of change which positioned students passively. Another teacher referred to:

“Seeing learners coming in at one level and seeing them move on to a higher level. We are the *court of second chance* for many...” (respondent 66, teacher, *my italics*)

The reference to ‘court of second chance’ illustrated the power and oversight some respondents ascribed to their role. These comments stood in contradiction to the lack of autonomy presented in many teacher narratives. Furthermore, some drew on a view that the education system was rigged against working-class students aspiring to a vocational career, which produced responses ranging from protection to outrage. No specific criteria for defining the working-class could be discerned, but it was evident that ministers were not characterised as sharing the same background as FE students (see section 7.3.1 – Policy Assault).

Largely missing from respondent narratives were references to ‘softer’ measures of success such as students’ ‘love of learning’, improvement in self-esteem, greater resilience, a developing ‘sense of enquiry’ or moral character, or their advance in maturity or sociability. None of these properties were readily identified with ‘professional’ work. There was no reference at all to ‘imagination’ or ‘student independence’ as professional objectives, and accounts of creativity did not focus on students, either as a desire to develop ‘creative students’ or an intention to nurture students’ creativity. The absence of these properties from respondents’ discourse suggested they did not function as capital-enhancing strategies in the FE field.

Summary

There was a strong ‘ethic of care’ reflected in many respondents’ descriptions of ‘professional’. These indicated a dominant ‘student-first’ value system operating across FE institutions. Though ‘vocation’ was hardly mentioned, respondents expressed a clear sense

of dedication. An 'ethic of care' was most visibly demonstrated by examples of personal sacrifice that ensured students were not disadvantaged by changes to economics or staffing. 'Making a difference' was represented across all positions in the FE hierarchy. A commitment to student achievement was also important, though this tended to refer to 'hard measures' (e.g. pass rates). There was little mention of creativity, imagination or citizenship in concepts of 'student service'.

7.2.4 THEME 4: SOCIAL CAPITAL - APPROVAL SEEKING

This theme considered the importance of getting recognition and approval from significant others at work, including feedback from students, colleagues and managers. Approval-seeking behaviours develop and sustain social capital. Gaining approval strengthens an individual's relationships and sense of belonging, and with approval comes an enhanced legitimacy that promotes personal reputation (symbolic efficacy).

Feedback from Students

Evidence from respondent comments suggested that feedback, more than any other activity, reinforced a person's sense of legitimacy at work. Feedback was tangible and provided an evidence base for respondents to be recognised and acknowledged. As one middle manager enthusiastically declared, what made them feel more professional was:

"Comments from students...Comments from parents. Comments from employers"
(respondent 170)

Another teacher spoke of the importance of:

"Feedback from my students and their achievements. Feedback and collaboration with my line manager and work colleagues" (respondent 285)

Getting positive feedback from those held to be significant adjudicators of legitimacy – students, managers, parents, inspectors and awarding bodies – was central to reputation which could earn trust and privileges from managers such as autonomy.

Recognition from students, via formal and informal feedback routes, represented a significant reservoir of positive (and negative) regard where professionalism could be enhanced or challenged. This was particularly pronounced amongst teachers. An enhanced professionalism came from:

“The feedback from my students when they finish their course. Students that have left that contact me to reaffirm that they were taught industry standards and *grateful* for the guidance I give” (respondent 271, teacher; *my italics*)

Feedback confirmed the ongoing credibility of respondents’ work as well as demonstrate a student’s gratitude and indebtedness. As another teacher confessed:

“Feedback from my students - they *appreciate* what I'm doing and value my skills and knowledge” (respondent 469, teacher, *my italics*)

Feedback was highlighted as a means of validating respondents’ contribution and effectiveness, for example, “When learners stay in touch to tell us how they are progressing when they leave, you know you've done something right” (respondent 69, teacher). Feedback, whether written or verbal, provided recognition of respondents’ expertise and contributed directly to the respondent’s sense of worth. This feedback demonstrated “just how much a good tutor is fully respected and appreciated” (respondent 100, teacher).

Feedback from Managers, Colleagues and External Parties

Feedback from peers, managers and other stakeholders were also highlighted as important. Professionalism was enhanced by “Being taken seriously! Being respected by senior staff” (respondent 49, teacher), while another highlighted the importance of “My manager’s comments confirming that I do a great job” (respondent, 271, teacher). This was true of

senior managers, with one claiming that “The feedback that I receive from the community about my students enhance[s] my sense of doing a worthwhile job” (respondent 158, senior manager). Comments like these emphasised how good feedback could enhance both personal and institutional reputations. In a handful of cases, “positive feedback and grades from...Ofsted inspectors” (respondent 300, middle manager) were professionalising factors, though, overall, both teacher observation and OFSTED were negatively regarded in this survey.

A strengthened professionalism was also linked to a sense of belonging and the importance of trusting relationships. One teacher stated that “Relationships with other staff are key to my feeling valued and valuing my place of work” (respondent 364, teacher), while a middle manager remarked that “the positive working relationships and projects with colleagues has made me feel that I am working in a profession at times” (respondent 300). Gaining approval, along with a sense of belonging, was linked to the establishment of positive relationships where trust was a precondition to feeling valued.

Respondents associated trust with openness, integrity and respect for one’s judgement, acknowledging the importance of “working with close colleagues” (respondent 416, teacher) and a “Team connection” (respondent 316, teacher). Trusting relationships could be inferred from comments about job autonomy and working with staff ‘similar to me’. Trust was created when there was “Respect and consideration from line manager and colleagues.” (respondent 435, teacher)

In high trust conditions, staff were more likely to give and receive support to each other; in lower trust environments, staff spoke of a lack of support. Responses could be generalised, for example:

“Support from the organisation, line manager, colleagues to delivery effective learning programmes” (respondent 281, teacher)

In other cases, they explicitly referred to the act of “Being supported from management” (respondent 518, job role). Management support was valued when it helped teachers set and maintain standards of conduct for students, or by encouraging individuals to take on

new responsibilities within the organisation. Some managers also acknowledged the importance of developing a climate of participation with staff, for example:

“Supporting my team towards outstanding and encouraging them to feel part of the decision making process.” (respondent 112, middle manager).

Summary

Common across these statements, and symptomatic of much of the commentary on question 41, was the association of professionalism with ‘recognition’, ‘trust’, ‘respect’ and ‘feeling valued’. Recognition enabled respondents to ‘stand out’ and entailed the assignment of merit by others. Respect highlighted the importance of courteous, trusting and just relations between individuals and teams and its presence or absence was often used to denote the quality of the respondent’s working environment and relationships. Feedback was a primary avenue for staff to gauge how valued they were by students, managers and colleagues. This measure of self-worth is arguably at the heart of professionalism. When it is absent, professionalism fails to flourish.

7.2.5 THEME 5: EXCHANGING SKILLS & INFORMATION

This theme demonstrated that respondents saw social capital opportunities to exchange skills and information as a means of improving professionalism. Respondents valued time with other colleagues, both internal and external to the institution, to share expertise, information, research, experience, advice and solutions to problems.

Making Contacts and Networking

Opportunities for making contacts and networking with peers to exchange skills and information were greatly valued. These exchanges could happen in both real-time and virtual environments, were visible at conferences, meetings and staff development events,

and to a lesser extent in organisational meetings. A selection of extracts on the value ascribed to these exchanges is presented below (*my italics*).

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Curriculum Support Worker | “Being able to make a difference and share knowledge... Mostly <i>sharing ideas</i> and exchanging ideas with other professionals around the country in networking groups”. (respondent 78) |
| Teacher | “Having meetings with a wide range of stakeholders present <i>clarifies</i> my role from an organisational point of view”. (respondent 13) |
| Middle Manager | “ <i>Being up to date</i> with what is going on in the sector. Networking with other 'professionals' and attending meetings within my organisation.” (respondent 148) |
| Senior Manager | “ <i>Direct dealings</i> with the SFA [Skills Funding Agency]” (respondent 309). |

Exchanges indicated two main benefits to individuals. First, they were important information-giving transactions, which aided job clarity, brokered new understandings on work activities, informed on sector developments and enriched the repertoire of ideas, skills and knowledge (and therefore cultural capital) that individuals held. These exchanges sometimes led to the re-calibration of standards and expertise as government, inspection or curriculum priorities and norms shifted, and with it, the knowledge and criteria designating ‘legitimate’ practice. Second, exchanges represented important social transactions, where individuals could get support and advice from those in similar positions who were facing comparable challenges. For some, it was also an opportunity to communicate directly with important stakeholders, for example:

“Liaison with external agencies has repeatedly shown that mental health support at [XXXX] College is valued and is a reason why some students choose to come here as opposed to other local providers”. (respondent 142, CSW)

The affirmation that external agencies or forums could provide respondents was a palpable demonstration of how such events operated as ‘acts of consecration’, which could affirm and legitimise approaches to work taken by individuals or groups. These exchanges were important for eliciting ‘recognition’ from external parties in the absence of perceived support from the respondent’s own organisation. For example:

“Meeting with external professionals such as the local council and employers and realising that they value what you have to say and offer to support the local economy which doesn’t always feel supported back in the workplace by some senior levels.”
(respondent 143, middle manager)

Being Consulted by Others

“Being asked and listened to” (respondent 193, teacher) was integral to the experience of professionalism. Colleagues were important. Respondents valued “Respect from colleagues and team members who value my advice and opinion” (respondent 112, middle manager) and “Co-workers asking for a professional opinion or judgement” (respondent 369, CSW).

Consultation by managers was judged to be especially significant. For example, one teacher felt valued:

“When senior managers do actually consult lecturers directly about what they do, or are going to have to do as part of their job role or role change; for example, working with staff to find the best type of course for them to deliver based on experience and qualifications (subject knowledge).” (respondent 122, teacher)

Other instances when consultation was valued included “productive and informative appraisals” (respondent 520, teacher) and “Being asked my opinion before management

make decisions which affect myself, my learners and my colleagues” (respondent 530, teacher). When individuals were consulted, it provided affirmation of their expertise, status and worth, for example:

“being consulted, trusted, respected for knowledge and competence by management, colleagues” (respondent 388, CSW)

From the few comments submitted by trade union representatives, it was evident that the opportunity to work alongside senior managers was highly prized, in which consultation carried for them a certain distinction.

“My line manager and senior managers ask my opinion and as a union rep [representative] I am consulted on policy and other college issues.” (respondent 297, teacher)

Summary

Building relationships, alliances and networks can be important for reinforcing staff’s sense of belonging and solidarity at work, as well as providing important sources of information, skills and contacts for improving individual expertise and standing. When staff are asked for their opinion, or feel that others are listening to their ideas, this increases both the quality of their participation and the perceived respect that accrues from this, which enhances professionalism.

7.2.6 FACTORS THAT ENHANCED PROFESSIONALISM – A SUMMARY

Professionalism could be enhanced by acquiring *cultural capital* e.g. by gaining qualifications and skills, taking on recognised roles to develop others, or by signalling an explicit commitment to students even if that meant personal sacrifice; or by improving *social capital*, e.g. by engaging in collegial activities, external networks or approval-seeking behaviours. Opportunities to build cultural capital also enhanced social capital, and vice versa, as networks promoted exchanges of intelligence and resources. FE agents used their

power and resources to strengthen their positional status (e.g. by working as a staff development trainer or by attachment to the quality improvement team). By improving cultural and social capital, individuals were better placed to advance their symbolic and economic capital. However, as the next section illustrates, individuals also used their position to prevent others from acquiring capital, which inhibited and weakened professionalism.

7.3 Factors that Weaken Professionalism

A loss of capital weakened professionalism by causing a loss of status. ‘Contesting’ described challenges to people’s status, denoting attempts by individuals to acquire or protect capital to improve or maintain their position (Bourdieu, 1990). When cultural capital was contested, respondents questioned the belief-systems and orthodoxies that underpinned appropriate ways of thinking and acting in the field; when social capital was contested, they disputed the legitimacy of social networks and existing monopolies on decision-making; and when economic capital was contested, they challenged the equity of the economic privileges afforded by work.

7.3.1 CONTESTING CULTURAL CAPITAL

We Are an Irrelevance - Policy Assault from Above

Criticisms of government policymaking were contests of *cultural capital* because respondents’ believed policymakers held illegitimate views about FE and its purpose. Many practitioners felt this led to uninformed policymaking:

“...Government massively undervalues the impact of the Further Education sector on developing the adults of the future who will provide prosperity to the UK going forward. [It] fails to recognise what Further Education offers to young people in terms of helping them make the transition into adulthood from school...[It] is invaluable and ensures that those young people live valuable and productive lives in the future. This cannot be bought on the cheap.” (respondent 189, senior manager)

Complaints about underfunding reflected many respondents' views that ministers did not value FE despite a rhetoric of employability and skills. The same senior manager suggested FE compared less well to the funding settlements for both schools and universities which reinforced the longstanding image of FE as:

“...the Cinderella of the education sector and I remember quoting this in my very first BA in Education assignment, and nothing has changed 20 years on. Very sad”.

While Cinderella had a glamorous resolution, this contrasted with respondents' bleak prognosis on the sector's financial position. Comments referred to “the constant 'battering' that FE experiences from government” (respondent 148) and being treated as:

“... an irrelevance and source of revenue expenditure rather than the investment in skills and wellbeing with a high rate of return” (respondent 239, senior manager)

Further education, unlike schools and universities, was positioned as a sector vulnerable to ministerial whims:

“...the government has *slashed* funding while universities and schools are relatively untouched in comparison. The fact that the government repealed the [...] legislation of 2007. Clearly so they were not required to fund ITE [*initial teacher education*] for the sector. The fact that we are being *forced* to deliver E and M (*English & Maths*) grade C and above for learners who have spent 5 years in in Schools failing to achieve. *Lacky* of the government” (respondent 169, senior manager, *my italics and emphasis*).

This quote, and others like it, underscored the powerlessness some felt towards a policy approach they believed was unfair and unaccountable. Change was mostly portrayed as excessive, ill-informed and unnecessary, with a number accusing ministers of ‘ignorance’ about the work of FE, and behaving like a ‘fish out of water’, bemoaning:

“The lack of understanding of the value of FE within Government circles. The lack of recognition of the importance a second chance can be to the life chances of individuals and the impact it has on society” (respondent 81, senior manager)

It was felt ministers did not understand “the nature of the FE learner (i.e. diverse, underachieving, disaffected etc” (respondent 190, curriculum support worker), or care about their aspirations, and were therefore culpable for the sector’s funding problem.

“The sector is being drained of income and is completely disrespected by the tory government. I would suspect that none of them have even been into one! I deal with adults, and here we deal with the vulnerable and disaffected...However, this government does not deem these individuals relevant to society, and should not have aspirational thoughts. This government...are adamant that only their children have a right to university education; the rest of us must go the apprenticeship route, which is why they are throwing millions at it. How dare the poor have aspirations! (respondent 378, teacher).

Not surprisingly, FE policymaking was sometimes cast as a class-based ‘assault’ on working class aspiration (e.g. only the ‘children of ministers’ go to elite universities). Here, respondents challenged the perception of ‘irrelevance’ and instead highlighted the importance of giving students new opportunities for social mobility. Several pointed to a duplicity in government rhetoric, which allowed “Constant scathing and relentless cuts despite all politicians agreeing that we need more technicians, apprentices and engineers” (respondent 139, middle manager). The government’s emphasis on ‘success’ was also challenged as hollow:

“My college recently achieved a fabulous result at our recent Ofsted inspection, and not a week later we were looking to see how we could save £7 million from our current budget whilst trying to maintain the very high standards achieved. This can cause stress and anxiety as we see the very resources which got us to a great place, stripped as we struggle to face further Government cuts in the FE budget. Can be very frustrating for hard working and dedicated professionals” (respondent 189, senior manager).

Accordingly, the FE sector faced something of a ‘Hobson’s choice’. Success or failure, managers complained that policymaking:

“...undermine[d] morale as teams work harder and harder to achieve ever increasing demands which results in some feeling that whatever they do will be brought into constant question” (respondent 143, middle manager).

Perpetual policy re-invention and regurgitation coupled with cyclical waves of funding cuts conveyed to respondents a sense of worthlessness and ‘professional impotence’. Government and OFSTED were also accused of unfairly perpetuating a view of FE ‘in need of fixing’ and criticised the power of OFSTED judgements to make or break institutional reputations.

“A succession of government intrusions in education of the most uninformed and ignorant kind, policed by OFSTED, an organisation that in 20 years has spectacularly failed, at great cost, to improve education services, diminishes the role of qualified educators” (respondent 219, middle manager)

Some suggested that the sector was “Being unreasonably held accountable by government and Ofsted for failures of social policy” (respondent 157, middle manager). For example, one senior manager indicated the scale of the English and Maths re-sit requirement which saw students:

“Picking up English and Mathematics in 1 year where individuals have not been successful in 7 years of secondary school education!” (respondent 361).

Not only did these policies put pressures on staffing resources, respondents were critical of OFSTED’s failure to recognise these social pressures in their reports, and more widely, condemned inspectors’ approach to grading teacher performance.

“...how rich it is that a twenty-minute observation that may involve a difficult learning situation, can be criticised to a point that teachers lose the will to carry on. No wonder so many people are exiting...” (respondent 263, senior manager).

Respondents blamed the ‘stress of Ofsted inspections’ (respondent 275), the ‘pressure to tick Ofsted’s boxes’ (respondent 517) and a process where inspectors “actively look for the

negative” (respondent 429) as instances that emasculated their self-efficacy and professionalism. Accusing OFSTED of being obsessed with data rather than “real life experiences”, another respondent concluded that:

“...they are a waste of government money and can make teachers feel degraded and worthless with their comments” (respondent 99, middle manager).

At best, respondents saw inspection as a distraction; at worst, they saw it as a pretext for a new round of admonishments, policy assaults and funding cuts that would lead to further uncertainty and turbulence in the FE sector. A negative policy climate was blamed for a:

“Lack of recognition within society for the difficult job we have to do. I must be bonkers doing this job”. (respondent 408)

The Wrong Priorities - Criticisms of the ‘Data Culture’

This theme exposed divisions between managers and teachers in how they positioned data as a mobilising driver of FE practice. The ‘data culture’ is arguably the predominant *modus operandi* governing FE operations and activities. For managers, producing ‘good data’ was good business because it gave institutions a competitive advantage:

“I work as Head of Department in a GFE College. We are a *results-led organisation* which has embraced the *current philosophy* of post 16 education. The job role is simply to be *better than any other college* regionally and nationally in terms of results and positive outcomes for our students” (respondent 91, middle manager; *my italics*).

In managers’ terms, institutions that produced ‘better data’ were more likely to attract new students and ensure institutional longevity. The production of ‘good data’ was therefore an intrinsic obligation of people’s work since it provided ‘hard’ evidence that work was being performed ‘correctly’. It meant practitioners were preoccupied with:

“...making sure all data is up to date and setting the standards and maintaining them throughout the year...If I can go home knowing I have done the best I can and done *what I am supposed to do.*” (respondent 43, teacher, *my italics*).

Not only could producing ‘good data’ profiles enhance an institution’s reputation, it increased the likelihood of courses running in the next academic year:

“FE is much more a business model than it ever was. If RAS [*retention, achievement, success*] data is strong then the likelihood of courses running is good. However, if something goes wrong the course is likely to be cut”. (respondent 5, teacher)

Teachers criticised the dependence on ‘data profiles’ to determine course viability; however, producing ‘good data’ was a ‘high stakes’ activity where compliance could preserve courses, jobs and reputations. Data, in its ‘snapshot’ state, was perceived to be an imperfect representation of the student experience:

“The role of the lecturer seems to be changing to become a process not of developing the individual but of meeting targets...The emphasis on data and measurable outcomes *diminishes* not only the learning experience and breadth of the curriculum, but also undermines professional judgement: I am not charged with what is best for the student but what is best for the college” (respondent 199, teacher, *my italics*).

For some teachers, the ‘data culture’ was alleged to be “at odds with public sector values” (respondent 261, teacher). It was not always clear what these ‘values’ pertained to, but they nearly always embodied an objection to education as a profit-based enterprise.

“[The] Priority of FE seems now to be making money, not providing the best education for the students.” (respondent 500, teacher)

‘Profit’, as a motive for practice, was contrasted with a student-needs approach based on student care and support. Such dispositions embodied an alternative, if not increasingly ‘out-dated’, form of cultural capital:

“Education is not what it used to be when I started teaching and it is for this reason that I won't recommend it to people wanting to come into the profession. This is really sad as education is the key to life and is as necessary as access to good health care, water and food. Teachers should be *allowed* to get on and do the job they're meant to do, not have to *pander* to tick box requirements and fulfil government's other agendas. Politics should be removed from determining what a good education is.” (respondent 250, teacher consultant, *my italics*).

The terms ‘allowed’ and ‘pander’ illustrated the degree of powerlessness some respondents ascribed to their roles. Respondents no longer recognised the sector they had first joined, and because of these impositions, no longer recommended FE as a career. Teachers reported this ‘data fixation’ as controlling, all-consuming and at times punishing, where one would be:

“Constantly reminded of poor figures and impending funding deficit looming. Reminded of Ofsted visits, grades improvement of standards, pressure to tick all Ofsted's boxes” (respondent 517, teacher)

The pressure to produce ‘good data’ and comply with management target-setting also led to certain ‘irregularities of practice’. One teacher confessed to:

“Being forced to take on students who shouldn't be on the course... And then being *forced* to get all of them to complete and pass the course.” (respondent 98, teacher; *my italics*)

In these ‘confessions’, teachers presented themselves passively, with no power to change compromising practices, which indicated a dislocation between the ‘official rhetoric’ of student-centredness and the ‘subterranean work’ required to produce ‘good data’. Managers’ ‘fixation on data’ led to accounts of teachers ‘fixing the data’ to protect their courses and jobs. Reports on ‘fixing’ were widespread, despite the duress this caused respondents:

Interviewing Students: “Being told we *have to accept students on courses* whatever their issues and motivation...This is being set up to fail. What is the point of interviewing them then? We have to get a manager to sign their agreement if they are unsuitable and then we get over-ruled.” (respondent 385, teacher, *my italics*).

Managing Students: “When other staff *lie* to the students to try and *coerce* students into doing things to achieve targets.” (Respondent 195, teacher, *my italics*).

Student Achievement: “Management have told me that I *‘have’ to pass students*, a corruption of educational standards.” (respondent 519, teacher, *my italics*)

Student Progression: “The priority is for *students to pass courses at any cost*...this is wrong, especially when students are not attending...Students are progressed to higher level courses when they are not appropriate courses and students will not achieve...problems are just passed on to the next level [of] tutors and lecturers.” (respondent 113, *my italics*).

The rhetoric of accountability that performance data purported to represent was juxtaposed with teacher accounts of ‘being forced’ to produce metrics that presented courses in preferred or ‘fabricated’ ways. ‘Good data’ was knowingly linked to securing funding streams, increasing student numbers and promoting institutional reputations, though it was clear that ‘acts of fabrication’ had a deleterious effect on professionalism, for example, by asking teachers to carry out actions that directly challenged their sense of fairness, integrity or purpose at work. In these instances, teachers complained of being ignored or marginalised by managers, experiences that often came with emotional and psychological costs such as anger, guilt, stress and shame. The ‘data culture’ was almost universally condemned by teachers for trivialising the teaching task. However, while these incidents clearly anguished staff, ‘fixing’ data was presented as an ‘unofficial’ norm of practice.

Disrespecting Expertise

The subordination of pedagogic issues to profit motivations was cast as a specific form of

disrespect by teachers which devalued their purpose and expertise. Therefore, the trivialisation of pedagogic issues was symbolically connected with the trivialisation of teachers, the relegation of their knowledge, skills and experience, and their subordination to managers.

Just as reputation was important to individuals, a loss of credibility was claimed to weaken professionalism. Three situations encouraged this: when teachers were asked to work in curricula or contexts for which they felt unqualified for (parachuting); when teachers felt their expertise was overlooked in staff training (ignoring); and when expertise of colleagues was judged to be illegitimate (impugning). The following was representative:

“Teaching a subject I am not qualified in - English GCSE [and] Being managed by people who do not have subject knowledge and experience [as an] English and Maths manager.” (respondent 423, teacher)

‘Parachuting’ referred to situations where teachers found themselves teaching in areas outside their sphere of expertise. Teachers felt out of their depth when they did not hold a relevant qualification or previous teaching/ occupational experience in the subject they were teaching. Assigning teachers to non-expert curricula was considered disrespectful.

“Managers that say the teacher is unimportant and can just deliver a lesson prepared by someone else... in my particular field of functional maths, having the subject taught by non-specialists.” (respondent 304, middle manager).

Working outside one’s expertise potentially threatened staff’s credibility and required them to work harder to maintain their ‘expert image’. Policymakers were blamed for encouraging a ‘culture of the unqualified’. One middle manager highlighted the “Lack of requirement for a teaching qualification [and consequently] feeling like the poor relation to schools and universities” (respondent 138, middle manager). Another teacher accused their awarding body of promoting qualifications so that “anyone can teach anything whether they have the facilities and appropriately educated/experienced staff or not!” (respondent 346, teacher).

'Ignoring' captured respondents' beliefs that managers were not interested in developing their expertise. Imposing financial costs on studying was one way to do this. Removing staff remission time for studying was another. High teaching loads were blamed for "squeezing CPD time" and preventing possibilities for connecting with industry. One teacher pointed to the gap between the rhetoric of CPD and the reality of access, complaining of:

"Managers paying lip service to professional development but not having enough time to develop (respondent 24, teacher).

Opportunities to develop expertise, through CPD and networking, were highly valued. However, teachers complained of a "Lack of meaningful and relevant CPD" (respondent 201, teacher), "No time for professional or subject updating of skills" (respondent 166, teacher) and events that were "repetitive, patronising or irrelevant to my area/ own practice" (respondent 58, teacher). Managers were gatekeepers of staff CPD, controlling access to valued capital-growing opportunities, determining what CPD would be available, and who could access it.

'Impugning' referred to respondents' negative characterisations of colleagues' expertise, especially when they were not considered qualified to carry out their duties. Evidence came from respondents who felt their own expertise went under-recognised:

"...there is no facility to recognise my expertise, compared to others becoming instructors/assessors. Frequently I have experience of operators barely technically competent becoming instructors/assessors. This facilitates a race to the bottom. And all industry wonders why there is a chronic skills shortage at every level. In my line of work, the consequences can easily be fatal." (respondent 310, CSW)

Professionalism was undermined by:

"Unqualified staff who hold teaching roles - some staff secure senior posts despite lacking any teaching qualifications... Qualifications being taught by non-expertise personnel e.g. a level 3 business administrator teaching health care modules, a childcare

assistant teaching anatomy and physiology or health research modules or assessment being IV'd [*internally verified*] by unqualified people (basically anyone can do it) (respondent 413, teacher)

Though it is not possible to check the authenticity of these statements, it was evident respondents used *a priori* assumptions to judge their colleagues' legitimacy. Colleagues without credentials were accused of masquerading in deception:

"I am aware that some colleagues are '*pretending*' that they can teach a subject when it is quite apparent that they cannot. Students easily pick up the lack of knowledge." (respondent 493, teacher, *my italics*)

Teachers also impugned the reputation of managers, opposing "leadership by non-teachers" and "interference from non-specialist observers". SMT's alleged 'distance' from the teaching function justified teachers' belief they lacked the required classroom expertise or competence to make informed student decisions. Typically, teachers complained of:

"Management not listening to the "grass roots" staff and making decisions they have no knowledge about. All senior management should be from a teaching background and have a full understanding of how heavy the load is at the moment for lecturers." (respondent 215, teacher)

Restricted Autonomy

Loss of autonomy was characterised as an assault on experience and expertise (cultural capital). Teachers described a climate of limited independence and innovation where practice was driven by compliance with institutional targets:

"I have no autonomy whatsoever, and the culture of the organization I work for is very controlling and infantilising. There is no room for initiative, and too great a focus on collecting data and ensuring that data is favourable" (respondent 8, teacher)

While ‘favourable data’ presented institutions in a positive light, how data was produced, and the time taken to produce it, was a source of frustration. For managers, improving data often meant re-configuring staff practices around its production, including practices that closely monitored staff performance such as lesson observations, appraisal and quality improvement frameworks focused on student outcomes and inspection needs. However, the restriction and re-prioritisation of teachers’ responsibilities by managers was described by teachers as disrespectful.

Objections to the “Constant scrutiny from Management, treating us like children and showing no trust” (respondent 132, teacher) and a culture of “Constant micro-management and target setting reducing autonomy over job” (respondent 379, teacher) were highlighted. Micro-management was closely associated with the activities of senior managers and caused resentment for staff lower in the FE hierarchy, for example:

“Not being trusted by the above to get on with the job that I've been highly trained to do (I'm more qualified in both teaching and subject area and have more experience than most of the above).” (respondent 425, teacher)

A lack of trust was most powerfully expressed when students were believed to be disadvantaged by management decisions. For example, culling student-facing services such as dyslexia assessment raised concerns that managers were putting finance before the student. The following quote confronts many of these confidence and trust issues:

“Ulterior motives - the real reasons behind changes. Not being trusted or appreciated or acknowledged. Not allowing us to have a voice as the learners do. Making us feel worthless in our efforts, complaints and actions. Undermining us in the classroom and our views.” (respondent 56, teacher)

Management practices were described as almost always involving a re-location of decision-making away from teachers to upper management teams. This drew criticisms from teaching staff. One teacher complained that “managers were not interested in developing new courses or consulting tutors in course development [as] decisions were imposed from

above” (respondent 453, teacher). Another teacher felt that classroom decisions had been completely removed from their jurisdiction, illustrated by “not being *allowed* to make daily decisions which would help learners, e.g. reward them with a 10 min early finish for hard work for example” (respondent 240, teacher, *my italics*). These practices conflicted with teachers’ views that “being trusted and allowed to teach my own way is important in feeling like a professional” (respondent 20, teacher).

Managers’ use of teacher observation also weakened professionalism. Most teachers did not see this as developmental but as a process of surveillance. Teachers objected to “Having every aspect of my teaching scrutinised even though I have been teaching a long time” (respondent 424, teacher) and believed observation served to:

“...pick out anything that does not meet the current 'approach' to teaching effectively and use it as a way to down grade the lesson. I am thinking specifically of times when 'teacher talk' (i.e. lecturing, which is my job) is identified as less effective than ideas such as getting students to write lots of things on post-it notes...” (respondent 122, teacher)

What constituted ‘good teaching’ could therefore be a contested issue. Managers’ regulation of practices also extended to how staff used their time outside class, for example, a manager “questioning time off for a hospital appointment/funeral” (respondent 333, teacher). For one manager who left their employment, they complained of:

“Managers that say you must be in the staff-room at all times if you are not in a lesson...Managers who think that unless they check your planning, you won't do any. Managers who say you couldn't work at home as your children would be too distracting, oblivious to the fact that we regularly plan or mark in the evenings or weekends. Needless to say, I left the organisation where these managers worked” (respondent 304, middle manager).

Management restrictions on how to plan, teach and spend time with students generated disagreements over who was most competent to make pedagogic decisions. Managers who “dictate[d] changes before gathering all information to enable them to make informed

choices” (respondent 358, teacher) were challenged as both uninformed and patronising. Overall, the FE culture was depicted as over-controlling, conformist and petty:

“there is no autonomy...It is impossible to get things done. The focus is on small stuff - the processes etc and not the big picture. They take people who have come in from industry and instead of changing to work more professionally, they expect them to conform to the way things have always been done ... There are lots of petty restrictions which, together with an opaque decision making process, make progress nigh on impossible to achieve.” (respondent 339, middle manager).

Even middle managers felt constrained by this culture. Use of ‘they’ in comments suggested a distancing from the practices of senior managers, acknowledging a tension that while industry experts were needed in FE, they were not expected to challenge the status quo. Overall, restricted autonomy and a coercive management climate was held to be the responsibility of senior managers. Here, low trust and a disregard for teacher expertise, compromised teachers’ efforts in the classroom. Some middle managers also contested their limited autonomy and what they perceived to be an ‘out-of-touch’ senior management autocracy.

Summary

Cultural capital is a major source of professional advantage and unsurprisingly, perhaps, it was deeply contested. A consistent complaint from FE respondents in this survey was the perceived low regard that FE was held in by ministers and policymakers. The relentless policy assault, which was often mentioned alongside funding cuts, was argued to be a result of ministers failing to understand or appreciate the value that FE institutions offered students and communities seeking a trade, university or life skills. This was countered by respondents’ use of compensatory and redemptive narratives that emphasised the social significance of their work. However, in respect of policy and OFSTED interventions, views presented the sector as a passive spectator, with little power to mediate or alter the policy trajectory. OFSTED was a factor that, overall, weakened people’s experience of professionalism. It was neither seen as valid or supportive, but rather an extension of government and complicit in perpetuating a ‘discourse of derision’. The effects of OFSTED

were often manifest in conflicts about priorities, in which ‘hard’ data, and the competence needed to produce this, was set against teachers’ expertise and the autonomy they valued in ensuring student success. Comments illustrated the circulation of ‘competing logics’ that supported different interpretations of expertise and what was ‘in the student interest’. This dissonance was most acutely demonstrated in confessions of ‘data fixing’.

7.3.2 CONTESTING SOCIAL CAPITAL

Being Excluded from Decisions and Networks

Just as inclusion strengthened social capital, exclusion weakened it. Reports of exclusion were usually accompanied by feelings of low worth and esteem, and was equated with a:

“...culture of not being valued and respected and not being [a] credit as an employee. Not being heard and listened to as an employee. Not being treated equally or fairly at work.” (respondent 64, teacher)

“Not being consulted” and “not being listened to” were frequent criticisms. These tended to come from teachers, support workers and, to a lesser extent, middle managers, although not senior managers. ‘Being excluded’ was described as part of a broader, hostile management culture that did not encourage staff to see themselves as valuable contributors to college decision-making processes. Senior managers were blamed for this culture, and were presented as aloof, unsympathetic and ‘dismissive’ towards staff lower in the hierarchy.

“The senior management frequently make decisions affecting the classroom without understanding the impact of these. They do not consult staff beforehand and are dismissive of negative feedback.” (respondent 155, teacher)

Another teacher expressed frustration at:

“Constantly being ignored when decisions are being taken and systems and procedures

being put in place which do not work, never have worked and senior management who do not have to use the systems insist on putting [them] in because it is their idea without proper consultation and LISTENING TO the people who will have to use the systems.” (respondent 335, teacher, original capitals)

Teachers, in particular, saw their exclusion from these consultation and decision processes as an example of senior managers’ disregard for teachers’ expertise. These exclusions were perceived as a...

“Lack of respect of SMT [*Senior Management Team*] shown to the body of the staff...Senior managers and teaching staff should be equal partners in the development and achievements of the organisation, rather than a hierarchical system of impositions and auditing mechanisms.” (respondent 285, teacher).

Senior managers, as the most elevated positions in the FE institution, were accused by teachers of using their position to push through unpalatable or motivated decisions without testing these in critical discussion with the staff corpus. Decisions were seen as opaque, interest-driven and poorly communicated.

“Where does one start? Management does not communicate or consult with staff. It seems that they presume, because they are paid the big bucks, that they know best. Changes are often made without informing staff so we end up looking as if we don't know what we are doing in front of the students.” (respondent 519, teacher)

This had implications for teachers’ own credibility when things didn’t work, especially if this exposed them at the ‘frontline’ with students:

“I find my role undermined by not being consulted on decisions that are made which effect my ability to plan a lesson or course of study. This might take the form of students being taken out of groups half way through their learning or finding that the students have been told to do something else when I actually have been waiting to take a lesson.” (respondent 27, teacher)

References to ‘top-down decision-making’ described situations when teachers were “expected to perform duties against [their] own professional judgement”. For many teachers, it was the remoteness of senior managers from the ‘frontline’ that meant decisions were not always appropriate, tested or relevant to the audience they were intended for:

“What is also irritating is the fact *they* consistently make decisions without ever consulting us as to whether or not they are workable. Senior management are always trying to put square pegs into round wholes by virtue of the fact that they have never taught before, *they* see the college as a business (which of course it is) but *they* are totally unaware of workability of what they are proposing.” (respondent 498, teacher, *my italics*)

The use of ‘they’ again illustrated a form of ‘distancing’ respondents used to disassociate themselves from SMT decisions. Where these related to pedagogy and students, where teachers believed they were specialists, exclusion mostly signalled a:

“...lack of trust in what we do from senior management...Not being given the tools to deal with situations or the backing of managers. (respondent 123, teacher)

However, perceptions of being an ‘outsider’ were not just about teacher-manager relations:

“Learning Support is often seen as an ‘add on’, rather than an essential element of some students’ education...Sometimes academic tutors look down on learning support tutors – in that we are not equals.” (respondent 447, CSW).

These comments described learning support workers as ‘standing in the shadow’ of academic staff because their expertise was perceived as ‘something less’ than the expertise of their ‘academic colleagues’. Exclusion was also felt by part-timers whose ‘invisibility’ had implications for recognition, access to feedback and opportunities for development:

“Not being included in staff meetings. Not having regular hours...Not being listened to. Not being supported in the same way that staff with fixed hours are treated. Not

receiving personal development reviews from the appropriate line manager to my teaching... I need support in exploring options for the development in my teaching career and I do not feel that I can access this support and advice at my place of work.”
(respondent 476, teacher)

Exclusion, as a form of social closure, not only constrained options for gaining social capital, it narrowed the possibilities for acquiring cultural capital. Many suggested that exclusion could be deliberate and calculated, for example, through forms of nepotism, favouritism and “cliques” that impeded ‘fair’ access to people, information, and even promotions. One respondent described the:

“Appalling nepotism where less qualified and experienced members [of] staff are given promotion over others and treated more favourably due to being related to senior management”. (respondent 530, teacher)

Feelings of exclusion could be heightened when “hard work and commitment is ignored or when others [are] rewarded for your hard work” (respondent 41, teacher). “Seeing great staff treated badly and ‘other’ staff getting away with murder” also magnified this (respondent 195, teacher). These acts, and many like it, were restraints on capital-growing, keeping some staff (mainly teachers and CSWs) at the periphery of institutional activity. This could impact on staff well-being when staff were expected to maintain a positive outward appearance despite their belief that whatever they did, and whatever their expertise, their efforts would always be ignored:

“People appear to be promoted simply because they're in the right place and the right time, or sharing an office with someone. I sound bitter - and I am, but I have worked my socks off all my life. I have three degrees, professional qualifications, teach for the OU [*Open University*] outside of college, work as an internal inspector, and have only ever given my all, and with an outward smile. I just don't want to do it anymore. I'm more than burnt out. I'm a pile of ashes.” (respondent 365, middle manager)

Being Criticised and Threatened by Others

Failure to comply with management targets or procedures could invoke a range of reactive, and occasionally intimidatory, responses from managers to correct behaviour, where non-compliance with could lead to social marginalisation. This included management criticism of staff behaviours and acts of threatening or bullying behaviour. Capturing both elements, one teacher lamented:

“Being blamed and punished for the wrong reasons, either as punishment or in order to improve performance or set an example. Having a culture of harassment and bullying at work.” (respondent 64, teacher).

In respect of staff criticism, management communication was described as derogatory and insulting, and indicative of a ‘blame culture’:

“There is an increasing culture of blame in FE. If students do not attend college or fail a course. it is the teacher’s fault...we are asked to take unsuitable students on to courses to make up numbers but then get penalised if success rates fall.” (respondent 109, teacher).

Criticism, especially when it was viewed as pernicious or unfair, was received as an assault on one’s personal reputation, and caused negative emotions such as anxiety, anger and detachment. These instances amplified feelings of low worth and institutional dislocation. Respondents complained of “being patronised” and senior managers “using the word ‘unprofessional’ lightly” (respondent 145, middle manager). Teachers objected to the “constant checks with negative feedback” (respondent 234, teacher) and “staff meetings where you manager ridicules you in front of colleagues” (respondent 512, teacher). These comments, aimed at SMT and some middle managers, reflected a sense of despair and hopelessness expressed towards a management culture many saw as “backstabbing” (respondent 265, middle manager) and unsupportive, in which:

“No matter how well the team, or I do, we are always wrong or ignored.”
(respondent 337, middle manager)

The second element saw the phrase ‘culture of fear’ used several times. ‘Threat’ came in many forms. Some emphasised the:

“the *constant pressure* and feeling that we are not keeping up with expectations of the organisation” (respondent 47, teacher, *my italics*).

Another expressed “continuous worry” over meeting SMT targets (respondent 273, teacher), while a third described the “pressure to apply technology inappropriately and the sense of *belittling* if you take issue with it” (respondent 336, teacher, *my italics*). The pressure to conform to certain ways of behaving undermined professionalism. The ever-present potential for OFSTED to call a ‘no notice inspection’ was blamed by teachers for a relentless state of vigilance that many found stressful. Another called attention to the “lack of respect and support from management” (respondent 380, teacher) created by the demands to meet top-down targets. In the words of another middle manager, this produced an ‘unhealthy’ sector, where:

“the collusion of many Principles [sic] and senior managers has contributed to the creation of an unwieldy, bullying and highly stressful system that is failing many staff and learners across the country.” (respondent 129, middle manager)

Disruptions to Courses and Teams

The volatility of the FE environment affected the stability of course teams and staff relationships, and therefore constrained the availability of social capital. Staff re-organisations disrupted established working patterns and dynamics, and injected insecurity and mistrust. For example, one respondent reported “Constantly feeling unglued and not trusted by high level managers” (respondent 462, CSW), while another berated a:

“Lack of staff cohesion, due to job insecurity staff are often distrustful of each other; it is difficult to remain 100% professional when you become exhausted from the stress felt by having to ‘watch your back’ (respondent 520, teacher).

Regular changes to funding exacerbated job insecurities because courses were often subject to annual viability assessments based on funding continuity and student enrolments. As student numbers were not usually confirmed until the beginning of the academic year, this could leave staff uncertain about their positions and the planning needed to prepare effectively for the year start. While those on temporary contracts were most vulnerable to these 'last-minute' decisions, those on permanent contracts also found this stressful:

"Although I am on a permanent contract each year there is always the threat of courses closing due to numbers and thus planning over the summer becomes stressful plus I do not always know what subject and level I am teaching until September when numbers are more definite" (respondent 215, teacher).

"Lack of open and transparent communication" (respondent 191, teacher) and "Lack of transparency in decision making" (respondent 64, teacher) were complaints made of managers. Another teacher criticised the "Changing classrooms, unpredictable plans, lack of cover [and] mid- year changes in policy..." (respondent 104, teacher). In a third case:

"Managers in my organisation seem keen to stop us collaborating i.e. they send me emails BCC so I can't contact others directly.... My managers seem to make things deliberately difficult! I've had enough and am not doing it any more" (respondent 525, teacher).

The loss of staff to re-structures and course re-organisations was also perceived as damaging. Issues included "Funding cuts leading to restructure and loss of staff" (respondent 115) and the "regular loss of valued colleagues" (respondent 9). Another criticised the...

"Reduction in support staff [that] has greatly impacted upon our ability to deliver good quality courses...A lack of administrative support effects recruitment initiatives. Proposed cuts to teaching and technical support will impact on teaching role and breadth of curriculum as well as the support for students." (respondent 199, teacher)

Senior managers were accused of not appreciating the disruption their decisions caused to staff teams and networks of expertise. Change could present a 'revolving door' of new staff who lacked the experience with courses and teams to make an impact. One respondent bemoaned the "Continual changing of line managers, most of whom don't know what we do or how we are supposed to do it" (respondent 533, teacher). Reflecting the problems constant change had for solid planning, another respondent noted:

"3 reorganisations in 2 years, shifting sands of Sahara having nothing on us."

(respondent 265, middle manager).

Summary

Practices of exclusion, criticism and disruption were evidenced in respondent comments and cited as major contributors to a loss of professionalism. All three practices, in different ways, represent forms of social closure. Exclusion, which referred to a lack of consultation and participation in decision-making, suggested that managers retained a monopoly on institutional decision-making which extended to issues relating to pedagogy and good teaching practice. Criticism was reserved for individuals that acted in non-compliant ways, which some suggested was part of a wider management culture of blame and rebuke. Comments that the FE culture was 'backstabbing', 'belittling' and 'nepotistic' did not indicate a positive appraisal of working conditions inside FE institutions. One problem suggested by the data was the regular disruption of teams, in which 'valued colleagues' and entire support departments could be re-structured out of the organisation. These actions could exacerbate feelings of job insecurity and vulnerability. A 'revolving door' of teaching staff and middle managers highlighted the instability of institutional existence.

7.3.3 CONTESTING ECONOMIC CAPITAL

While economic capital did not appear to play a motivating role in professionalism, several elements relating to the economics of FE were implicated in the experience of *de-professionalisation*. Two elements are reviewed here: the impact of funding cuts on the intensification of FE work; and criticisms of exploitative practices relating to pay and contracts.

Work Intensification

Much of the critique on work intensification revolved around the impact of government funding cuts, which have been a constant feature of FE life in recent years.

“Since the cuts in education and at my college I have seen mine & my colleagues’ wages decrease by £5k pa, my workload treble and the support staff wiped out and yet we are expected to keep the standards high and professional. There is more and more sickness due to stress and the team support for each other is non-existent, as we are all under pressure to reach targets and hit performance criteria”. (respondent 125, CSW).

The dramatization is vivid and striking, which sees ‘support staff wiped out’, ‘workload treble’ and team support ‘non-existent’. These were presented as the scars of enforced change and organisational upheaval brought about by funding cuts.

“Cuts, cuts, cuts - reduction of funding from Government. Jobs that are not replaced and therefore result in more work for those of us left.” (respondent 29)

In response to funding cuts, SMT were accused of initiating a policy of work intensification by refusing to replace staff who retired or resigned. Respondents complained of “having to do more work for less” (respondent 156, middle manager) as a result of:

“Reduced staffing, budgets and time. So much of the more for less approach that the elastic band has been stretched to breaking point.” (respondent 170, middle manager)

Teachers were critical of:

“Unrealistic workloads which are impossible to manage, leading to illness and feelings of failure, despite mammoth efforts. Relentless change for the sake of change (education being used as a political pawn by people who have no idea). Relentless drive for improved performance in the face of reduced budgets, increased workloads and reduced standard of living as pay effectively reduced year after year.” (respondent 432, teacher)

Another pointed to the reduction of curriculum planning time:

“More duties than I have time for. When I break down my working week, taking out meetings and verification time, I only have 15 mins per lesson to plan, prepare and mark. This shrinks if I have student issues to deal with. I can only see this getting worse as support for learners has been cut; the problems won't disappear, but the burden will fall on teaching staff to increase our already overstretched workload!” (respondent 160, teacher).

These examples exemplified the conditions under which staff reported a weakening of their professionalism. Teachers complained of a culture of “Constant pressure” (respondent 262, teacher) with “no real down time” (respondent 288, teacher), and spoke of “increased demands for data and statistics” (respondent 225, teacher) with “Too little time to plan,” (respondent 435, teacher), and “Not having enough time to support the students” (respondent 305, teacher). These conditions appeared to work against ‘putting the student first’, because they put teachers:

“...under massive time and financial pressure to teach more and more larger classes, leaving less and less time to plan and mark work and create better resources” (respondent 167, teacher)

Another illustration came from a teacher told by their manager to “compress a 32 week course into 24 weeks which severely impacts on the quality of work that we produce” (respondent 493, teacher). For teachers, reducing time for student-facing activity was represented as a downgrading of teaching and learning in management priorities:

“When someone leaves, they [*managers*] do not replace them, they just add the work to someone else's caseload. Most people are employed on 0.5-0.8 contracts - but are doing full time. This means that there is a limited amount of time to see students - whom I feel are being short-changed” (respondent 447, CSW).

Not only did staff blame “Expectations which are totally unrealistic” (respondent 501, teacher) they also complained of “increasing workload[s] for no additional remuneration”

(respondent 203, teacher). Some teachers admitted to using their own time to make up for reductions in course contact time, complaining in one case of:

“...only 1 hour for tutoring a group of students and the amount of support each student needs. To be effective, we use our own time to tutor. (respondent 271, teacher)

This example of ‘underground learning’ was not untypical. However, conditions of intensification and uncertainty took their toll on the health and well-being of staff. Staff gave examples of recurrent sickness and absence issues amongst teams. Reliance on agency staff to maintain continuity of service was also reported:

“We have had three members of our team off long term sick with stress this academic year and we have been managing with agency staff when recruitment for a permanent member of staff was badly planned the proposed employee did not turn up. I am leaving the college in 3 weeks’ time as I do not feel that I can have another year like this without my health suffering.” (respondent 87, teacher)

Emerging health difficulties were blamed on policies of intensification and poor planning by managers, which weakened staff’s professional outlook:

“I currently suffer from stress related trigeminal neuralgia and often feel anxious and depressed as a result of poorly communicated, inappropriate policies and demands on my time that stifle professionalism and creativity, thus impinging on my ability to do my job.” (respondent 431, teacher).

The blurring of public and private life was asserted in a number of submissions, in which staff worked outside their normal working hours to stay on top of workloads and management targets, as well as ensuring students were not disadvantaged.

“Most of the things I do to make a difference I do outside a normal working day. I regularly work evenings and weekends to ensure my tasks are completed. If I only worked my contracted hours the students would still be taught but would have limited enrichment or employability opportunities.” (respondent 68, middle manager)

These were conditions where staff suggested there was “too much extra time needed to be professional” (respondent 271, teacher). Overall, management intensification practices caused resentment and suffering lower in the FE hierarchy.

“I resigned from my 0.5 teaching post last year and will never go back to teaching in FE...The demands and compromises are too great” (respondent 86, teacher).

Policies of work intensification also sharpened divisions between characterisations of teaching and non-teaching roles. One criticised “Being *ordered* to complete endless admin tasks by non-teaching staff” (respondent 518, teacher, *my italics*). Another berated the “Repetition of work and paperwork tasks that would be more suited to administrators” (respondent 166, teacher). A third resented “doing administrative tasks which a *secretary* could do” (respondent 113, *my italics*). The irrelevance of administration to ‘meaningful’ work also came from middle managers: “Many of the jobs I do have very little, or no value, but are done for 'auditing' purposes” (respondent 365, middle manager). Administrative tasks were considered low status, tedious and totalising:

“we are not teachers we are now administrators” (respondent 289, teacher)

Exploitation

Pay did not materialise as a driver of professionalism but was a source of career dissatisfaction. “Low pay” (respondent 10, teacher) and pay freezes were recurrent complaints for teachers, factors identified as weakening their professionalism:

“Being paid considerably less than school teachers or university lecturers despite having the toughest cohort of students to teach” (respondent 271, teacher)

“We haven't had a pay rise for 5 years. When I began teaching in FE 11 years ago, I had to take a £7000 pay cut from my school teachers' salary. Now 11 years later I still earn less than I did 11 years ago” (respondent 297, teacher)

Unfavourable comparisons with the salaries of schoolteachers and HE staff were made by several respondents. Implicit in these statements were allegations of being disrespected by government and the general public:

“The Government and public perceptions (frequently expressed) that we are a bunch of skivers who do our very best to do the very least for our salaries. The old adage of 'if you can't do it, then teach it' is still used. I would challenge anyone so blinkered to deliver a session to our Level 1 students, and survive...” (respondent 66, teacher)

Comparisons with schoolteachers and higher education lecturers elicited counter-narratives emphasising the complexity and social desirability of FE work which served to magnify a sense of perceived inequity. These claims were strategies individuals used to re-assert their meaning, status and dignity:

“I have never understood why wages for lecturers in FE are worse than those in mainstream education or in HE; we do just as, if not [a] harder job on the type of qualifications we deliver (A-levels, Access), and often we are also having to support students who did not achieve sufficient qualifications at school, in order to get them to HE!” (respondent 122, teacher)

The relative deterioration in FE salaries was apparent to staff who had re-entered the sector on inferior pay terms. Policies of work intensification affected how respondents reported their economic status:

“The fact that if you work out the actual hours that I work with the huge amount of paperwork and other duties I'm essentially earning *minimum wage*” (respondent 425, teacher; *my italics*)

The term ‘minimum wage’ pointed to the low status of FE work brought about by the impact of work intensification on working hours. For part-timers, frustrations with contract allocation and job insecurity created cycles of anxiety as staff waited to be told whether they were needed in the next academic year. Some described this process as opaque and disingenuous, as managers obfuscated on appointment decisions:

“I have been a 0 hours contract lecturer, course leader and tutor for 4 years now and I don't understand why as a continuously good lecturer in every observation, I am not employed on a contract. It has caused huge amounts of stress with timesheets going missing, pay not being on time and eventually last summer, to homelessness for my family and I.” (respondent 101, teacher)

These were situations where individuals viewed their existence as precarious and expendable. In the above example, good performance did not appear to be rewarded with higher job security and, according to the respondent, went unappreciated, as well as led to their financial discomfort which they felt powerless to change. Several part-time respondents described situations where they were working well beyond their contract:

“I reduced my hours to 0.8 and the college increased my workload and responsibility as I am a good Course Leader. I work 45-50 hours per week which is not part time.”
(respondent 385, teacher)

Assessments of the wage-effort bargain, as evidenced in the previous quote, raised allegations of being exploited, especially when extra work done was not remunerated and where managers did not offer TOIL (time off in lieu) as compensation:

“We have not had a pay increment since I have worked for [company name], their ethos is 'more for less', where we are given more work but no extra pay or toil, morale is low among staff here, we should be paid a decent wage or salary.” (respondent 458, teacher)

We do not know what was considered to be a 'decent wage' in this case, though the word 'decent' suggests pay was equated with 'being valued'. When staff perceived there to be an unfairness between employer expectations of work, and their willingness to fund it, these issues eroded commitment and prompted staff to look at alternative employment. Here, the 'more for less' culture was perceived to benefit the employer and disadvantage the employee.

“As a part-timer, I feel exploited and often have to work on 4 days a week due to working in a small, stretched team and I am not paid for more than 0.6 FTE. There is no real opportunity to claim back TOIL and extra hours are not paid for” (respondent 201, teacher)

Another teacher complained that their organisation “expect[ed] casual staff to go the extra mile to fulfil the criteria for substantive manager's targets and OFSTED requirements without recognition or reward” (respondent 53, teacher). Some staff suggested that managers’ expectations of going “the extra mile” to show commitment were calculative to get ‘more for less’, and suggested exploitation was embedded in management policymaking:

“I feel as though my role is used as cheap teaching staff ... provide cover yet expected to perform and hit targets in my other job roles. i.e. technician duties, procurement, workplace NVQ assessing” (respondent 517, teacher)

While SMT did not identify pay as an issue, some teachers saw SMT as profiting from the same conditions in which pay freezes or depreciation had become the norm for FE teachers.

“The College has its priorities wrong - last year top management got a 20% pay rise but the lecturing and all other support staff got nothing”. (respondent 396, teacher)

Managers were accused of using their position to strengthen their power, status and privileges. In these statements, managers and teachers were not described as ‘in it together’; SMT, especially, were characterised as ‘feeding from the trough’, in terms of pay rises, re-structuring programmes and determination of contracts. This compared to teachers who argued they were “expected to work for free for the good of the service while managers have secure jobs and incomes” (respondent 525, teacher), where “those at the coal face of delivering teaching do not get any additional financial reward or recognition for student success or achievement” (respondent 53, teacher). Re-structuring was identified as a management tool to improve SMT salaries, job security and position, and in a few cases, to

target individuals SMT considered unsuitable for the organisation. Income discrepancies between SMT and other staff were approached cynically:

“The organisation that I work for have [a] high opinion of themselves as a business and the senior management team are paid accordingly to this whilst the rest of the staff have had pay freezes for a number of years...The general consensus towards the organisation is one that is becoming increasingly fructuous as a result of continued restructures year on year and the ability of our senior management team to continue to rewrite their job roles to include pay rises.” (respondent 242, teacher)

The paradoxical situation that saw some staff gain in income, whilst others felt “Undervalued in terms of monetary remuneration” (respondent 100), and which saw “immense sums of money spent on consultants... whilst ALS support for students is cut” (respondent 87), reflected a general schism in FE between senior leaders with the power to impose change, and a staff followership that felt powerless to make change. Pay, as a form of recognition and an indicator of organisational value, underpinned this schism. These disparities, and expressions of exploitation, compromised professionalism.

Summary

Economic factors were not identified as levers for improving professionalism, but they were strongly represented as factors that weakened it. Work intensification was a major problem for many staff, both in terms of the increased workload, and in terms of the need to re-prioritise tasks that ensured commercial targets were achieved. Teachers were highly critical of work intensification practices that made them work harder, faster and longer, and which some described as contrary to a student-centred philosophy. The trivialisation of pedagogic issues associated with work intensification generated a range of emotional and health difficulties, with some respondents changing to part-time status or leaving their jobs altogether to address issues of overwork. These forms of ‘teacher-pushing’ were often presented as exploitative because they benefited the employer at the expense of the individual. Here, pay was commented on negatively and compared unfavourably with schools and universities. For some teachers, perceived improvements in SMT pay at a time

of relative austerity confirmed suspicions that FE employers, and SMT in particular, exploited their staff.

7.3.4 FACTORS THAT WEAKENED PROFESSIONALISM – A SUMMARY

When cultural capital was contested, this was a contest over the definition of expertise and a need for political recognition. Perceptions of policy assault created a view that FE was in a permanent state of crisis and was undervalued for its societal contribution. Institutional priorities were also contested, often revolving around what was in the student interest. Managers promoted the need for ‘good data’ to sustain institutional prosperity, but for many teachers, this emphasis undermined their professionalism and their belief that it should be pedagogues not managers making student-facing decisions. Accounts of data fixing showed most vividly the clash in professional priorities in which expertise and service were subordinated to the need for target compliance. Strategies of impugment and parachuting were social practices that evidenced the symbolic struggle for expertise, in which the denigration of unqualified colleagues and the assignment of tutors to non-expert teaching were two forms of disrespect that challenged the authority of FE teachers. Impugment of senior managers was also witnessed as teachers complained they were too remote from the classroom. Exclusion, criticism and disruption were practices that protected managers’ right to decide, whilst destabilising local course communities and relationships to support new institutional efficiencies. Funding cuts were felt by all staffing groups to be deleterious to FE’s mission, but it was mainly teachers who felt the force of these cuts, through work intensification practices, pay freezes and opaque contract decisions, where those with least power experienced professional life as one of exploitation.

7.4 A Summary of Practices that Enhance and Weaken Professionalism

Interrogating the views of FE staff in relation to the factors that enhanced or weakened their professionalism illustrated that these could be considered as factors that either supported

or enfeebled their cultural, social and economic capital. These factors described strategies that gained individuals new privileges, recognition or positions in FE, or described situations where their position, reputation and legitimacy was compromised. By privileges, this thesis draws attention to the new titles, responsibilities, autonomies and training opportunities that enable staff to develop their professional experience and improve their institutional status.

Cultural and social capital were identified as important drivers of professionalism and underscored the importance of expertise, credibility and staff solidarity that supports professional work in FE. When these are deprived or removed, as part of work intensification or flexibility initiatives (e.g. assignment of a teacher to a non-specialist subject), respondents reported conditions of de-professionalisation.

Economic factors (pay, workload, funding) did not motivate professionalism but weakened it when conditions were judged to be unfair, excessive or exploitative. Criticisms of senior managers were often explicit in this section and were held responsible for a culture of teacher-pushing, impossible expectations and pay inequalities, all of which heightened feelings of job insecurity and anxiety. Where respondents claimed to be exploited, they showed signs of emotional suffering (e.g. resentment, burnout, ill-health).

Alongside the many positive narratives that featured the importance of students and pride in their accomplishments, in which a service ethic was evident, respondent narratives also described working conditions in restrictive rather than expansive ways. When this happened, respondents reported disagreements on what expertise constituted and what was in the students' interest. Whereas teachers described issues of autonomy, pedagogy and student contact as crucial, managers impressed the need for good data so that institutions survived financially and reputationally. Managers used strategies of disrespecting, social closure, disruption and work intensification to ensure that priorities were consistent and adhered to.

Chapter 8 - Discussion of Main Findings

8.1 Introduction

This penultimate chapter examines the research questions in light of the study's main findings and theoretical concepts discussed in the literature review. The study posed four questions:

- 1. Is the FE sector highly professionalised?**
- 2. How does professionalism vary with capital?**
- 3. How does professionalism vary with position in the FE field?**
- 4. What practices enhance or weaken professionalism?**

The chapter discusses each of the questions in sequence. First, it argues that FE is not a highly professionalised occupation. It does this by showing that FE does not demonstrate strong alignment with Hall's professional model (Hypothesis 1) and by examining the relationship between professionalism and key career variables (Hypothesis 2). Next, it discusses the proposition that professionalism can be conceptualised as form of symbolic capital (Hypothesis 3) which varies with the volume and structure of capital (Hypothesis 4). Following this, the chapter examines evidence that professionalism is linked to certain structural characteristics of the workplace (Hypothesis 5) and draws upon a tripartite analytic framework to show that respondents' professional habitus is correspondent with their structural position (Hypothesis 6). It proceeds to a discussion of the factors that enhance and weaken professionalism and suggests that these can be understood in terms of the acquisition or loss of capital (Hypothesis 7). This final section draws together the main discussion points using Bourdieu's concepts of *illusio* and *doxa*.

8.2 Is the FE Sector Highly Professionalised?

The extent to which an occupation is 'highly professionalised' is a difficult and somewhat subjective judgement. Hall's professionalism scale, as a means of achieving this, follows a functionalist tradition to identify core attitudes that distinguish professions. These were autonomy, self-regulation, public service, sense of calling and profession-as-referent, attributes that Hall believed could be measured to assess an occupation's progress towards professionalisation. What constitutes 'highly professionalised' was never made clear by Hall, but there are clues in Carlan & Lewis's (2009) study of police officers, who claimed that mean scores only slightly above the scale's midpoint indicated an occupation that was moderately professionalised at best. On these terms, FE does not appear to be highly professionalised. This supports previous commentaries by Jameson & Hillier (2008), Spenceley (2006) and Avis & Bathmaker (2004) who have described FE's professional status as 'problematic'.

The results for both commitment and autonomy indicated an occupation in professional tension. Noting variances across individual items, overall, respondents scored commitment positively. Commitment was often associated with student achievement and welfare which underpinned the professional motivations of many staff. However, as section 8.2.2 explores, many FE workers were unhappy with their employment experience. For example, while a majority suggested they wanted to build a career in the FE sector, only half indicated they would choose an FE career if they had their time again. This indicated that FE staff were not strongly attached to their occupation.

More surprisingly, autonomy was *not* one of the most frequent properties cited in definitions, which seemed to contradict earlier FE reviews (see Robson, 1998; Clow, 2001; Spenceley, 2006). In this study, 'expertise' and 'service' were much more dominant. However, perceptions of autonomy were more nuanced than previous studies have indicated. While autonomy was scored below the mid-point of Hall's scale and indicated a general 'autonomy deficit' inside FE institutions, this masked differences between staff groups. Autonomy was a strong differentiator between high and low HPS scorers (see section 6.9.2) and most frequently advocated by those with the weakest professional

attitudes (the 'P1s'). Teachers, for example, identified autonomy as being important to their classroom discretion and authority (see Chapter 7). In contrast, for SMT, whose autonomy scores were significantly higher than teachers and middle managers, there was little mention of autonomy across the qualitative data. Not only did this suggest that the 'power of decision' was increasingly centralised amongst a small, elite group of individuals, it presented autonomy as a 'naturalised' expectation of SMT work. Just as vitamins might correct a nutritional deficiency, autonomy was important to those who felt it was lacking from their job. This finding is reminiscent of Herzberg's (1968) distinction between motivating and hygiene factors affecting workplace motivation, suggesting that when autonomy is missing, professionalism is inhibited.

8.2.1 COMPARISONS AGAINST THE PROFESSIONAL MODEL

Both Wilensky (1964) and Hall (1968) argued that strong professional attitudes were cultivated when occupations possessed certain structures: a full-time workforce, a university-based training system, a professional association and a code of ethics. These structures are missing or weakly associated with FE: its workforce is mainly part-time (ETF, 2018), there is no graduate entry and there is no universal professional body or binding code of ethics. Greenwood (1957) and Goode (1969), and later Clow (2001), suggested these structures enabled common systems of socialisation, values and recognition that strengthened an occupation's sense of purpose and community. Robson (2007) warned that the sector's lack of structural integration was linked to its fragmentation and impoverished professional status. As the trend in the last decade has been towards further de-regulation and structural diversification, arguably, professionalisation has come under greater strain.

Despite small variations, there were no significant differences between full-timers and part-timers, and no effect of education or certification on HPS scores. These were contrary to the predictions of the professional model (Wilensky, 1964; Hall, 1968). In respect of employment, full-time employment did not confer a professional advantage over part-time work. Results indicated a mixed picture, with some choosing part-time work to avoid the pressures of full-time, while others felt exploited and marginalised by working part-time.

This concurs with Swain & Cara (2010) and Jameson & Hillier (2008) who conclude that the effects of part-time working on professional motivation will often depend on other intersecting variables such as age, gender, lifestyle and career stage. These issues were not analysed in this thesis and deserve follow-up.

The absence of an effect of education on professionalism was unexpected and can be contrasted with other occupational studies where higher education is associated with higher HPS scores (Schriner & Harris, 1984; Wynd, 2003; Carlan & Lewis, 2009; Loftus & Price, 2016). These studies have theorised the effect of education in relation to career structures where graduate status leads to career progression and acceleration. As in Swain & Cara (2010), a lack of career structure and career stagnation were obstacles to FE professionalism. Respondents in this study complained there was no established system for recognising their expertise and therefore no clarity how careers could be planned and developed. Clear career and training pathways have been shown to positively affect professional status in FE (BIS, 2012); however, unlike schoolteachers which have established career pathways, the absence of a national approach in FE may help explain the relatively low impact of education on professionalism.

The effects of teacher certification were something of an anomaly. Not only were differences in professionalism between certified and uncertified staff not significant, professionalism *decreased* with rising levels of certification. At first glance, these results appear to oppose the restoration of teaching qualifications as the basis for professionalising FE. However, small numbers in part-qualified and 'no-qualification' groups suggest caution with these findings. Further examination of these trends is suggested here. It is also possible, for example, that fully-certified teachers held expectations about their role that were not being fulfilled in practice post-qualification. Those with full-qualifications also tended to be older and more experienced and significantly more likely to indicate leaving their jobs for an equivalent salary, indicating they were less satisfied with their work than their uncertified colleagues. There are implications, therefore, for how the sector might incentivise more experienced staff.

Most FE respondents were not members of professional associations, but those who were

experienced a professionalism uplift. In what might be an obvious point, membership promoted positive views of the work of professional associations. This confirmed a symbiotic relationship between professional associations and professionalism. However, as no membership data was collected, it was not possible to tell if these benefits accrued to FE membership bodies or subject associations. On the former, there was no mention of the Education & Training Foundation (ETF) and only three references to the former Institute for Learning, suggesting FE professional associations were not conscious drivers of professionalism.

Under conditions where occupations do not appear to meet the full requirements of the professional model, the label 'semi-profession' has been applied (Etzioni et al, 1969). This work, however, has been criticised for ignoring the role actors play in defining professionalism and shaping the conditions that enable or constrain it. Semi-profession did not describe the status of FE respondents in this study. Respondents were invested in a *professional ideology* consistent with Hall's theorisation. Most FE respondents were well-educated, many referred to their expertise and qualifications for credibility, and more spoke of their work as complex, virtuous and intellectually-demanding.

However, it was also apparent that respondents inhabited workplaces with 'competing logics' (Singh & Jayanti, 2013). As employees, respondents were tied to institutional goals and priorities, in which conformance and adaptability were valued. These tensions produced different constructions of expertise: as subject expert, committed pedagogue and competent administrator. These 'logics' were not valued equally, but were aligned to positional rank, with subject knowledge and qualifications significantly more valued amongst teachers than managers. To borrow from Muzio et al (2013), these constructions were illustrations of the 'institutional work' respondents engaged in to maintain their workplace status and dignity.

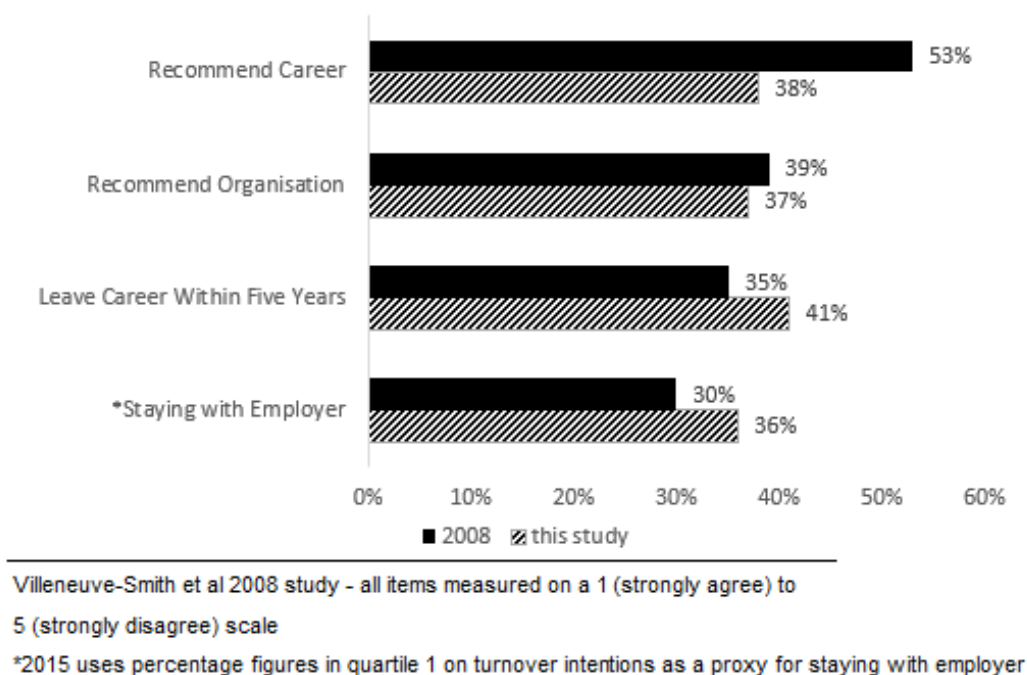
There were no precedents on which to compare the scores of FE respondents in the UK. However, FE staff measured lower on mean HPS scores than other professional groups (e.g. doctors, lawyers, university professors). A consistent finding amongst studies with the lowest HPS scores (e.g. Wynd, 2003; Jang et al, 2016, Chan, Chan & Scott, 2007) was the

negative impact of audit regimes on professionalism. Of interest, almost all these listed studies were carried out in the US (see Section 6.3.4), where the corporatisation of public services and the omnipresence of neoliberal economics has dominated political reform projects, and where quantitative research has been most prolific. It seems surprising, by comparison, that the UK has not undertaken a similar research programme, when arguably public service reform has been equally penetrating and pervasive. While this indicates that FE staff may not be as strongly professionalised as these occupations, differences in culture (most studies were carried out in the US), time (spanning 40+ years) and methodology (using different scales and item wordings) are all possible confounding variables that make direct comparison difficult, and where further trend analysis is needed to verify differences. Not only is this likely to shed valuable insights on the relative capacities of different occupations to professionalise, it can provide a much needed evidence-base on which to assess the impact of policy.

8.2.2 PROFESSIONALISM AND CAREER OUTCOME VARIABLES

According to Vollmer & Mills (1966), a highly professionalised occupation describes members with strong attachments to their career and employment, signs of a committed workforce. However, many FE staff no longer wished to work in the FE sector and did not find FE teaching an attractive career. These findings corroborate the opening statement that FE did not show signs of being strongly professionalised.

Those with high professionalism were significantly more likely to remain in their jobs and careers and rate their employer and job positively. Of concern, a majority did not express positive views about either their career or employer. Compared to the survey carried out by Villeneuve-Smith et al (2008), arguably, conditions of work have deteriorated in the last decade (see Figure 8.1). Compared to 2008, respondents were more negative about their career, with a greater number (a majority) not willing to recommend their employer as a workplace.

Fig. 8.1: Comparison of Survey Responses (% Agree) with Villeneuve-Smith et al (2008)

Links between quality of employer attachment, turnover intentions and career expectations reinforce Muzio et al's (2013) observation that it is institutions where professionalism is made or broken. Arguably, the decline in students and workforce in today's FE system highlights a rising precariousness in FE employment. Between 2010 and 2017, FE teachers have fallen by almost 20,000 (O'Leary, 2020). With tightening budgets, institutional performance and efficiencies may be the difference between prosperity or deficit, driving practices to maximise revenues and streamline costs. As a result, this can narrow the professional options for FE decision-makers, leading to greater control and circumscription of staff behaviours, and a restricted autonomy that results in higher staff turnover intentions and poorer employer ratings.

Many staff did not see a long-term future working in the FE sector. Whether this translates into actual turnover is not clear. Little empirical work in this area has been undertaken by government to show how policy decisions affect staff outcomes and student achievement. This is to be contrasted with the plethora of studies on nursing turnover and quality of patient care carried out in Western healthcare systems (see for example, Limb, 2017; Minore et al, 2005; Cherba et al, 2019; Duffield et al, 2014; Khan et al, 2018; Shoorideh et al,

2015). The results suggest that 'policy assault', and the disruption this causes, has had a significantly negative effect on FE practitioners; this contrasts with emerging research that identifies staff continuity and commitment as attributes that support student learning (Ronfeldt et al, 2013). Davis (2018) argues that ministers, in conjunction with sector leaders, must develop a clear process for risk planning before embarking on large-scale change projects that affect staffing stability because of the significant implications this has for the quality of teaching and learning.

The de-regulation of teacher training in 2012, flexible job entry and frequent ministerial interference (affecting both FE structures and practices), along with complaints about staff autonomy, managerialism and low pay, all point to a sector struggling to professionalise. As staff turnover in the sector is reported to be higher than the national average (ETF, 2018; AoC, 2017; Monster, 2019), the lack of positive advocates for FE as an occupation and career should be a concern for policymakers and sector leaders. Lack of attachment to one's occupation could pose further difficulties in staff shortages at a time when the sector has expressed problems filling vacancies. An investment in internal socialisation, training and career management processes may help strengthen the employee's compact with their organisation and improve professional commitment (Crosswell & Elliot, 2004; Day & Gu, 2007). Pay is another strategic lever that can be used to strengthen commitment and arrest staff attrition (Gu, 2014; Markovits et al, 2010; Goulet & Frank, 2002; Dolton & Van Der Klaaw, 1999). With a representational deficit of teachers on external forums, there is an opportunity for FE associations to make their presence felt, for example, by advocating (and funding) new forms of engagement and challenging existing barriers to access, where engagement is arguably framed as a managerial privilege. Positive steps to engage FE staff, as well as opportunities to discuss how members' interests can be best protected and advanced, is likely to improve respondents' appraisals of the value of professional associations in FE. Why these factors are likely to improve professionalism is the subject of the next section.

8.3 How does Professionalism Vary with Capital?

8.3.1 PROFESSIONAL AS SYMBOLIC CAPITAL: THE IMPORTANCE OF RECOGNITION

Although Bourdieu was hostile to the concept of ‘profession’ because of its connotations with status and superiority, his concept of symbolic capital helps to situate its study within a Bourdieusian framework (Schinkel & Noordegraaf, 2011). This study agrees with Schinkel & Noordegraaf when they state:

“Within each professional field, the legitimate substance of what it means to act in a “professional way” is constantly at stake”. (Schinkel & Noordegraaf, 2011, p67).

As a form of symbolic capital, professionalism is subject to contestation, since the profits of being defined ‘professional’ are advantageous in the FE field. Bourdieu (2000) argues that symbolic capital is a measure of recognition, prestige and honour. Thus a ‘professional’ is a socially distinguished individual who achieves recognition, and therefore legitimacy, while someone who is unprofessional is ‘exiled’.

A significant positive correlation was found between professionalism and work status (being valued at work). ‘Recognition’, ‘value’, ‘appreciation’ and ‘respect’ were frequent expressions in descriptions of FE work that enhanced respondents’ professionalism. A lack of recognition and respect dominated reports of weakened professionalism. Recognition, Bourdieu states, “rescues agents from insignificance, the absence of importance and of meaning” (Bourdieu, 2000, p242). In other words, recognition gives individuals meaning and makes them feel valued. These results aligned with both Hargreaves et al (2006) and Hall & Langton (2006) who found that teachers who feel valued and respected in their work expressed higher professional status.

Recognition was demonstrated in different ways in this study. Being recognised as a subject expert was important for many teachers. The notion of competence, effectiveness and ‘doing a good job’ was also highlighted. Teachers and middle managers also engaged in virtue-signalling, identifying a range of caring and personal qualities that were expected of

good pedagogues, including devotion to the task and a commitment to ‘go the extra mile’. A number emphasised the achievement of ‘hard’ outcomes – pass rates, retention rates, attendance rates, university progression – tangible outcomes of pedagogic competence and ‘good’ service. Others, more frequently in management positions, affirmed the importance of making good impressions – in customers, parents and external agencies, which could enhance personal and institutional reputations. Across the spectrum of positions in the FE field, respondents valued positive feedback and personal acknowledgement. These ‘plurality of logics’ (Muzio et al, 2013) represented the main ways that professionalism was contested. At the heart of this, professionalism flourished when people felt valued, while a lack of recognition weakened it.

8.3.2 PROFESSIONALISM: CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CAPITAL

In *Distinction* (1984), Bourdieu claimed that the volume of capital and the structure of capital were the two defining commodities that determined the relative status of individuals in a field, and that changes in capital explained how this status could improve or diminish. Substitute capital for power, and Bourdieu’s theory is one that explains differences in professional status by the respective power positions that people hold. To examine the impact of capital on professionalism, accepting that the results neither confirmed causality, nor discounted the prospect that enhanced professionalism might also generate capital, the analysis in this thesis predicted that professionalism would be related to both the volume and the structure of capital.

Each of the forms of capital – cultural, social and economic – was significantly related to professionalism (HPS scores). This study confirms the importance of including measurements of different forms of capital since the results indicate they individually contribute a net positive effect on professionalism. It also found that capitals combine to produce significantly enhanced effects. High capital holders were almost five times more likely to score high HPS scores than low capital holders.

Cultural capital had the strongest effect on professionalism of the three capitals, increasing the odds of high professionalism by more than three times. This is related to the

opportunities individuals have for improving their knowledge, skills and qualifications, and corroborates research that expansive learning environments promote professionalism in FE settings (O’Leary, 2013b; Fuller & Unwin, 2003). Expansive learning environments provide a “stronger and richer learning environment” than those described as restrictive (Fuller & Unwin, 2003, p411-412) because they support substantive opportunities to train, upskill, improve and develop practice. It is clear from the high correlations in Chapter 6, that these opportunities depend on management agreement, with a lack of management consultation and support on CPD a determining factor on whether opportunities to accrue cultural capital are available. An expansive approach to CPD is also most likely to generate higher commitment. At the same time, the negligible effects of education level and teacher certification suggested that these forms of knowledge and qualification were already losing their value in the FE field.

Underpinning this was a dispute over what counted as expertise. Teachers were much more willing to define expertise in terms of subject knowledge, qualifications and the quality of the pedagogic relationship with students. In contrast, senior managers mostly measured expertise by its capacity to achieve organisational targets and secure course data improvements. When cultural capital is enhanced (e.g. through the possession of scarce, but desirable knowledge and skills), it creates new opportunities to network and build alliances that can prove valuable for promotion and career development. Consequently, as Catts (2009) observes, social and cultural capital are mutually reinforcing. In short, controlling opportunities for developing social and cultural capital controlled the experience of professionalism for FE agents.

Social capital had the second strongest effect on professionalism, increasing the odds of high professionalism by 86%. It is not simply the quality of relationships that appears to underpin high social capital and professionalism, it is the quality of *management* relationships. Trust, respect and consideration from managers were social capital qualities that were most highly valued, suggesting that it is vertical relationships that were most important in creating a professionalising environment. Putnam & Feldstein (2003) suggest that high social capital is positive for organisational performance as workers are happier and more productive. Putnam’s (1993, p167) emphasis on “trust, norms and networks”

also emphasises the importance of solidarity and connectiveness. These align with collaborative and connected professionalism (Whitty & Whisby, 2006; Whitty, 2008; Crawley, 2017), and corroborates the value staff place on practice-based networks (Hillier 2015).

Professionalism was significantly correlated with economic capital. This study used 'pay equity' as a proxy for economic capital based on Pinxten & Lievens's (2014) concept of psychosocial economic capital. Managers considered themselves to be significantly more fairly paid than teachers and CSWs. Narratives indicated that economic capital was a contributor to de-professionalisation, not a driver of professionalism. These findings concur with Elliot (1996) and Boocock (2015) that FE teachers are more likely to be motivated by intrinsic factors related to pedagogy and service. In a climate of economic austerity and the rationalisation of resources, respondents accepted that they worked in a budget-tight environment. However, the differences in economic capital suggested that those lower in the FE hierarchy perceived greater disadvantages and inequities in how this was distributed. Teacher pay is regarded as an important factor in deciding whether staff find FE an attractive career to join (Camden, 2019a).

Capital is contested at times of policy disruption because it leads to a re-constitution of institutional power relations. This disruption was reported as negative by many staff because of its implications for job security and job re-distribution. Amongst these narratives, there were clear human costs to these initiatives, with the loss of valued colleagues, changes in curricula, and ultimately redundancy. While institutional re-structuring is often used to engineer new efficiencies, researchers also suggest it may serve a symbolic function for managers wishing to be seen as dynamic and assertive (Mather et al, 2011; Mather et al, Senior et al, 2017). Bourdieu's concept of *misrecognition* allows us to consider management rationalities as motivated by position and status. Here, change arguments are *euphemisms* for 'capital-grabs' by an elite few which can be both economically and socio-culturally debilitating for others. Recent examples emerging from the Area Review process are providing evidence of this, in terms of lower morale and productivity, as well as in financial settlements for redundancy. Linford (2019) reported that between March 2018 to October 2018, Hull group College had paid out £6 million in redundancy and non-disclosure

settlements to those who were the objects of a significant (and often confrontational) cultural change strategy to 'improve' institutional efficiency. Mergers and organisational restructuring could be regarded in Bourdieusian terms as forms of *symbolic violence* because their claim to efficiency and improvement mask high degrees of suffering, disruption and hidden financial costs.

This thesis also investigated the effects of capital structure in addition to volume of capital. The cluster analysis performed on the binary 'economic vs socio-cultural capital', as discussed in Paccoud et al (2020), yielded four types of capital structures that were associated with clear differences in professionalism, commitment and autonomy. This points to the empirical existence of different capital structures within the FE population that are associated with distinctive professional experiences and practices. Outcomes are best for those that have the highest capital in both economic and socio-cultural categories, followed by those with low economic capital and high socio-cultural capital, then those with low socio-cultural capital with high economic capital, and then finally those with low volumes of all three capitals. This shows that professionalism is sensitive to immaterial factors (see Chapter 7) and reinforces the need for professionalisation to consider the institutional and cultural dynamics that are preventing staff from achieving their professional potential.

8.4 How Does Professionalism Vary with Position in the FE field?

8.4.1 THE IMPACT OF STRUCTURAL FACTORS ON PROFESSIONALISM

A combined stepwise analysis of 18 structural factors identified *five* significant predictors of professionalism, in descending order of strength: job role, committee membership, trade union membership, weekly teaching load and 'non-specialist' teaching which accounted for 20% of the variance in HPS scores.

Job role was the strongest predictor of professionalism. Whereas a majority of teachers scored negatively on professionalism, senior managers (SMT) were overwhelmingly positive.

Teachers were five times more likely to be in the lowest HPS quartile (P1). Conversely, SMT were almost four times more likely to be in the highest HPS quartile (P4). Closer inspection reveals that teachers expressed the lowest commitment and autonomy of the four staffing groups. Conversely, SMT scored significantly higher scores on commitment and autonomy than teachers. If professionalism was under siege in FE teachers (Leaton-Gray, 2006), it was flourishing for SMT. These divisions resonate with the ‘them’ and ‘us’ narratives that Mather et al (2009) and Mather & Siefert (2014) identified.

The effects of job role on professionalism can also be explained in terms of differences in volume and structure of capital. Compared to senior managers (SMT), teachers and curriculum support workers (CSWs) scored significantly less well on economic and cultural capital, though not social capital. The odds of teachers rating their learning opportunities positively (cultural capital) were five times less than SMT, and a staggeringly 20 times less likely for CSWs, although no significant differences were observed between SMT and middle managers (MMs). Given that social capital is used to exploit opportunities for learning, often by building supportive relationships with line managers, it is perhaps surprising that social capital was not a significant differentiator.

SMT were more likely to frame professionalism from a compliance perspective: hitting targets, alignment with inspection goals, financial savings and student growth. The evidence in this thesis is that FE teachers have been drawn into “calculated technologies of performance” (Ball et al, 2012, p518), evidence of the ‘metrification’ of practice, and confirmation of the dominance of managerial professionalism (Sachs, 2001). As in Avis & Bathmaker (2004), teachers and managers drew upon an ‘ethic of care’ to exemplify their commitment to students, but comments equally revealed that what counted as ‘student-first’ practices differed between these groups. This was most strikingly demonstrated in discussions of data fixing and fabrication, which informed teachers’ narratives but were completely missing from SMT.

In conditions of restricted autonomy which has indicated a negative impact on commitment (Chapter 7), there are signs that many teachers are experiencing forms of deprofessionalisation. Many of the features highlighted in Randle & Brady (1997b) were

evidenced: loss of control, prescriptive curriculums, external auditing, concerns over standards. Managers were criticised for their 'constant interference' in pedagogic matters, and for excluding staff from decision-making. Some described a loss of personal integrity when required to comply with management targets that conflicted with their personal values. Such cases highlighted the pervasive effects of a compliance culture built on annual cycles of insecurity and anxiety, in which meeting targets insured staff against redundancy.

More than two decades ago, Randle & Brady (1997b, p237) cited work intensification as a major consequence of funding reductions which increased teaching hours and employment precarity (see also UCU, 2016). As in Randle & Brady's study, staff were subject to rationalisation and cost-cutting strategies that re-configured their work around new 'efficiencies'. Teachers felt that these initiatives trivialised issues of teaching and learning, with some alleging both the de-skilling and disrespecting of their roles. Unlike Randle & Brady, trade unionism was not seen as a major defence against marketisation and was largely missing from professionalism narratives.

HPS scores of trade union members were significantly weaker than non-members. In particular, trade unionists scored significantly less well on autonomy and this appears to be linked to much lower levels of social capital, illustrating the effects of low management trust and perceptions of institutional instability and exclusion. Low perceived professionalism may be the product of negative work pressures faced by members, the union's weakened status within FE institutional processes (Smith, 2015) or members' exposure to the 'contentious politics' (Tarrow, 1998) of union campaigns. Trade unions do not appear to have a professionalising effect on members; in fact, they had the opposite effect to professional associations. For members, the impact of change was clearly a contested issue, viewed by some staff as a motivated opportunity for SMT to strengthen their jurisdictions. The construction of managers as exploitative (Mather et al, 2012) may reinforce existing preconceptions held by union members which sustains a negative characterisation of the workplace. Further exploration is required.

Members of organisational committees had significantly higher HPS scores than non-members. The fact that members also had significantly higher cultural capital and were

more positive about professional learning opportunities might suggest membership is perceived to be developmental. Committees provide access to higher status circles of decision-making, which by association, confer a status uplift to members (Lumby et al, 2007). In Collyer's (2015) terms, they act as spaces where intellectual capital can be deployed to enhance individual credibility as well as representing opportunities to join "formal hierarchies" which control access to decision-making (Lumby et al, 2007, p19). Tajfel's social identity theory (1981) suggests that committees can be viewed as in-groups which provide individuals with self-validation (membership often implies a presumed competence, see Theodorou, Philippou & Kontonvourki, 2017). Committees can also be seen as opportunities for information exchange, encouraging alignment with dominant espoused values, and strengthening feelings of belongingness. On the other hand, membership can be pressurised and oppressive (Lumby et al, 2007). More research is needed to explore the intricate dynamics of membership on professionalism.

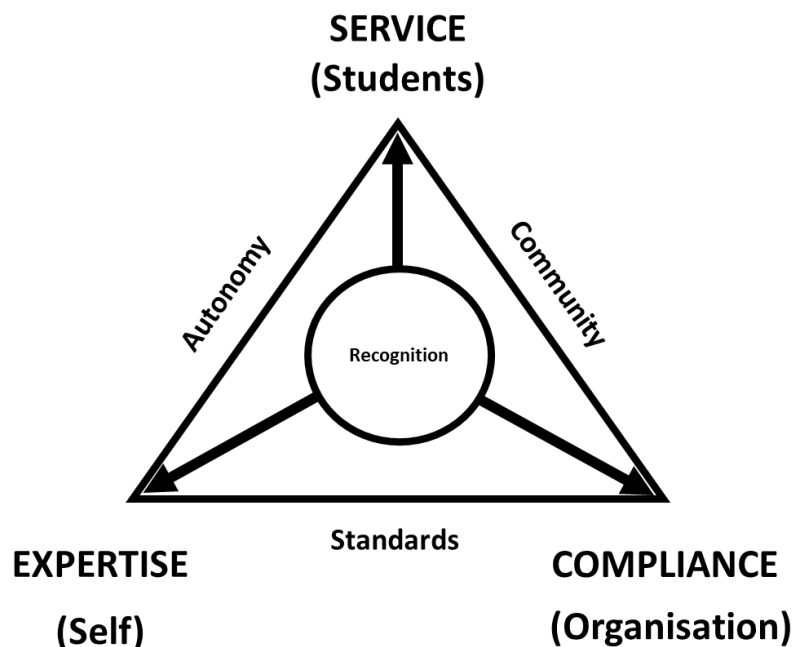
Those who taught on non-specialist courses were significantly more likely to score lower professionalism scores than those with no experience of this. Flexible deployment undermined individual's credibility with students. In Hornikx's (2011) study of French university students, teachers who were not seen as credible (i.e. 'epistemic authorities') were least successful at building strong student groups because students considered them unreliable and untrustworthy. Lucas (2004a) argues that the transition to more commercialised, flexible forms of FE management, for example, by adopting a 'teacher-as-facilitator' model, has de-emphasised expertise in many FE institutions in favour of flexi-employment practices (see also Edwards et al, 2001; McCabe & O'Connor, 2014). Although these practices may be considered a cost-effective use of human capital, such practices are likely to undermine staff professionalism.

8.4.2 AN ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK FOR EXPLORING PROFESSIONALISM

An analytic framework was developed from correspondence analysis and narrative links around three organising schemas: expertise, service and compliance (see Figure 8.2). These schemas reflected the primary ways professionalism was interpreted and contested in FE.

The next section re-visits the ESC model and its main components and establishes their relevance in the context of this thesis's findings and existing research.

Fig. 8.2: The ESC Model – Expertise, Service & Compliance



The “contested and competitive terrain” of professionalism (Peel, 2005, p126) has become something of a cliché in the main FE literature. However, a model of professionalism should be able to represent this contestation. The schemas of expertise, compliance and service describe broad propensities to think about professionalism that reflect the conditions and structures inhabited by respondents. This model, drawing on detailed narratives and supported by empirical investigation, offers a way of conceptualising these propensities and provides a framework for understanding the schisms that have occupied FE researchers such as Robson (1998; 2007) and Guile & Lucas (1999), in which antagonisms between occupational expertise and pedagogic mastery (Robson, 1998; Broad, 2015; Gleeson & Mardle, 1980; Lucas, 2004a; Guile & Lucas, 1999), between vocational expertise and institutional conformity (Page, 2013) and between service and regulatory motivations (Jephcote & Salisbury, 1999; O’Leary, 2013b; O’Leary, 2011; Lobb, 2017; O’Leary & Simmons, 2012) have dominated scholarship.

Across the literature, these contests have been reported as clashes between managerial and pedagogical priorities (Jephcote & Salisbury, 2009; Randle & Brady, 1997a; 1997b), professional and organisational allegiances (Evetts, 2003) and demanded-enacted forms of professionalism (Evans, 2008). These binary approaches did not fit the data in this study. Managerial and pedagogic priorities were both represented as professional positions. To speak of teachers expressing a professional paradigm, and managers a managerial paradigm, as in Randle & Brady (1997a; 1997b), did not accurately describe the HPS profiles. Managers who valued accountability measures also reported stronger attitudes on the HPS. In this study, there was no inherent conflict between 'professional' and 'organisational' values. Those scoring highest on the HPS expressed the strongest attachment to their employer, which is consistent with studies of other professional groups (Chan, Chan & Scott, 2007; Bartol, 1979), and an affirmation that 'compliance' is a recognisable professional schema for those that highly value the achievement of performance metrics. What Fitzgerald (2008, p119) has called a 'culture of performance' is "organised around notions of quality, outcomes, targets and improvement strategies", which underwrites a compliance schema. Currently, within FE, there is no professional model that adequately accounts for this.

The Bourdieusian angle also urges a re-consideration of the concept of professionalism. Evans (2008) has argued that professionalism is a way of re-invigorating the professional paradigm so that teachers can win back public confidence. It would be perhaps oversimplified to present this as an orientation towards competence and 'effective practice', and Evans has been keen to stress professionalism is more a reflexive mode of enquiry into the "*reality of daily practices*" (p29, *original italics*) than a set of prescriptive and improvable behaviours. However, it would be difficult not to conclude that what counts as professional appears to be a process that is both objectively derived and consciously understood where the goal is improvement and self-awareness. Enacted professionalism, or as Evans defines it, "practice that is observed, perceived and interpreted" (p29), does not in fact advance us any further. There is no reflection on why people's professional experiences are differentiated and unequal. What is labelled 'self-awareness' may simply be the endorsement of the existing status quo. Furthermore, there is no capacity to

theorise why certain ideas come to dominate professional practice or how they work to reproduce professional privilege.

Expertise

More than any other property, expertise was identified by FE respondents as most essential to their experience of 'being professional', concurring with Halliday's (1987, p29) assessment that expertise is a "core generating trait" of professionalism. A majority of the sample referred to the need for subject-based or teaching qualifications and/or knowledge (confirming a 'dual identity'), while others referred to the importance of judgement and discretion in making effective decisions and interventions. Expertise, as 'reputational currency', improved chances of climbing the FE hierarchy and enhancing status, for example through promotions, new titles (e.g. lead Internal Verifier), invitations to run CPD sessions or membership of organisational committees. Equally, its dilution, devaluing or de-recognition, for example, by being asked to teach on courses for which individuals felt unqualified for, or through the displacement of pedagogic time with administrative and regulatory tasks, were issues that reduced professionalism.

Robson, Bailey & Larkin (2004) have previously shown that subject discourses (the 'knowing why') is central to constructions of professionalism amongst vocational teachers, and often much more so than pedagogic discourse (the knowing 'how'). As in their study, teachers saw themselves as ambassadors for their industry and 'guarantors' of quality. The substantive linking of subject expertise with professionalism suggested that many teachers were being placed in situations which challenged their professional credibility, and a re-appraisal of how subject expertise may be supported is one of the significant findings emerging from participant responses.

Service

A service lens embraced the pride, passion and care staff attached to student encounters and their roles as guardians of student goals and welfare. It supported Carr & Kemmis's (1986, p8) view of 'professional work' as an "overriding commitment [of practitioners] to the well-being of their clients" (in Elliot, 1996, p3). A 'service' ethos was distinguished from

managerial and consumerist epistemologies by its emphasis on the student as subject, presenting stories of hope, love, dedication, sacrifice and redemption, and of the need for engagement, respect and control in the classroom. In respect of the service lens, findings were reminiscent of much of the recent professional identity literature in FE which shows that an 'ethic of care' drives professional motivations (see Jephcote & Salisbury, 2009; Robson & Bailey, 2009; Colley et al, 2007; James & Biesta, 2007; Avis & Bathmaker, 2004).

Enabling students to achieve, building positive relationships (with students and other stakeholders) and receiving positive feedback were factors that enhanced professionalism. Negative feedback, workload (including lack of planning time) and management interference weakened it, replicating the concerns observed by some teachers in Lobb (2017). Submissions were also distinguished by an ethical dimension in which respondents presented situations where 'student-first' expectations clashed with their personal values and beliefs, which undermined professionalism. This was most visibly demonstrated in confessions of data fixing.

Expertise and service were linked by a connection to autonomy, since expertise requires the application of abstract principles to concrete student cases using discretion and judgement (Abbott, 1988; Alterator et al, 2018). Demands for greater autonomy emanate from claims to expertise (Vigar, 2012). Granted autonomy was a recognition of expertise, whilst a restricted autonomy undermined it, and implicated the degree of trust individuals felt they commanded from managers and colleagues. Trust, as the basis for authentic, supportive professional relationships is an enabler of autonomy (Taubman, 2015), both of which derive from a recognition of expertise. Loss of autonomy emerged as a core factor that weakened professionalism. Responses from teachers confirmed previous research that FE teaching takes place in restrictive and controlling conditions, where autonomy is perceived as a privilege and where 'micromanagement' is a recurring complaint (Mather et al, 2012; Mather & Siefert, 2014; Lobb, 2017; Randle & Brady, 1997b; Boocock, 2017). The lack of scope for pedagogic discretion and judgement described by teachers is experienced as both disempowering and de-professionalising.

Compliance

Whereas expertise mostly focused on the self, and service on the achievement and welfare of students, those who held a compliance lens framed professionalism in terms of their institution and external standards. Here we see a distinct shift in what is valued by FE agents, from qualifications and pedagogic preferences, to institutional data and reputation. In a compliance schema, meeting targets, accountability and organisational loyalty strengthened professionalism; disloyalty, inefficiency and failure to meet targets, which affected reputation, undermined it.

Those adopting a compliance schema were more likely to accept that FE institutions were businesses that needed income to survive. This did not mean that individuals did not recognise the instability of the sector or acknowledge that current policy and funding regimes could undermine organisational security. At the same time, individuals recognised that this was the situation FE must operate in and accepted its demand for accountability. 'Striving for excellence', 'delivering outstanding teaching' and 'ensuring students are at the centre of everything we do' were mantras that underlined respondents' acceptance and internalisation of the new FE business model and its requirement for 'good data' as evidence of performance.

Professionalism and standards are entwined in the modern FE literature (Shain, 1999; Clow, 2001; Smith & O'Leary, 2015; Springbett, 2018; Lucas, 2004a; 2004b; Tummons, 2016) as well as being embedded in 'third way' political projects to 'modernise' public services (Barber & Mourshed, 2007). Standards attracted the second highest volume of references by respondents in definitions, though these tended to be drawn from across the spectrum of the FE field. Standards were sometimes vague in description but were mostly tied to notions of competence and effectiveness. The phrase 'raising standards' in FE is synonymous with improved student outcomes and inspection findings (O'Leary, 2011) rather than a code of ethics and self-regulation, as classical theorists have suggested. Standards have also arguably assumed a prescriptive tonality in publications of teaching standards and the common inspection (now educational) framework, which sets out the criteria by which practitioners are expected to comply (Tummons, 2016). It is the intention

to achieve excellence, with all the symbolic efficacy this implies, that assures positive publicity, reputational advantage and job security.

Compliance was linked to service through the concept of community. The latter embodies a number of antagonistic elements, reinforcing the importance of individual and collegial relationships on the one hand, and recognising the boundaries, responsibilities and rules that a community imposes on a professional group on the other. Arguably, the FE community is fragmented and highly stratified, and there is no overarching professional body that equally represents all parts of the sector. However, a community is an opportunity to provide support, information and clarity, which respondents suggested they highly valued (see Chapter 7). Disruptions to teams, as well as difficulties in participation with external networks due to teaching loads and economics, are creating barriers to the emergence of a recognisable community of practice, and while community pockets may exist between the cracks and crevices of institutionalised employment, genuine opportunities for dialogic work are scarce. The conditions reported in this study, and the absence of an 'emancipatory agenda' in comments, suggested that the ideal of democratic professionalism is just that, an ideal.

Summary of the ESC Model

The resulting ESC model claims three specific advantages over previous research. First, it theorises the relationships between variables that have been examined separately, such as subject expertise (Lucas & Unwin, 2009), autonomy (Furlong, 2008) and student commitment (Jephcote & Salisbury, 2009). Second, the model accounts for both the contestability of professionalism and its hierarchisation. This is an advantage on dual professionalism frameworks that arguably treat the FE population as homogenous. It is not clear whether dual frameworks are valid for FE managers, nor do they problematise what is meant by professionalism. The tensions and contradictions in claiming professionalism are also missing. Finally, the ESC model recognises that professionalism is a discourse (Fournier, 1999), or more accurately, a series of overlapping discourses in which legitimacy is contested through competing ideas and vocabularies. These vocabularies are intimately bound up with respondents' social position and reflect distinctions of power. The

integration of these elements is proposed as a more complete, more dynamic and more relevant description of FE professionalism than previous work.

8.5. Practices that Strengthen and Weaken Professionalism: The FE Illusio

How agents construct professionalism is related to their social position in the FE field. As such, professionalism can be understood within three overarching schemas: expertise, service and compliance. Bourdieu's concepts of 'doxa' and 'illusio' are helpful for contextualising these preferences and can be used to explain why some ideas achieve greater legitimacy than others. Bourdieu defines 'doxa' as the dominant, taken-for-granted assumptions that energise the field, and it is the fit between doxa and individuals' professional habitus that underpins the concept of 'illusio' (Colley, 2012).

The legitimacy of staff constructions is related to their alignment with the dominant values of the FE field. These values ensure that a field operates in expected and self-sustainable ways. The doxic view of professional practice in FE is one dominated by the philosophy of 'putting the student first', the pursuit of which involves holding a certain level of expertise and using it in 'approved' ways to promote student learning and achievement in line with commercial targets and efficiency initiatives. This requires cultural capital, time, commitment, a 'caring disposition' and access to relevant contacts and networks (social capital), properties which are fiercely contested by agents in the FE field.

Putting the student first carries expectations that students will be advised appropriately, taught effectively and will achieve, which in turn, improves institutional pass rates and the subsequent public reputation of those institutions. The field is therefore structured around the need to produce favourable data returns in pursuit of this 'recognition', to sustain competitive advantage in a marketplace that is volatile and precarious. In this environment, managers used work intensification and social closure strategies to advance a dominant compliance view of professionalism, enabling them to maintain control over decision-making, learning opportunities and workloads that ensured staff put the student first even if

there were individual costs. In this regard, this study compliments and extends the work of Mather & Siefert (2014) and Mather et al (2007).

Above all else, 'putting the student first' describes practices that institutions and agents believe are necessary to produce 'outstanding' student experiences, prioritising the need for student 'choice and voice', as well as demanding a highly committed workforce and curriculum flexibility. What can be described as a 'consumerist' strategy is predicated on the principles of value for money and customer satisfaction, which creates a 'relentless' pressure for improvement and a determination to ensure every student achieves their potential. Failure to do this reflects negatively on the institution in terms of reputation and lost funding revenue. It can also undermine the sector's claim to promote opportunity and social justice (Kennedy, 1997). The dominant narrative of the field, as expressed by participants, and presented in media portrayals and government policywork, is one that enables students to be prepared for employment or university, and that institutions that do this successfully are *consecrated* for their high-quality provision in inspection reports.

Consequently, the FE field is permeated by a competitive ethos which is homologous to all forms of education, in which institutional funding and long-term economic prosperity depends on an institution's capacity to attract and retain students other institutions compete for. With 16-18 participation rates flatlining, alongside a fall in the number of 16-18 year-olds accessing apprenticeships (DfE, 2018), and a longer-term decline in FE adult participation rates (ibid), this competition is likely to be intensified, placing even greater financial pressures on FE institutions to remain solvent.

The significance of 'good data' cannot be over-estimated in this heightened competitive landscape. 'Good data' is a badge of 'fitness' that gives consumers confidence that their 'educational investment' in a given institution is secure. These 'badges', which include inspection grades and achievement profiles, provide 'certificates of assurance' for the consumer, much in the same way as Michelin stars do for the hospitality industry, and testify to the 'high quality' services and products of the FE provider. At the same time, competition for students fuels a relentless and irrepressible search for new growth, new markets and new forms of differentiation to achieve long-term business sustainability,

which guarantees that all FE institutions are locked into an 'arms race' to see who is best equipped to 'put the student first'.

Ensuring that students succeed is therefore considered to be the most important part of professional practice and what all new entrants to the field are expected to embrace and internalise. This firmly resonated with respondents in this survey, who spoke of 'making a difference' and wanting to see their students thrive, develop and transition into new careers or new forms of education.

Practices that supported this mission, and provided evidence of its accomplishment, were recurring in people's comments: student-centred learning, individualised pastoral support, good student relations, target-setting, high performance metrics (attendance, retention, pass rates), the need for inclusivity, the 'marketing offer', systems of student feedback, etc; all these served to assert and reinforce the 'primacy of the student'. Consequently, compliance with these practices, and the ability to meet targets, secured recognition for individual practitioners. It confirmed the production of 'good data' (i.e. meeting institutional targets) as the legitimate capital of the field which sets the parameters, conditions, interests and stakes that define the FE *illusio*.

Bourdieu referred to the 'game' as the '*illusio*' which is both "the condition and the product of the field's functioning" (Bourdieu, 1998, p78). It provides the motivation and incentives for people to play the game; it "makes people believe that the stakes are worth dying for" (Lupu & Empson, 2015, p1319) and ultimately becomes "inscribed in the bodies" of those who willingly submit to its rules (Bourdieu, 2000, p171). For the FE 'game' to exist and operate as described, there needs to be individuals who believe in its value and significance, of which there is ample evidence. The expressions of care, dedication and sacrifice endured 'on-the-job', and their embodiment of these in people's moral and lifestyle statements exemplify Bourdieu's description of agents that are 'immersed' in their field; they are 'taken in by the game' (Bourdieu & Waquant, 1992) and reproduce it through their participation and complicity with its rules and expectations.

The degree to which people share the same beliefs, ideals, values and practices about 'putting the student first', of which the evidence is extensive, acts as a counterforce to the conflicts and divisions that arise from the competition for recognition. FE staff appear to be united in their belief in 'putting the student first' as a marker of professionalism, along with the processes of enculturation and socialisation that enable and sustain this belief (e.g. through professional associations, membership of internal committees, external forums, and opportunities to share practice, etc).

While examples of commitment, caring and personal sacrifice confirmed the importance of 'putting the student first' as a professional priority, the reverse was also true; practices deviating from this principle were considered unprofessional. Some respondents went to great lengths to ensure they put students first, with many working harder and longer to meet targets. However, accounts of stress and ill-health, as well as complaints about imposed change, showed that staff lower in the organisation experienced conditions of suffering as they pursued compliance (Schubert, 2008). By complying, the field itself is reproduced in all its forms, hierarchies, relations and continuities.

The evidence also illustrates FE's inherently contested nature and is indicative of the field's main divisions. The competition for symbolic capital gives rise to struggles, conflict and tensions between teachers, managers, students and institutions who strive for official recognition and the status and rewards this provides. Structural divisions between different parts of the sector, in which Sixth Form Colleges, specialist providers, private companies and large GFEs seek to strengthen their occupancy, overlay and intersect with tensions between autonomous (e.g. business plans) and heteronomous pressures (e.g. government funding) and agents' competition for different forms of capital.

In fighting for recognition, FE participants and institutions make claims on the very definition of professionalism, how the 'FE game' should be played and what it should try to accomplish. The ideas and practices that constitute the FE *illusio* simultaneously obscure and reinforce this drive for recognition, through a language of 'excellence' (which, by definition, is never completely attained) and collegiality (which disguises the individualism

inscribed by competition) and a re-scoring of teaching as noble, virtuous and honourable work, all of which combine to strengthen the FE *illusio* and ensure its continuity.

While Bourdieu's theories suggest strong structural links between knowledge, practice and position in the field, these links are not immutable. There is always sufficient friction between the habitus of actors and the doxa of the field to create space for change to be possible (Adkins 2004), and for actors to shape the field to redistribute opportunities and advantage. For Bottero (2010), the most powerful spaces for challenging such links occur in intersubjectivity, as interpersonal relationships and interactions determine the extent to which actors are constrained by their habitus or afforded opportunities for independent action.

This study concurs with Adams's (2015, p155) call for "a more accurate empirical picture" of professional work. This is a particular interest in FE where professional status amongst staff is alleged to be vulnerable (Taubman, 2015). Consequently, this study contends that professionalism should be a major focus in future FE policywork because it is likely to strengthen the sector's capacity to assess and, if necessary, contest the logics of policymaking and organisational change. Further empirical work will also reveal how institutional conditions and management strategies impact on staff professionalism in ways that can be both empowering and debilitating. This research is considered vital if the FE sector is to create and sustain 'best-in-class' working conditions that maximise student learning and success. Turning away from these challenges, arguably, not only condones and validates the status quo, as Bourdieu reminds us, but renders invisible new possibilities for developing and improving FE work.

Chapter 9 - Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

The study set out to examine four main research questions. These were:

- 1. Are FE staff highly professionalised?**
- 2. How does professionalism vary with capital?**
- 3. How does professionalism vary with position in the FE field?**
- 4. What practices support or weaken FE professionalism?**

Most FE staff did not show evidence that they were highly professionalised. For different reasons, many respondents lower in the organisational hierarchy reported challenges to their commitment and autonomy. Capital, as theorised by Bourdieu, was found to be a useful heuristic for understanding and explaining differences in these professional experiences. Bourdieu's view that there should be correspondence between an individual's objective position and subjective position was consistently evidenced. Both volume and structure of capital provided insights into the professional inequalities reported. Practices where capital was most likely to be won or lost revolved around access to valuable learning opportunities and networks and being located within decision-making circles where consultation and joint-working with colleagues were perceived as motivational. However, many staff do not report these conditions and there is evidence not only of restrictive working conditions for teachers and curriculum support staff, but that increasingly, FE institutions appear to be run as senior management autocracies whose practices sustain and reinforce professional divisions.

The first section provides a concise summary of the study's main findings. The second section evaluates the study's research design and considers its original contribution to knowledge. The final section concludes with a set of recommendations for the FE research community.

9.2 Summary of Findings

Professionalism is not a homogenous experience across FE. It is dependent on the possession of capital. Capital refers to the “resources, interests and opportunities” staff compete for to maintain and improve their professional status at work (Lawrence, 2004, p117). Differences in capital were central to understanding the status inequalities between staffing groups and therefore its acquisition and loss were ‘sites of struggle’ (Avis, 2003). Staff’s social position and working conditions were factors that influenced capital which, in turn, shaped their professional experiences.

Two complimentary approaches to the study of professionalism were undertaken. First, Hall’s professionalism scale (HPS) was used to measure the strength of staff’s professional attitudes and assess the extent that FE could be described as ‘professionalised’. With some modification, the HPS proved to be a reliable instrument. The evidence suggested that FE was not strongly professionalised with most staff experiencing low autonomy (Hypothesis 1).

Second, respondents used their own words to define ‘professional’ (Chapter 7). This produced a range of responses, which were synthesised into a tripartite analytic framework based on three interpretative schemas: expertise, service and compliance. Although responses showed overlap with the HPS, definitions were more nuanced than Hall proposed, concurring with Clow (2001) that how professionalism is defined is contextual.

Worryingly, most respondents were not committed to their occupation or employer (Hypothesis 2), attitudes that have arguably worsened over the last decade, with many staff suggesting FE teaching was no longer an attractive career (see Villeneuve-Smith et al, 2008). These outcomes have implications for the long-term stability of the FE workforce.

In line with Schinkel & Noordegraaf’s (2011) positioning of professionalism as symbolic capital, HPS scores were significantly related to work status (Hypothesis 3). Staff with the lowest HPS scores often cited a lack of recognition at work. In this study, capital appeared to be important for leveraging opportunities for gaining recognition. HPS scores (and thus

recognition) were linked to both the volume and structure of capital (Hypothesis 4), with socio-cultural capital exercising stronger effects than economic capital.

Consistent with Bourdieu's predictions, professionalism varied with social position (Hypothesis 5). Job role, committee membership, trade union membership, teaching load and experiences of non-specialist teaching were the strongest structural predictors of HPS scores. How professionalism was constructed appeared to be linked to the individual's position in the FE field (Hypothesis 6).

Acquiring knowledge & skills, developing others, approval-seeking and exchanging information and support were valued practices that enhanced professionalism. However, work intensification and social closure practices operating inside FE institutions, alongside policy and inspection impositions, weakened it. Contests of capital described disputes over purpose, priorities and participation, all of which affected perceptions of value and work status. The acquisition and loss of capital arising from these practices had direct implications for how professionalism was experienced (Hypothesis 7).

9.3 Evaluating the Research Aims, Design and Outcomes

9.3.1 INITIAL REFLECTIONS

The title of this thesis reflected a desire to better understand the concept of professionalism in the FE sector with the aim of contributing to this debate. Through an analysis of 461 responses to an online survey, it revealed some of the strategies staff use that improve or weaken professionalism. It explored differences between groups and related these to individuals' field position. The research was interested in the following question:

Is the concept of capital useful in explaining differences in perceived professionalism amongst FE staff?

The question was approached in two ways. The first explored the empirical relationship between professionalism and capital (cultural, social, economic and symbolic) and confirmed capital as a useful heuristic for explaining differences in professionalism. The second investigated practitioners' understandings of the term 'professional'. This produced an analytic framework with three organising lenses: expertise, service and compliance.

Guided by Bourdieu's conceptual framework, the first stage used a mixed-methods approach incorporating quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative analysis (Chapter 6) focused on the influence of structural factors that affected professionalism (a topographical project). Qualitative analysis examined respondents' answers to a series of prescribed and open questions, in which narratives were emotive and experiential, as well as fragmentary and indicative (a dispositional project). These narratives were suitable for dealing with the complexities and contradictions inherent in the interpretation of the term 'professional' (Chapter 7).

9.3.2 SUCCESS FACTORS TO THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Several features of the research design were important to the success of this study. First, the response set was both large and diverse for a study of this kind, producing a rich stream of data. Second, the quantitative and qualitative data provided a means of triangulating findings and exploring emerging themes in more detail. Third, a Bourdieusian framework provided the conceptual tools to situate professionalism within a wider field of power, showing how individual practices are shaped by wider structural forces.

Responses to the survey were submitted over three months, June to September 2015, which allowed response patterns and emerging issues to be monitored, including completion times. Earlier pilot testing had reviewed the survey's structure, design and clarity, and ensured that the final version was suitable for an FE audience. The incorporation of quantitative and qualitative data enabled a more thorough and immersive understanding of FE professionalism to be reported. The high quality and breadth of responses meant that it was unnecessary to carry out follow-up interviews, so these were dropped from the final design.

Ideally, a large survey increases the possibility that a sample represents the target population in terms of profile and characteristics. In FE, this is a challenge due to the lack of definitive data on the sector's overall membership. In the absence of such data, existing workforce profiles (see ETF, 2017; 2019) provided an incomplete guide to the sector's likely composition. To counter this issue and to maximise circulation, the survey was distributed through multiple channels: union bulletins, association websites, blogs, commercial distribution lists and institutional websites and mailing lists. Despite this, there remained some areas of the sector that were represented to a much greater extent than others (e.g. General Further Education Colleges). While the findings do not claim to represent the entire sector, they were based on a significant data set (461 cases) comprising a wide variety of viewpoints from across FE.

Designing an online version of the questionnaire proved to be a valuable experience which has enabled me to better guide students in the conduct of their own research, including the design and construction of online surveys. The use of an online survey was a singularly important methodological choice. The ease of distribution, automatic response collation and the ability to track responses daily, was ideal for busy FE agents, producing a powerful analytic tool with considerable research advantages over traditional methods.

9.3.3 THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

This study furthers our knowledge of the links between professionalism, power and status in the FE sector by showing that social position in the FE field is related to how professionalism is experienced. It reveals that professionalism is a 'site of struggle' between different interest groups (Avis, 2003). It also highlights inequalities in work situations, power and influence that contribute to this professional experience.

An issue that emerged from the literature review was the paucity of studies that had used a quantitative approach to a study of FE professionalism. The review yielded few reliable measurement tools and generated little in the way of comparative work. Measures of capital were similarly diverse. The study used scales and items borrowed from existing

instruments and theories, and where required, I corresponded with the original authors to qualify their appropriateness. These scales were not claimed as definitive, but rather explorative and indicative, providing insights into a topic deserving further investigation.

Critical realism provided an overarching epistemological position on professionalism, in which quantitative and qualitative contributions were considered equally valid and useful. The study also benefited from drawing on a range of theoretical concepts from education, sociology and organisational studies to help frame the research issues. In particular, Bourdieusian theory provided a useful lens to explore relationships between variables and the wider FE socio-political context, offering a sophisticated vocabulary for examining the phenomena at multiple levels.

Importantly, a Bourdieusian analysis considers the effects of structure and agency on the professional experience. As Bourdieu argues, it is not possible to understand agential decisions unless they are contextualised in terms of the constraining and empowering properties of structures. These structures include policies, legislation, job titles and work memberships, as well as personal demographics. Bourdieu acknowledges that individuals and groups interpret, mediate and resist the effects of structure, producing a range of responses and expectations that define professional legitimacy. He invites us to 'peek behind the curtain' to re-imagine the status quo and to ask why certain situations persist and are reproduced. Arguably, it is legitimacy, to be recognised as legitimate, that is at the heart of professionalism.

The choice of Bourdieu was assisted by engagement with other major research traditions, in which overlaps and linkages were observed. Theories of managerialism and performativity helped to situate the practice of professionalism within the wider 'field of power' (Bourdieu, 1991). This helped to construct the FE sector as a political, economic and historical field that exercises influence over the conditions of FE work. These were supplemented by concepts such as social closure (Parkin, 1979), restricted and expansive learning (Fuller & Unwin, 2003), ethic of care (Avis & Bathmaker, 2004) and professionalisation (Muzio et al, 2013; Wilensky, 1964) to explain participant narratives.

The literature provided a unique perspective on the unfolding dynamics of educational development which forces us to see FE as part of a wider political, economic and cultural system. The thesis was also influenced by labour process theory. The contraction of FE's estate and workforce, and the effects of OFSTED on the homogenisation of practice are congruent with the predictions of LPT theorists who describe FE reforms as a process of de-skilling (e.g. Mather et al, 2007; Mather & Siefert, 2014). Statements of work intensification and burnout by respondents suggest these remain ongoing sector concerns. At the same time, LPT does not adequately account for the many stories of 'love', redemption, pride and recognition in narratives, suggesting individual subjectivities are important in studying professional attitudes. Identity and professional learning traditions supplemented these insights, and sometimes contrasted with them, though overall, this study agrees with Jameson & Hillier (2008) and Robson (2007) when they assert that FE's professional status continues to be 'problematic'.

9.3.4 LIMITATIONS

A research survey of this scale always presents itself with difficulties. Choice of questions, length of survey, interpretation of items – these were all challenges given the knowledge that FE staff are very busy and have limited time outside their main duties to complete this type of activity. The survey took time to develop and test, as did the platform that it was hosted on, which delayed its publication. Fortunately, a June launch fitted well with the close of mainstream academic activities in most FE institutions. The process of survey design and implementation was carefully project managed. Respondents who offered themselves as potential interviewees (not pursued in the end) suggested that respondents found the survey stimulating and relevant to their working experiences. That said, with almost two-thirds of the sample registered as union members, this is likely to have influenced the overall response profile, since trade union members scored significantly lower on the HPS than non-members.

There are no previous studies of FE staff using Hall's scale, so it is not possible to confirm whether these results are typical. The sample was better qualified and older than the national profile, which may be consequential. Both education level and age have been

known to increase levels of organisational cynicism (Korkut & Aslan, 2016; Şahin, Uğur & Yasin, 2013) and dissatisfaction (Bordia et al, 2011), especially around the efficacy of change projects (Abraham, 2000; Wanous et al, 2000; Bordia et al, 2011) which can affect professionalism and occupational commitment (Altinkurt & Ekinci, 2016; Abraham, 2000; Barton & Ambrosini, 2012).

Any form of comparative analysis across time and cultures poses difficulties (see Chapter 6). Variations in scale items, scoring method and sample characteristics can influence final professionalism scores. Most studies have been conducted in the United States and arguably promote an Anglocentric view of professional occupations. Scores may therefore vary between cultures that assess the desirability of Hall's characteristics differently. Expectations surrounding the work of professions may also have changed over time. For example, the gradual incorporation of professions into large professional firms in the last few decades (Muzio et al, 2013) may have lowered people's expectations on autonomy, which acts downwardly on mean scores, without necessarily affecting their subjective assessment of professionalism. Notwithstanding, this comparison supports a more general interpretation that FE professionalism may be under strain.

In this study, a reduced 15-item version of the Hall-Snizek scale was used but did not achieve good reliability ($\alpha = 0.61$). Following Swailes (2003), the Sense of Calling subscale was replaced with Blau's 5-item Commitment subscale, which improved reliability ($\alpha = 0.74$) and restored Hall's five factor structure. α scores for Hall's original subscales were modest to poor, ranging from 0.47 to 0.36, falling below the minimum 0.5 threshold for small-item scales (Dall'Oglio et al, 2010; Rice et al, 2015). Reliability scores were much lower than other reported studies using Hall's scale (e.g. Chan et al, 2007; Wynd, 2003; Carlan & Lewis, 2009). In particular, the Profession-as-Referent (items 26.1, 26.7, 26.12), Belief in Self-Regulation (items 26.3, 26.9, 26.13) and Autonomy (item 26.6, 26.11, 26.15) subscales did not evidence a clean uni-dimensional structure. Belief in Public Service, Self-Regulation and Profession-as-Referent subscales were dropped from the final analysis. While Hall's scale performed appropriately under its revised form, further testing of the original Snizek-Hall scale or condensed versions is advised.

Survey categories which rely on self-categorisation can also distort findings. In this survey, respondents were restricted to selecting one main job role. In reality, participants may occupy more than one role, a manager who teaches, a teacher with technician duties, etc, which may influence their experience of professionalism. These hybrid roles were not captured, though the study proceeded on the assumption that main roles would be the predominant influence on professional identity. Where respondents identified as 'advanced practitioners' or 'learning coaches', usually under 'other' (job role), these were assigned to a middle manager category. This is a contested decision, but one based on the directive role these positions have within FE institutions and their 'elevated status' compared to teachers. As their numbers were small, the results will not have skewed the overall findings. Had they identified with teachers, not managers, this will have accentuated divisions and therefore left the study's main conclusions unaltered.

Finally, the study adopted a cross-sectional approach which provides a snapshot of professional attitudes at a given moment in time. Cross-sectional research allows researchers to see how variables such as professionalism vary with other identified variables. An alternative is to use a longitudinal design that shows how the same variables dynamically change over time (within-individual). These designs are more costly in time and resources which the sector may be unwilling to accommodate, although they can provide a significantly enhanced insight into a complex issue like professionalism.

9.3.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

In taking a 'stakeholder perspective', opportunity to explore the professional priorities of different staffing groups in more detail would be a logical next step. For example, an examination of the views of Principals, learning support workers, or new curriculum managers (as they transition from curriculum to managerial roles). In addition, there has been no study of business support personnel who carry out essential functions and interface with curriculum staff on a daily basis. How they describe their professionalism, and that of colleagues, would add a new dimension to the existing research corpus.

Other areas of enquiry include examining professionalism from the perspective of external stakeholders. Replication of the excellent studies by Hargreaves et al (2006) and Hall & Langton (2006) on schoolteachers in the UK and New Zealand respectively provide leads on how professional status is affected by different variables. How status is regarded in the general public, the media and employer stakeholders, and for what reasons, provide an empirical context for examining the wider FE field and its pressures. Of great interest too would be a study of OFSTED inspectors' views on FE professionalism, which may shed insights on the degree of concordance between private ideologies and public orthodoxies as inspectors conduct their work. Comparisons between schoolteachers and FE, raised by several respondents and reported in Simkins (2000) also remain under-theorised and are worthy of future investigation. Finally, comparisons with other 'public sector' occupations may determine similarities and differences in professional experiences.

Lastly, how student ratings affect staff professionalism is under-explored. The Bilborough College (2009) survey represents one of few empirical attempts to examine students' assessments of the 'effective' teacher, though even here, it focused on the narrow issue of effectiveness rather than the broader issue of professionalism (in Lightbody, 2012). Arguably, this is overdue, given the significance attached to student voice initiatives and customer satisfaction metrics in measures of staff and department performance (Linnet, 2009; Lobb, 2017; McFarlane, 2015).

9.4 Recommendations and Final Thoughts

How might a study of professionalism be used most effectively to improve the status and experiences of FE staff? In its totality, this summarises the conclusions drawn for each of the main research questions in this study (see Chapter 1).

The first recommendation is an appeal for further empirical research. Professionalism offers an important insight into the values, priorities, traditions and pressures of FE life. In particular, there is a need to understand further why managers and teachers come to hold discrepant views and with what effects, especially as these differences have implications for

the long-term stability and development of the sector. Arguably, this should involve the appointment of a policy research team which can lead, develop and report on this work, possibly linked to the Education and Training Foundation, as FE's professional body, whose role could be to promote and fund this agenda.

The second recommendation is to extend Davis's (2018) suggestion for policy risk-assessment so that the sector has a formal process for evaluating the impact of policy. This impact could consider institutional, staffing, student and reputational indices. The sector should seek agreement with ministers that policy-testing will be subjected to an agreed process of scrutiny, which may go hand-in-hand with joint policy forums with government and wider educational stakeholders who have a vested interest in the success of a national educational system in which FE is a partner. Policy-testing should arguably consider issues of staff stability, morale and commitment, which research indicates have a direct influence on student results (Ronfeldt et al, 2013). The role of funding and OFSTED as levers of change should be re-examined to see what role they play in sustaining unproductive practices, and further study of institutional climate is to be strongly recommended.

The third recommendation is a call to re-consider the role of OFSTED, which has arguably had a determining effect on staff's professional experience. Few had positive comments for OFSTED, but many spoke of the fear they experienced trying to comply with targets, plans and benchmarks that OFSTED dictated. Longer-term, in terms of staff commitment, this is unlikely to be a sustainable position for FE. This is not the same thing as having no watchdog or evaluative process for the sector. But if the inspectorate is to reclaim the sector's confidence, it must be seen to be politically independent and consider whether policy is helping or hindering student learning. In addition, it may be time for research to establish the relationship between staff professionalism and student learning in FE, so that OFSTED is invited to consider the impact of staffing variables on student progress as part of the formal inspection process.

The fourth recommendation points to a need for management training. The lack of recognition, praise and respect highlighted by so many staff cannot be blamed on government policy alone. Institutions need to take responsibility for how staff are treated,

and how best to support their careers just as staff are expected to do with students. That many managers were described as incompetent, rude and threatening is an indictment of a culture of blame that has developed across much of the FE system. At the same time, staff professionalism has been shown to be supported by respectful and consultative relationships. Including staff in decision-making circles and positive use of feedback systems can create enriching professional experiences.

The fifth recommendation is for teacher developers and managers to think more imaginatively about supporting the development of expertise. Expertise is key to being seen as credible and useful, and when developed as part of collegial engagements, can strengthen professional identity and encourage greater pedagogic reflection and innovation. Conversely, managers are recommended to think how timetabling and new curriculum assignments affect subject specialists, and what training and support is needed if these assignments are unavoidable.

The sixth recommendation considers the application of this study's professionalism framework to improve professional learning amongst individual teachers and teaching teams. The study indicates that teacher professionalism is a complex admixture of cultural, social and economic factors, all of which combine to shape professional attitudes. As well as developing expertise, for example through scholarly practice or action research projects, opportunities to work collaboratively in internal and external forums can enhance the experience of community sought by practitioners. These forums offer dialogic opportunities for mutual discussion, sharing, feedback and problem-solving, empowering individuals and teams to refine, develop and improve organisational products and services. These activities offer a joint endeavour to build sustainable businesses and reputations, with the prospect of strengthening the FE community as a whole.

The final recommendation is for the sector to review what mechanisms, networks and forums it uses to engage practitioners at every level of the sector, and to what extent participation should be facilitated with targeted funding. Networks that facilitate the exchange of important information, updates, expertise and contacts may be considered a priority. Such networks may also consider how staff divisions can be broken down through

collaborative projects and research, and how this work should be publicised to wider stakeholders. This suggests an enhanced role for the Education and Training Foundation to help facilitate, fund and evaluate new networks to improve engagement. In the longer-term, the need for FE to review and rationalise existing professional associations may be something that is needed to improve its bargaining power with government.

In conclusion, the relentless drive for 'good data' and reputation across FE institutions in recent years has indelibly shaped staff's ideas of professional practice. Under a managerialist agenda, underpinned by notions of performativity and accountability, the dominant vision of professionalism is one of compliance with institutional objectives. Managerialism has coincided with incursions into traditional autonomies and expertise once exercised by FE teachers, so that now teachers are expected to speak of their work in technical and conformance terms. This preoccupation is a direct product of current funding and inspection programmes where high student outcomes are rewarded and non-compliance is punished. The prominence of the managerial prerogative has reinforced a stratification inside FE institutions where managers increasingly enjoy greater power (capital), influence and pay in comparison to most other staff, and whose ideas dominate professional agendas and training. Teacher expertise has been arguably neglected in this transition, hastened by a 'student first' orthodoxy that misrecognises the relative disempowerment of teaching staff in FE. While teachers and managers appear to hold distinctive perspectives on professionalism, both use the language of students to support their professional priorities, variously drawing on notions of commitment, service and an 'ethic of care'. However, what is considered in the student interest means different things, depending on the individual's social position in the FE field. Bourdieu's work allows us to reconsider issues that may have been normalised, but which should be systematically reflected on, for example, whether a market logic is supporting staff professionalism. The evidence gathered in this thesis suggests that it is failing to do this for a majority of staff. Future co-operation between sector bodies, ministers and wider stakeholders in the development and implementation of policy will support a more sustainable professionalism that will create positive reputational outcomes for FE.

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Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Scoping Questionnaires
- Appendix 2 - Online Professionalism Survey
- Appendix 3 – Email Invitation
- Appendix 4 – Blog – Invitation on Education & Training Foundation website.
- Appendix 5 – FE Community Press Release
- Appendix 6 – Feedback from Pilot Exercise of Survey
- Appendix 7 – Ethics Consent Checklist
- Appendix 8 – Capital Scales and Professionalism
- Appendix 9 – Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis
- Appendix 10 – CA Data Tables
- Appendix 11 – CA Contingency Table

Questionnaire 2

YOUR VIEWS ON TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM AND TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS

RESEARCH INTO FE

| | | | |
|------------------------|--|--------------|-----------------|
| RESEARCH FOCUS: | TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM & TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS | Date: | 21.03.14 |
|------------------------|--|--------------|-----------------|

Your Details:

Name & Job Title

Are You:

Full-time Part-time

Organisation:

Job Category:

Manager Lecturer Support

Subject Background:

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Science & Maths</i> | <i>Social Sciences</i> | <i>Creative Industries</i> | <i>English & Humanities</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Other.....

Interpretations of Professionalism:

Our main research question is: What does it mean to be 'a professional teacher' in Further Education?

Do you consider an FE teacher to be 'a professional'?

Yes No

Please explain your selection:

Does an FE teacher have the same 'kind' of professionalism as the following occupations?

| <i>Please Tick</i> | Highly Similar | | | | Highly Different |
|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Nurses | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Doctors | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Accountants | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Police Officers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Solicitors | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| University Lecturers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Learning Support Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Senior FE Managers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please explain your ratings:

Put the following professions in rank order in terms of their status 'in the public's eyes':

Please Tick

Rank Order (1 to 10)

- Nurses
- Doctors
- Accountants
- Police Officers
- Solicitors
- University Lecturers
- Learning Support Staff
- FE Teachers
- Schoolteachers
- Veterinary Surgeons

| |
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| |
| |

Please explain your ratings:

Implications of the Lingfield Report on Teacher Qualifications:

Following Lord Lingfield's final report in October 2012, mandatory teaching qualifications for FE teachers were abolished with colleges/employers now deciding who should be teacher trained. Please rate whether the following will be positively or negatively affected by this outcome:

| <i>Please Tick</i> | Highly positive | | No Difference | | Highly Negative |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Quality of Teaching & Learning | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Teacher's Pay | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Public Reputation of FE Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Student Achievement | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Teacher Morale | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Recruitment of Good Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Teacher Retention | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Preparing Students for Work & Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Access to High Quality Professional Development Opportunities | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Relationships between Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The Professionalism of Teachers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Additional Comments:

Questionnaire 3

YOUR VIEWS ON TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM AND TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS

RESEARCH INTO FE

| | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| RESEARCH FOCUS: | TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM | Date: | 21.03.14 |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|

Your Details:

Name & Job Title

Are You: Full-time Part-time

Organisation:

Job Category: *Manager* *Lecturer* *Support*

Your Department:

Interpretations of Professionalism:

Teacher Professionalism, or put simply, what makes an FE teacher a 'professional', has been the subject of considerable debate. We take a 'grounded approach' by asking for your views on what you – the practitioners - think this means.

Defining Professionalism:

If a teacher is to be considered 'professional', list three characteristics you would expect them to exhibit or possess that underpins and defines this 'professionalism'.

Does an FE teacher have the same 'kind' of professionalism as the following occupations?

| <i>Please Tick</i> | Highly Similar | | | Highly Different | |
|------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Nurses | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Doctors | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Accountants | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Police Officers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Solicitors | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| University Lecturers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Learning Support Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Senior FE Managers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please provide a short explanation of your ratings:

Questionnaire 4

A STUDY OF THE REPUTATION OF FURTHER EDUCATION

1. Do you think the 'FE profession' is highly regarded by:

| <i>Please Tick</i> | <i>Most Definitely</i> | | | | | <i>Definitely Not</i> | <i>Have no Opinion</i> |
|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | |
| Government | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| OFSTED | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The General Public | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please briefly explain your ratings:

2. If you describe someone or a group of people as having a 'good reputation', what does this mean to you?

3. In your view, Is the public reputation of FE Teachers higher or lower than the following:

| <i>Please Tick</i> | <i>Much Higher</i> | <i>About the Same</i> | <i>Much Lower</i> |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Nurses | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Doctors | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Accountants | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Police Officers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Solicitors | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| University Lecturers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Schoolteachers (Secondary) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pharmacists | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Town Planners | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Politicians | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Engineers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Hairdressers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Social Workers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. Is it important for FE Teachers to have a high reputation?

Yes No

5. Does it matter to you if the FE Sector is not regarded as highly by the public as other professional groups?

Yes

No

6. Additional Comments:

Please add any further comments that you feel are relevant to a discussion about the reputation of FE teachers and the FE sector as a whole.

Appendix 2 – Professionalism Survey (Online)

SURVEY - PERCEPTIONS OF PROFESSIONALISM IN FURTHER EDUCATION

Thank you for taking the time to answer this survey on professionalism. This survey is designed for staff who currently work in Further Education. The purpose of this survey is to find out more about your views about your work and what it means to be 'professional'.

The results will be analysed as part of a PhD project with the University of Brighton under the supervision of Professor Yvonne Hillier and Dr Nadia Edmond. The research has been given ethical approval by the University of Brighton's Faculty Research Ethics Committee. All data collected in this survey will be kept confidential and securely stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Please answer ALL questions as fully and honestly as possible.

COMPLETING THE SURVEY

The survey is divided into Sections A-F and are presented as follows:

Section A - Personal Details

Section B - Your Employment

Section C - Your Subject Knowledge

Section D - Your Views as a Professional

Section E - Your Work Relationships

Section F - Your Work Motivation & Future Intentions

The majority of questions require you to rate a statement using a 5-point scale, for example from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree' - and to do this you simply 'tick a box'. A small number of questions ask you to 'tick all that apply' where there are several options for you to consider. There are also 'open questions' which encourage you to write freely with your comments.

The survey will take 15 minutes to complete. You can complete the survey in one sitting or you can save the survey in sections and come back later to complete it. The survey will be open until **Monday 28th September 2015**

If you have any queries relating to the research or your potential participation in the study, please contact Paul Tully at paultully@braintech.freereserve.co.uk.

Thank you for your participation.

Notes on Confidentiality:

Names of individual participants or their institutions will not appear in the analysis or final reports and you are not required to give your name in completing the survey, though you may choose to do so if you would like to participate in the interviews planned for 2015-2016 as part of this study.

By completing and submitting this survey you agree to give consent to the research team's use of the data for research purposes. Members of the research team may disseminate findings in several ways which may include presentations at conferences and articles submitted in education journals.

Notes on Copyright:

The survey is not permitted to be used - in part or in full - in any other form of research without the written consent of the survey's author.

SECTION A: PERSONAL DETAILS

All personal details will be kept anonymous and shared only with the research team.

Question 1: Your Gender

Are you:

- Male
- Female
- Prefer Not to Say

Question 2: Your Ethnicity

Are you:

- Asian
- Black
- Chinese
- Mixed Race
- White British
- White - Other
- Other
- Prefer Not to Say

If you selected 'Other', please specify

Question 3: Your Age

Are you:

- Under 25
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

Question 4: Your Highest Qualification

Please pick the highest educational qualification that you have achieved from the following menu.

- O-levels / GCSEs
- A-levels / Vocational Level 3
- Foundation Degree / HND / HNC
- Degree
- Masters
- PhD
- Other Professional Qualification
- No formal qualification

If you selected 'Other Professional Qualification', please specify:

Question 5: Your Teaching Qualifications

Please pick the highest teaching qualification that you have achieved from the following menu.

- Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
- Certificate in Education (CERT Ed)
- Diploma in Teaching (DTLLS)
- Certificate in Teaching (CTLLS)
- Award in Teaching (PTLLS)
- 7407 Stage 3
- 7407 Stage 2
- 7407 Stage 1
- 7306/ 7307
- Assessor / Verifier Awards
- Other
- I do not have a teaching qualification

If you selected 'Other', please specify:

Question 6: Professional Memberships & Groups

Please tick all that apply:

Are you a member of:

- A Trade Union Y/N
- A Professional Body Y/N
- An External Professional Development Network or Forum Y/N
- An Internal Committee or Working Group Y/N
- A Work Social Club

Question 7: Your Experience

Please tick ONE answer for each statement.

How long have you worked in Further Education?

- 0-1 yrs
- 2-4 yrs
- 5-9 yrs
- 10-19 yrs
- 20+ yrs

SECTION B - YOUR EMPLOYMENT

In answering these questions, please choose the organisation where you spend MOST of your working 'FE' time in.

Question 8: Your Main Organisation

Please give the name of the organisation where you do most of your teaching / work in.

(If you work equally for two or more organisations, please pick one of these).

[type here]

Question 9: Years at Organisation

Please state the number of years and months you have worked at this organisation?

Years:

Months:

Question 10: Type of Organisation

The organisation identified in Question 8 can be best described as a:

- Adult Learning Provider
- Armed Forces Provider
- General Further Education College (GFE)
- Independent College
- Offender Learning Provider
- Private Training Company
- Sixth Form College
- Specialist College
- Tertiary College (does not teach A-levels)
- Voluntary Organisation/ Charity
- Other, please specify

Question 11: Your Contract

The type of contract I have is best described as:

- Permanent
- Temporary

Question 12: Type of Employment

The type of employment can be best described as:

- Full-time
- Part-time (fraction is 0.5 or more)
- Part-time (fraction is less than 0.5)
- Part-time – hourly paid/ casual
- Agency employed
- Other, please specify

Question 13: Your Job Role

My job role is best described as:

- Teacher/ Lecturer
- Middle Manager
- Senior Manager
- Workplace Assessor/ Verifier
- Learning Support Worker
- Technician with Teaching Duties
- Trainer/ Instructor
- Other, please specify

Question 14: Your Typical Weekly Work Hours

In a typical working week, how many hours 'on average' do you work at this organisation?:

- Options, from 1 to 30 (drop-down list)

Question 15: Your Typical Weekly Teaching Hours

In a typical working week, how many hours 'on average' do you teach at this organisation?:

- Options, from 1 to 30 (drop-down list)

Question 16: Other Teaching Roles

Do you teach in other organisations?

- Yes
- No

Question 17: Previous Occupation

What was your previous occupation before coming into teaching? If none, write NONE.

- [type here]

Question 18: About Your Job

The next 6 questions are about your job role and are presented on a 5-point scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

Please tick ONE answer.

| | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 18.1 I am clear about my job role, its duties and responsibilities | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18.2 I often carry out tasks that I personally disagree with | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18.3 I am clear about my organisation's main priorities | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18.4 If I had the power, I would change my organisation's priorities | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18.5 I am paid fairly for the job role that I do | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18.6 My job causes me high levels of stress and anxiety | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Use this box to add any further comments.
[type here]

Question 19: About Your Job Performance

The next question asks you to rate how well you have performed your job duties over the previous year. This is your *personal opinion* of your own performance.

Please choose a number between 1 and 100 that indicates your performance rating, where 1 = 'Not at all Well' and 100 = 'Extremely Well'.

[type here]

SECTION C: YOUR SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The next section is about your main subject specialism and your professional development.

Question 20: Subject / Occupational Specialism

Please identify ONE subject that you consider to be your main subject specialism.

- [type here]

Question 21: Teaching Hours in Subject Specialism

How many hours of teaching per week, on average, do you spend teaching this subject ?

- Options, from 0 to 30 (drop-down list)

Question 22: Teaching on Non-Specialist Subjects

Have you ever taught on the following courses for which you felt you were not appropriately qualified to teach?

(Tick all that apply)

- A-level course
- Vocational course
- Key/ Functional Skills course
- GCSE Course
- Enrichment Course / session
- Adult Training / Recreational Course
- Other, please specify
- This has never happened to me

Question 23: Qualifications

The next 2 questions are presented using a 5-point scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

Please tick ONE box for each statement.

| | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 23.1 A professional teacher in Further Education should be required to hold a relevant subject qualification to teach their subject | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23.2 A professional teacher in Further Education should be required to hold a teaching qualification | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 24: Your Professional Development

The next 4 questions are about your professional development at work. These are presented on a 5-point scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

Please tick ONE box for each statement.

| | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 24.1 I have regular opportunities to update my teaching skills in my organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24.2 I have regular opportunities to update my subject specialism in my organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24.3 I am regularly consulted about my professional development needs in my organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24.4 My professional development needs are taken seriously by my line manager | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SECTION D: YOUR VIEWS AS A PROFESSIONAL

This section asks questions about your views of the 'FE profession' and about being an FE teacher.

Question 25: What does the term 'professional' mean to you?

Please use this text box to pin down what the term 'professional' means to you within the context of your working role and duties

- [type here]

Question 26: Your Views about the FE Teaching Profession

The next set of questions consider your views about the FE teaching profession and aspects about your teaching role.

If you are a manager, not a teacher in Further Education, then substitute the word 'manager' where you read the word 'teacher'.

The questions are presented using a 5-point scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

Please tick ONE box for each statement.

| | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 26.1 I regularly attend local professional meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.2 I think my profession, more than any other, is essential for society | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.3 My fellow professionals have a pretty good idea about each other's competence | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.4 People in this profession have a real 'calling' for their work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.5 The importance of my profession is sometimes over-stressed | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.6 I don't have much opportunity to exercise my own judgement | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.7 I believe that professional organisations should be supported | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.8 Some other occupations are actually more important to society than mine | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.9 A problem in this profession is that no one knows what colleagues in other organisations are doing to improve standards | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.10 It is encouraging to see the high level of idealism which is maintained by people in this profession | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.11 My own decisions are subject to review | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.12 Professional bodies do little for the average member | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.13 We really have no way of judging each other's competence (in this profession) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.14 Most people would stay in the profession even if their incomes were reduced | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26.15 I am my own boss in almost every work-related situation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 27: Your Professional Outlook

The next 5 questions are about your current outlook towards your profession. These are presented on a 5-point scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

Please tick ONE box for each statement.

| | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 27.1 If I could go into a profession other | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| than the one I am in and which paid the same I probably would | | | | | |
| 27.2 I definitely want to make a career in the profession I am in | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27.3 If I could do it all over again, I would not choose the same profession | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27.4 I like this profession too well to give it up | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27.5 I am disappointed that I ever entered my profession | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SECTION E - YOUR WORK RELATIONSHIPS

The next section looks at the relationship you have with work colleagues and your line manager.

Question 28: Quality of Work Relationships

Please tick ONE answer.

| | Excellent | Good | Satisfactory | Difficult | Poor |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 28.1 How would you describe your relationships at work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 29: Support from Colleagues

Please tick ONE answer.

| | Fully Agree | | | | Fully Disagree |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 29.1 Most people in my organisation are willing to help if you need it | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 29.2 Most people in this organisation can be trusted | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 30: Relationships with Work Colleagues

To what extent do you agree with the following statements about your relationships with work colleagues?

NOTE: Some of the questions refer to your 'work unit' - you may think of this as your 'team' or 'work group' if this is more helpful.

Questions are presented using a 5-point scale ranging from Fully Agree to Fully Disagree

Please tick ONE answer for each statement.

| | Fully Agree | | | | Fully Disagree |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 30.1 We have a 'we are together' attitude | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30.2 People keep each other informed about work related issues in the work unit | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30.3 People feel understood and accepted by each other | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30.4 Members of the work unit build on each other's ideas in order to achieve the best possible outcome | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

The next question is presented on a 5-point scale ranging from 'Very Much' to 'Very Little'

| | Very Much | | | | Very Little |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 30.5 People in the work unit co-operate in order to help develop and apply new ideas | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 31: Meeting Colleagues Outside the Organisation

Please tick ONE answer.

| | Frequently | Often | Occasionally | Rarely | Never |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 31.1 How often have you been able to meet colleagues from other Further Education organisations to discuss/ share good practice in the past 12 months? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 32: Management

The next questions are about the way you are managed.

NOTE: Where you see the term 'supervisor', it may be more helpful to think of this as your 'line manager'

Questions are presented using a 5-point scale ranging from Fully Agree to Fully Disagree
Please tick ONE answer for each statement.

| | Fully Agree | | | | Fully Disagree |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 32.1 Our supervisor treats us with kindness and consideration | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 32.2 Our supervisor shows concern for our rights as an employee | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 32.3 We can trust our supervisor | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 33: Staffroom Provision

Does your organisation have a staffroom where staff can meet each other at breaks or lunch time?

- Yes
- No

SECTION F - YOUR WORK MOTIVATION AND FUTURE INTENTIONS

Question 34: Motivation & Morale

Please tick ONE answer for each statement.

| | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 34.1 There is a high level of morale in my organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 34.2 There is a high level of job security in my organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 35: Work Status

How do you feel about your status within the organisation?

Questions are presented on a 5-point rating scale from 'Strongly Agree' to 'Strongly Disagree'

Disagree'.

Choose N/A if the question is not relevant to your circumstances.

Please tick ONE answer for each statement.

I feel valued by:

| | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 35.1 Senior Managers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35.2 My Line Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35.3 My Full-time co-workers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35.4 My Part-time co-workers | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35.5 Support Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35.6 My Learners | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35.7 The General Public | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35.8 Government | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35.9 OFSTED | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 36: Job Satisfaction

Please tick ONE answer for each statement.

| | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 36.1 Overall, how satisfied are you with your job? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 37: Emotional Exhaustion

The next question asks you to think about how your work makes you feel and uses a 7-point scale from 'Every Day' to 'Never'.

Please tick ONE answer for each statement.

| | Every Day | A few times a week | Once a week | A few times a month | Once a month or less | A few times a year or less | Never |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 37.1 I feel burned out from my work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 38: Your Future Intentions

The next question measures the extent to which you want to leave your current organisation.

Please choose a number between 1 and 100 that indicates your wish to leave, where 1 = 'Not at all' and 100 = 'very, very much'.

[type here]

Question 39: Your Career Intentions

Please tick ONE answer for each statement.

Can you see yourself working in Further Education in:

| | Most Definitely | Very Likely | Not Decided | Not Likely | Definitely Not |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 39.1 Five years from now | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 40: Your Recommendations

Please tick ONE answer for each statement.

I would recommend:

| | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 40.1 My organisation as a place to work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 40.2 A career as a Further Education teacher to others | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Question 41:**What aspects of your job role support/ enhance your sense of 'being a professional' in Further Education?**

Please be as detailed as you can.

[type here]

Question 42:**What aspects of your job role diminish/ undermine your sense of 'being a professional' in Further Education?**

Please be as detailed as you can.

[type here]

Thank you for participating in this research.
If you are interested in taking part in follow-up interviews that will form part of the next phase of research, please e-mail
paultully@braintech.freemove.co.uk

Survey Tools powered by FluidSurveys
 A SurveyMonkey Company.

Appendix 3 – E-mail Invitation for Survey

RAISING THE PROFILE OF FURTHER EDUCATION – INDEPENDENT PHD SURVEY INTO FE PROFESSIONALISM, UNIVERSITY OF BRIGHTON

Dear Colleagues,

Please take part in this FE Professionalism Survey – it takes a few minutes to complete.

This professionalism survey is interested in the views of all those that work in the Further Education sector, including GFES, Sixth Form Colleges, Tertiary Colleges, Adult Colleges, Charities and Private Training Providers. It captures information about your perceptions of your FE work and how you feel as a 'professional'.

The survey forms part of a PhD into FE professionalism and is supervised by Professor Yvonne Hillier and Dr Nadia Edmond at the University of Brighton. It hopes to add to the growing body of work on the FE sector and what we understand the terms professionalism and professional identity to mean to FE practitioners. All responses will remain anonymous and will be used in strict accordance with the University's ethics policy on doctoral research. The survey closes **28th September 2015**.

To take part in the professionalism survey, please follow the link:

<http://fluidsurveys.com/s/Professionalism-survey/>

Please share the link with colleagues and in your networks.

Paul Tully

PhD researcher & FE teacher

University of Brighton

paultully@braintech.freemove.co.uk

Appendix 4 – Published Blog for the Education and Training Foundation

Published blog on the ETF website

Survey on FE Professionalism

Posted on July 8th, 2015

Paul Tully, doctoral student at the University of Brighton and long-time teacher trainer, discusses the importance of professionalism as the basis for improving staff performance, status and welfare in the Education & Training sector.

If you work in the Education & Training sector, you may be forgiven for thinking that the ‘third sector’ feels like an afterthought in government and policy-making circles. The constant stream of funding cuts, inspection declarations and political initiatives in post-16 learning may give off an impression of a sector in crisis, downtrodden, manipulated, possibly expendable and lacking the muscle and kudos of its schools and university cousins. But this is a caricature, and one that completely misunderstands the complexities, capabilities and expertise of those who work and thrive in the name of Education & Training.

One of the lingering issues is that the general public knows less about the Education & Training sector than they do schools and universities. When you know little about something, it is natural to downplay its significance, even to mistrust it – especially if you are reliant on the media for your authority. What’s more, politicians remain uncertain about the workings of the sector, possibly because so very few have used it. It can sometimes create the (mistaken) impression of an Education & Training sector that is opaque, impenetrable, undistinguished in reputation and a ‘weak brand’ when compared to schools and universities (Sharp, 2011). Any yet, at the same time, for those that use the Education & Training sector, research has consistently shown it has a flourishing reputation.

I felt the time had come to investigate this schism – in essence, to find out why there were two reported ‘faces’ to Education & Training. Having worked in the sector for the last twenty years, I knew that the teachers and managers I worked with were every bit as

remarkable, skilled and professional as their schools and university counterparts. Their dedication to students, their ability to respond rapidly to repeated change from above, and their capacity to work with limited resources – all symptoms, in my view, of a profession characterised by innovation and invention, working diligently and earnestly to provide the best possible education service, even if the outside world seemed barely to notice.

I was also aware that whilst I appeared to share with my colleagues many of the core principles and attitudes that defined our collective views about ‘what works’ and ‘what should be’ in Education & Training – the need to put learners first, the need to create respectful learning environments, the need to see staff as the principal change agents in the transformation of young lives – it also became clear that there were differences. There were scientists that saw PhD study as singularly important to their professional contribution; there were artists who saw their practice as equally important as their teaching role (as one informed the other); and there were teachers who only wanted to support learners in a 1:1 capacity because of the privilege of devoting one’s time and energy to the potential of changing this one person’s life forever. In addition, many teachers felt let down by the Lingfield enquiry into FE professionalism in 2012 because of the abolition of mandatory teacher training qualifications – and I was certainly one of those – and yet equally, I have conversed with many across the sector where teaching qualifications were regarded as an impediment to the recruitment of skilled, professional practitioners. Teaching qualifications or no teaching qualifications – on what basis do we decide who is more professional? And how are these beliefs about professionalism material to the way we conduct our work?

For me, the more stories I gathered about the way people work in the Education & Training sector, the more remarkable those stories, and the more it suggested to me that professionalism may exist in many different guises and manifestations. But just exactly what these differences are, and how they are regarded by those external to the sector, has not been fully explored. It needs to be if we are to give a full account of the professional work of teachers and managers in Education & Training. Indeed, it would appear to be seminal to the project of raising the public profile of the sector and the status of all those that work within it.

The survey into FE professionalism I have launched, under the supervision of Professor Yvonne Hillier and Dr Nadia Edmond, is an attempt to capture the richness of the voices that inhabit Education & Training – from General FE Colleges to work-based learning providers, from charities to armed services providers, from sixth form colleges to adult & community learning enterprises – the survey is for every Education & Training professional. To participate, please follow the following link – it takes just a few minutes of your time and your voice is valuable.

<http://fluidsurveys.com/s/Professionalism-survey/>

Posted by Paul Tully, PhD researcher & FE teacher, University of Brighton; for further details, please contact paultully@braintech.freeseve.co.uk. All responses will remain anonymous and will be used in strict accordance with the University of Brighton's ethics policy on doctoral research. The survey closes on 31st July 2015.

Appendix 5 - FE Community – Press Release

Survey into FE Professionalism

Posted by Paul Tully on June 28, 2015 at 15:58

[View Press Release](#)

Dear Colleagues

This professionalism survey is interested in the views of all those that work in the Further Education sector, including GFEs, Sixth Form Colleges, Tertiary Colleges, Adult Colleges, Charities and Private Training Providers. It captures information about your perceptions of your FE work and how you feel as a 'professional'.

The survey forms part of a PhD into FE professionalism and is supervised by Professor Yvonne Hillier and Dr Nadia Edmond at the University of Brighton. It hopes to add to the growing body of work on the FE sector and what we understand the terms professionalism and professional identity to mean to FE practitioners. All responses will remain anonymous and will be used in strict accordance with the University's ethics policy on doctoral research.

To take part in the professionalism survey, please follow the link:

<http://fluidsurveys.com/s/Professionalism-survey/>

Please share the link with colleagues and in your networks. The survey closes on 10th July 2015.

Further information can be provided at:

Paul Tully

PhD researcher & FE teacher

University of Brighton

paultully@braintech.freeseve.co.uk

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying a blog post on the Ning platform. The browser's address bar shows the URL: <http://fecommunity.ning.com/profiles/blogs/survey-into-fe-professionalism>. The browser interface includes a search bar with 'Norton' and 'Safe Search' options, and a navigation menu with items like 'Home page - myBarclays', 'Amazon.co.uk - Online S...', 'Web Slice Gallery', and 'Suggested Sites'. The blog post itself is titled 'Survey into FE Professionalism' and is attributed to Paul Tully, dated June 28, 2015, at 15:58. The content of the post is as follows:

Dear Colleagues

This professionalism survey is interested in the views of all those that work in the Further Education sector, including GFEs, Sixth Form Colleges, Tertiary Colleges, Adult Colleges, Charities and Private Training Providers. It captures information about your perceptions of your FE work and how you feel as a 'professional'.

The survey forms part of a PhD into FE professionalism, and is supervised by Professor Yvonne Hillier and Dr Nadia Edmond at the University of Brighton. It hopes to add to the growing body of work on the FE sector and what we understand the terms professionalism and professional identity to mean to FE practitioners. All responses will remain anonymous and will be used in strict accordance with the University's ethics policy on doctoral research.

To take part in the professionalism survey, please follow the link:

<http://fluidsurveys.com/s/Professionalism-survey/>

Please share the link with colleagues and in your networks. The survey closes on **10th July 2015**. Further information can be provided at:

Paul Tully
PhD researcher & FE teacher
University of Brighton
paultully@braintech.freeserve.co.uk

Views: 64

At the bottom of the post, there are social sharing buttons for 'Share', 'Tweet', '+1', and 'Like', with a '0' next to the 'Like' button.

On the right side of the browser window, there is a user profile for 'Paul Tully' with options for 'Sign Out', 'Inbox', 'Alerts', 'Friends', and 'Settings'. Below this is a 'Latest Activity' section with a search bar and a 'Share' button showing 140 shares. A 'Top News - Everything' section follows, listing recent updates from other users, including 'Carmina Ballantine updated their profile' and 'Ian McCall posted a photo' (with a small profile picture of Ian McCall).

Appendix 6 – Results of Pilot Testing for Survey (PAPER-BASED VERSION)

Pilot Exercise – 5th June 2014, 9 DTLLS students

On 5th June 2014, 9 DTLLS students completed a paper-based version of the online survey. The exercise was designed to:

- Check the clarity of the questions being asked
- Identify problems with the presentation and layout of the survey
- Gain verbal feedback from participants on what they thought of the survey items and the process of completing it
- Time the length that it took to complete from start to finish

FINDINGS:

Clarity of Questions:

- Q7 – changed last option from ‘No Teaching Qualification’ to “I do not have a teaching qualification yet” to recognise those who are currently studying a teaching qualification and their ‘in-between-ness’.
- Q9 – it wasn’t clear to at least 1 participant if the ‘name of the organisation’ was the one where most teaching hours were undertaken; question amended.
- Q10 – swap months and years; order is the reverse of the way ‘tenure’ is typically presented at the moment; question amended.
- Q12 – 12.2 sometimes missed out, and the answer offered as ‘other’ in 12.1. The suggestion is that it may be better to swap the order of 12.1 and 12.2; question amended.
- Q16 – some vagueness about the meaning of ‘professional’ as an option to tick (for ‘previous occupation’); proposal to change this to a free text response; question amended
- Q24 – regarded by several respondents as ‘repetitive’; proposed solution – to integrate Q24 with Q25.
- Q26 – switched order of questions
- Q25 – needed to introduce a Yes/No item as at least one respondent stated they did not work in a recognisable team structure (e.g. functional skills lecturer)
- Q28 – removed the term ‘work unit’ and stayed with the term ‘team’
- Q31 – at least half of the responses were marked as ‘No Opinion’. The question is therefore not eliciting useful information and has been reduced accordingly (there may be a need to insert a question about staff’s knowledge of outside agencies??)

Time Taken/Length of Survey:

- Participants took between 14 and 22 minutes to complete the paper version of the survey
- At least 4 of the participants stated that the survey was probably ‘too long’ (i.e. too many questions)
- 2 participants stated that the survey was satisfactory in terms of time taken to complete

Appendix 7 – Ethics Checklist

Statement of Intent: Ethics Checklist

| Your Name: Paul Tully Your Project Title: How can an understanding of social capital explain differences in the identity beliefs and professionalism of FE teachers? | Considered | Not relevant |
|--|------------|--------------|
| 1. Does your proposed activity need initial clearance from a 'gatekeeper' (e.g. Local Authority department, head teacher, college head, nursery/playgroup manager)? | ✓ | |
| 2. Have you checked whether the educational setting requires you to undertake a CRB check before carrying out your data collection? | | ✓ |
| 3. Have you indicated how informed consent will be obtained from your participants (including children less than 16 years old, school pupils and immediate family members)? Have you included an understandable <i>Participant Information Sheet</i> ? | ✓ | |
| 4. If you are working with vulnerable people or school pupils, do you and they need to understand what might happen if anything untoward is disclosed? | | ✓ |
| 5. Do your consent letters/forms inform participants that they have the right to withdraw from the activity at any time? If they do, what will you do with any data they have already provided? | ✓ | |
| 6. What arrangements have you made to maintain confidentiality of participants' data? | ✓ | |
| 7. Might participants' privacy be invaded in any way? | ✓ | |
| 8. Is this insider research? Have you sufficiently explored the challenges and advantages of this? Will any harm arise to colleagues, pupils or students as a result of your project? | ✓ | |
| 9. Are you proposing to collect photos, video and/or audio data? If so, have you indicated how you will protect participants' anonymity and confidentiality and how you will store the data? Have you discussed this with your supervisor? Are you able to justify this form of data collection? | ✓ | |
| 10. Does your proposal indicate how you will give your participants the opportunity to access your interpretations and conclusions? | ✓ | |
| 11. Have you built in time for a pilot study to make sure that any task materials you propose to use are age appropriate and that they are unlikely to cause offence to any of your participants? | ✓ | |
| 12. Is your activity likely to involve discussion of sensitive topics (e.g. adult/child relationships, peer relationships, discussions about personal teaching styles, ability levels of individual children and/or adults)? Have you put safeguards in place to prevent any possible harm to participants? | ✓ | |
| 13. Consider whether your proposed activity raises any issues of personal safety for yourself or other persons involved in the project. Do you need to carry out a 'risk analysis' and/or discuss this with teachers, parents and other adults involved in the activity? | | ✓ |
| 14. Who might have access to your data other than yourself? Where will it be stored? How long will you keep it? | ✓ | |
| 15. Have you referred to relevant documents such as UoB's <i>Guidance on Good Practice in Research Ethics and Governance</i> ; the School of Education's <i>Research Ethics Tier 1 Approval Protocol</i> ; and <i>Thinking about Ethics for your Research Project in Education</i> ? There may also be specific professional guidance available such as BERA or the Institute for Youth <i>Work's Code of Ethics</i> | ✓ | |

Each of these statements is explained and justified under: 'Researcher's Response to Ethical Checklist'

Appendix 8 - Capital Scales and Professionalism

Cultural Capital Scale:

Pearson's R Correlations between Cultural Capital and Professionalism

| Item | PROF | COMM | AUT |
|--|--------|--------|--------|
| Q4 Highest Qualification | 0.03 | -0.03 | 0.07 |
| Q5 Highest Level of Teacher Certification | -0.04 | -0.11 | 0.02 |
| Q23.1 FE teachers should hold a relevant subject qualification | 0.03 | 0.02 | 0.07 |
| Q23.2 FE teachers should hold a teaching qualification | 0.10 | 0.13* | 0.07 |
| Q24.1 Regular opportunities to update teaching skills | 0.37** | 0.26** | 0.19** |
| Q24.2 Regular opportunities to update subject specialism | 0.44** | 0.37** | 0.16** |
| Q24.3 Regularly consulted about professional development needs | 0.47** | 0.37** | 0.21** |
| Q24.4 My professional development needs are taken seriously by my line manager | 0.46** | 0.37** | 0.24** |

*p<0.05, **p<0.01

Cultural Capital: Items and Coding Notes:

Item responses were converted to Z-scores to combine as a single scale.

| Qu: | Question | Coding & Notes |
|-------|---|--|
| Q4 | Your Highest Educational Qualification | Nominal data: Respondents selected from 8 options. Options marked 'other' were checked for accuracy (34 options were re-classified against the QCF). The final variable eliminated the category 'other' to prevent skewing the scoring. |
| Q5 | Your Highest Teaching Qualification | Nominal data: Respondent choices were organised into three groups: 1 – no qualification 2 – part qualified (Level 2, 3 and 4 teaching qualifications, relevant assessor/ verifier awards, or coaching qualifications) 3 – fully qualified (Level 5 or higher – PGCE, Certificate in Education, Diploma in Education (DTLLs), specialist L5 numeracy or literacy qualification; or Bachelor of Education. Items marked 'other' were tracked individually and either re-assigned to these groups or omitted from the analysis (to avoid skewing the analysis). |
| Q23.1 | A teacher in Further Education should be required to hold a relevant subject qualification to teach their subject | Likert Scale 1 (low) to 5 (High) |
| Q23.2 | A teacher in Further Education should be required to hold a teaching qualification | Likert Scale 1 (low) to 5 (High). |
| Q24.1 | I have regular opportunities to update my teaching skills in my organisation | Likert Scale 1 (low) to 5 (High) |
| Q24.2 | I have regular opportunities to update my subject specialism in my organisation | Likert Scale 1 (low) to 5 (High) |
| Q24.3 | I am regularly consulted about my professional development needs in my organisation | Likert Scale 1 (low) to 5 (High) |
| Q24.4 | My professional development needs are taken seriously by my line manager | Likert Scale 1 (low) to 5 (High) |

Social Capital Scale

Pearson's R Correlations between Social Capital and Professionalism

| Item | PROF | COMM | AUT |
|---|--------|--------|--------|
| Social Capital (Mean) | 0.45** | 0.36** | 0.30** |
| Horizontal Capital | | | |
| 30.1 We have a 'we are together' attitude | 0.31** | 0.25** | 0.22** |
| 30.2 People keep each other informed about workrelated issues in the work unit | 0.27** | 0.14** | 0.21** |
| 30.3 People feel understood and accepted by each other | 0.30** | 0.22** | 0.26** |
| 30.4 Members of the work unit build on each other's ideas to achieve the best outcome | 0.36** | 0.25** | 0.27** |
| 30.5 People in the work unit co-operate in order to help develop and apply new ideas | 0.38** | 0.25** | 0.25** |
| Vertical Capital | | | |
| 32.1 Our supervisor treats us with kindness and consideration | 0.35** | 0.33** | 0.23** |
| 32.2 Our supervisor shows concern for our rights as an employee | 0.41** | 0.37** | 0.22** |
| 32.3 We can trust our supervisor | 0.43** | 0.38** | 0.26** |

*p<0.05, **p<0.01

Economic Capital Scale

Pearson's R Correlations between Economic Capital and Professionalism

| | Total Professionalism | Commitment | Autonomy |
|------------------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Economic Capital | 0.30** | 0.30** | 0.12* |

I am paid fairly for the job that I do

Symbolic Capital Scale

Pearson's R Correlations between Symbolic Capital (Work Status) and Professionalism

| Item | PROF | COMM | AUT |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Symbolic Capital (Mean) | 0.54** | 0.46** | 0.23** |
| 35.1 I feel valued by senior managers | 0.49** | 0.42** | 0.18** |
| 35.2 I feel valued by my line manager | 0.41** | 0.37** | 0.23** |
| 35.3 I feel valued by my full-time colleagues | 0.22** | 0.17** | 0.17** |
| 35.4 I feel valued by my part-time colleague | 0.20** | 0.10 | 0.18** |
| 35.5 I feel valued by support staff colleagues | 0.28** | 0.21** | 0.12* |
| 35.6 I feel valued by my learners | 0.20** | 0.21** | 0.05 |
| 35.7 I feel valued by the general public | 0.26** | 0.17** | 0.03 |
| 35.8 I feel valued by Government | 0.21** | 0.21** | 0.03 |
| 35.9 I feel valued by OFSTED | 0.25** | 0.22** | 0.07 |

*p<0.05, **p<0.01

Coding: Questions 35.1 to 35.9 (1=not valued, 5=highly valued)

Appendix 9 – Exploratory Factor Analysis of Main Proprietary Scales: Professionalism & Social Capital

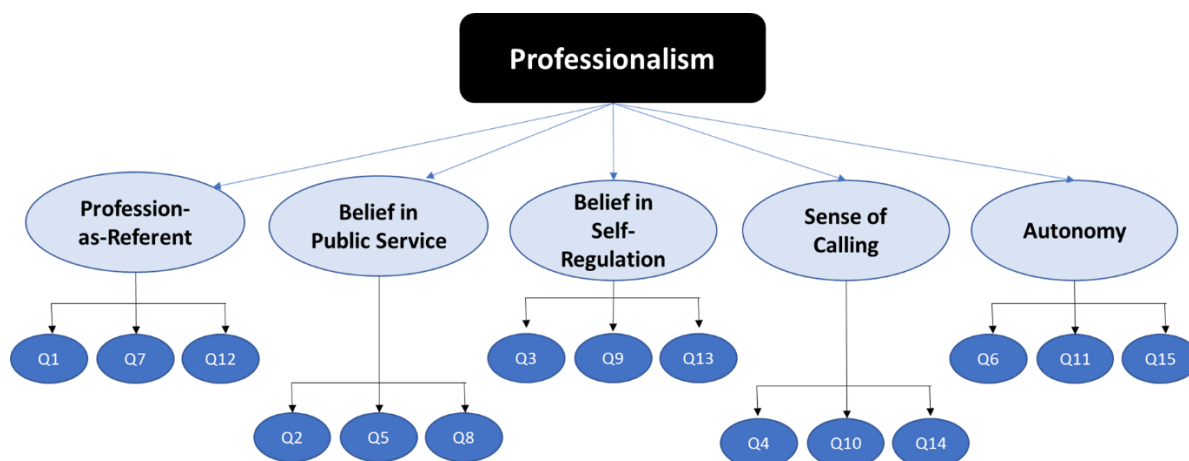
Introduction:

Factor analysis (FA) is a group of statistical methods used to simplify patterns of relationships underlying measured variables (Beavers et al, 2013; Schmitt, 2011). It includes two well-known forms: exploratory factor analysis (EFA), which is exploratory, and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) which tests theoretical propositions (Decoster, 1998). As this study was exploratory (used on FE participants for the first time), EFA was selected. Because EFA is a multivariate statistical approach, it is appropriate for examining relationships between items and testing the construct validity of a measurement scale (Williams et al., 2010). Considerations for using EFA are presented in Figure 9.1.

Fig. 9.1 - Considerations for Conducting Exploratory Factor Analysis

| | |
|--|--|
| 1. Is EFA suitable for the sample size? | Comrey & Lee (1992) recommend sample sizes of 300 or more, with at least 5-10 observations per item |
| 2. What process of factor extraction should be used? | Following Snizek (1972) and Swailes (2003), <i>principal axis factoring</i> was selected. |
| 3. How many factors should be extracted? | In line with Hall's theorisation, five factors were extracted. This was corroborated by an examination of loadings and scree plot. |
| 4. What type of factor rotation should be employed? | Following Swailes (2003) and Tabachnick & Fidell (2007), <i>oblique rotation</i> (direct oblimin) with <i>Kaizer Normalisation</i> was selected, as it assumes items may be co-related (such as dimensions linked to an overall measure of professionalism). |
| 5. How is the factor structure to be interpreted? | Loadings of 0.3 or higher are considered acceptable for indicating factors. At least 3 loadings per factor are required (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Cross-loadings are considered undesirable because they do not suggest distinctive factors. |

Hall’s Professionalism Scale (HPS).



*Hall’s Professionalism Scale
Adapted from Wimmer (2007).*

Using the original 15 item questionnaire, exploratory factor analysis (using Principal Axis) with oblique rotation revealed five factors with an eigenvalue of 1.00 or above accounting for 53.4% of variance (KMO=0.65; Bartlett (105)=578.23; $p<0.01$). The factor structure proved to be unstable, with only 1 of 5 factors (public service) achieving the desired 3 item loadings of 0.3 or above. Sense of Calling (SC), Profession-as-Referent (PR) and Self-Regulation (SR) had two loadings above 0.3, while SC and SR scales had crossloadings above 0.3.

Re-running the model by substituting Blau’s commitment scale with Hall’s SC restored the five factor structure (KMO=0.77; Bartlett (136) = 1230.92, $p<0.01$) accounting for 55% total variance, though loadings were weaker than those reported in Swailes (2003) and Wimmer (2007). Factor 3 (self-regulation) was less stable, with item Q26.3 loading weakly at 0.17 (<0.3), and with a significant cross-loading of 0.45 from Q26.12 (PR scale).

Blau-Hall Scale: Rotated Component Matrix, Principal Axis Factoring with Oblique Rotation

| Item Statement | Factor | | | | |
|---|--------|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27.4 I like this profession too well to give it up | 0.79 | | | | |
| 27.2 I definitely want to make a career in the profession I am in | 0.78 | | | | |
| 27.5R I am disappointed that I ever entered my profession | 0.75 | | | | |
| 27.1R If I could go into a profession other than the one I am in and which paid the same I probably would | 0.71 | | | | |
| 27.3R If I could do it all again, I would not choose the same profession | 0.61 | | | | |

| | | |
|--|------|------|
| 26.2 I think my profession, more than any other, is essential for society (PS1) | 0.72 | |
| 26.5 The importance of my profession is sometimes overstressed (PS2) | 0.35 | |
| 26.8 Some other occupations are actually more important than mine (PS3) | 0.31 | |
| 26.9 A problem in this profession is that no-one knows what colleagues in other organisations are doing to improve (SR2) | 0.58 | |
| 26.13 We really have no way of judging each other's competence (in this profession) (SR3) | 0.53 | |
| 26.3 My fellow professionals have a pretty good idea about each other's competence (SR1) | 0.17 | |
| 26.6 I don't have much opportunity to exercise my own judgement (AT1) | 0.57 | |
| 26.15 I am my own boss in almost every work-related situation (AT3) | 0.57 | |
| 26.11 My own decisions are subject to review (AT2) | 0.28 | |
| 26.12 Professional bodies do little for the average member (PO3) | 0.45 | 0.40 |
| 26.7 I believe that professional organisations should be supported (PO2) | | 0.39 |
| 26.1 I regularly attend local professional meetings (PO1) | | 0.33 |

Social Capital Scale:

In testing the scale, three possibilities were therefore considered. A one factor solution in which all items might contribute to a single measure of social capital; a two factor solution, that would test either for evidence of a cognitive/ structural structure or a vertical/ horizontal structure; and finally, a 3 factor solution used to assess bonding, bridging and linking constructs.

An exploratory factor analysis was undertaken (using Principal Axis) with oblique rotation to test the scale's factor structure. Initial glance at the eigenvalues highlighted two factors of 1.00 or more, accounting for 79.1% of the variance, but a screeplot suggesting three factors.

The one factor solution, accounting for 62.1% of variance, showed moderate to high loadings for all item statements (unrotated factor matrix; KMO=0.88, Bartlett = 2456.57, $p < 0.01$) ranging from 0.63 to 0.85 and suggesting the possibility of a single unitary construct. The three factor solution, accounting for 88.2% of variance, provides evidence of two factors with clean loadings of more than 0.3, and one factor with a crossloading of 0.32 from item 30.5. Factor 1 is clearly aligned to the bonding subscale with coefficients above 0.6, and Factor 2 is similarly aligned to the linking subscale with coefficients above 0.9, but

Factor 3 is not uniquely suggested (with item crossloadings higher on Factor 1 than Factor 3).

The results here (see *Figure 4*) indicate that a two-factor structure is the most persuasive model, KMO=0.88, Bartlett = 2456.57, $p < 0.01$, accounting for 83.4% of variance, with 5 items loading cleanly onto Factor 1 (Q30.1, 30.2, 30.3, 30.4, 30.5) and 3 items loading cleanly onto Factor 2 (Q32.1, Q32.2, Q32.3).

Social Capital Scale: Rotated Component Matrix, Principal Axis Factoring with Oblique Rotation

| Item Statement | Factor | |
|---|--------|------|
| | 1 | 2 |
| 30.4 Members of the work unit build on each other's ideas in order to achieve the best possible outcome | 0.91 | |
| 30.3 People feel understood and accepted by each other | 0.88 | |
| 30.1 We have a 'we are together attitude' | 0.87 | |
| 30.2 People keep each other informed about work related issues in the work unit | 0.85 | |
| 30.5 People in the work unit co-operate in order to help develop and apply new ideas | 0.80 | |
| 32.1 Our supervisor treats us with kindness and consideration | | 0.93 |
| 32.2 Our supervisor shows concern for our rights as an employee | | 0.92 |
| 32.3 We can trust our supervisor | | 0.91 |

Principal Axis with Oblique Rotation (Direct Oblimin with Kaiser Normalisation)

The item loadings did not align themselves with the cognitive and structural dimensions of social capital suggested in Kouvonen et al (2006). Instead, they confirmed the horizontal-vertical capital structure the authors finally accepted, the former measuring trust in management and the institution, the latter measuring trust in one's work colleagues.

Appendix 10 – CA Data Tables

Reference: Chapter 6, Section 6.9 – Correspondence Analysis for Q25 and Respondent Properties

Summary

| Dimension | Singular Value | Inertia | Chi Square | Sig. | Proportion of Inertia | | Confidence Singular Value | |
|-----------|----------------|---------|------------|-------------------|-----------------------|------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| | | | | | Accounted for | Cumulative | Standard Deviation | Correlation 2 |
| 1 | .109 | .012 | | | .405 | .405 | .008 | .010 |
| 2 | .067 | .005 | | | .156 | .560 | .008 | |
| 3 | .056 | .003 | | | .106 | .666 | | |
| 4 | .051 | .003 | | | .089 | .755 | | |
| 5 | .048 | .002 | | | .078 | .833 | | |
| 6 | .037 | .001 | | | .047 | .881 | | |
| 7 | .032 | .001 | | | .035 | .916 | | |
| 8 | .031 | .001 | | | .034 | .949 | | |
| 9 | .024 | .001 | | | .020 | .970 | | |
| 10 | .022 | .000 | | | .016 | .986 | | |
| 11 | .020 | .000 | | | .014 | 1.000 | | |
| Total | | .029 | 437.837 | .875 ^a | 1.000 | 1.000 | | |

a. 473 degrees of freedom

Overview Row Points^a

| Definition | Mass | Score in Dimension | | Inertia | Contribution | | | | |
|--------------|-------|--------------------|-------|---------|----------------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|------|-------|
| | | 1 | 2 | | Of Point to Inertia of Dimension | | Of Dimension to Inertia of Point | | Total |
| | | | | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | |
| Autonomy | .031 | -.865 | .516 | .004 | .216 | .124 | .653 | .144 | .797 |
| Recognition | .059 | -.315 | -.236 | .002 | .054 | .049 | .313 | .109 | .421 |
| Community | .084 | .417 | .085 | .003 | .135 | .009 | .565 | .014 | .579 |
| Standards | .121 | -.116 | -.022 | .001 | .015 | .001 | .167 | .004 | .171 |
| Expertise | .180 | -.346 | -.195 | .003 | .198 | .102 | .712 | .141 | .853 |
| Improve | .058 | .073 | -.052 | .001 | .003 | .002 | .032 | .010 | .042 |
| Role | .086 | .289 | -.208 | .002 | .066 | .055 | .369 | .119 | .488 |
| Conduct | .114 | .462 | -.130 | .004 | .224 | .029 | .622 | .030 | .652 |
| Students | .132 | .209 | .322 | .003 | .053 | .203 | .229 | .335 | .564 |
| Qualities | .074 | -.144 | .547 | .003 | .014 | .327 | .065 | .582 | .647 |
| Pay | .019 | -.145 | -.495 | .002 | .004 | .071 | .023 | .165 | .188 |
| Experience | .042 | -.215 | -.214 | .001 | .018 | .028 | .153 | .094 | .247 |
| Active Total | 1.000 | | | .029 | 1.000 | 1.000 | | | |

a. Symmetrical normalization

Overview Column Points^a

| Attribute | Mass | Score in Dimension | | Inertia | Contribution | | | | |
|----------------------|-------|--------------------|--------|---------|----------------------------------|-------|----------------------------------|------|-------|
| | | 1 | 2 | | Of Point to Inertia of Dimension | | Of Dimension to Inertia of Point | | Total |
| | | | | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | |
| LL-Prof | .016 | -.280 | -.247 | .000 | .012 | .015 | .504 | .244 | .747 |
| L-Prof | .019 | -.360 | .182 | .001 | .023 | .010 | .383 | .061 | .444 |
| Prof+ | .019 | .184 | .280 | .001 | .006 | .023 | .116 | .166 | .282 |
| Prof++ | .018 | .485 | -.225 | .001 | .038 | .013 | .521 | .070 | .591 |
| LL-SC | .018 | -.404 | .117 | .001 | .026 | .004 | .491 | .025 | .517 |
| L-SC | .018 | -.353 | -.015 | .001 | .021 | .000 | .412 | .000 | .412 |
| SC+ | .023 | .113 | -.099 | .000 | .003 | .003 | .075 | .036 | .111 |
| SC++ | .014 | .823 | .071 | .001 | .086 | .001 | .705 | .003 | .708 |
| LL-CC | .017 | -.168 | -.179 | .001 | .004 | .008 | .063 | .044 | .107 |
| L-CC | .017 | -.429 | .471 | .001 | .028 | .055 | .354 | .265 | .619 |
| CC+ | .022 | -.019 | -.032 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .003 | .004 | .007 |
| CC++ | .017 | .632 | -.176 | .001 | .064 | .008 | .810 | .039 | .849 |
| L-EC | .037 | -.261 | -.130 | .000 | .023 | .009 | .631 | .097 | .728 |
| M-EC | .014 | .118 | .170 | .000 | .002 | .006 | .110 | .142 | .252 |
| H-EC | .021 | .412 | .164 | .001 | .033 | .009 | .600 | .059 | .659 |
| LL-Status | .020 | -.486 | .050 | .001 | .043 | .001 | .686 | .004 | .691 |
| L-Status | .016 | -.185 | .385 | .001 | .005 | .035 | .095 | .255 | .350 |
| Status+ | .019 | .232 | -.150 | .000 | .009 | .006 | .239 | .062 | .301 |
| Status++ | .016 | .436 | -.357 | .001 | .028 | .031 | .588 | .244 | .833 |
| CSW | .004 | .978 | -.390 | .001 | .037 | .010 | .657 | .065 | .721 |
| Teacher | .046 | -.179 | .043 | .000 | .014 | .001 | .359 | .013 | .372 |
| MM | .014 | .078 | .304 | .001 | .001 | .019 | .017 | .157 | .174 |
| SMT | .008 | .105 | -.298 | .001 | .001 | .010 | .012 | .060 | .073 |
| No-TU | .028 | .510 | .086 | .001 | .066 | .003 | .683 | .012 | .696 |
| Yes-TU | .045 | -.299 | -.031 | .001 | .037 | .001 | .679 | .004 | .684 |
| No-INTComm | .048 | .020 | -.147 | .000 | .000 | .015 | .008 | .279 | .287 |
| Yes-INTComm | .024 | -.012 | .331 | .001 | .000 | .040 | .001 | .309 | .310 |
| Teaching<15hrs | .041 | .364 | .199 | .001 | .050 | .024 | .748 | .138 | .886 |
| Teaching>15hrs | .032 | -.442 | -.221 | .001 | .058 | .023 | .726 | .113 | .839 |
| No-Non-Specialist | .037 | -.018 | .077 | .000 | .000 | .003 | .006 | .075 | .082 |
| Yes-Non-Specialist | .035 | .022 | -.083 | .000 | .000 | .004 | .009 | .078 | .087 |
| LL-Turnover | .025 | .399 | -.041 | .001 | .037 | .001 | .605 | .004 | .609 |
| L-Turnover | .014 | .073 | .327 | .001 | .001 | .023 | .016 | .199 | .215 |
| Turnover+ | .012 | -.288 | -1.359 | .002 | .009 | .334 | .052 | .723 | .776 |
| Turnover++ | .016 | -.426 | .695 | .001 | .026 | .113 | .260 | .428 | .688 |
| L-Career Staying | .026 | -.086 | .301 | .000 | .002 | .036 | .046 | .351 | .397 |
| M-Career Staying | .016 | -.247 | -.637 | .001 | .009 | .095 | .149 | .610 | .759 |
| H-Career Staying | .029 | .191 | .014 | .000 | .010 | .000 | .335 | .001 | .337 |
| L-Org Recc | .024 | -.392 | .067 | .001 | .034 | .002 | .705 | .013 | .718 |
| M-Org Recc | .019 | -.237 | -.124 | .000 | .010 | .004 | .358 | .061 | .420 |
| H-Org Recc | .027 | .461 | -.070 | .001 | .052 | .002 | .834 | .012 | .846 |
| L-Career Recc | .023 | -.473 | -.091 | .001 | .048 | .003 | .820 | .019 | .839 |
| M-Career Recc | .019 | -.002 | .014 | .001 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| H-Career Recc | .027 | .410 | .031 | .001 | .042 | .000 | .640 | .002 | .642 |
| L-AUT ^b | .034 | -.143 | .066 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .193 | .025 | .218 |
| M-AUT ^b | .020 | -.003 | .096 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .045 | .045 |
| H-AUT ^b | .019 | .339 | -.116 | .001 | .000 | .000 | .375 | .027 | .403 |
| LL-COMM ^b | .010 | -.078 | -.195 | .001 | .000 | .000 | .012 | .048 | .060 |
| L-COMM ^b | .046 | -.100 | .146 | .001 | .000 | .000 | .097 | .128 | .225 |
| COMM+ ^b | .016 | .418 | -.131 | .001 | .000 | .000 | .326 | .020 | .346 |
| COMM++ ^b | .001 | .167 | -.739 | .000 | .000 | .000 | .007 | .082 | .088 |
| Active Total | 1.000 | | | .029 | 1.000 | 1.000 | | | |

a. Symmetrical normalization

b. Supplementary point

Appendix 11 – CA Contingency Table

| | | Autonomy | Recognition | Community | Standards | Expertise (without experience) | Continuous Improvement | Role & Organisation | Personal Conduct | students & service (comb) | Qualities | Pay & Career | Experience |
|----|----------------------------|----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------------------------|-----------|--------------|------------|
| 1 | LL-Prof | 9 | 18 | 19 | 32 | 49 | 13 | 22 | 25 | 25 | 17 | 5 | 10 |
| 2 | L-Prof | 14 | 16 | 23 | 33 | 58 | 14 | 18 | 30 | 37 | 26 | 10 | 12 |
| 3 | Prof+ | 9 | 14 | 21 | 40 | 47 | 17 | 25 | 36 | 51 | 19 | 2 | 12 |
| 4 | Prof++ | 2 | 17 | 30 | 28 | 41 | 19 | 30 | 33 | 31 | 20 | 4 | 11 |
| 5 | Social Capital (LL) | 11 | 19 | 20 | 34 | 49 | 21 | 21 | 18 | 33 | 22 | 6 | 11 |
| 6 | Social Capital (L) | 13 | 15 | 16 | 36 | 57 | 12 | 18 | 33 | 35 | 18 | 6 | 11 |
| 7 | Social Capital + | 7 | 19 | 36 | 44 | 59 | 20 | 32 | 37 | 36 | 29 | 7 | 16 |
| 8 | Social Capital ++ | 3 | 11 | 21 | 17 | 30 | 10 | 21 | 36 | 39 | 11 | 2 | 7 |
| 9 | Cultural Capital (LL) | 11 | 20 | 24 | 28 | 45 | 13 | 15 | 32 | 31 | 14 | 5 | 18 |
| 10 | Cultural Capital (L) | 12 | 12 | 16 | 30 | 50 | 11 | 20 | 21 | 34 | 28 | 7 | 8 |
| 11 | Cultural Capital + | 7 | 18 | 26 | 45 | 65 | 21 | 29 | 32 | 45 | 23 | 4 | 11 |
| 12 | Cultural Capital ++ | 4 | 15 | 27 | 30 | 35 | 18 | 31 | 39 | 34 | 17 | 5 | 8 |
| 13 | Economic Capital (L) | 21 | 39 | 44 | 66 | 115 | 34 | 46 | 60 | 61 | 43 | 11 | 23 |
| 14 | Economic Capital (M) | 4 | 13 | 18 | 26 | 36 | 10 | 17 | 24 | 31 | 19 | 4 | 8 |
| 15 | Economic Capital (H) | 9 | 13 | 31 | 41 | 44 | 19 | 32 | 40 | 52 | 20 | 6 | 14 |
| 16 | Status (LL) | 15 | 18 | 24 | 37 | 60 | 15 | 24 | 26 | 29 | 26 | 6 | 16 |
| 17 | Status (L) | 8 | 15 | 14 | 29 | 42 | 17 | 19 | 19 | 42 | 20 | 4 | 9 |
| 18 | Status + | 7 | 17 | 28 | 35 | 51 | 16 | 19 | 42 | 38 | 17 | 7 | 9 |
| 19 | Status ++ | 4 | 13 | 23 | 27 | 40 | 15 | 29 | 33 | 31 | 13 | 4 | 11 |
| 20 | CSW | 0 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 13 | 9 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| 21 | Teacher | 25 | 40 | 45 | 84 | 137 | 37 | 54 | 76 | 93 | 50 | 11 | 30 |
| 22 | MM | 6 | 12 | 25 | 25 | 33 | 9 | 14 | 21 | 27 | 20 | 6 | 8 |
| 23 | SMT | 2 | 9 | 9 | 17 | 15 | 9 | 16 | 8 | 13 | 8 | 3 | 4 |
| 24 | TU - No | 8 | 19 | 48 | 52 | 58 | 22 | 38 | 56 | 60 | 31 | 12 | 13 |
| 25 | TU - Yes | 26 | 46 | 45 | 81 | 137 | 41 | 57 | 68 | 84 | 51 | 9 | 32 |
| 26 | Committee - No | 24 | 39 | 62 | 85 | 136 | 41 | 64 | 92 | 86 | 49 | 14 | 34 |
| 27 | Committee - Yes | 10 | 26 | 31 | 48 | 59 | 22 | 31 | 32 | 58 | 33 | 7 | 11 |
| 28 | Teaching Loads<15 hrs/wk | 17 | 28 | 65 | 67 | 93 | 37 | 55 | 79 | 90 | 46 | 10 | 25 |
| 29 | Teaching Loads>15 hrs/week | 17 | 37 | 28 | 66 | 102 | 26 | 40 | 45 | 54 | 36 | 11 | 20 |
| 30 | Non-specialist - never | 18 | 30 | 48 | 59 | 105 | 34 | 51 | 58 | 78 | 44 | 11 | 25 |
| 31 | Non-specialist - yes | 16 | 34 | 44 | 70 | 90 | 29 | 44 | 65 | 61 | 38 | 10 | 19 |
| 32 | LL - Turnover | 10 | 22 | 35 | 44 | 58 | 27 | 36 | 57 | 50 | 25 | 6 | 10 |
| 33 | L - Turnover | 8 | 8 | 18 | 24 | 37 | 10 | 15 | 31 | 28 | 22 | 5 | 10 |
| 34 | Turnover + | 2 | 14 | 12 | 27 | 44 | 10 | 20 | 15 | 19 | 1 | 8 | 11 |
| 35 | Turnover ++ | 12 | 16 | 21 | 30 | 41 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 38 | 22 | 1 | 13 |
| 36 | L - Career Staying | 18 | 27 | 40 | 48 | 65 | 22 | 34 | 39 | 52 | 33 | 6 | 14 |
| 37 | M - Career Staying | 6 | 17 | 17 | 25 | 55 | 13 | 18 | 28 | 26 | 12 | 7 | 13 |
| 38 | H - Career Staying | 10 | 19 | 32 | 55 | 73 | 28 | 39 | 54 | 62 | 31 | 8 | 18 |
| 39 | L - Org Recc | 19 | 22 | 26 | 49 | 73 | 19 | 27 | 37 | 46 | 25 | 7 | 16 |
| 40 | M - Org Recc | 9 | 20 | 22 | 32 | 56 | 21 | 20 | 28 | 34 | 20 | 5 | 14 |
| 41 | H - Org Recc | 5 | 20 | 39 | 44 | 64 | 23 | 41 | 55 | 56 | 31 | 9 | 15 |
| 42 | L - Career Recc | 17 | 23 | 26 | 43 | 76 | 19 | 27 | 33 | 38 | 26 | 9 | 14 |
| 43 | M - Career Recc | 8 | 24 | 23 | 31 | 48 | 22 | 23 | 35 | 35 | 24 | 2 | 14 |
| 44 | H - Career Recc | 9 | 15 | 40 | 50 | 66 | 22 | 41 | 52 | 66 | 25 | 9 | 17 |
| 45 | Autonomy (L) | 20 | 26 | 40 | 69 | 100 | 24 | 49 | 56 | 63 | 42 | 9 | 20 |
| 46 | Autonomy (M) | 6 | 19 | 26 | 38 | 54 | 21 | 24 | 28 | 43 | 25 | 5 | 13 |
| 47 | Autonomy (H) | 8 | 20 | 28 | 29 | 42 | 18 | 22 | 41 | 39 | 15 | 7 | 12 |
| 48 | LL-Commitment | 13 | 22 | 23 | 31 | 53 | 19 | 19 | 22 | 30 | 22 | 9 | 11 |
| 49 | L-Commitment | 9 | 12 | 16 | 35 | 59 | 12 | 21 | 29 | 37 | 23 | 5 | 12 |
| 50 | Commitment+ | 8 | 17 | 38 | 35 | 49 | 21 | 31 | 44 | 51 | 26 | 5 | 15 |
| 51 | Commitment++ | 4 | 14 | 16 | 32 | 34 | 11 | 24 | 29 | 26 | 11 | 2 | 7 |