

Teacher Professionalism, Education Reform and 21st Century Skills in the United Arab Emirates.

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Doctorate in Education

I, Heather Jane Kinuthia, confirm that the work presented in my thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm this has been indicated in the thesis. Word count: 44,995 (exclusive of abstract, impact statement, reflective statement, appendices, references, diagrams, tables: 7,372 words).

Abstract

The United Arab Emirates National Agenda Vision 2021 calls for a 'complete transformation' of the current education system 'to serve the knowledge economy'. The Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT), with 16 campuses, are the largest Higher Education Institution in the UAE. Aligning with the national vision, their strategic plan 2017- 2021 sets out key goals 'to empower students with 21st Century skills' and to 'improve academic programmes' through 'blending traditional and innovative teaching methods to ensure student centred learning'. To promote this, HCT aimed to increase teacher professionalism through a collection of measures: HEA membership, a new professional pay scale, training in a learning management system and 40 annual hours of professional development, all orchestrated through a performance management tool.

Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, recurrent themes are identified which reflect the experiences of seven teachers, who come from countries with exposure to, and experience of, student-centred pedagogies. The in-depth interviews found that HCT strongly promoted a form of controlled professionalism, within which knowledge development and innovative teaching methods became subsidiary to the instrumental outcomes of the strategic plan. A managerial and administrative approach to accountability relayed control in a way that teachers' agency and co-agency were significantly reduced. The higher order cognitive competencies, behaviours and values (21st-century skills) of teachers and students envisioned by the reform were constrained in the controlled model.

The study was able to elaborate on how the positioning of the individual within the processes, procedures and accountability mechanisms that surround their work shapes their capacity to affect change. The findings present a professional model that moves away from the individualising concept of 'performance management', towards horizontal modalities, where advancement is positioned as both individual and mutual, locating transformation within an inclusive, institutional dialectic based on democratic participation.

Impact statement

The study engaged with non-citizen teachers as they attempted to recontextualise their training and experience outside of the country where they trained. Of interest were teachers already trained and experienced in student-centred pedagogies, moving to a reform environment where this was less common and desirable. For the purpose of the study, these teachers were categorised as originating from Western Educated, Industrialised, Rich and Developed countries (WEIRD). Teachers leave in their thousands from WEIRD countries every year to work in countries around the world, which have different approaches to pedagogy. This study considers how models of professionalism enable or restrict teachers in contextualising and channelling their skills in new environments to contribute to pedagogic development. It is therefore relevant to educational institutions, consultancies and policy makers alike.

The Global Education Industry positions education as a key intervention in the quest to build innovative, knowledge economies of the future, which require graduates with '21st-century skills' (understood as higher order cognitive competencies, behaviours and values). Working in such environments with teachers for eight years, my aim was to understand the processes on the ground and how policies could be frustrated at the implementation stage. The study found that teachers at HCT were operating within a controlled form of professionalism. In this model the teachers were procedurally driven by professional renewal practices, worked individually, were self-regulating and adopted technicist approaches to teaching, where skills and knowledge were prioritised over attitudes and values, to comply with accountability systems. This pushed the teachers to a 'teach to the test mentality'. They mostly worked with pedagogies where knowledge was transmitted for exams. The message from the teachers was united in that missing from this model was both individual and collective agency, without which, a sense of meaning and purpose was lost. Teachers finding themselves with limited agency were unable to integrate their knowledge and channel their expertise to effect any significant change.

The intention and impact of this research is in contributing to a public discourse which reiterates the de-professionalising nature of managerial models of professionalism. Environments of 'performativity' (Ball 2008) are not conducive to reform programmes which aim to develop the higher order competencies of communication, critical thinking, creativity and collaboration (WEF 2015) that modernising reform programmes seeking '21st-century skills' desire. The OECD identifies 'agency and co-agency of teachers and communities' as vital to the learning frameworks of the future (OECD 2018). The proposed integrated model is a response to this, inductively generated from the teachers' responses to how they wanted to work as professionals, it represents a model that structures these democratic processes of agency and co-agency. This enables local knowledge sharing and the means to define, adapt and interpret education policies and plans through 'communities of practice' (Wenger 1998) and 'communities of provision' (Rix 2019). The institution, within the wider community setting, becomes a space for a dynamic and sustainable re-negotiation of education reform plans according to needs identified within the domain of practice.

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Reflective statement

Reflective Statement on undertaking a Doctorate in Education

In 2013 when I started this Professional Doctorate, I was clear about why I chose to return to study after a break of ten years. Having been in the UAE for 4 years, I wanted to make sense of the experiences of expatriate professionals. Up to that point the topic had fuelled much lively debate between the teachers who I worked with. Each person had a story to tell and their own set of irreconcilable tensions. It was very distinct from the school environments I had encountered in the UK, and something I wanted to further explore. After my MA in Education, Gender and International Development, a professional doctorate with an international perspective seemed to provide an opportunity to structure my thinking and extend my understanding. The taught courses such as Foundations in Professionalism in Education and the cohort of education professionals I studied alongside were a dynamic community of practitioners. The discussions, understandings and misunderstandings we shared were formative to my early thinking.

The reflective essay on professionalism was the first chance to consolidate this. The course reader 'Exploring professionalism, edited by Bryan Cunningham was a useful collection of articles and provided a sound entry into the literature. After reading Geoff Whitty's chapter on changing modes of professionalism I began to realise that, in the UAE, we were caught between modes. Traditional, managerial, collaborative and democratic aspects of professionalism manifested in a complex tangle. The reform was attempting to shift something more complex than just curriculum and assessment. It was at this point that I deepened my thinking on how limits to teachers' autonomy and the role of stakeholders were written into reform processes. Many teachers had not been prepared for that shift.

In the various roles I have had in education systems, I have worked extensively alongside teachers, designing and running CPD programmes. The theoretical perspectives allowed me to form a deeper understanding that the nature of the professional development work I did for the Local Authority was complex. The training I had delivered in England, in the 'failing schools' as a Consultant with the School Improvement Service in Buckinghamshire in England, teachers had,

been pressured by detailed planning regimes and endless pupil progress meetings where questions were raised about why certain groups of pupils were failing. I began to ground that experience in the literature and understand why many aspects of that had been so contentious. I took stock of my role in de-professionalising teachers. As part of an educational group in the UAE, with strict time bound outcome measures, my work as an advisor manifested differently than it had in the English system. The expectation was for a lot of cascade training as the new school model was rolled out across Abu Dhabi. Over time I was able to remap some aspects of my approach. As a response to reading Lave and Wenger's books on situated learning and communities of practice, I shifted my CPD programmes from the cascade model, which some of the teachers expected and others resented, to a team-teaching collective, which also had mixed responses. As part of the new bi-literacy curriculum I purchased bi-lingual picture books, *The Hare and the Tortoise* was one of these. I devised a sequence of lessons around them for the junior schools' English lessons, paired up Arabic and English-speaking teachers to team teach a range of objectives through them. A larger group then met to discuss experiences and resulting developments in practice. Moving agency into CPD generated research-based practice amongst the teachers. A similar training on using phonics programmes in Arabic and English lessons led to an understanding that the programme which was being used to teach phonics was neither appropriate culturally nor working for second language learners. Many of the teachers I worked with were American and had very different experiences of professionalism, even between themselves. Mixing these teachers with mostly non-Gulf Arabs, most of whom were bilingual themselves, was a uniquely diverse professional environment. Drawing everyone's experiences into developing new practices was an intense learning experience for all and not without significant problems. My experiences were scaffolded by extensive reading and application of a model of professionalism that structured teacher collaboration and research-based practice into the CPD programme.

Methods of Enquiry 1.

As soon as this course started I began to realise how central this aspect of my studies would be. Prior to this I had been driven by an interest in education reform and pedagogy and had not given much mind to how I would go about the process of being able to examine and interrogate ideas and practices. The philosophical and sociological conceptions of knowledge, in this early course were challenging. After reading many books and finding clarity in Creswell's *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (2013), I went forward with an idea I would use one of these. I had started with the firm idea that I wanted to represent the experiences of teachers in the reform process and contrast their notions of success with the outcome measures of the reform which were, in my experiences to date, two different things.

Methods of Enquiry 2.

I came across an online lecture where the work of Binswanger (1881-1966) was discussed, he was a German phenomenological psychologist and I was immediately drawn into his ideas. He was a pioneer in the field of existential psychology and as I began to read more, I began to research how I could use phenomenology as a basis for my research to capture teachers' perspectives. As I delved into the literatures, I began to develop an ontological position and spent probably too long lost in German philosophy. I eventually came across the work of Heidegger and his book 'Being and Time'. His ideas had a profound influence on my approach. His writing around 'The care structure': that our fundamental essence as a human being is that we care, struck a chord with my work with teachers. I had not come across one who didn't care about doing a good job, but many felt that they were not. When I came across Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) I was genuinely excited. I read many research papers which had used the method, most of them were in the field of healthcare. As a qualitative researcher I wanted to document the varied and not often directly heard, teachers' perspectives and IPA was perfect for this. I wanted to document teachers' experiences and their sense making commentary of them.

Student Diary / Academic writing

Reading back over my struggles and thoughts throughout the process in my student diary was interesting. My areas of weakness are now all too clear. The meticulous, conscientious nature of studying at Doctoral level has challenged my nature. At I felt like I was not cut out for it. Attention to detail has never been my strength, I am more usually to be found forging ahead, with expansive and ambitious ideas, rarely stopping to plan or else leaving others to pick up the necessary details. In the context of a Doctorate, I was forced to address this. Early drafts of my writing were filled with a multitude of errors, inconsistencies and were not cohesive. I pounced on new literatures and hurriedly incorporated them into my writing, leaving the reader lost in the wave of disorganised enthusiasm. A turning point came in my work as an Associate Lecturer in Education Studies with the Open University. Lost in the detail of my own thesis, I sometimes found it hard to take a fresh perspective on it and see why something didn't make sense to a new reader. I learnt from my OU students, as I read their essays, and taught myself as I taught them how to improve their writing. When I read some of my favourite writers, I can appreciate the simple elegance of their writing and am still striving to get to that.

Institution Focused Study (IFS)

I was beginning to isolate the fields that I was interested in exploring. I interviewed twenty-three teachers about their experiences of professionalism and education reform. The transcribing and coding process, using Nvivo, had been time consuming and several times I had lost data. There was a lot of data from very diverse teachers. The codes converged around ideas of a loss of autonomy. There was clear evidence of de-professionalisation. As a forerunner to the final thesis it was invaluable, and I made many mistakes there. I began to form my thesis idea: Hiring teachers with experience of LCE, did not automatically lead them to implement that pedagogy into the new environment. My IFS was evaluated by two internal examiners and it was in this dialogue that my thesis idea took shape. I realised I needed to interview less teachers to really gain an insight into how and why teachers taking LCE in a new environment were struggling.

Tutorials

The tutorials designed and run by my supervisor, Professor Paul Morris, for the Department of Education, Practice and Society at IOE UCL, are an environment with many layers. The group includes students at varying stages of their studies and visiting UCL staff who add their considered thoughts and commentaries on the topics to hand. Most powerfully, witnessing alongside colleagues the evolution of their respective research topics has been an education. A truly engaging tutorial is challenging, thought provoking, enlightening and invigorating all at the same time. It is in these spaces where I really began to appreciate that communities of practice are powerful and develop their own way of being. It helped me to understand Lave and Wenger's concept of legitimate peripheral participation (Lave and Wenger 1991/ 1998) as group members move in and out of roles between subjects and over time. Replicating that with my own student groups has been developmental. I run online tutorials in my role as Associate Lecturer for the Open University. For students studying through distance learning, group interaction is important, but challenging to offer as an online experience. The response and feedback elements of the tutorials and the forums, where the group can really grapple with complex ideas and in-depth engagement with articles or concepts, have been successful.

The final thesis

Considering my own experiences of professionalism have been central to driving my final thesis. Being at the end of the process now I can see that the most valuable part is the process itself. The opportunity to work with my supervisor has been invaluable. What I have learnt from him in terms of his knowledge, insight, patience and good humour, I shall attempt to pass on to my own students. Taking another year to re-organise and focus has led to a more focused thesis with more tangible outcomes. The integrated model is something I intend to take forward to future work contexts. I can appreciate now what an incredibly creative process it has been to get to this final product. My aim for the future is to continue to work with teachers, designing teacher training programmes and exploring how to build democratic participation into education systems. I will also continue to develop my writing style, to enable me to share my experiences and reflections of working with communities of practitioners.

CHAPTER 1.

1.1 Introduction

This is a study of the way in which educational reform is experienced by non-citizen¹ teachers working in an institution called the Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The thesis explores how teachers experienced the reforms within the institution with specific regard to their professionalism, pedagogies and practice. This section outlines the backdrop of the drive towards a knowledge economy in the UAE and the role of the education system in the achievement of this. The role that non-citizen teaching professionals play in this transition is introduced. My research focus, its relevance and method are then established.

1.2 Rationale

The research took place in the UAE between 2015-2019, as the country was, and continues to make an economic transition from a reliance on oil and gas towards a knowledge-based economy. The UAE National Vision 2021² has positioned the education system as central to the realisation of this, calling for 'a complete transformation of the current education system and teaching methods' (UAE Government, 2010b). This is because the skills, abilities and dispositions associated with the knowledge-based economy are, in part, seen to be rooted in the development of modern pedagogies, requiring the UAE to move away from traditional teaching methods. A key strategy to achieve this has been replicating policy from elsewhere coupled with use of sovereign wealth to buy in the necessary skills, part of which involves the employment of large numbers of non-citizen teachers, to enact the National Vision 2021. Several reports³ and research on the Gulf region suggest these reforms have, to date, been largely unsuccessful (Kirk 2014 p.78).

The countries from which many of these teachers originate have differing histories and types of teacher professionalism, where pedagogy and practice emerge differently. For western teachers, whose pedagogy and practice has

¹ The study adopts the term non-citizen, to describe these teachers, rather than the term 'expatriate' to align with UAE government documents.

² UAE National Vision 2021, launched in 2010, is mapped into six national priorities one of which is a 'first rate education system' and another 'a competitive knowledge economy'.

³ Discussed in Chapter 2.2

emerged within more democratic models of professionalism, how they set about transposing their practice into the UAE environment, where the professional model perhaps differs, called for examination. This is relevant because their pedagogy and practice often more closely resembles the pedagogy which is seen to encourage the 21st-century skills that the reform desires. The study considers processes of change in a conservative and highly regulated Gulf State and how this impacts the ways in which teaching practices are recast. This is important as without a clear understanding of the model of teacher professionalism at HCT and how that corresponds to the formation of pedagogy, the reform will face serious obstacles.

The research offers a qualitative understanding of how teacher professionalism and pedagogy are negotiated within the structures and systems that define the spaces within which they operate. It is based on the proposition that 'identifying one's own discomforts can provide valuable information about how wider systems operate' (Morley, 2008 p.105). The data is an in-depth analysis of how teachers experienced the reform elements, focusing specifically on accessing their reflexivity and interpretations in the socio- cultural context. The research considers how these elements promoted or discouraged different types of professionalism and affected their approach to teaching and how that relates to the 21st-century skills vision of the UAE.

1.3 Teacher professionalism, Education Reform and 21st Century Skills in the UAE.

The title of the thesis ties teacher professionalism to two key aspects of the UAE National Vision 2021: education reform and 21st-century skills.

1.3a The UAE economy, 21st-century skills and Education Reform

The UAE has a bold, long-term vision for its future economy. Specifically, the UAE plans to be at the forefront of the Fourth Industrial Revolution through a strategy of industrial digitalisation involving developing technologies such as robotics, autonomous vehicles, artificial intelligence, 3D printing, augmented and virtual reality. The seven targeted sectors include: renewable energy, transport, education, health, technology, water and space (UAE Government, 2019).

As countries shift from industrial to knowledge economies, the World Economic Forum (WEF) called governments to ‘reconsider fundamentally the education models of today’ (World Economic Forum, 2016 p.7). They claimed that in the future new skills, abilities and learning dispositions would be required for economic success in the 21st-century. Their definition of this includes competencies such as collaboration, creativity, communication and critical thinking as well as character qualities such as curiosity and initiative which run concurrently alongside other foundational literacies, including digital literacy (World Economic Forum, 2015 p.3).

With flexible, unstable and competitive global markets, education is now positioned by global bodies such as The World Bank (WB), The World Economic Forum (WEF) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as crucial to gaining economic advantage. This is not an undisputed view, Rappleye and Komatsu call this ‘a fundamental assumption’ that ‘improvements in cognitive levels of a given population are closely linked to economic growth’ (Rappleye & Komatsu, 2019 p. 2) and refute the ‘tight linkage between cognitive levels and GDP⁴ through research analysing the statistical basis of these claims (ibid).

As this research focuses on Higher Education (HE) in the UAE where there is a fundamental reconsideration of education, it is worth emphasising the speed of development to date. Post-secondary education was only established in 1976 with the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) opening in two cities with the first four Higher Colleges of Technology opening in 1988. Thus, in just 44 years the UAE went from no post-secondary education to a wealth of public and private universities and colleges substantially achieved by transferring educational models from elsewhere, often referred to as policy borrowing and lending (Steiner-Khamsi and Waldow, 2012). The nuance in the language of these terms is relevant, Kirk refers to the Gulf in terms of policy ‘replicating’ (Kirk, 2014), which will be discussed in Chapter 2.2a.

This assumed link between education and economic growth has been central to policy in the UAE and in 2010, the UAE Vision 2021 National Agenda was

⁴ Gross Domestic Product per capita growth

launched. It was a response to diminishing oil reserves, which was seen to necessitate a move from an industrial oil economy, towards a knowledge economy. The UAE National Agenda ties their economic development plans firmly to the education system. Take, for example, this passage from their development plan:

‘The UAE will harness the full potential of its National human capacity by maximising the participation of Emiratis. More Emiratis will enter Higher Education, where they will enrich their minds with the skills that their nation needs to fuel its knowledge economy’ (UAE Government, 2010 p.16).

A significant aspect is the development of a ‘First-Rate Education system’ as described in the National Vision:

‘The National Agenda emphasises the development of a first-rate education system, which will extend beyond rote learning to encompass critical thinking and practical abilities, equipping our youth with essential skills and knowledge for the modern world’ (UAE Government, 2010 p.23).

Hargreaves has described the relationship between these pedagogies as ‘an ideological conflict between traditionalism and progressivism’ (Hargreaves, 2010 p.159). The National Agenda is clear in its plan for a movement towards integrating progressivist pedagogies. Whether this represents a conflict of ideologies or a simple blending, it seems clear that teachers are at the heart of this movement.

1.3b 21st- century skills and teachers

The educational reforms across the Gulf, though aligned with the rhetoric of 21st-century skills, are actually about promoting and developing complex and sophisticated sets of higher order cognitive skills, behaviours and values through developing and embedding them within their educational institutions, curricula, assessments and teaching methods in order to prepare their populations to stimulate the growth of a knowledge economy. Teachers are, therefore, central to the success of the National Vision 2021.

The availability and competency of teachers is an issue in the UAE, which Sharif et al. attribute to teaching not being seen as a desirable occupation for local Emiratis, due to both the low status of teachers in society and their difficult working conditions (Sharif, Hossan and McMinn, 2014 p.62). With Emiratis

making up just 11% of the UAE population⁵, Emiratis in the teaching profession are fewer, making up just 4% of teachers (ibid). The UAE has three teacher training programmes within the public higher education institutions: these are provided by the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU), Zayed University (ZU) and HCT. The gender segregated campuses of HCT, for example, only run teacher training programmes on the female campuses and not the male ones. This impacts the demographic of the teachers in the Governmental institutions where the Emirati citizens are educated. More recent statistics, released by the Ministry of Education in 2019, show that nationally, the UAE hired 3,430 non-citizen teachers over an 18-month period, including 1,500 westerners (Arabian Business, 2018).

The teaching workforce in the sixteen colleges which make up the HCT, on which this study focuses, number 1,211 Faculty (Higher Colleges of Technology, 2017b p.4), comprised overwhelmingly of non-citizens mainly from the Indian sub-continent, non-Gulf Arabs and a minority of westerners. Data is not available of the actual percentage, however in one typical department of thirty teachers, six were from western backgrounds⁶ and 20% represents a typical department average. The majority of teaching Faculty⁷ are mid-career professionals, not trained teachers and as evidenced from the findings of my IFS, were schooled in what can be considered a traditional manner. Direct instruction methods of teaching are often referred to as transmission, where, in a face to face, formal manner teachers explain, show, model and demonstrate the skills to be learned. The assertion of the 21-century skills agenda is that this transmission model alone discourages the development of higher order cognitive skills, thus significant development and training is required to achieve the UAE Vision 2021.

The type of teaching, curriculum, assessments and learning environments required to promote this transformation have implications for teachers because a key feature of these reforms, and the basis for their success, lies in the nature of the type of learning that they encourage, some of which are social

⁵ Abudhabi2 information for residents and travellers. <http://www.abudhabi2.com/uae-population-by-nationality/>

⁶ Data from the Business Department in Dubai in 2019

⁷ The interviewees either refer to themselves as teachers, faculty or both.

constructivist⁸ in nature. For example, student-centred education (SCE), sometimes also referred to as Learner Centred Education (LCE) and experiential learning, are promoted globally, and in the HCT, as they are thought to provide cognitive opportunities to promote critical thinking, independent research, inquiry based learning (Vavrus 2009 p.303) and enhance higher-order thinking (Vavrus, Thomas and Bartlett, 2011 p.46). These together represent a significant element of the concept of 21st-century skills. This is well evidenced in local newspaper articles in the UAE, which often report on the changes in teaching methods in education. Referring to local teachers, a chief executive officer of Dubai's Education Ministry stated: 'in the past there has been too much rote learning and standards have not always been high enough, so we do need a change' (The National, 2011). The article explains: 'held up to international scrutiny, they (teachers) have been found wanting in the face of contemporary theory that promotes student participation and active learning' (ibid).

Vavrus argues that LCE is not neutral as a pedagogy as it originates from liberal democracies and therefore:

'Schools are expected to be democratic communities, if learners and their teachers are to acquire those qualities of mind and social attitudes, which are the prerequisites of a truly democratic society' (Vavrus, 2009 p.303).

The traditional classrooms of the Gulf sit in some contrast to these theories of learning,

'because it (LCE) is more democratic than authoritarian teaching, learner centred pedagogy emerges as the natural choice for the cultivation and inculcation of a liberal, democratic ethos' (ibid p.303).

Definitions of SCE/ LCE are inconsistent. A meta-analysis of 326 journal articles in 2020 found that 'SCE / LCE had been defined inconsistently in the literature' and that a broader conceptualisation than 'an increased focus on the learner' or 'placing learners at the centre' is necessary (Bremner, 2020 p.1). Moving SCE/ LCE to differing socio- political contexts is therefore complex and exacerbated

⁸ Social constructivism is a sociological theory of knowledge according to which human development is socially situated and knowledge is constructed through interaction with others.

in the HCT given that the majority of the non-citizen teachers working there have been neither schooled nor trained in social constructivist pedagogies.

To align with the national vision, a nine-year, two-part, reform programme for all 16 Higher Colleges of Technology (HCT) across the UAE was initiated, part one running from 2012 – 2017 and part two 2017– 2021. My study focuses on how the plans actualise the movement from transmission methods towards incorporating modern pedagogies in one institution.

1.4c The Higher Colleges of Technologies (HCT) strategic plans⁹

2012-2017 Strategic Plan: An ambition for more. Going the distance through Learning by Doing.

The 2012-2017 plan was drawn up during a series of retreats for the senior management of the HCT organised by The Boston Consulting group¹⁰, then mandated and launched by Officials from Government. The educational approach of Learning by Doing (LBD) was central as was HCT's position 'to meet workforce needs of business and industry' to 'produce entry level Emirati graduates to meet market demands'. It was a selected technique through which to shift pedagogy, which appeared to align with the vocational nature of the colleges. The six identified strategic goals were: to enhance student success, emphasise applied education, expand partnerships, ensure continuous quality improvement, encourage innovative initiatives and support national Emiratisation strategies' (Higher Colleges of Technology 2012).

However, despite ambitious goals and strategic intent, at the end of this period in 2017, my Institution Focused Study (IFS) identified a clear sense of de-professionalism amongst Higher Education teaching staff in one college, which had arisen during the reform period. An overwhelming majority of the twenty-three staff members interviewed, from diverse backgrounds, reported that as a result of the standardisation and centralisation of curriculum and assessment processes, they had experienced increasing stress as the proliferation of

⁹ As of Sept 2020, these two strategic plans are no longer available on the HCT website. The 2017-2021 HCT 2.0 Strategic Plan has been replaced with HCT4.0 2017-2021. The previous two plans are available on request as pdfs.

¹⁰ An American global management consulting group

external requirements left them less and less space for professional reflexivity and discretion.

2017-2021 Strategic Plan HCT 2.0

With the 2012 -2017 Strategic Plan at an end, the HCT 2.0 Strategic Plan 2017-2021¹¹ was launched. The new plan published a lot more detail. The five strategic goals¹² had twenty-six strategic initiatives with associated Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) set out within a 'strategic management framework'. Some key challenges identified included the 21st-century skills gap, the changing job market and technology megatrends within the challenge of 'embedding a culture of innovation' (p.6). At the same time, the Minister of State for Higher Education and a member of the UAE Cabinet, Dr Ahmad Belhoul Al Falasi, launched a new National Education Strategy for Higher Education 2030. His appointment as the new Chancellor of HCT in April 2018 has firmly brought the aims of HCT in line with those of the Cabinet and Government.

The nature of both strategic plans are overwhelmingly focused on the goal to develop the knowledge economy of the UAE, in the first plan referencing the UAE Vision 2021 directly, to 'harness the full potential of its human capacity (Higher Colleges of Technology 2012 p.3) and in the second as the 'largest human capital provider in the UAE' (Higher Colleges of Technology, 2017 p.2). In 1997 Labaree, writing on the relationship between education and the economy, adopted the term 'social efficiency' to describe this approach,

'The social efficiency approach to schooling argues that our economic well-being depends on our ability to prepare the young to carry out useful economic roles with competence' (Labaree 1997 p.42).

The HCT reform agenda resonates with this quote, given that the transition from an oil-based economy to a knowledge economy is designed fundamentally to replace one form of wealth creation with another. Labaree captures this point,

'Its (social efficiency) structure has a pyramid shape similar to that of the occupational structure. Within this system there are a large number of potential exit points and there are also a variety of cooling out

¹¹ <https://government.ae/en/about-the-uae/strategies-initiatives-and-awards/federal-governments-strategies-and-plans/national-strategy-for-higher-education-2030>

¹² Appendices 1-5

mechanisms that encourage students to use these exits and go to work' (Labaree 1997 p.64).

Mirroring Labaree's description, the pyramid shape is reproduced in the Strategic Plan 2.0, shown in Figure 1.1 below.

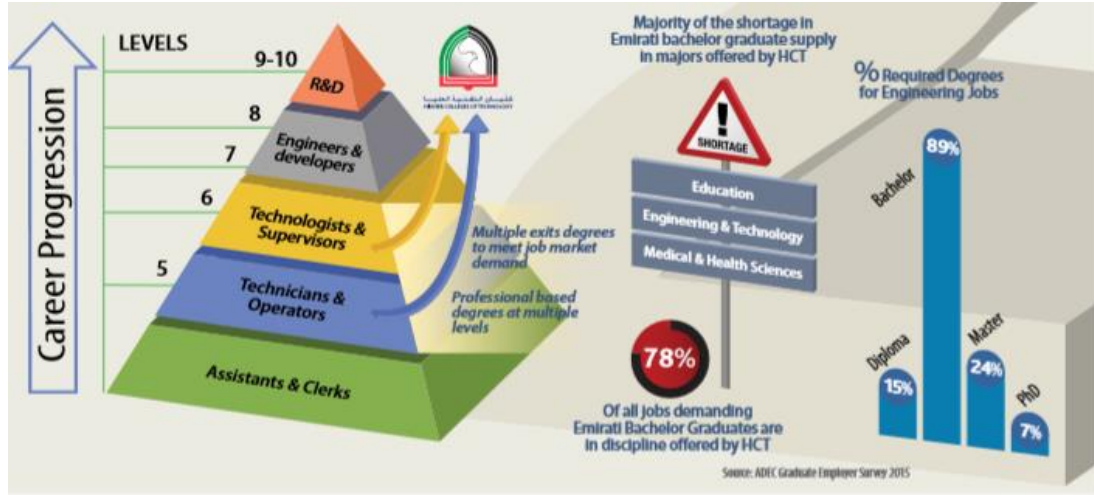


FIGURE 1.1 IMAGE FROM HCT'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2021 P.8

The clear purpose of the college is outlined in the strategic plan which reads,

'HCT is mandated to meet the current and future job market demand with work-ready, skilled, and competent Emirati graduates in the middle category' (Higher Colleges of Technology, 2017a p.7).

As seen in the pyramid, this middle category are technicians, operators, technologists and supervisors. The role of HCT is distinct in this respect from the private universities in the UAE, who might be expected to follow more of a social mobility model. In this model education is positioned as a commodity to provide the (mostly non-citizen) student body with competitive advantage in the struggle for desirable social positions (Labaree, 1997 p.42).

A key feature of both documents is that the progress of the reform plan is measured through the language of standards, measured by quantitative outcomes. The first plan proposes,

'as initiatives are implemented, these will need to be evaluated in accordance with agreed metrics to assess if the changes have resulted in improved quality, service and effectiveness' (Higher Colleges of Technology, 2012).

The Strategic Plan 2017- 2021 sees a significant acceleration of this use of metrics through a 'strategic management framework' focusing on, what is

termed in the strategic plan as the ‘cycle of change’ (Higher Colleges of Technology, 2017a p.4). Strategic objectives are tied to explicit key performance indicators which are set out numerically with progress indicators, expressed as a percentage, for each year of the plan. These are tied to twenty named initiatives and specified international accreditation and professional certifications, for example, the American Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) and, also American, the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programmes (ACBSP) (Higher Colleges of Technology, 2017 p.13). Labaree’s more recent critical observation around the proliferation of the social efficiency approach argues that ‘the policy establishment has converged on human capital production as the prime goal for schooling’ and cautions that this approach ‘serves to narrow the learning outcomes of schooling and educational knowledge production to whatever is in service to economic development’ (Labaree, 2017 p.282).

The term ‘21st-century skills’ appears in Goal 1 (appendix 1) and strongly aligns with the World Economic Forum, using its 2015 diagram of 21st-century skills, shown in Figure 1.2 and 1.3 below.

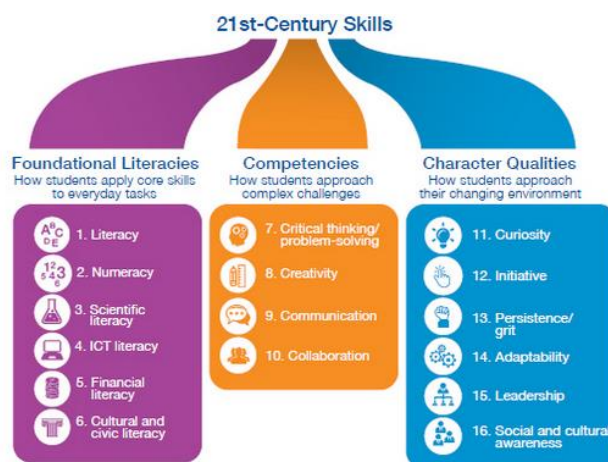


FIGURE 1.2 WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM 2015 NEW VISION FOR EDUCATION (World Economic Forum, 2015)



FIGURE 1.3 IMAGE FROM HCT'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2021 P.8 GOAL 1

Goal 2, plans 'continuous improvement of academic programs, faculty and scholarship activities to meet high quality standards and industry requirements', seeking 'a blend of traditional and modern teaching methods' (appendix 2).

The modern teaching methods referred to across both the strategic plans include an assemblage of pedagogies which are non-traditional and social constructivist in origin. These include, in the first plan: 'learning by doing' (LBD), 'student centred learning environments' and 'the latest teaching methodologies'. The term LBD, which appeared on the HCT logo, with its strong connotations of practical, hands-on experiences, had been replaced in the 2017-2021 plan by more abstract, broader conceptualisations of pedagogy including: 'experiential learning', 'ubiquitous learning', 'immersive environments', 'personalised learning', 'collaborative learning', 'inclusive learning', 'innovative teaching methods', 'collaborative creativity', and 'technology focused learning'. The later plan has a focus on creativity and innovation whilst technology has moved from primarily being associated with facilitating mobile learning, to more fundamentally associated with innovation.

Broader definitions of the 'operational innovation spaces' by which the 'modern pedagogies' and the associated terms used in the strategic plans are to be achieved is unclear. The goals pertinent to this are: Goal 2, which includes a sub-heading to 'blend traditional and innovative teaching-methods to ensure student centred learning' (appendix 2), Goal 4: 'attracting, developing and retaining high quality faculty' through 'effective performance management' (appendix 4) and Goal 5 'encouraging employee innovation' (appendix 5). One example of how student centred learning was operationalised arose from the interview data, when teachers spoke about the introduction of the 'flipped learning technique' into HCT in September 2014. Originating in the US, it has now become a global initiative: students review class material before class, leaving in-class time dedicated to discussions, interactive activities or independent work. The methodology of the classroom shifts towards learner-centred, flexible spaces that are focused on developing conceptual understandings. The teacher's role is focused on observations, live feedback and reflective practice to support progression of their students (Bergman, 2017). This transition to 'flipped classroom' was a key feature which the teachers of HCT were expected to enact.

1.3d Personal interest: teacher professionalism

I undertook this thesis in order to examine the lived experiences of teachers. Thousands of education professionals enter the UAE every year, seeking new professional experiences in the fast-paced reform environment. I worked in the UAE as an education professional for eight years (2009 -2017) in two positions. Firstly, as an English advisor, working across public primary and secondary schools (2009-2012). In 2009 Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC¹³) initiated a 'New School Model', which they stated, represented an educational transformation, from Kindergarten to Grade 12. The thousands of existing government school teachers, many of whom were non-Gulf Arabs and employed nationwide, were to be trained to deliver the new curriculum. They were supported by a host of advisors and consultants in a network of public-private partnerships to implement the new model, of which I was a part through my employment with Nord Anglia Education. As the reform progressed, many non-Gulf Arab teachers were replaced by teachers from America, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the UK who were more experienced in learner-centred education. I encountered countless teachers from different countries and education systems, all seeking to make sense of their experiences working in this very different professional environment.

In a second position as a lecturer at HCT from 2012-2017, I again found myself amidst another diverse group of non-citizen professionals, engaged with transferring their ideas of teaching into a HE context. Within the group of committed, experienced and well-qualified professionals there was an undercurrent of dissatisfaction and frustration that was difficult to ignore. It was connected to a sense of de-professionalism and I felt motivated to capture their experiences to understand this phenomenon in more detail. Whilst reading around the changes in education around the Enlightenment period, starting with Nietzsche, I followed one strand to Heidegger and then eventually phenomenology. Through this, I developed the study's theoretical framework to include the lived experiences of teachers, which led to interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA).

¹³ Since renamed as the Department of Education and Knowledge (ADEK)

To draw out a theoretical interpretation of this, the micropolitics literature of Morley (2008) and Ball (2013; 2012; 2009; 2008; 2003) shaped the thesis significantly. Ball's commentary on Foucault and his pursuit of understanding 'how human-beings are made subjects' (Foucault in Ball, 2013 p.5) was a key question I wanted to consider. Sachs's 2000 review of dominant forms of professionalism was informative. In 2014 she recast teachers as ideally being a research-active, mature profession (2014 p.422), whilst still recognising professionalism as a 'site of struggle' (p.418). It is pertinent then to consider how these struggles of professionalism appear in the HCT and UAE context.

1.4 The research focus

A year into the second strategic plan 2.0, the two research questions were designed to reveal the experiences and meanings that the participants ascribed to their lived experiences. The first:

RQ1. How are the reforms experienced by non-citizen teachers and how does that shape their professionalism, with specific regard to their pedagogies?

The second research question allowed me to examine experiences of agency.

RQ2. How do teachers want to work as professionals?

This question allows the teachers to describe the conditions which they perceive would better support their professional development. From this I seek to infer the features of a model that might better support the development and enactment of the reforms and consequently the 'transformation of applied higher education' in the UAE (Higher Colleges of Technology, 2017a p.3).

To undertake this research, the key requirements of teachers were identified from a content analysis of the teachers' job descriptions and 'roles and responsibilities' documentation as referred to in their contracts. These are set out in the following list:

- 1 HEA membership
- 2 New professional pay scale
- 3 Blackboard Learn certification Level 1.
- 4 40 hours PD development
- 5 Tri annual teacher observation
- 6 Engagement in a performance management process¹⁴

The first two directly aim to increase professionalism: mandatory Higher Education Academy (HEA) membership and placement on a new professional pay scale. The next three are all designed to enhance professional skills and development. The sixth aspect, the performance management process, is typically used as part of performance cultures and is intended to provide shared baselines about learning outcomes, whilst providing teachers with a common language to talk about practice. Overall, these measures were the means designed to connect the teachers to the 2017 HCT strategic plan.

In their responses, the respondents reflected on the six measures and spoke about the ways in which their 40 hours were used. Each of the five measures were experienced through the organisational structures of the performance management process and inside this process, I examined patterns of social relationships.

¹⁴ Goal 4, appendix 4

14.a The gap in the research

The practice of policy borrowing and purchasing in education reform is common in the Gulf region, as countries attempt to rapidly promote modern approaches to teaching in order to generate knowledge economies. This largely mirrors the OECD/ World Bank narrative that economic growth is dependent on improving pupil learning outcomes (Rappleye and Komatsu, 2019). The model of teacher professionalism required to generate the required 21st-century skills and a 'culture of innovation', a key element of knowledge economies, has been less well specified in the reforms to date and is strongly conditioned by key variables, including approaches to autonomy and accountability.

The outcome of my IFS revealed ways that twenty-three teachers perceived that they had been de-professionalised through a drive to meet the instrumental outcomes of the strategic plan. Running across the sample was a clear pattern of feelings of reduced professionalism and disengagement. These findings aligned with a 2017 report, commissioned by UNESCO, which named 'teaching to the test' and 'narrowing the curriculum' as well-established (unintended and unexpected) results of accountability systems that aim for instrumental outcomes. The authors stated that these unintended and unexpected behaviours amongst educators 'appear so frequently in the literature, we wonder whether they can be considered as 'unintended' or 'unexpected' any longer' (Verger and Parcerisa, 2017 p.30).

The concerns raised in my IFS warranted further attention given the widening of the planned curricula to include 21st-century skills in both the national vision and HCT's strategic plan 2017-2021, alongside the continued use of a performance management system. The UNESCO report went on to call for further research 'to understand how accountability systems can be designed in order to minimise these types of undesirable behaviours' and 'contribute to promoting more expressive responses, including the development of innovation within the curriculum and in pedagogic terms' (Verger and Parcerisa, 2017 p.30). Specifically with regard to autonomy the report stated: 'the professional identity and autonomy of teachers requires more research that needs to conceive teachers' identities from a more institutional and collective (rather than

exclusively individual) perspective'(ibid p.30). Asking teachers about their experiences of the reforms was the starting point of my study.

1.5 Participants and method of data collection

Within the interview sample from my 2016/2017 IFS, I identified a group of teachers trained in western contexts. I wanted to gain a deeper insight into these teachers' experiences of pedagogy and practice. In November 2018, over a year into the second strategic plan, this study examines how teachers, who already have some exposure to SCE/LCE, have been able to develop both themselves and this assemblage of pedagogies broadly drawn from a social constructivist stable. To develop the cognitive skills, behaviours and values (21st –century skills) amongst students desired within the reform plan, the features of the professional model will be explored to see how they facilitated development.

The study uses Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which has its origins in Heidegger, and his most influential work 'Being and Time' in 1927, which asks the question: What is being? The thesis captures meanings arising in the everyday flow of life, as the teachers detail the realities of their 'being'¹⁵ as they work in the new professional environment. Of interest is what these collective experiences can tell us about the nature of professionalism in the UAE and ways in which that professionalism is repositioned and repurposed by both teachers and the institution. For the purposes of this study, this group of educators will be classified as coming from Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich, Democratic (WEIRD) societies, a term used, usually to denote awareness that this influential group only represents 'a thin and unusual slice of humanity' (Henrich, Heine and Norenzayan, 2010 p.1). The WEIRD teachers at HCT arrive with a range of experiences of pedagogy from WEIRD countries and set about embedding their practice within the wider environment of the HCT.

¹⁵Which will be expanded in Chapter 3.3 using Heidegger's concept of 'Dasein' meaning 'being in the world'.

1.6 Thesis structure

This thesis has six chapters. Following this introduction, the 2nd Chapter is a review of literature across four areas pertinent to the research: education reform, education reform in the Gulf, theories of learning and professionalism. Chapter 3: Research Methods, introduces Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) within the phenomenological perspectives that it originates. It then goes on to set the detail of this study within the IPA framework. Chapter 4 presents the individual interviews using verbatim extracts and representative examples, which captures a distinctive representation of teachers' experiences. Chapter 5 then draws these together in themes and is an interpretative discussion in relation to the wider socio-cultural context. Chapter 6 then concludes to answer the two research questions by presenting a current, descriptive model of professionalism, as experienced by the teachers at HCT, and then a suggested future normative model of professionalism for HCT rooted in a theoretical discussion.

CHAPTER 2. Review of Literature

This chapter focuses on four literatures central to this study, exploring the areas and debates within them.

2.1 Contemporary education reform

2.2 Education reform in the Gulf.

2.3 Theories of Learning. Exploring ways in which learning theories, including learner centred education (LCE), arise and relate to the concept of 21st-century skills.

2.4 Professionalism

The purpose is to draw these literatures together to broadly understand the global climate of education reform and how education reform in the Gulf has emerged in order to highlight possible stages and tensions within that.

Understanding the term '21st-century skills' and how associated pedagogies support the reform, has implications for the type of professionalism required of the teachers who work there. Identifying models of professionalism from the literature provides a framework for describing and analysing the experiences of teachers in the UAE.

2.1 Global tensions in contemporary education reform

In 2017 Labaree characterised policy discourse around 21st-century education as converging around a single, overarching goal, a shift in purpose from education promoting a nation's values, to only about creating human capital. He argues that globally there is now a singular focus on the purpose of education to align with the economy, over and above everything else (p. 278). To understand this assertion more deeply, it is beneficial to set it within a historical context of educational reform changes from the late 19th and 20th century.

2.1a The industrialisation of education

This review begins with a perspective on the transition from an agrarian to an industrial era, to understand how education shifted in response to the demands of an industrialised economy. In the context of the Enlightenment¹⁶, in 1870's Germany, Nietzsche, schooled in a classical education, articulated a concern of

¹⁶ Referred to also as the age of reason.

the age: a movement in the nature of education towards more utilitarian goals. He referred to this as 'breadwinning', contemporarily referred to as 'technicism'. Politically, the technicist view is that the job of Government is to harness workforce energies according to the needs of the state. This mandate is given on the assumption that the main purpose of education is to train the population to contribute by filling the roles demanded by the technicist society.

It was a critique of modernity, a belief that the dominant trends of 19th and 20th century thought, including technicism, would not lead to emancipation as promised, but new forms of dehumanisation (Evans and Newnham, 1998 p.107). It was Nietzsche's belief that technicist training did not constitute an education and he lamented the loss of artistry and philosophy. For Nietzsche, the technicist man was submissive and 'given' the goals of his society (Cooper, 1983 p.37). At the end of the 19th Century, Nietzsche's diagnosis was 'a devastating criticism of the mediocrity of modernity' (Cooke, 2000 p.14). Nietzsche's writings are thought to hold the intellectual origins of postmodernism¹⁷ with his belief that 'the triumph of rationality portends disaster' (Evans and Newnham, 1998 p.106).

Continuing this perspective, in response to the increasing rationalism of modern life, in the 1920's Heidegger wrote 'the inherent technicist way of ordering our views of nature and men drive out every other possibility of revealing' (Cooper, 1983 p.42). Also writing in Germany in this period, Max Weber used the expression 'shell as hard a steel' to describe a system that individuals find themselves in based on teleological efficiency, a reason or purpose for something in function of its end purpose or goal, derived through rational calculations, a bureaucratisation (Weber, 1994 p. xvi). Over a hundred years later, a very similar statement by Robinson in 2010, speaks about education as being still suited to fit a 19th Century model of industrial society:

'Current systems of education are based on the manufacturing principles of linearity, conformity and standardisation. The evidence is everywhere that they are failing too many students and teachers alike. A primary reason is that human development is not linear and standardised, it is organic and diverse. People, as opposed to products, have hopes and

¹⁷ Difficult to define but represented here to mean 'a sustained challenge to existing theoretical positions and a questioning of existing social order' (Evans and Newnham 1998 p.106)

aspirations, feelings and purposes. Education is a personal process. What and how young people are taught has to engage their energies, imaginations and their different ways of learning' (Robinson, 2010).

Approaches to education which place its main function as being to serve the economy bring us back to Labaree's view that modern education has an ever 'narrowing vision', which 'relentlessly seeks to remake education into an efficient machine for the production of human capital' (Labaree, 2017 p.277). Nietzsche's view, it seems, still holds currency.

2.1b Education reform 1970 - 2020

Later, this chapter (2.2) will discuss how the Gulf countries are reliant on borrowing and purchasing education policies from western democracies. Understanding the political and historical origins of these policies and ideas of 'best practices' will allow for a deeper analysis of how those practices manifest in a different historical and political environment. For the purpose of gaining a basic overview, the following paragraphs outline a very brief summary of Hargreaves and Shirley's categorisation of education reform. These are broad stages with much variation between countries but can serve as a starting point in understanding the complexities and shifting conceptions of professionalism.

Hargreaves & Shirley (2009) describe 'a political journey of education reform' in western democracies in four stages. In the 1970's 'The First Way' of education reform was one of 'innovation and inconsistencies' with huge variations in focus and quality. The focus on investment in state services, including education, led to experimentation and innovation in schools moving towards child centred models. With no regulation, during this time there was much variation in progress with schools existing on a scale of 'traditional to innovative' and 'excellent to awful' (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009 p.4). Large scale, centrally driven education reform, termed 'The Second Way of Markets and Standardisation', emerged in the late 1980's to address these inconsistencies in the UK, with the US, Canada and Australia following during the early 1990's. This was often referred to as 'the (unholy) trinity of markets, testing and accountability' (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009 p.25). 'The Third Way' of 'Performance and Partnership' refocused on four clear elements of community, equality of opportunity, responsibility and accountability. Giddens's influential book entitled *The Third Way: The renewal of Social Democracy* (Giddens,

1998) attempted to reconcile centre-left social policy and centre-right economic policy and informed Government policy in the UK, US and Germany in the late 1990's and early 2000's (Hay, 2007). The model attempted to offset the heavy top down models with a socially focused bottom up approach with 'a blend of top-down control, bottom-up initiative, and sophisticated lateral learning. The hope was to prepare leading western democracies to thrive in the new knowledge societies of the future' (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009 p.14).

It is worth noting the unevenness of these transitions, in the US, for example, in 2009, the Obama administration was only just planning to move beyond 'The Second Way' (ibid p.15), whilst parts of Canada and the UK were well into 'The Third Way'. In 2009, 'The Third Way' ushered in a new orthodoxy of testing, accountability and data driven decision making, which relied on school inspection agencies with a focus on achievement data. 'The Third Way' was reported to have stalled (ibid p.3) due to, they suggest, stricter policies than in the previous 'Second Way'. Australia, for example, in 2012 implemented a range of programmes that reflected a managerial culture and technologies of control (Mackenzie, 2017 p.273). A retrospective, critical view of the Third Way has been that its vagueness 'provided cover for the continuation and expansion of the neo-liberal project' (Rikowski *et al.*, 2000 p.4) with Hay describing 'the ambiguous nature of the relationship between the Third Way and social democracy' (Hay, 2007).

This led Hargreaves and Shirley to set out a 'Fourth Way', drawing upon successful systems such as those found in Finland, Singapore and South Korea. 'The Fourth Way', 'of inspiration and innovation, of responsibility and sustainability' (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2012 p.71) positions teachers differently. Rather than driving reform through teachers, it encourages professional involvement beyond standards and targets to 'forge an equal and interactive partnership' (ibid p.71). This is a direct attempt to address the de-professionalism of teachers. It seeks to bring about change through democratic processes which liberate the expertise of teachers, rather than through the market and bureaucracy.

In addition to the four ways, in 2010 Hargreaves (Hargreaves, 2010 p.153) identified 'four historical ages of professionalism' which countries pass through:

pre-professional, autonomous, collegial and postmodern. The 'ages', Hargreaves argues, are not universal, but rather 'a contingent history of Anglophone nations' (ibid p.153). He argues that teaching, as a profession, has moved from the formal methods of recitation and rote learning of the *pre-professional* age, to a transition in some classrooms of the 1960's to the beginnings of the *autonomous professional* using learner-centred pedagogy and other progressive methods. This was a significant movement in teaching, giving rise to what Hargreaves refers to as 'an ideological conflict between two great metanarratives of traditionalism and progressivism' (Hargreaves, 2000 p.159). The age of '*the collegial teaching professional*' arose in response to the increasing complexities of schooling. Teaching methods and technology proliferated, administrative requirements were increasing, as were 'social work' responsibilities. There was a need to work together as the education systems increased in their levels of sophistication. The 'Fourth Age' he describes as *post professional*: a 'postmodern struggle which demands more flexible and democratically inclusive groups' in education (Hargreaves, 2000 p. 167). Having summarised key stages of education reform, I am now able to better analyse the configuration and these 'ages' and 'ways' as they manifest in the Gulf. The impact of borrowing policies developed in countries who have passed through autonomous, collegial and postmodern stages of professionalism and seeding them in the context of the Gulf, which has a very different historical genesis, is not obvious.

2.2 Education Reform in the Gulf

As a global trend, non-governmental actors have gained more influence over education, in and beyond the traditional sites and circulations of policy making, including: IGOs, NGOs, think tanks, advocacy groups, consultants, social entrepreneurs and international business (Ball, 2012 p.10). Added to this list are big tech companies such as Google and Microsoft and other technology providers. This has seen an emergence of 'international knowledge banks that seek to govern through global indicators that monitor global progress (Steiner-Khamsi and Waldow, 2012 p.xix)'. According to the World Yearbook of Education 2012, this has seen the Governmental role re-defined towards being, to varying degrees, 'drivers of integration of action and delivery with a range of

partners in the provision of services' (Ozga et al. 2012 p.xix). This is evident in the Gulf perhaps to a greater extent due to the wealth of the region coupled with the need for economic diversification, necessitating broader reforms in education to build the human capital to support this.

The Gulf region has seen a set of economic visions which exhibited strong similarities. These were framed as long-term modernising investments in human capital designed to address the economic challenges as well as promote the nations' branding. Within this, education was portrayed as the key driver of reform and any serious attempt to compete in the global economy therefore required ambitious educational reforms. From an economic perspective, human capital is viewed as a critical input for innovations, research and development activities (McGrath, 2010 p.1) and is therefore worth large investments. Human capital is defined by the OECD as 'the knowledge, skills, competencies and other attributes embodied in individuals that are relevant to economic activity' (OECD, 2016). Through using large scale comparative measurements, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), they seek to ascertain the level of human capital in a country 'as a proxy measure for stocks of human capital in a given national labour force' (Rappleye & Komatsu, 2019 p.8). The OECD Director for Education repeatedly states its purpose as being 'How can we measure what makes school systems work'¹⁸, characterised by an increased reliance on the interoperability of data to both standardise and compare. Judgements made by Governments and reported on in the media about quality education are now seemingly inescapably tied to these national and global ranking systems. The UAE, for example, aims to be in the PISA top 20 by 2021 (Prime Minister's Office UAE, 2010).

The global architecture which now surrounds education development is termed by Williamson as 'systems of judgement' (Williamson 2017 p. 66). He summarises these broadly as including: escalation of standardised assessment, academic progress data, key performance indicators, performance metrics and measurements of schools, standards and evaluation frameworks, centralised school inspections, publication of individual school data, training of teachers in

¹⁸ Andreas Schleicher

digital literacy, decentralised management, international comparison, international experts and reform advisors to guide and evaluate implementation (ibid). These clearly impact the nature of professional practice.

The technical experts who run these systems are referred to as ‘technocrats’ or ‘technocracy’. Collier’s definition of technocrat means ‘individuals with a high level of specialised, academic training, which serves as principle criterion on the basis of which they are selected, to occupy key decision making or advisory roles in large, complex organisations – both public and private’ (Collier 1979 in Dargent, 2015 p. 13). Technician assumptions and goal-oriented rationality are embedded in the logic and purposes of contemporary education at national and global levels, evidenced in the globally coordinated PISA results of the OECD and national league tables of schools and universities. Such league tables have ‘a complicated rationale, combining elements of accountability and choice with a social justice argument that says everyone should have access to education of the same quality’ (Biesta, 2010 p.10).

There are significant criticisms of this model with critical discussions around datafication, de-professionalism, managerialism and statistical othering. Lawn and Lingard (2006), for example, refer to this as the ‘magistracy’: a cohort of people, key players, policy makers who travel between countries and create options, define agenda and deliver product (p.156). Whilst this is presented neutrally in international circles, Lawn and Lingard go on to assert that this represents a ‘consumption’ of western knowledge that leads to a neglect of the production of indigenous knowledge. Sahlberg refers to these organisations, as promoting the ‘Global Education Reform Movement’ (GERM), which ‘relentlessly seeks to remake education into an efficient machine for the production of human capital’ (Labaree, 2018p.227). Others refer to the ‘Global Education Industry’ (GEI) ‘embedded in all stages of policy making, delivery and monitoring, which revolves around the selling of ‘best global practices’ (Mohammed and Morris, 2019 p.1). Ansell claims that they must be understood as part of a broader neo- liberal agenda where education is increasingly geared to the demands of a global economy, promoted directly and indirectly by the World Bank and many other donor agencies. Connected to this, education

becomes part of a corporate marketplace where global corporations compete to make money (Ansell, 2019 p. 223).

2.2a Research on Reform across the GCC

Despite massive investment over a significant period, there appears to have been limited progress towards quality education in the GCC. At the 2009 Gulf Comparative Education Symposium (GCES) it was identified that ‘a recurring concern amongst participants was the lack of substantive progress on the education front despite various educational initiatives’ (Tabari, 2014 p.7). More recently a 2016 report by the Gulf Financial House (GFH) on the GCC education sector, noted that there is a willingness to spend for quality education with government impetus to spend for improving the quality of Higher Education as part of a long-term vision with increased private sector participation and Public Private Partnerships. The report concluded that ‘quality education remains an issue in many of the GCC nations’ (*GCC Education*, 2016 p.4). The lack of ‘substantive progress’ is explored below through some qualitative research from within the GCC.

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) 2020

A recent qualitative study focusing on experiences of western trained teachers of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) in KSA found ‘a prolonged endurance, frustration, helplessness and resistance to prescribed curriculum, testing, top-down policy and practice’ (Alshakhi and Phan, 2020 p.1). KSA have ‘a growing demand for English at all levels of schooling’ (ibid p.2).The impact of this, Alshakhi and Phan (2020) put in the context of a ‘depersonalisation’ of teachers’ ‘emotional labour’, which Hochschild (1979:1983) defined as ‘the self-regulation, self-management and commodification of emotion as one is expected to observe and follow workplace rules, guidance, protocols, procedures, terms, norms, policies and mandates (ibid p.3). Teachers had little agency or voice. The significance of the study, the authors conclude, are relevant to the thousands of TESOL teachers in KSA.

The UAE 2018

A report by the Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government (MBRSG) on the role of the teacher in Government schools in the UAE concluded that there was

a need to revise the existing paradigm of teacher training and professional development, moving away from traditional models of training towards a more situated one. The reform was characterised as taking a top-down approach. The existing training models 'did not develop critical thinking, but instead developed content specialists' (Warner, 2018 p 3). A more constructivist approach to teacher learning was said to be required in order to empower teachers and build capacity to enable the reform goals of the National Agenda 2021 to be met.

Qatar 2016

An example of an ambitious education reform project is found in a review of educational reform in Qatar. Qatar embarked on serious reform in the late 1990's with the twin aim to develop a knowledge economy and to 'succeed along international and particularly western benchmarks' (Al Banai et al. 2015 p.679). The reform was informed by the Research and Development corporation (RAND), a non-profit research organisation who provided a few models. The leadership in Qatar selected the Independent School System, which many thought to be ambitious, and particularly unusual for the Middle East educational system, traditionally run by the public sector, to be turned over completely to the private sector. Nevertheless, with an appetite to increase foreign ways, believed to be efficient and progressive, the implementation began 2002 and the first schools to be converted were in 2004 (Al-Banai and Ramzi Nasser, 2015 p.679).

This saw a clear role shift for government, towards the use of government technologies that seek to deliver reform, mediate and promote change. Reviewing that ten-year period, the most important aspect was reported to be that Qatar had implemented a standards-based system. Key challenges identified included: underachievement in core subjects (only 10% met the required standard), poor administration and teaching, insufficient alignment with the labour market, low standards and inadequate pathways beyond secondary level. The conclusion, after ten years of fundamental changes, included a lack of clear focus on: teaching and learning, teacher professional development, use of collaborative systems -including peer reviewing and mentoring, and institutional autonomy with professional sharing and distributed leadership. In

summary this review concluded that the reform required a more participative and collegial approach that fosters teacher professionalism through increasing their participation in school reform. In 2016 the Cabinet approved plans to change the system again.

The UAE 2014

A qualitative study by Tabari in 2014 of Emirati and non-Emirati Arab teachers' responses to education reform in the Emirate of Ras Al Khaimah in the UAE concluded that 'implementing reforms without consulting teachers and without their participation is unlikely to result in substantive change' (Tabari, 2014 p.25). There were a lack of forums for teachers to share and communicate both within and between schools. The teachers were reluctant to take on LCE as it prevented them from completing the curriculum. The case study identified that these factors had led to a resistance from teachers and had hindered change.

Jordan and the UAE 2011

A policy brief on education reform in Jordan and the UAE in 2011, published by the Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government (MBRSG), a research and teaching institution focused on governance and public policy, uncovered a tension. In the UAE the study reported that increasing higher order thinking questions on its final examinations to make up 30% of the content resulted in a sharp rise in the percentage of failures and led to a public outcry from parents. Similarly, in Jordan, including more analytical questions on the Tawjihi¹⁹ resulted in the pass rate falling from 60% to 48%. Both governments reinstated the older versions of the exams (Dakkak, 2011). This tension was summarised as resulting from 'the incentive structures embodied in high stakes entrance exams, the effect of foreign actors on the direction and momentum of reform efforts and the misallocation of limited resources' (ibid).

The UAE 2007

In 2007, a case study on school reform and the role of leadership in the UAE concluded that 'a fresh blend of theory and praxis unique to the UAE will need to be developed', going on to identify the most immediate challenge to that is the ability to 'engage a critical mass of current professionals and enabling them

¹⁹ General secondary education certificate examination

to learn and create learning organisations' (MacPherson et al. 2007 p.60). The barriers to developing this indigenous leadership included 'that the current knowledge, skills and attitudes of its current leading professionals in education were obsolete' (ibid p.72). The study acknowledged that the purchase of international best practice alone was far from enough, and that education professionals 'required social constructivist pedagogies to sustain coherence and authenticity' (ibid p.74).

Summary

What these six studies have in common is the limited role that teachers themselves had in defining the nature of their work. The model of education reform in the Gulf, at times, actively removes any such freedom to innovate through the top-down, mandated model of reform that is prevalent in the region. Kirk claims that 'innovativeness is a concept that does not really apply to the region, as educational structures remain top-down in terms of management and change' (Kirk 2014 p.82). He writes that a pan GCC approach for education reform was neither created nor attempted across the region but there are many similarities between approaches. He identifies two: replicating strategies and policies from elsewhere, and use of sovereign wealth to buy in the skills necessary for the purpose of rapid and targeted development. (Kirk, 2014 p.78). Kirk states that:

'policy borrowing allowed the Gulf States to leapfrog the lengthy and costly processes of indigenous growth and maturity (ibid), with a longer-term aim of human resource development, to become less reliant on expatriate labour and expertise. Policies have been borrowed from 'perceived educational "winners" — such as Singapore, Finland, the United Kingdom and United States and are often presented within the Gulf as examples of innovative educational reform and development' (Kirk p.79).

The overall picture is summarised by Donn and Yahya, in 2010, who argued that in the borrowing of policies, the Gulf has bought into the role of subservience making less likely the development of indigenous knowledge based educational developments (p.14). This approach of marketisation and commodification in Higher Education is problematic according to Donn & Al Manthri, who argue that as purchasers of 'First World' products, Arab Gulf States are buying into inevitable contradictions (Donn and Al Manthri, 2010

p.13). Some argue that this shift has reshaped and reoriented education towards corporate and consumer arrangements and question the ability then of these countries (the purchasers) to develop their own indigenous knowledge based educational development. A report from within the region, by the Mohammed bin Rashid school of Government, identified 'vertical relationships' in the Gulf where 'institutions from the west have taken a lead in designing, shaping and overseeing their branches in the Gulf, which needs to be rebalanced in terms of a more horizontal model' (Warner and Burton, 2017 p.14). They identified this was restricted by 'the top-down approach of governance in the UAE education sector'²⁰(ibid p.30).

In the case of this short review of literature and reports from around the region, three aspects limiting development have been identified: the limits of broader structural deficiencies within national governments, a reliance of replication rather than innovation and the borrowing of foreign models and expertise. The region's education reforms appear to resemble the heavy top-down models of the Second Way of Markets, Testing and Accountability.

2.2b WEIRD Teachers at The Higher Colleges of Technology

This study offers a qualitative approach to the picture of Higher Education Reform in the Gulf from the experiential perspective of teachers in 2018. The majority of teachers in the GCC at the tertiary level are expatriates, accounting for 92% and 98% in public and private universities respectively (*GCC Education*, 2016 p. 83). This perspective is of the WEIRD, non-citizen teachers in the UAE who, unlike the majority non-citizen teachers, are often experienced and trained in the policies borrowed from the west. The study seeks to capture unique perspectives on education reform in the Gulf from WEIRD, non-citizen teachers working in the HCT who are expected to use SCE/LCE. The study seeks to identify how seven teachers' experiences of the reform impacted their practice, adding a closer angled lens to the picture of education reform in the Gulf.

²⁰ Discussed in Chapter 5.3 p. 118

2.3 Theories of learning

Alexander (2009 p.6) summarises six versions of teaching in his Five Nation study: transmission, initiation, negotiation, facilitation, acceleration and technique. He shows how the complex genealogy of learning theory has led to an eclectic and nuanced development of these versions of teaching, which are rooted historically in both continental European and Russian literatures alongside Anglo-American ones. The features and permutations of these pedagogies in different countries look very different, which raises questions about any single standard of educational practices as they travel globally. Two main ideas covered are theories around the role of community in learning and student-centred education (SCE) otherwise referred to as learner-centred education (LCE).

2.3a Community and learning

Research and debate around the positioning of knowledge in an education system are underpinned by philosophical assumptions, and link to the field of developmental psychology. Highly influential to education debates, the idea of knowledge as a process and not a product generates much debate around pedagogy.

‘Discussion within education research about scientific concepts, the nature of knowledge, the processes by which knowledge can be learned and the nature of rationality mimics issues that have been examined over centuries of philosophic dispute’ (Derry 2013 p. 69).

The complex debates within these literatures go far beyond the scope of this research. For the purpose of professional teachers, it seems the question is around the debate of how knowledge and understanding are related to immediate context: causally or constitutively or in some combination of these (Derry 2013 p.6). Piagetian ideas relate to ‘natural’ developmental stages of learning, whereas the Vygotskian principle places learning as ‘guided acculturation’, with the teacher seeking to outpace development rather than follow it. While teacher and learner-centered approaches are often used categorically, it is more accurate to pose them as points on a continuum that teachers move across with greater or lesser ease, depending on both the task at hand and their education, training, and experience (Barrett and Tikly 2010 in Schweisfurth 2013).

With its roots in cognitive constructivism (Piaget 1954), and socio-cultural theory (Vygotsky 1978), social constructivism is both an epistemology and philosophical explanation about the nature of learning (Hyslop -Margison and Strobel, 2008 p.78). The key argument that has relevance here is the idea that it is the educational environment itself that is a stimulus of cognitive development, rather than only the innate capacities of students and staff. If so, the context in which education takes place, the institution itself, must be constructed to ensure it is encouraging these different types of learning. Taking a Vygotskian viewpoint:

‘A complete account of the organisation of human cognitive activity, manifested in a task carried out on either the individual or the social level, must go beyond narrowly defined psychological phenomenon and consider the forces that create the context in which human cognition is defined and required to operate at the level of societal and cultural organisation’ (Wertsch, Minick and Arns in Derry 2013 p.10).

Socio-cultural theory that positions human learning as a social process has given rise to different ideas about the role of the community in learning.

According to Rogoff (2009), theories around communities of learners are not limited to claims around adult led transmission teaching and learner centred discovery, rather a community of learners, based on assumptions that learning is a process of transforming participation in shared socio-cultural endeavours (p.1). This theory of participation means ‘students learn as they explore in idiosyncratic ways that are not necessarily connected to the uses to which the information is historically or currently put in the adult world’ (Rogoff, 1994 p. 210). This being the case, creativity and innovation thrive in these types of environments.

Lave and Wenger have developed a concept of ‘communities of practice’ and define them by their structure, which is threefold: mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire (Wenger and Lave, 1998 p. 72/3). Developing these elements in parallel cultivates a community of practice. Over time, that community develops ‘a unique perspective, as well as a body of common knowledge, practices and approaches’ (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002 p.6). The driving force within communities of practice, Wenger (1998) describes as dualities: ‘a single conceptual unit that is formed by two inseparable and constitutive elements whose inherent tensions and complementarity give the

concept richness and dynamism' (p.66). The four dualities he identifies are: participation and reification, designed and emergent, identification and negotiation, and local and global. These dualities can present false dichotomies but in fact require a tension. We can apply this idea of necessary dualities in the drive towards developing global conceptions of 21st-century skills. For teachers, the meaning making that occurs through an ongoing tension between participation and reification is an essential aspect in developing bodies of knowledge and innovations in curriculum and pedagogy. As another example, Wenger's second duality of 'design and emergent', might see the concrete design of the strategic plan strangling any emergent behaviour or renegotiation within the community of practice.

This idea of transforming *participation* rather than transforming education is an important distinction. Rix's concept of a 'community of provision' (2019) explores ideas of inclusion and participation in education and is a reconceptualisation of how wider services are represented. A 'community of provision' is defined as 'made from the settings and services which work together to provide learning and support for all children and young people in their locality' (Rix, 2019 p.40). The notion of participation leads to questions around *who* gets to participate, a community can be 'static, representing sameness and unity' (Rix *et al.*, 2015 p.336), yet this charge cannot be levelled at the dynamic, fast changing body of public service professionals in the UAE, whose institutions are anything but static. The inclusion of *ideas* in the UAE's education reform however does need consideration. The boundaries of community dictate levels of inclusivity. 'A profound challenge here for aspirational communities is how they can localise control so that it reflects the priorities of those it aims to serve' (Rix *et al.*, 2015 p.342). The impetus for the transformation in education in the UAE that the knowledge economy requires, may lie in changing participation. In one example, Rix suggests that traditional ideas around how the class and subject are currently taught can be a barrier to wider participation. He proposes that the nature of student response is dependent upon the nature of the space that is made available to them and therefore 'the closed nature of these boundaried worlds is problematic if we are looking for a shift in practice' (Rix, 2019 p.38). It is access to this wider

community that can 'facilitate our conversations and collective imaginations about both the smaller and the wider moments out of which education emerges' (ibid p.42). Within this, the HCT classroom setting can be considered unique as the largely homogenous local, Emirati, gender segregated students encounter a diverse, international staff. Each class is situated within a unique, wider community of provision: 'if we wish to create effective change that enhances participation, then the desire for this needs to be reflected across the wider educational community' (ibid p.42). The nature of how non-citizen teachers access the wider community is unclear in terms of its practicality or desirability but seems important in any attempt to stimulate indigenous, knowledge-based development.

2.3b Student Centred Education / Learner Centred Education

The HCT 2.0 Strategic Plan 2017-2021 makes explicit references to 'learner centred environments' (Higher Colleges of Technology, 2017a p.11) , 'innovative teaching methods' and 'student centred learning' (ibid p.12). Understandings of definitions and implementation of these concepts will be explored. Defining SCE/ LCE is not unproblematic. Schweisfurth argues,

'the terms learner centredness and associated labels are often used loosely, and they embrace a very wide range of concepts and practices to the extent that actors might call anything learner centred to explain policy or practice' (Schweisfurth, 2015 p.262).

Schweisfurth positions learner centred education as a 'slippery term' yet offers a simple definition of it as 'a pedagogical approach which gives learners, and demands from them, a relatively high level of active control over the content and the process of learning' (Schweisfurth, 2019 p.1). Her proposed minimum standards for LCE include: engaging lessons, mutual respect between teachers and students, building on learners' existing knowledge, dialogue, context relevant, skills and attitude outcomes as well as content outcomes and assessment consistent with these principles (Schweisfurth, 2013 p.146).

A much broader conception of SCE/LCE is suggested by Bremner (2020), his analysis of 326 journal articles on LCE creates a concept which includes 'active participation, adapting to needs, autonomy, relevant skills, power sharing and formative assessment' (Bremner, 2020 p.2 and p.14). Bremner positions these aspects as context dependent, active participation alone, for example, does not

necessarily offer student autonomy if offered within the confines of a fixed curriculum. He argues that a focus on one aspect only, rather than a holistic sense of SCE/LCE makes it very difficult to measure and compare.

Schweisfurth (2013) refers to Learner Centred Education as a 'globally travelling policy', describing it as a 'global panacea' because it is believed to contribute to development (Schweisfurth, 2013 p.1). Guthrie summarises the problem thus: 'the equation of quality education with changes to teaching styles based on western ideas of reform may not be contextually compatible for non-western cultures and contain logical fallacies and cultural bias' (Guthrie, 2011 p.3). The challenges to implementing education models outside of their countries of genesis are complex. As an example of this, Schweisfurth, referring to The Gambia, relating to the Gulf in some respects, comments 'the relationships of equality demanded by LCE mean that deference for elders may restrict open dialogue and critique' (Schweisfurth 2018 p.214). Challenges around implementing LCE in Sub Sahara Africa identified that without high quality training 'teachers mostly teach the way they were taught' (Vavrus, Thomas and Bartlett, 2011 p.11).

The UAE, clearly not a low-income country, has the resources to provide high quality training to move practice. The same report however found 'a philosophical challenge lies at the heart of learner-centred pedagogy: the notion that knowledge can be co-constructed by teachers and students' (ibid p.12). This element is somewhat connected to one aspect of Bremner's (2020) conceptualisation of SCE/LCE which he terms as 'power sharing', defined as 'involvement in decision making' (p.8). He identifies this as the least mentioned aspect in his meta-analysis. This concept of power sharing can be connected to debates around teacher agency and participation. Agency can be defined as 'the capacity of an individual to actively and independently choose and to affect change' (Bell, 2016), with more expansive definitions asserting 'the promotion of teacher agency does not just rely on the beliefs that individual teachers bring to their practice, but also requires collective development and consideration' (Biesta, Priestley and Robinson, 2015 p.1). Discovering the institutional approach to SCE/LCE is important to establish whether SCE/LCE is understood

as implementing isolated techniques or a broader approach to SCE/LCE set within wider structures of co-creation.

2.3c 21st-century skills

There is a quest for a fixed reference point around good teaching internationally from which to draw comparative data. Within global education circles, a new narrative has been developed with a discourse and agenda that spans across global organisations, to create standardised systems, which produce human capital imbued with so called 21st-century skills. This section tracks a brief timeline of the evolution of the idea of 21st-century skills as it became united globally to appear in the latter HCT strategic plan, by tracking four key actors: The Partnership 21 group, the WEF, WB and the OECD.

2.3d The origins of the idea of 21st-century skills

In 1982 a report on Education in the US sparked a shift in ideas about the role of education, which seem to echo Nietzsche's writings of the 19th Century in its impending fear of mediocrity. Recognising the changing needs of economy in the 1980's, the 'Nation at Risk' report asserted that the education system of the US was no longer creating a learning society. This was to become a move away from education as being content and knowledge based, which in order to continue to serve economic needs now needed expanding to include cognitive, social and emotional characteristics. These were agreed and put together by a coalition including the OECD, American Universities and private organisations who named themselves 'Partnership for 21st-century skills'²¹ formed in 2002.

By 2012, The Partnership 21 group had developed 'a unified, collective vision for learning known as the 'Framework for 21st-century skills'²². Essentially this involved identifying additional skills to build upon a base of core academic subject knowledge, woven together under '21st- century interdisciplinary themes, such as 'health, media and environment literacy'. The skills included: creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration as well as 'life and career skills' such as flexibility and productivity. Additionally, their 2012 framework outlined the 'critical systems necessary to ensure student

²¹ Now renamed as The Partnership for 21st Century Learning

²² <http://www.battelleforkids.org/networks/p21>

mastery of 21st-century skills' (*P21 Framework Definitions*, 2012 p.7). One of which is assessment, shown in Figure 2.1 below.

Assessment of 21st Century Skills

- Supports a balance of assessments, including high-quality standardized testing along with effective formative and summative classroom assessments
- Emphasizes useful feedback on student performance that is embedded into everyday learning
- Requires a balance of technology-enhanced, formative and summative assessments that measure student mastery of 21st century skills
- Enables development of portfolios of student work that demonstrate mastery of 21st century skills to educators and prospective employers
- Enables a balanced portfolio of measures to assess the educational system's effectiveness in reaching high levels of student competency in 21st century skills

FIGURE 2.1 PARTNERSHIP 21 FRAMEWORK DEFINITIONS 2012 P.8

It is here that another idea is imported into the discourse, an assumption that the measurement of these competencies and character qualities is desirable and possible, at individual level, in the same way that foundational literacies are measured. This is not surprising, 'accountability policies are pivotal to the policy recommendations of numerous international organisations' (Verger and Parcerisa, 2017 p.3) and operate at multiple scales in pursuit of promoting efficiency, effectiveness, equity and good governance. Modalities of accountability differ and can include political, public, market, professional and managerial approaches amongst others. What can be said is, as a global trend, 'we are currently witnessing a greater push of accountability systems of an administrative nature that are linked to large scale evaluations' (ibid p.3).

In 2015, an important international agency, The World Bank, who provide financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world, portrayed the role and purpose of education similarly putting these new skills, with creativity central to their policies as shown in Figure 2.2 below.

Building a creative economy through education

An effective education system can unleash the potential of a student's intelligence & personality traits to achieve academic excellence and labor market success

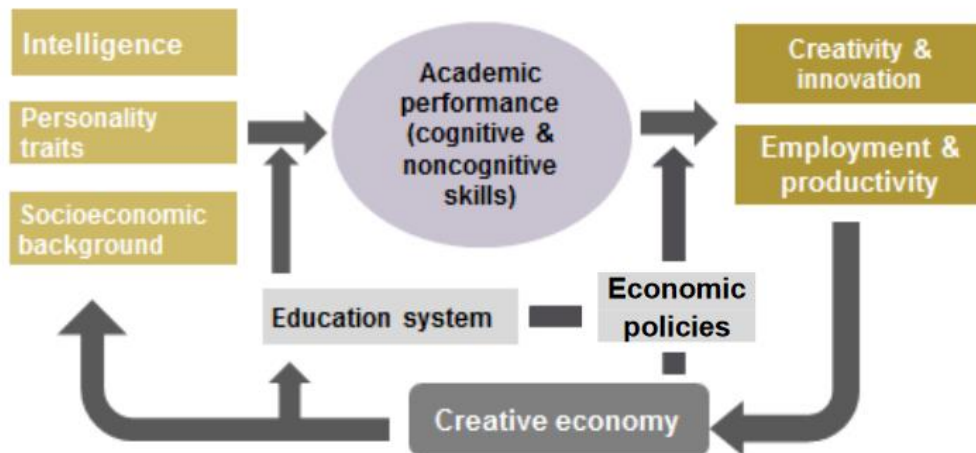


FIGURE 2.2 BUILDING A CREATIVE ECONOMY THROUGH CRITICAL THINKING. THE WORLD BANK 2015

In a key World Bank document, the education system is placed as a key 'intervention' in the quest to build a creative economy. In their analysis of the link between skills and creativity and labour market success the document problematises that:

'Few studies estimate the relationship between academic outcomes (as measured by individual performance on specific tests) and labour market outcomes, and much fewer still examine the relationship between non-cognitive skills and labour market outcomes. The major obstacle to this research has been the availability of measures of skills of workers in large, representative data sets' (World Bank, 2014 p.8).

The then President of the World Bank, admits that measuring non-cognitive skills is no easy task.

'Our understanding of non-cognitive skills continues to develop – in fact, it's relatively new that we even try to measure them – so we need more research to understand more fully the role they play in fostering creativity and creating a productive work force' (Kim, 2014).

Additionally, in 2015, The World Economic Forum, a key influencer of global politics and the economy, also promotes this language of 21st-century skills and 'the four Cs' (communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity) are

central to their conceptions of competencies as are character qualities, illustrated in Figure 1.2. All this places creativity as central to the knowledge economy and by 2015 The World Bank and the World Economic Forum had adapted and standardised this new discourse created by the P21 group.

2.3e Technology and 21st-century skills

According to the WEF, the role of technology is now central to education. In the WEF's 'New Vision for Education: Unlocking the potential of Technology' document of 2015²³, 21st-century skills are to be realised through technology with the idea of measurement central.

'Students require new skills in the 21st-century, while educators and other stakeholders require new measures of performance. Education technology has the potential to fundamentally increase efficiency and effectiveness throughout the closed loop²⁴, as well as a unique potential to facilitate the teaching of 21st-century skills beyond foundational literacies' (World Economic Forum, 2015 p.20).

This document clearly sees the teaching of '21st-century skills' to be 'facilitated through technology', by developing teachers' 'technology expertise' to facilitate them in teaching 21st-century skills. Essentially 'learning with technology is portrayed as a mediated activity, which potentially leads to transformation' (Hardman and Amory, 2014 p.20). The WEF suggests that teachers can develop through 'traditional hardware- oriented technology players (who) have also moved into the professional development space' (World Economic Forum, 2015 p.13). Ng'ambi and Brown's research on mediating learning in a blended postgraduate course concluded that technology use must employ an idea of co-construction of knowledge between the teacher and the learner and sees 'the transformation of actual to potential knowledge through collaboration and co-learning with more knowledgeable others' (Ng'ambi and Brown, 2015 p.56).

2.3f The measurement of 21st-century skills

The OECD published a position paper in 2018 entitled 'The Future of Education and Skills: Education 2030', which set out a 'shared vision' and some 'underpinning principles' for the future of education systems. This similarly rests

²³ Prepared in collaboration with the Boston Consulting Group.

²⁴ Closed loop system, according to WEF, is when education technologies are integrated within a loop that includes instructional delivery, ongoing assessments, appropriate interventions and tracking of outcomes and learning.

on the triumvirate of knowledge, skills and attitudes and values, firmly aligning with the earlier 2015 definitions of the World Bank and World Economic Forum. The OECD Learning Framework 2030 states that it is about ‘orientation, not prescription’ and education as the site where ‘new solutions for a rapidly changing world can be formed’ (OECD, 2018 p.3). The paper mentions climate change and social issues such as migration, urbanisation, inequality, conflict, and terrorism as challenges which urgently need to be addressed.

The framework is introduced by the Director for education and skills, who sets out two broad questions that need to be addressed:

- 1, What knowledge, skills, attitudes and values will today's students need to thrive and shape their world?
- 2, How can instructional systems develop these knowledge, skills, attitudes and values effectively?

(Andreas Schleicher in OECD 2018 p.2)

Schleicher’s second question of how to develop these skills effectively has led to a ‘mapping and visualisation process’ of 21st-century skills, with OECD and stakeholders developing and translating the concept of 21st-century skills into something more ‘actionable’.

The Learning Framework states,

‘To ensure that the new learning framework is actionable, the OECD Education 2030 stakeholders have worked together to translate the transformative competencies and other key concepts into a set of specific constructs (e.g. creativity, critical thinking, responsibility, resilience, collaboration) so that teachers and school leaders can better incorporate them into curricula’ (OECD, 2018 p.6).

The list of thirty-six ‘constructs’ under current review by the OECD include, for example, compassion, curiosity, empathy, hope and creativity with the full list shown in appendix 6. Despite the document emphasising the ‘intricately interrelated’ nature of the constructs, decisions around which constructs are included in the final list are to be made based on the following guiding principles, taken from the same page of the document shown in appendix 7: ‘clear definition, relevant for 2030, interdependent, impactful, malleable and measurable’. As the document states the intention is ‘orientation and not prescription’ (OECD, 2018 p.3), a critical analysis of this would begin to explore

the implications of attempting to first isolate and define ‘constructs’ such as ‘identity’ or ‘hope’, move these now homogenised definitions from macro to micro cultural contexts globally, and then create metrics to measure and compare them. Translating these concepts into a definitive list of actionable constructs seems fraught with layers of cultural, political and social problems as well as seeming to be in conflict with research around SCE/LCE where definitions are broadening towards more holistic, interconnected ideas around these concepts. This task conceived and developed at a macro, technocratic level, has enormous implications as these concepts arrive in an educational institution for teachers to meaningfully engage with at the micro level.

In a critique, Lemke refers to these processes as a ‘technocratic discourse’, ‘by which the technocratic elite claim a right to rule on the grounds of its ability to use expert knowledge to solve social problems’ (Lemke, 1995 p.70). The managerial systems which track these accountability processes are also questioned by Morley (2008) who suggests that ‘the micropolitical practices and processes can often be lagging behind, and indeed dissonant with the macro politics that aim to engineer a transformation of professional and organisational cultures’ (Morley, 2008 p.116). For example, a 2018 report by MBRSG²⁵ on creativity and innovation in the Dubai Government made a significant recommendation indicative of this potential dissonance. The report recognised there were organisational factors underlying creativity, which could be mitigated by some managerial practices. The report’s recommendation, of ‘paramount importance’, was for ‘the development of leaders with strong skills in nurturing individual, team and organisational creativity throughout the hierarchies of Dubai Government’ (Batey *et al.*, 2018 p.29).

2.3g 21st- century skills at HCT

In 2017 HCT’s strategic plan aligned with the WEF definition of 21st-century skills, making the same link between these skills and technology as well as using metrics and measures to track outcomes. Lemke (1995) and Morley (2008), believe the risk of reform design based on ‘global best practice’ is in overstating the capacity of government, edu- business or IGOs, to change the

²⁵ Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government

complex way communities operate and the way people choose to live their lives. The structures and hierarchies formed to implement HCT's strategic plan will be explored with the teachers, seeking to understand how micro political practices are congruent with the macro political vision to generate the innovation central to the knowledge economy.

2.4 Professionalism

Before exploring this further it is important to distinguish between *professionalisation* and *professionalism* to clearly frame the research focus. Evetts defines professionalisation as 'the process to achieve the status of the profession' (Evetts 2014 p.34). As such *professionalisation* is regulatory, the structures commonly associated with professionalisation include a codification of knowledge or practice, a formal entry-gate, some form of professional body or registration council, an enforceable code of practice and a requirement to keep up-to-date, which together act to enhance professionalism for the occupational group and supports professionalism. More research is required in the UAE around the status of teachers and the professionalisation of teachers in wider society, linked to concerns around low numbers of local Emiratis, particularly men, recruited into the profession (as discussed in 1.3b) also targeted in Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan (appendix 4).

Professionalism, according to Englund, 'focuses on the question of what qualifications and acquired capacities, what competence is required for the successful exercise of an occupation' (Englund, 1996 p.76), although he also writes of 'a lack of conceptual clarity and consensus relating to teaching as a profession' (ibid). This research is specifically concerned with these capacities, competencies, norms and values and how one institution in the UAE set about fostering their improvement through their strategic plan.

2.4a Different models of teacher professionalism

Professionalism and professionalisation are 'essentially contested' (Hargreaves, 2000 p.154). How professionalism emerges within different political systems can be further understood through distinguishing two broad types of professionalism: occupational and organisational.

Evetts sets out the difference. Occupational forms are:

'a discourse constructed within professional occupational groups and incorporates collegial authority. It involves relations of practitioner trust from both employers and clients. It is based on autonomy and discretionary judgement and assessment by practitioners in complex cases' (Evetts, 2008 p.23).

Organisational professionalism, in contrast, are:

'a discourse used increasingly by managers in work organisations. It incorporates rational-legal forms of authority and hierarchical structures in decision-making. It involves increased standardisation or work procedures and practices and managerial controls. It relies on externalised forms of regulation and accountability measures such as target setting and performance review' (ibid p. 23)

Whilst in alignment in their features, Sachs terms these forms differently as democratic and managerial respectively and sets out a clear tension between educational systems and employers, who seem to favour managerial forms of professionalism and professional bodies and education unions, who find more agency in the democratic model (Sachs, 2000 p.80).

Sachs's model of 'Types of CPD and teacher professionalism' (2014 p.421), shown in figure 2.3, organises types of professionalism into a quadrant representing more dynamic characteristics than are found in Hargreaves and Shirley's 'Four ways' and Hargreaves' 'Four Ages'. Her model contrasts how different features manifest within these two distinct forms of managerial (organisational) and democratic (occupational) professionalism. The added dynamic in Sachs's model is attitudinal development, which indicates the extent to which teachers take responsibility for defining the nature and content of their work. This addresses the role that teacher agency plays in any structure. Sachs's model is further of use in understanding how these models of professionalism accommodate types of CPD and the nature of resulting practice.

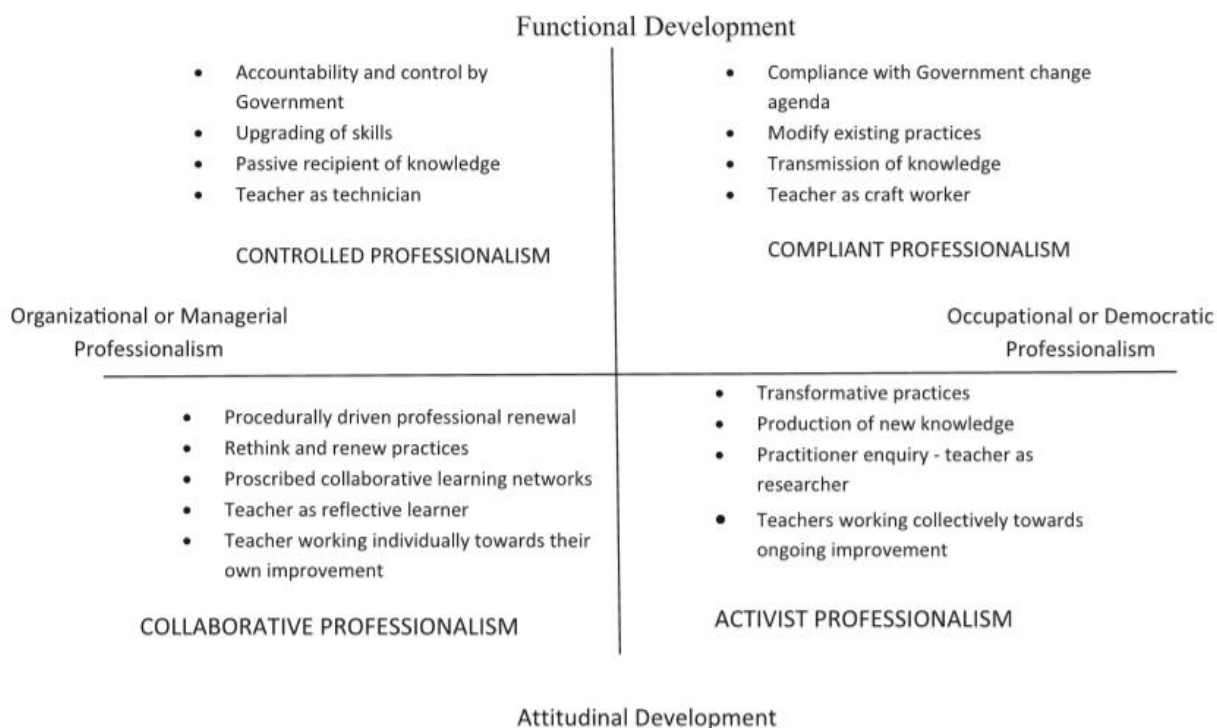


FIGURE 2.3 TYPES OF PROFESSIONALISM J. SACHS 2014

In Sachs's model, 'Collaborative professionalism' is managerial with high attitudinal development, it includes 'prescribed collaborative learning networks', described by Whitty to mean inter and multi-agency working, requiring teachers to work alongside other professionals and non-professionals (Whitty, 2008 p. 42), this could link to Rix's 'communities of provision' (2019). Sachs's definition includes a variety of stakeholders collaborating, combining experience, expertise and resources (Sachs, 2016a p. 421). This would be an example of what Whitty calls, variance in time and place (Whitty, 2008 p. 28) and would manifest in the UAE according to the identified wider needs of the community.

In the functional quadrant of 'Controlled professionalism', professionals are held accountable to the government to ensure implementation and compliance with a technician approach to teaching. 'Compliant professionalism', Sachs describes as a reactive teaching profession, risk averse with limited decision-making capacity. High attitudinal development combined with democratic professionalism gives us, what Sachs calls 'Activist professionalism'. The Activist professional is identified by Sachs (2000) from her research across a number of English-speaking countries, including Australia, and is characterised

by: inclusive membership, an ethical code of practice, collaboration and collegiality, an activist orientation, flexibility and progressivism, responsiveness to change, self-regulating, policy active, enquiry oriented and knowledge building (Sachs, 2000 p.91). The key features that build agency here are practitioner control and proactivity, which are pursued by both policy makers and teachers themselves as a feature of modern education systems. This is coupled with a form of 'research literacy', a capability that is instrumental in moving the profession forward and a key policy lever in educational reform. She concluded her 2003 article around 'recasting professional identity around practices that are informed and improved by and through teacher and classroom research' (Sachs, 2016, p. 424).

Biesta, introduces the concept of the individual more explicitly into his discussion on the purpose of education which is threefold: qualification, socialisation and subjectification. He makes a distinction between the role of education as *socialisation* and *subjectification*, which he defines as 'the process of becoming a subject (Biesta, 2010 p.21). Part of what IPA intends to illicit is finding where processes of subjectification, as they relate to socialisation, sit in models of professionalism, specifically Biesta refers to 'the transformation of individual wants into collective needs' (ibid p. 98): this study intends to uncover the mechanisms that surround this.

We can see from these literatures that variance within institutions result from both internal and external pressures, leading to the formation of very different types of professionalism, accountabilities and practices. This has implications for countries borrowing 'best practices', who also need to consider the agency teachers hold in the structures within which these policies are implanted. Key concepts within models that determine the type of professionalism and the agency of teachers include: marketisation, managerialism and de-professionalism.

2.4b Marketisation and Managerial professionalism

Neoliberalism is linked to economic theory and policymaking, in the context of a capitalist society, and promotes free market forces with no, or minimal, intervention by state regulations. Neoliberal ideas in economics were transmitted to the field of education and spread all over the world by

transnational organisations within trade and finance. According to Ball (2013) the following five aspects are the foundation of neo-liberalism and very evident in almost all parts of contemporary higher education: individualisation, inequality, insecurity, de-politicalisation and financialisation. Ball argues that together these constitute a 'politics of the social', an ontological framework that displaces the principles of the welfare state. He goes on to assert that within this model collective, professional values are displaced by commercial values, and professionals are dispossessed of their expertise and judgment (Ball 2013 p.135).

The privatisation of public services, including education, means services are bought and sold at market value, rather than provided by the state. Public, private partnerships are a common approach to education reform across the Gulf states, including the UAE. In this respect, it is not only the ideas that are imported from the private sector in order to make the public sector run more like businesses, but also what Ball (2008 p.58) refers to as 'exogenous privatisation. This involves the opening up of public education services to private sector participation on a for-profit basis, and using the private sector to design, manage or deliver aspects of public education' (Ball 2008 p.58).

A distinct tier of management is required to monitor this type of state spending, resulting in the need for control and accountability processes. A dominant form of managerial professionalism has emerged and is characterised by the use of mechanisms for measuring teaching performance, judging research quality and assessing institutional effectiveness. These mechanisms are intended to ensure accountability and transparency, a principle justified on the rational and democratic grounds that those who spend taxpayers' money should be accountable to the public (Shore & Wright, 1999 p.1). Whitty claims that managerial professionalism accepts that decisions about what to teach, how to teach and how to assess students are made at school, national and international level rather than by individual teachers themselves (Whitty, 2006 p.120) and is in this respect also hierarchical.

West et al. (2011) proposed a framework which identified a number of types of accountabilities that can sit within both managerial and democratic models of professionalism, for example: hierarchical, market, participative, network and

professional. They argue that competing lines of accountabilities are evident here with participatory professional and network accountabilities usurped by more individualising forms of accountability including contract and hierarchical arrangements. This is relevant to theories of micropolitics which emerged in the 1960's and focused on organisational change and ways in which power underpins knowledge, autonomy and standards (Morley, 2008 p.99). The influential writings of Foucault, in 1979, illuminated how power is transacted in the quotidian (ibid p.100) through mundane daily practices.

Managerial professionalism brings with it a focus on the management of standards. Standards can refer to specific teacher standards or more general professional standards. A focus on raising professional standards would prioritise the provision and outcomes of education. According to Sachs (2016 p.47), standards have become a tool for managing and overseeing teacher accountability. Standards, at the level of the individual teacher, focus on their level of competence and ongoing performance, which in the context of HCT would link to regulatory processes of contract renewal and promotion.

Establishing the focus of standards at HCT would determine to what extent standards are used to either ensure compliance or develop teacher quality as part of authentic professional learning.

In this environment of standards and managerial forms of accountability, a culture of performance naturally arises. Elliot (2001) cited in Sachs (2014) claims that performance cultures imply a low level of trust in the professionalism of their employees, 'the more pervasive the gaze of the audit, the lesser the trust invested in the moral competence of its members to respond to the needs of the people they serve' (Sachs 2014 p 415). According to Lewis and Holloway (2018), the outcome of these processes results in an impoverished version of professionalism. Teaching has become a 'data profession' and teachers 'professors of data' (Lewis & Holloway, 2018 p.1).

What pushes this audit culture towards a specifically neo-liberal rationality is the shifting question of who will carry it out. Ball (2008) writes about 'performativity' where much of the auditing focuses on 'technologies of the self', modes of regulation that make judgements and comparisons of performativity, measures of productivity or output of individuals (Ball, 2008), or what Sobe calls

'self-organising reflexivity', 'self-description' and 'self-observation' (Sobe, 2015 p.83). This is where professionals are welded to a multitude of seemingly small conscious deceptions for their own survival. Andrews & Edwards (2008) describe the resulting paradox as being 'where excellence and world class standards are the norm, it can feel as if there is little space for taking risks. We are expected to set our targets and achieve them, covering them in 'cloaks of jargon' which they claim leads to a 'faux professionalism' (Andrews & Edwards, 2008 p.5). Ball refers to this as 'a cynical or strategic compliance' (Ball, 2003 p.222) and describes this as the sinews of power embedded in the mundanity of everyday life (Ball, 2013 p.6). Performativity can lead to a culture of self-surveillance by teachers and their colleagues. Examples of internal measures include processes that require self-regulation, research targets and training aspirations, which can lead to a risk averse culture due to the contradictory obligations that these types of accountability generate.

Perspectives converge in a view that marketisation and managerial approaches can lack nuance, be devoid of any real contextual understanding or depth of meaning. Their constructions are presented as truth, and by their quantitative nature, can ignore the heterogeneity of human experience, leading towards de-professionalism. This is not to say that all accountability systems are inherently restrictive. Performance data can be used to provide a shared language of practice channeled through a systematic approach to reward teachers for their work that aligns to national and international economic agendas. Ravitch (2010), cited in Sachs (2014), believes a good accountability system must include within it professional judgement, student and teacher evaluations and a range of work, not solely test scores (Sachs 2014 p. 416).

2.4c De-professionalism

John (2008) argues that de-professionalism emerges in a context of 'increasing workloads, a growing loss of autonomy, increasing centralised control over curriculum and assessment, and a compliance culture driven by harsher inspection regimes combined with the imposition of nationalised professional standards' (John, 2008 p.12). Similarly Milner writes of de-professionalism occurring in response to increasingly scripted and narrowed curricula, which restrict professional judgment with the consequent sacrifice of higher-level

learning, creativity, flexibility, and breadth of learning (Milner, 2013 p.1). These conditions arise as a result of the drive to improve standards according to market-oriented definitions of effectiveness and efficiency mediated through managerialism. Managerialism and de-professionalism emerge in models of professionalism which are less democratic and can appear differently according to structures of implementation. Helsby notes that 'teachers are not always reactive subjects but have degrees of freedom in deciding how to interpret and cope with imposed change' (Helsby 1999). 'Studies show that the complex and diffuse nature of schools and classrooms acts as a natural filter for such policy demands as do teachers' personal theories and perspectives' (Troman and Woods, 2001 in John 2018 p.14). This is something which this study seeks to discover in the context of education reform in the UAE. This study will aid a micropolitical analysis of de-professionalism, which might shift the locus of analysis and allow one to see how power is exercised and experienced in organisations (Morley 2008 p.104).

2.4d Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The learning professional is one who seeks out opportunities, within whatever institutional constraints are in place, to extend their professional understandings and skill sets, rather being concerned merely to reflect on those they already possess (Cunningham, 2008 p.162). CPD refers to some form of ongoing learning be it conferences, events or work-based learning, there is a contractual obligation to engage in this in most institutions. Sachs identifies two broad categories: a traditional training approach, which positions teachers as managers of learning who, through training, improve their instruction. The other, teacher-learning orientation: where teachers are reflective change agents, as an approach she argues that this is more 'transformative in its intent and practice' (Sachs, 2016 p.240).

Training model approach

Training is a dominant form of CPD and despite its drawbacks, the training model is acknowledged as an effective means of introducing new knowledge (Hoban, 2002), albeit in a decontextualised setting. What the training model fails to impact upon in any significant way is the manner in which this new knowledge is used in practice (Kennedy, 2014 p. 339). This is compatible with

the standards based models which refer to the level of competence required by the individual teacher, in some cases, to enter the profession or in others to measure ongoing performance.

Teacher learning orientation

Lave and Wenger's position is that learning is not about acquiring a discrete body of abstract knowledge. The conception of situated learning goes further than the notion of 'learning by doing' on which HCT's 2012 pedagogic policy was based. Learning is not merely situated in practice. Situatedness is a theoretical perspective. Learning here is an integral and inseparable aspect of social practice:

'Learning is a process that takes place in a participation framework, not in an individual mind. This means, among other things, that it is mediated by the differences of perspectives among the co-participants' (Hanks 2005 p.15).

Situated cognitivists argue that thinking is conceived differently once the sociality of thought is taken properly into account. This somewhat shifts the focus from individual cognitive functions to communities of practice, emphasising the situated character of knowledge production and reproduction. This goes further than students and practitioners 'just being active participants', they must also be 'able to exert some form of agency' (Garraway and Morkel, 2014 p.26). From this perspective, individual teachers joining an institution undergoing reform learn how to configure and fully participate in what is a sociocultural practice/setting. The induction of a teacher into this environment could be parallel to the concept of apprenticeship: 'while the apprentice may be the one transformed most dramatically by increased participation in a productive process, it is the wider process that is the crucial locus and precondition for this transformation' (Hanks in Lave and Wenger 1991 p.15). The locus of transformation here is the community.

2.4e Non-citizen professionals

Within the plurality of understandings of professionalism are education professionals who move geographically, to teach in a different country. In the case of this study, teachers who move from WEIRD countries to the UAE, a developing, rich, absolute monarchy in the Gulf. How does the largely Anglo-American policy of learner centredness (Schweisfurth 2019 p.1) travel here

within these teachers' practices? How do the professionals, from contexts where notions of professionalism have elements of Sachs's democratic models (Sachs, 2000), fit into a country with a very different historical genesis? The UAE has a historic, political and geographic context that is distinctive, not least because of the high percentage of diverse non-citizen teachers that it employs. How the dimensions of professionalism are experienced and synergised within the HCT seems pertinent to the success of any reform programme that includes a non-homogenous group of professionals. As Kennedy suggests:

'analysing the means through which CPD for teachers is organised and structured may help us to understand not only the motivation behind such structures, but also the nature of professional knowledge and professionalism itself' (Kennedy, 2014 p.236).

Identifying the types of CPD on offer at HCT and the means through which they are organised is important in establishing the capacity to support the transformative practice envisioned by the National Agenda 2021.

Summary

A brief account of educational change was necessary to link the development of education policies, pedagogies and practices to policy shifts in Anglophone nations. This offers a deeper understanding of how the tensions within professionalism and de-professionalism have emerged in one significant institution in the UAE. Reviewing the approach of the global education industry shows that modern conceptions of pedagogy and practice now includes wider sets of cognitive competencies, behaviours and values (termed 21st-century skills). Literature on this shows that the generation of these require professional models with high degrees of teacher agency.

The review of extant literature on education reform in the Gulf has revealed limited progress to date, with the research pointing to a debilitating dominance of top-down curricula and high stakes testing, which has superseded teachers' ability to develop pedagogy. Noticeably, the term 'de-professionalism' has not been used in these literatures, despite many features of it being evident. This can be linked to two factors: as discussed in Chapter 1.3, teaching is still undergoing a process of *professionalisation* in the UAE and broadly speaking (see Jordan and UAE Chapter 2.2a) could be said, in reference to Hargreaves (2000 p.153), to have not yet passed into the professional stage of autonomy.

Understandings of de-professionalism as a *loss* of teacher autonomy therefore is not strictly accurate. The second reason could be linked to the political sensibilities of researchers in the region using more careful language. As such 'de-professionalism' doesn't simply transfer or hold the same historical and political inferences and needs to be used cautiously.

Education policy in the Gulf needs consideration in terms of the professional model that the political environment has adopted. This research builds on the current literature to understand more about teachers' experiences and how these result in a form of de-professionalism. Using a phenomenological approach, the method is a bottom-up construction, using accounts of the form and content of CPD, as well as the more seemingly mundane experiences within the processes teachers were subject to. These unambiguously reveal how teachers are compelled to make the choices they do, detailing what specifically contributed to that and what type of pedagogy and practice that led to. In this way, the research sets out to inductively identify the professional model in which the teachers at HCT operate.

Through the interviews, the study explores how the positioning of the individual, Biesta's subjectification (2010), within the processes, procedures and mechanisms that surround their work, shapes what individuals understand to be their 'experience of being'²⁶ and within that, their capacity to affect change. An explicit aim being to move towards a deeper understanding of what transformation really is and what it requires from a model of professionalism. Chapter 3 sets out how these perceptions will be gathered and presented.

²⁶ Heidegger's *Dasein*, covered in Chapter 3.3

CHAPTER 3. Research Methods

The study is qualitative and uses a phenomenological approach to answer the two research questions.

1. How are the reforms experienced and understood by non-citizen teachers and how does that shape their professionalism, with specific regard to their pedagogies?
2. How did the teachers want to work?

The data set is comprised of seven in-depth interviews where respondents narrated their experiences.

3.1 Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

The goal of this study was to capture both teachers' experiences of professionalism at HCT and the meanings participants ascribed to their experiences, for this reason IPA was selected. IPA is qualitative and focuses on the similar and consistent ways people think about and give accounts of particular issues as part of a meaning making process. Data is inductive and collected to form 'a composite description of the essence of the experience for all individuals' (Cresswell, 2013 p.76). It is not a discursive attempt to give objective reasons and arguments for objective positions, rather it is interested in the subjective meanings people ascribe to events. In this way the themes derived from interviews aim to capture a distinctive representation of a way of thinking or talking about an issue (Flowers *et al.*, 1998 p.411), in this case, exploring the type of professionalism the teachers experienced at HCT.

3.1a History and use of IPA

IPA was developed in the mid 1990's as a qualitative psychological approach which could capture people's experiences of engaging with the world. Generating experiential, qualitative data, it is founded on theoretical ideas of phenomenology²⁷ and hermeneutics²⁸. It is distinct in its combination of psychology, interpretative and ideographic aspects. It is psychological in its commitment to a person 'as a cognitive, linguistic, affective and physical being and assumes a chain of connection between people's talk and their thinking and emotional state' (Smith and Osbourn, 2007 p.54). IPA has been used mostly in

²⁷ an approach that concentrates on the study of consciousness and the objects of direct experience.

²⁸ the branch of knowledge that deals with interpretation.

sociological and health studies (Creswell, 2013 p.77) to understand phenomena including: the social context of HIV risk-related behaviour (Flowers *et al.*, 1998), experiences of learning with a disability (Forsyth, 2015), by therapists working in Romanian orphanages ‘to uncover the struggles and long term trauma of volunteers’ (Finlay, 2011 p.10), the impact of the death of a child on social services staff (*ibid*), experiences of living with pain (Smith and Osborn, 2015) and living with illness (Carel 2008).

3.1b IPA and professionalism

The above topics are all nuanced, personal and complex human experiences and choosing this method to understand education professionals could be considered an unusual approach, compared to undertaking standard interviews. I selected IPA to add a different, closer perspective to the debate on de-professionalism and ‘illuminate the multi-faceted nature of human experience’ (Tuffour, 2017). The impact of changing professional environment coupled with shifting modes of governance for education professionals is the phenomenon under examination in the context of a single institution. IPA is ‘a particularly useful methodology for examining topics which are complex, ambiguous and emotionally laden’ (Smith and Osborn, 2015 p.1). This study uses IPA to access the subjective meanings teachers ascribed to their sense of professionalism which cannot be captured through teachers simply describing it. This reveals an intentionally nuanced and personal insight into human experiences of professionalism.

The teachers’ professional development was managed through the structures of the performance management process, which was selected by HCT to measure, objectively and individually, the variables of professional performance. IPA is chosen to recognise and fill in the gap between the description of the features of the performance management process and the individual subjective perception of that. IPA intends to elicit the vagaries, ‘working at the micro level, exploring the content of particular individual’s beliefs and responses and illuminating the processes operating within the models’ (Smith, 2006 p.265). The end result will be a description of ‘what’ they experienced and ‘how’ they experienced it (Moustakas in Creswell, 2013 p. 76). From a phenomenological perspective, objectivity has a different meaning since: whatever reality may

mean, it always corresponds to an active, intellectual construction (Larkin et al. 2006 p.107), in this case constructed by the professional engaging with that reality. The interviews are attuned to the nuances of professional experiences, operating on the basis that 'if someone tells you in good faith that something is true, you should always assume that they are right. The problem is to find out what it is true of' (George Miller²⁹).

IPA is commonly misunderstood as a method to gain an 'insider perspective' (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006 p.103), this is not the case due to the second order analysis, the phenomenological aspect, which involves a commentary on participants sense making activities. An IPA study has two clear aspects to it. Firstly, an interpretative analysis³⁰, which collects experiences and viewpoints from the world of the participants, giving voice to their concerns. Secondly, the phenomenological analysis³¹, more overtly interpretative, where the initial description is discussed in relation to the wider socio-cultural and theoretical context. It is phenomenological because it is a critical, sense making commentary on the participants sense making activities. This is achieved through a consideration of what it means to be the participants in their situation, and analysing that through direct engagement with theoretical constructs, in this case, professionalism. The belief of IPA is that 'meanings in the world can only be properly disclosed and understood as a function of our involvements with it' (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006 p.106).

IPA has an idiographic perspective, defined as a commitment to the particular at two levels, in the detail and depth of analysis of each case, which is thorough and systematic, before moving to understanding how the experiential phenomena have been understood from the perspective of a particular group in a particular context. This is important in identifying themes from the data. Ideography 'does not eschew generalisations, but rather prescribes a different

²⁹ Millers Law, a theory of communication proposed by psychologist George Miller 1920-2012

³⁰ IPA's interpretative component contextualises these claims within their cultural and physical environments, and then attempts to make sense of the mutually constitutive relationship between 'person' and 'world' from within a psychological framework (e.g. 'What does this mean for this person, in this context?')(Larkin et al. 2006 p.117).

³¹ IPA's phenomenological component maps out the participants' concerns and cares, their orientation toward the world in the form of the experiences that they claim for themselves (e.g. 'How has this phenomenon been understood by this person?') (Larkin et al. 2006 p.117).

way of establishing those generalisations. It locates them in the particular, and hence develops them more cautiously' (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009 p. 29). The idiographic aim is to develop an analysis of divergence and convergence across interviews.

3.1c Validity of the method

It is not the validity of IPA that is criticised, but the use to which the measure is put and the competence of the researcher. It is intentionally subjective. It has potential to lack validity on four counts: the role of language is overlooked, experiences can be opinions, experiences alone do not explain why they occur and the role of cognition is not properly understood (Tuffour, 2017). 'IPA can be easy to do badly and difficult to do well' (Larkin et al., 2006 p.103).

To address some of this, in Chapter 3.6, I use 'overlapping aspects of perception' (Smith, 2018) to support coding, this enabled me to categorise, for example, language and other aspects of cognition. As an interviewer I was mindful of the critical balance in IPA between eliciting a purely descriptive account, which represents voices, and the wider potential to communicate experiences rather than opinions. The stance taken during data analysis is that the interviews have given access to experience that is partial and complex, the aim in the discussion of that is to provide a critical and conceptual commentary on the sense making activities of the interviewees. This analysis must also take account of conditions that triggered the experience, which is where an insider perspective is useful. Critics can point to the reductive representation of experience. The research is a partial view that is inevitably imperfect, emergent, tentative and incomplete. The researcher acknowledges this and 'strives to engage phenomenological reflections from within the reduction, appreciating its potentially transformative nature' (Finlay, 2011 p.77).

Another danger is in a consistency bias of the researcher in selecting and interpreting the nuances of experience to fit a theory. The interpretation of the narratives needs consideration and in-depth analysis. 'Consequently, those who are planning to adopt IPA are advised to take active steps to give voice to the experiences of the participants, followed by sufficient interpretation of their narratives' (Tuffour, 2017 online). As a researcher, exploring the foundational

ideas of the phenomenological theory deepened my understanding of IPA and therefore its efficacy.

3.2 Phenomenology

Phenomenology, from which IPA is derived, is a philosophical approach with a long intellectual history. The roots of phenomenology can be traced back to the enlightenment period with philosophers, such as Emmanuel Kant, who wrote 'all knowledge is filtered through human consciousness', and that things are essentially unknowable. This is captured in Kant's theory of *ding an sich* – thing in itself. The logic is that there exists the world as it is 'in itself' and then the world of experience as sensed by our bodies, which Kant called 'intuitions' joined with 'understandings', essentially our ability to have and use concepts. Both these aspects are a priori, meaning they are known before or independently of any experience. Kant extended the range of a priori truths to include all truths mediated through our tools of understanding. This goes beyond empiricism; it is conceived as a philosophy with a view of the transcendental ego as the source of all meaning (Emmanuel Kant 1783).

The essential idea is that a concept has an indirect acquaintance with things. There is the world as it really is and the world as it appears to our senses after mediation through our tools of understanding. Kant therefore recognised that we are not passive, any connection or association between phenomena are human constructs. Due to this identification of the a priori Kant's philosophical ideas are considered foundational to many schools of thought. A way of summarising this idea is that 'what is real is not dependent on us, but the exact meaning and nature of reality is' (Larkin et al., 2006 p.107).

Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) is considered the modern-day founder of phenomenology due to his development of these ideas into a systematic methodological approach. Importantly, he was a philosopher, his writings are conceptual, setting the scene for systematic examination of the content of our consciousness, looking not at objects but our experience of objects. Four major phenomenological researchers are Husserl, Heidegger (a student of Husserl), Merleau-Ponty and Sartre. Of their differing approaches, the transcendental (or psychological) phenomenology of Husserl focusses less on the interpretations of the researcher and more on a description of the actual experience. The

researcher brackets their experiences to take a fresh perspective and provide purely descriptive data. As a researcher I did not attempt this but used an interpretive approach, which considers relationships between parts and whole and individual phenomenon and situation. The hermeneutic traditions of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre also emphasise historical and contextual aspects to support the formulation of arguments that are embedded in the world of language and social relationships. This interpretive, hermeneutic approach is used in this study.

A basic tenet of phenomenology is that our basic and most fundamental experiences of the world are already full of meaning. In this approach Finlay, (2009) cited in Kafle (2011), states 'the focus is on the way things appear to us through experience or in our consciousness, where the phenomenological researcher aims to provide a rich textured description of lived experience' (Kafle, 2011 p.182). These descriptions reveal the way meanings are instantiated in situations which clarifies and deepens our understanding of them. Through describing what all the participants have in common as they experience a phenomenon, the aim is to uncover a universal essence 'to grasp the very nature of a thing' (Van Manen 1990 p163).

The nature of professionalism, according to teachers' experiences, is what this study is aiming to elicit. Given that the performance management tool is being used to mediate that, it requires a closer look. The premise here is that the object, in this case the performance management tool, is multifaceted. It manifests itself according to the way individuals interact with it. Reducing it to its constitutive elements will not reveal what it is, every time it is engaged with it is different, because the individual is different. The dynamic between subjective perception and objective perception is tangled. What is reflected in the object relates to the stance taken when the object is interacted with.

3.3 Heidegger's approach

Whilst Tuffour sees IPA as 'seeking to integrate the works of all four phenomenological researchers' (Tuffour, 2017), according to Larkin et al. the theoretical underpinnings of IPA are Heideggerian in approach to both interpretation and phenomenology (Larkin, Watts and Clifton, 2006 p.104), this is 'broadly debated by others' (Horrigan-Kelly, Millar and Dowling, 2016 p.1). Central tenets of Heidegger's work however are useful to explicate and understand the human lived experience which underpins the research methodology.

As a 20th Century philosopher and phenomenologist Heidegger's concern in its simplest form was with 'the question of being' (Cerbone, 2008 p.3). Heidegger replaces 'man' with the concept of Dasein³²: 'experience of being' or 'existence'. This underlies his belief that people live within a self-defined, conceptual world. What this means, for him, is that reality is experience. Meaning detection is central as meaning is perceived first. This is fundamentally an ontology. His belief was that without a subject nothing at all would exist to confront objects. The implication of this is that everything 'objective' is being merely objectivised by the subject. How the object is defined is only revealed as a consequence of the way that it is interacted with. Defining the object therefore cannot be reduced, it is multi-faceted. What manifests itself from any object is in accordance to how you behave towards it. It is not easily reduced to a single set of properties. Defining what it is, means you define a frame of reference. The very act of perception has a motor aspect and is determined by the individual's hierarchy of values. The past and the present are therefore implicit within it. If you approach objects in this manner, they will manifest a set of traits which is the manifestation of your reality, your 'experience of being'. This idea is pertinent to this research as the teachers interact with the performance management process. The view can be summarised as there being a systematic interrelatedness to the world and as such, any act of interpretation is never from a purely neutral stance.

³² Translated from the German: *da* "there"; *sein* "being."

3.3a The care structure

Heidegger identified humans as ontological beings and our fundamental essence is that we 'care'. This overall concept of 'care' is a central concept in Heidegger's philosophy, which he outlined in his 1927 work, 'Being in Time'. The scope of what Heidegger means by care is wide and captures what is most important to a human being. It has a reality that is interpreted in terms of three temporal dimensions: past, present and future. Facticity (the past), he defines as how we are 'thrown' into a gender, a socio-cultural context, a history and more. All these factors influence your individual being and make up the facticity of your being and what you care about as an individual. Fallenness (the present) describes how we 'fall' into tasks by default, other people tell us how to behave, our modern society makes us fall into a set of tasks – a 'they self' as Heidegger calls it. This is part of our nature. The third and last dimension is the possibilities (future) we have at our disposal to make meaning of all this. Together Heidegger calls this the care structure. To be deeply engaged in understanding our own reality: of the culture we were born into, to realise the tasks we have fallen into because we were told to do them, and to live for oneself and radically realise all the possibilities you have, according to Heidegger, is to live authentically (Horrigan-Kelly, Millar and Dowling, 2016 p.3). If you embody only the first two parts of the care structure, in Heidegger's mind, you are living inauthentically. This he argues, is not a binary position, we all exist on a spectrum of authenticity and inauthenticity.

The discussion in Chapter 5.1 will explore the teachers' experiences of professionalism, using the care structure as the basis for exploring the concept of professionalism. The analysis will consider the nature of what it is to be a non-citizen, WEIRD professional (facticity), immersed in the reform culture (fallenness) and the possibilities that teachers have at their disposal (existentiality) to affect change. The assumption being that an analysis of professional perceptions can provide a greater understanding of institutional structures as they impact upon the individual.

In this way the research draws a third element into the tension between objective and normative purposes of education, focusing on the individual as a distinct entity. Biesta (2010) identifies three functions of education and does

something different to Labaree, who identifies a tension between normative and objective values. In Biesta's identification of *three* functions of education: qualification (objective: providing students with knowledge, skills and understanding, essentially connected to the economy and workforce), socialisation (normative: the transmission of norms and values in relation to the continuation of cultural and religious traditions) and thirdly subjective (or individualisation) which he describes as:

‘ways of being that hint at independence from such ordered ways of being in which the individual is not simply a ‘specimen’ of a more encompassing order’ (Biesta, 2010 p.21).

Phenomenology is being used in order to explore this idea further: how the individual factors into the normative and objective purposes of education.

3.3b Phenomenology and professionalism

Asking professionals to articulate their experiences will help uncover the ways in which Demirkasimoglu (2010) sees professionalism as an ideological construct, neither passive or universal but located in socio- historical contexts (Demirkasimoğlu, 2019 p.142). Hargreaves (2000) describes ‘postmodern professionalism’ with polarised directions (Hargreaves, 2000 p.167), and Whitty (2006) views professionalism as ‘a shifting phenomenon’ with no essentialist definition (Whitty, 2006 p. 2047). Through an interpretative and careful reflexive engagement with the transcripts, the way people think about events can be understood, and ‘the causal relationships between account, cognition and behaviour become open to examination’ (Flowers *et al.*, 1998 p.411). The coding process used to analyse the interviews refers to ‘the properties and structures of experience’ developed within phenomenology. They are summarised by Smith (2018):

‘phenomenology develops a complex account of temporal awareness, spatial awareness, attention (distinguishing focal and marginal or “horizontal” awareness), awareness of one’s own experience, self-awareness, the self in different roles, embodied action, purpose or intention in action, awareness of other persons, linguistic activity, social interaction and everyday activity in our surrounding life-world (in a particular culture)’ (Smith, 2018).

Examining the transcripts and considering these overlapping properties of experience allowed an insight into conscious experience. The directedness of the experience reveals what the person is conscious of and makes up the

content or meaning of the given experience. Some meanings were evident through considering linguistic choices: ‘*my materials*’, ‘*my power points*’ or subtleties, such as use of the word ‘evidence’ and ‘*evidence of professional development*’, as meaning something different to professional development itself. Experiences of the self in different roles: ‘*professionalism (at HCT) is operating in a certain way to be efficient, it’s something you wear in the workplace*’, illustrating how the interviewee understands professionalism as a construct specific to context. A temporal awareness: ‘*short term goals could lead to inauthentic improvement*’, indicates that the interviewee believes the time frame of a target impacts the authenticity of them. Attention awareness which considered the focal awareness of the interviewees, for example, probation and contract renewal were focal awareness’s rather than the more horizontal awareness to develop pedagogy. For some teachers, the awareness of others knowledge of pedagogy led to a self-awareness that they were limiting their own practice for fear of being misunderstood: ‘*it looks chaotic to the untrained eye*’. The quotations cited from Dave’s interview (4.1) are included in appendix 8 to further demonstrate how the interviews were analysed to identify the forms of experience, emergent themes and final themes.

3.4 The sample

The study had seven participants. Smith et al. suggest that IPA studies usually benefit from a concentrated focus on a small number of cases. Given the complexity of most human phenomena ‘the issue is quality not quantity’ (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009 p. 51). Whilst it may not be possible to make more general claims, the aim is to explore divergence and convergence in detail. The sample is reasonably homogenous in that they are all mid to end career³³ professionals aged between 36 and 60. They all work at the Higher Colleges of Technology in Dubai where there are two separate campuses for men and women, the faculty themselves are mixed gender. All are qualified minimally to master’s level with their experiences working in the field of education ranging from 2 to 30 years. The language of instruction of HCT is English and all teaching faculty must be fluent as a condition of hire. The interviewees were

³³ Defined as such due to recruitment criteria of having minimally both a masters and a minimum of 7 years professional experience.

recruited for the IFS through a snowballing technique (Dowling and Brown, 2010 p.27) with initial contacts made through asking colleagues and asking them to refer others. No one approached had declined to take part. Due to the purpose being to capture faculty response to the Strategic Plan, I was not comparing groups, but attempting to demonstrate the complexity of the response by capturing varied perspectives. The original interviews produced rich material and after twenty-three interviews I was beginning to hear similar responses to questions indicating I had captured some insight into the collective response of the group, with clear themes emerging, referred to as ‘data saturation’.

Running across the original sample of twenty-three faculty, my 2017 IFS identified a clear feeling of de-professionalism. Of the twenty-three, eight were from WEIRD backgrounds, the subsequent thesis sample included the six WEIRD nationalities from the original sample, the other two had left the college. The extra interviewee, a newer faculty member, was recommended by one of the other interviewees in response to asking for a recommendation from either the Business or Engineering Department. Uniting the sample, all the interviewees had experiences of student-centred learning to varying degrees. Defining this narrower range of different departments and multi-national perspectives makes the sample more broadly representative of the group of teachers³⁴ at HCT from WEIRD backgrounds (table 1). The WEIRD group was diverse in terms of ethnicity, religion and gender.

Name	Years at HCT	Country of K-12 / University Education	Department	Role and responsibilities
1. Dave	1		Education Technology	
2. Matthew	1		General Education	
3. Elizabeth	1		Education	
4. Hannah	1		Education	
5. Omar	1		Foundation Math's	
6. Fares	1		Information Technology	
7. Caroline	1		Business	

TABLE 1 INTERVIEWEE SAMPLE

³⁴ The interviewees refer to themselves and other interchangeably as both ‘teachers and faculty’. Contracts refer to ‘teaching faculty’.

3.4a Ethical issues

This research is very clear in its aims which are how individual teachers experienced the reform. The tensions here are internationally well documented and not unique to HCT. Standards based reforms can narrow the curriculum and push practice towards transmission methods, which in turn can be restrictive to teacher autonomy. The risks to participants are in expressing the challenges that they faced which they may not want in the public domain. Being objectively critical of the institution, even in a research context, has the possibility of being misconstrued, and interviewees will be made aware that the focus of the interview is reflecting on their experiences as professionals, not on criticising the institution. Their experiences are of interest to understand how notions of professionalism shift. It is highly personal. As such it was made clear that identities would be totally anonymised in name, department and location. Participants were all asked to read and agree to the contents of the consent form, drawn up with regard to the British Educational Research Association (BERA) guidelines, to ensure they were fully aware of this.

3.5 The interviews

The interviews were conducted as a face to face interaction, with time for a detailed account of experiences, mostly in interviewees own homes. Verbal input from the interviewer was kept to a minimum, encouraging the subject to talk at length. It was purely inductive with the teachers free to direct what aspects of professionalism they chose to discuss. In procedures outlined in Creswell (2013), participants were asked two broad questions with regard to professionalism: 'what have you experienced, and what contexts or situations have influenced your experiences' (Creswell, 2013 p.81). The two questions are open and expansive. Interviewer prompts moved between requesting narrative and descriptive responses to analytic and evaluative responses. The two questions were forwarded in advance to the interviewees and resulted in between 90 - 120 minutes of dialogue.

1. What have you experienced in terms of professionalism?
2. What contexts or situations have typically influenced or affected your experiences?

These two questions then allow for both textual experiences (what has been experienced) and structural descriptions (how it was experienced in terms of conditions, situations or context). For example, when an interviewee was talking about her teaching and didn't refer to SCL/LCE, I did not seek to raise those terms. It was important to the integrity of the study that, as the interviewer, I did not influence the direction of the themes by prompting the interviewees and inadvertently creating recurrent topics myself. To move the interviewee on I asked: '*What other experiences have you had?*' or '*What other situations have influenced your professionalism?*' This interview technique also aimed not to focus on overt opinions but keep within a narrative of experiences.

Underpinned by Heidegger's interpretative philosophy, probes and prompts were designed to minimise assumptions. In this way the content of each interview was directed by the individual respondent as they spoke about their conscious experiences. *Their* intentionality led the interview meaning *their* experience of being was disclosed.

Can you tell me more about that?	Prompts
What do you mean by '.....'?	Probes

As a previous staff member, I was aware of people letting off steam, a part of normal staffroom behaviour and that these were not representative. What I wanted to capture in my approach were more in-depth accounts from which to collate personal experiences: both successes and challenges. By engaging empathetically with the interviewees, they disclosed the personal and often private concerns they had grappled with. I probed into interesting and thoughtful accounts, an example of this was an interviewee talking about the college's focus on grades and exam results. I probed for an analytical response: '*How has this affected your experiences?*' This revealed her focal perception that any low grades would lead to questions around her competency, which she ultimately linked to her contract renewal. In another interview, the interviewee was describing clocking in and out and I prompted for an *evaluative* response: '*how do you feel about that?*' Another interviewee explained most of the L&D team were from a corporate background and I prompted for an *analytical* response: '*What impact does that have?*' Guided by Smith and Osbourn's interview guidance (A. Smith & Osborn M, 2004 p.240), the interviews were not

rushed to enable richer and fuller responses and used minimal probes. One question was asked at a time in order to monitor the effect on the respondent to ensure ethical responsibilities were duly considered. The main challenges were in teachers having too much to say, and keeping the interviewee focused on experiences rather than opinions.

3.5a Insider research

The nature of an observed object will inevitably place constraints on what can be revealed. A Heideggerian approach is sensitive and responsive to the situation, but intent on understanding the invariant and divergent meanings that show themselves in their own terms and not from the researcher's preconceived set of assumptions. My motivation was to understand an environment that I had worked in, I had loved teaching at the college. I had witnessed a mix of practices and had a great interest in, and respect for, the ranging experiences of my colleagues. My positionality, as a former WEIRD employee myself (discussed in 1.3d), meant that I was conscious to adjust my potential biases and assumptions in response to what I heard. I acknowledged this in interpreting and analysing the experiences and reflections of professionals, I went through a reflexive process of an interrogation of my own values and political position. My aim was to represent the essence of their professional views, rather than looking to reinforce my own. The intention being, for each interviewee, to gain a first-person account, constructed by the researcher and interviewee and develop a coherent third person description as close to the participant view as possible and present these as a narrative. LeVasseur (2003) cited in Creswell (2006) suggests a new definition to bracketing that is 'suspending our understandings in a reflective move that cultivates curiosity' (Creswell, 2013 p. 83). This goes beyond an insider perspective; it is a collection and representation of views.

3.6 Phenomenological data analysis

The steps for phenomenological data analysis are generally similar for all phenomenologists (Moustakas & Polkighorne in Creswell, 2013 p.82).

Step 1. Coding

The first step is to transcribe the interviews, reading and re-reading to 'highlight significant statements and quotes' that provide an understanding of the

participants' professional experiences, in what Moustakas calls 'horizontalisation' (ibid p.83). For example, below is a significant statement from Dave that he made when talking about his experiences of innovation:

'There's almost no innovation at all. Again, we've got this quantifiable element and there's a lot of measurement, or supposed measurement, of competency and achievement and things like that. We're very much restricted by time, curriculum and deliverables I suppose'.

This is a rich statement coded as words and phrases: '*Innovation*', '*restricted by curriculum*', '*quantified measurement of competencies*' and '*time and deliverables*'. These key words and phrases captured the essence of the content and began to represent emergent themes as synonyms were collated together. This was repeated with each transcript. A set of transcript extracts was created. Themes emerged from the data, as part of a necessarily interpretative process, which was 'attempting to capture the meaning of the phenomena to the participant' (Flowers *et al.*, 1998 p.412).

In further understanding *how* Dave had experienced this, I also used the forms of experiences (outlined in 3.3b) to inform coding: his use of the term '*supposed measurement*' was an example of self-awareness, he was aware measures weren't measuring what they purported to. In his use of the word '*restricted*' and '*I suppose*' he revealed an awareness of his own role as a manager to change that, whilst using '*we*', as a manager himself, he was nevertheless somewhat invested in it. The intention of this coding being to 'see the world as it is experienced' (Flowers *et al.*, 1998 p.412).

Step 2. Developing themes

In the second step, clusters of meaning are developed from the significant statements of *all* participants into emergent themes. Repetitions, when clustered together, became indicative of emergent themes. For example, codes like those above from Dave, about the relationship between innovation and measurement were clustered with other statements from interviewees such as: *accountability, centralisation, deliverables, products, targets, machine, measure and tracking*. '*Time*' was dominant with many synonyms: *time pressures, speed, time sensitive* and *quickly throw together*. Words like *control, struggle, pressure, limited, push, obstacles, high stakes* appeared in this emergent

theme, and when seen in conjunction with all other participant's codes the recurrent theme of **regulation** was identified with a clear convergence in the forms of experience around that.

Over the seven interviews, which represent over fourteen hours of dialogue on the topic of professionalism, repetitions of *emergent* themes were moved into *recurrent* themes which reflected shared understanding (Flowers *et al.*, 1998 p.411). Rather than focusing on individual variabilities, the focus was on similarity and the consistent way teachers thought about and gave accounts of tensions. In this way, each theme represents a distinct representation of a way of thinking about an issue, the ultimate aim being to glimpse a higher-level objective synthesis of them (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). It must be noted, not every teacher expressed each topic within the theme, there were a plurality of topics with some divergence. Where divergence occurred within these themes it is included. If individual topics were raised by one participant this could not be considered a theme, for example, one interviewee mentioned the low status of teachers in the UAE as a concern, this could not be represented as a consistent way of thinking amongst the teachers as a recurrent theme.

The emergent themes were moved into the final recurrent themes which represent recurrent understandings. Types of CPD recurrently discussed could be clustered together. Passages around performance management processes and targets were put together as regulation. Experiences of community were coded alongside forms of experience in terms of both a lack of it (individualisation) and a positivity around references to that way of working. Some passages inevitably fitted more than one theme but were coded according to a holistic narrative objective to connect experiences. Some topics ran across themes, for example, references to pedagogy were frequent due to the centrality of it to teaching. In the case of agency, or more accurately its absence, references to it permeated the interviews and ran across the other themes and, unlike references to pedagogy, this was not expected. The four themes which emerged across the interviews were:

Theme 1.	Limited Agency	Theme 2.	Regulation
Theme 3.	Regulation	Theme 4.	Community

Step 3.

In the last step, samples of these significant statements and themes are collated to inform a description of both what the participants experienced and how they experienced the phenomena. The aim being to reflect some of the subjective experiences of professionalism in the UAE which are to date, largely not represented in depth in research.

3.6a Writing up the interviews

The individual accounts were written up as part of step 3, after coding in step one and developing the emergent and final themes during step two. For each interview, I selected recounts and verbatim examples of what the interviewee said around each of the final themes as a 'textural description'. This textural description includes a 'structural description' of the context that influenced that experience (Cresswell, 2013 p.82). From these individual textural and structural descriptions, composite descriptions that present the essence of each phenomenon were written. The focus is on the *common* experiences of the participants. All experiences have a common underlying structure. According to Van Manen (1990), within the totality of these interviews 'a good (phenomenological) description that constitutes the essence of something is construed so that the structure of a lived experience is revealed to us in such a fashion that we are now able to grasp the nature and significance of this experience in a hitherto unseen way' (Kafle, 2011 p.189).

Summary

This chapter has introduced IPA and explained why it was selected and why it is valid. The key steps of phenomenological data analysis which I used have also been detailed.

Step 1: Coding significant statements and quotes

Step 2. Developing themes across the interviews.

Step 3. Write up. This is presented in Chapter 4 as descriptions of what was experienced and how it was experienced, presented individually. The selection of extracts used were either the most articulate or powerful examples of the topics within the themes which emerged as *recurrent* understandings across most of the interviews.

CHAPTER 4. The Interviews

In Step 2 of the data analysis, I identified four themes: Limited Agency, Regulation, CPD and Community. I structure the interviews below around the latter three identified themes. The first theme of 'Limited Agency' is embedded throughout and will be clear in the descriptions.

Step 1: Significant statements and quotes. By presenting the seven interviews individually, the reader is offered an insight into the views of each participant, preceded by a description of their professional background. What I hope to have achieved is an in depth insight into the content of the interviews, using 'verbatim extracts', 'significant statements', 'meaning units' and 'more detailed descriptions' as representative samples of the underlying common themes (Cresswell, 2013 p.78). The verbatim extracts and significant statements are all presented in italicised quotation marks.

Step 2: The topics and themes. In writing up each interview, sub-titles are used to show the topic, followed by the final theme the extract was coded to. It must be noted that whilst the teachers converged with similar meanings attached to each theme, they each expressed them to varying degrees within a range of experiences which are evident in their accounts. Some topics seemed to be about CPD but manifested as Regulatory and are themed as both. Significant divergences are noted later in Chapter 4.8.

The interviews are presented in order of seniority, this is because those in managerial positions had a greater breadth of experience of the processes within the themes, so spoke in more depth. What is apparent is that the junior teachers, and those with no wider responsibilities, felt more isolated and had narrower perspectives. A table of the topics and themes is included in appendix 9.

courses. He equated that with *'innovation being squashed'* and there being *'no celebration of innovation'*. When I asked him why, he replied *'management thinks that more learning occurs through transmission methods'*. This echoed the perspective of others who had commented that managers did not understand good pedagogy when they saw it. This is a complex picture of faculty assuming their understandings of good pedagogy are not congruent with wider, managerial meanings, resulting in complex layers of thinking about what others are thinking and then changing behaviour according to that.

Targets. Regulation

He thought that there was a fear of being open with managers in some departments, he said: *'teachers have been sent down a track of target setting in the wrong climate'*. He went on to provide an example:

[REDACTED]

Performance management. Regulation

He believed that the performance management process measures *'quality, accuracy, efficiency and completion'*: *'I'm not sure what that does to a teacher'*. It *'encourages this lack of creativity, lack of risk in teaching which is probably what we need'*. He saw that the PM process *'could demotivate people to only perform to minimum standards'* and it *'put a cap on what people are prepared to commit to'*. He described the performance management tool itself as a *'conservative cap to the creative'*. He saw that it was necessary to have some *'deliverables'* and meet certain standards:

'What can I say, again, this whole process of putting everyone in the same basket, it doesn't allow for outliers'.

Nevertheless, he called *'his staff'* *'exceptional'*, and said they all *'went beyond the call of duty'* but the concept of *'office hours'* (clocking in and out) was compromising that. Dave finished up by claiming,

[REDACTED] *if you acknowledge a weakness you will be penalised for it, so it's not in your interests to. So, you aren't challenged by the system to grow. You put your energies into the fiction'*.

Colleagues and pedagogy. Community

Dave referred to groups of teachers from the Levant and North Africa, a large group within the colleges:

‘The pedagogy is not aligned between us in any shape or form. Often teachers stick in groups according to nationality, so sharing of pedagogy does not happen. Older members of staff who have been here for decades have a very different relationship with the students which we could learn from, but we are certainly not wanting to pick up the pedagogy from them and they don’t get the pedagogy from the western teachers either. They are parallel communities mostly’.

These barriers he saw as self-imposed to stop individuals moving too far outside of a level of change they feel they could assimilate to, and some teachers therefore *chose* to stick to traditional methods.

4.2 Matthew

Matthew [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Classroom Observation. Regulation & CPD

Matt thought there was an opportunity to develop a range of pedagogies and preserve the oral storytelling approach of some teachers in the region:

‘Still the best teacher I ever observed was a lecturer, from an Arab background. He was a storyteller, and I can remember everything that he said, I can almost teach you several of his lessons. The students were captivated. So, I kind of wanted to model that in some ways, but that doesn’t work for everybody and really, it forced me to start applying some of the things that I kind of knew I should have been doing anyway, which is balancing my pedagogic choices between that and activities to get the cognitive skills going’.

This idea of blending pedagogies had come from the only interviewee who had observed diverse teachers as part of the regulatory duties of his position. There

³⁶ Diploma for Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

³⁷ Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

was a more polarised view from others around teacher-centred versus student-centred who had not had the benefit of observing others:

‘I see great things in the classroom, I get to have great discussions with teachers afterwards and I think, at the moment, that informs a lot of what I can do and I would probably go as far as to say that has been more valuable for me to improve my teaching over the last couple of years than any formalised PD session that I’ve actually attended’.

Matt spoke about how context driven professional development was lacking:

‘New practices seem limited to a transfer of ideas and strategies about what works well elsewhere. The approach of taking something wholesale, such as the flipped classroom strategy failed mostly due to no regard for cultural difference. It amounted to imposing a change on teachers with no space or opportunity to trial, adapt or discuss it’.

He spoke about the development of pedagogy and practice amongst his teachers:

‘There’s lots of ways we could do it, but we just don’t. We are in a system, as ashamed as I am to admit it, where the only thing that matters are the grades that the students get’.

He referred to the National Vision and the internationally competitive environment that the UAE has chosen to compete in:

‘If you work in places where teachers are educated differently, from different places, with different skills, it is very difficult to pull them all up. It’s not impossible but it would take longer. That’s not what we are doing here. There are ambitious targets to be met and meeting them comes at the expense of quality teaching’.

Blackboard training. CDP

He spoke about the learning management system, Blackboard:

‘I mean Blackboard training is pretty standard is just run straight and there’s no connection or discussion. No contextualisation at all’.

He spoke about the use of technology in the college:

‘I think a number of people see blended learning as a way of getting out of teaching, tell the students to do these activities on Blackboard in their own time. There’s no class, class is cancelled or it’s independent study, in an unprincipled way. There are some teachers who use the BBL (Blackboard Learn) technology to cancel classes’.

Matt went on to claim:

‘I don’t believe most teachers understand what blended learning or mobile learning is. Whether it means which location the class is, or using tech on the internet to achieve some activities, or the replacement of paper-based questions with BBL activities’.

For him, technology was associated with basic training and lazy teaching.

Management approach. Regulation

He talked about the management idiolect:

‘The culture here is that you find yourself using certain key words all the time, impact isn’t a word that’s part of the management idiolect here. Senior management have got a very strong focus on accountability. One of the key phrases is ‘top-down responsibility and bottom-up accountability’. The people, especially in this lowest level of management here, being a chair, operate the way they do because we are being held accountable, we have to justify. I find it really disappointing that with all my other responsibilities, the accountability is not on the teaching, it’s on the grades’.

This phrase ‘top-down responsibility’ and ‘bottom-up accountability’ allowed no autonomy to this lower rung of management who were a critical bridge between teachers and senior management. He identified the root of this problem:

‘Quality of teaching is the quality of measuring the input and they try to measure the quality of the input through the output. I was asked to investigate a situation where a teacher had some poor results in the classroom, what was this teacher doing wrong? I was able to answer that very quickly and said: well they also teach another class exactly the same lesson where the results are exemplary’.

The logic of measuring the quality of the teaching input through students’ results goes some way to understand a system where the presence or absence of quality teaching was invisible to the measurement system. He spoke about the performance management process. It’s part of the policy here, he said it was ‘*unfortunate depending on your point of view*’ that staff must set their own goals for the year, but this had to be tied to the strategic plan:

‘A lot of what they want you to be doing is standardisation of courses, collaborating with staff members around the system to develop a standardised course’.

He said ‘*any developmental work needs to be tied to goals linked to the strategic plan*’:

‘there’s really very little (time) left to say this is how you are going to be involved with your peers, whether its observation or it’s just a generalised meeting together to discuss pedagogy which is actually quite disappointing, if we had more flexibility or our strategic goals actually specified those, we might be able to do more of it’.

He got out the document and pointed out the 25 strategic initiatives which goals had to be tied to:

'There's enhancement and extension of faculty professional development programmes, that doesn't include peer networking, it's not in there at all. It's secondary to nearly everything else that we do here. Even though it's our core business'.

He spoke about staff:

'Intrinsic motivation is the holy grail of motivation and going back a few years I would say that yes we were. In general, everyone here is a professional person, we've all got higher level qualifications, master's degrees, PHD's, we're motivated. In most organisations the ultimate aim is to turn extrinsic motivation into intrinsic motivation, and unfortunately here I think the reverse is true. They've taken that intrinsic motivation away from people and made it more into extrinsic motivation by instituting systems of punishments and rewards'.

He went on to speak about morale:

'We have a very low level of motivation and teacher morale at the moment which I think probably adds to a more minimalistic approach, they've had a lot of their autonomy taken and not been treated as professionals. So, if you're not treated as professional why would you act professionally? With everything being counted and measured and ticked off under very challenging circumstances'.

Prescribed collaborative networks. Regulation & CPD

These were set up centrally to prioritise the standardisation of curriculum and assessment. Tasks were apportioned, membership specified, and deadlines set, with limited time for consultations on drafts of curriculum or assessments.

Matt explained:

'Peer network meetings are not for professional development but just to make sure that everyone is doing the same thing. There is a kind of quasi-autonomy there in that the top-down says you have to do something, but it's those at the bottom, the bottom-up, that have the accountability, you're doing the heavy lifting on the bottom to make sure you come up with a consensus'.

Along with Dave, Matt had more experience of peer networks in his role of [REDACTED] than the other teachers. Compliance, not pedagogy, was at the forefront of this, driven by the L&D team. Matt explained some of that, the prescribed collaborative groups at HCT were '*held captive to short term interests*'. He spoke about '*a passive compliance within the group, that did not yield innovation*'. The response of another prescribed collaborative group Matt was involved with was to take the standards and '*reverse engineer*' adherence to them.

‘They have achieved a professional compliance; we can’t really call it cross pollination of ideas but more a series of compromises’.

He identified that for more isolated teachers there was less of a *‘buy in’* to the objectives of the vision, in part *‘because they’re excluded from the processes involved in shaping it’*. I asked him to elaborate:

‘You’re not going to get peer networking when there is nowhere for you to go, where can you go here for that kind of meeting or cross pollination of colleagues? Nothing is set up for that, there’s nowhere for it’.

His management perspective was that there was limited time and spaces for informal networks to develop.

4.3 Elizabeth

Elizabeth [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Induction and probation. Regulation

I asked her to tell me more about the induction programme she was involved with:

‘It’s called ‘The teaching skills enhancement programme’, the group that we have is mixed, the challenge is that we have people who have teaching experience and people who don’t have any teaching experience at all’.

They had produced an *‘orientation package’* for induction but no-one had used it because there was *‘no top-down mandate to do so’*.

Of the pedagogy:

‘there’s an imperative to move away from ‘chalk and talk’ but this is drilled into them and not really effective as it’s become reductive. What it has come down to is a target for them between the time they spend talking and the time that the students are talking and collaborating and doing things’.

She concluded, *‘there’s more of a focus on probation rather than induction’*.

Learning and Development team, CPD

Elizabeth had some involvement with the Learning and Development (L&D) team, in a role as mentor for the induction of new faculty which ran over a semester and *‘is mostly about ‘sign-posting and trouble-shooting’*. The team

consisted of fifteen people, I asked about the makeup of the team, she reported most of them were from a business background in the U.S. with some specialists in education technology. A colleague she worked alongside, for example, spent 12 years doing corporate training, her perception of this was cynical, that those responsible for college CPD were businesspeople. She reported two main concerns around the L&D team. The first was a belief that teachers were abusing the concept of blended learning to get out of teaching classes. She was concerned:

‘The focus wasn’t on how they could get teachers to utilise blended learning in a more pedagogically sound way or in a way that’s convenient to students but rather on how they can control potential issue’.

Another concern of the group was assessment:

‘A lot of effort is being put into developing an assessment policy that can be consistently applied across all disciplines and the focus is, how can we all just have the same test. How can we do that very quickly and not even so much as how can we implement it properly, but let’s see how quickly we can throw something together so that we can say we have all the tests the same’.

Her view was that both blended learning and assessment were not being driven by a pedagogic imperative but a managerial one to meet pressured time-sensitive targets.

Learning by Doing / LCE, CPD

She perceived a conflict in achieving a pedagogic shift due to a significant group of managers who wanted to see more ‘*traditional lectures*’:

‘There was a sense that under the previous policy of ‘Learning by Doing’ we had shifted too far to group work at the expense of formal lecturing where the expertise of teachers could be shared. Essentially the problem was that teachers were not sufficiently rooted in the pedagogy behind it.

I probed further. She spoke about ‘*western teachers*’ coming and ‘*naively believing that they could make a difference*’:

‘They struggle with motivating students, they struggle with the language barriers and limitations. All the strategies they previously had don’t work. The system compromises some of the best things that these teachers bring to the system. They are forced to completely adapt their pedagogy because they don’t have the resources, spaces or support to enact their role as they were trained to do’.

I asked about the nature of these struggles:

'To change the culture of the college is a long-term project. The problem is we have short term targets'.

She said, '*I can see why this has happened*': prior the drive for common standards and equivalency, departments were working in silos, some of which contained creative practice. '*There was some good practice amongst early-years practitioners in regional groups including the colleges and settings*', she finished, '*the now strangling push for standards and equivalency has killed that*'. There was convergence across the interviews in this perspective, management driving short term targets had not supported longer term sustainable, collaborative development.

Aligning pedagogy. Community

In another example, she spoke about '*products*' that professionals were trying to work towards tied to ideas of '*quality education*'. Working with professionals from all around the world she noted that she'd come across instances where people's notions of these terms were '*at odds*':

'So is this paradigm shift from a professional as having a set of knowledge to a set of skills like synthesising, collaboration and creativity, not everyone is on-board with this. There is an 'expat culture' of 'this is how we do it back home'. I've worked with teachers from certain countries who haven't understood that there are other ways of doing things and other views who have been very intolerant of others'.

She understood these as micro cultures:

'I think there is a general sense of teacher professionalism that moves between contexts, but the micro- cultures of institutions are all very different. There are obstacles to practicing the way I have been trained to. These obstacles can get in your way, provoke anxiety'.

I asked for an example of obstacles:

'As an Egyptian you come to a training session with your own experiences. You don't want to be too quick to discard your understanding of professionalism, that is the basis under which you have been hired. Are you going to admit that you need to radically change your practice? You might not be well paid in the hierarchy of the college, but back home you have doubled or tripled your salary'.

Another example she gave was that the multi-disciplinary set-up of the curriculum did not allow for collaboration between subjects, one example was that she saw the Arabic and Islamic history teachers as being isolated, as were the ESOL teachers who were mostly westerners.

Centralisation. Regulation

Elizabeth felt, from a central perspective, '*the focus was on control*':

'All the policies are about how can we control employees; versus how can we give autonomy to employees and how can we increase the quality of the things that we do'.

I asked for an example:

'Some teachers are outstanding and put their own mark on materials, but ultimately there is an assessment which is multiple choice, and the ones that aren't have been rushed through without wide consultation. These are students learning in a second language. Teaching strategies and materials need to be carefully contextualised for both language and content but they haven't been. Students will fail unless we teach to the test. When you realise that's your job you make a professional choice'.

I asked her more about this choice:

'There are objectives that are contradictory. Students' low literacy rates don't fit with the centralised, high stakes testing machine, which ultimately measures our success. How can we deliver the outcomes management push us to? It's an impossible task, how can you be honest about that'?

The idea emerged that teaching in a student-centred way will not get students through the course content required to pass the final exam. This was point was reiterated across the interviews.

Code of conduct. Community

Elizabeth spoke of '*servicing*' her profession, this included the importance of a code of conduct in the modern-day workplace. She spoke about the need for a public code of conduct for every new community which allows for '*the nuanced differences of each group to be explored*'. In the UAE she had encountered a more explicit code of conduct:

'Well in recent places I've worked it's been written rather than being implicit. I guess if I think about that, it has more recently become more bounded. In the form of written rules. In places I've worked in, many years ago, it wasn't so clear. Maybe there was more tolerance in the past maybe that's less now'.

I enquired why this was the case.

'If you got to get the job done, you need to do it efficiently and if people are not operating in the same way it becomes inefficient. So, by having a set standard which everyone is operating by it becomes more efficient'.

She said '*there just wasn't enough time to develop a code of conduct*' which necessitated a more top-down one.

4.4 Hannah

Professional background

Hannah [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

She taught in the women's college on the Education programmes.

Developing Pedagogy. CPD

Hannah spoke about misunderstandings of pedagogy:

'The reform project wants them (teachers) to shift pedagogy, but when they (management) see it, the mindset is 'why on earth would you be doing that'? This is the perception of the other educators who can't see the theory underneath the practice. They want everything to look perfect, but teaching creatively is messy, flip chart papers all over the room, noisy group work, the learning environment doesn't look the way they expect 'best practice' to look like, the value is hidden in the process, not necessarily a shiny end product'.

She thought that what *she* considered good pedagogy in the classroom was not the same as the construction of what others, who trained in different systems, had constructed it to mean. '*They have different reference points*'. She said, '*there's a mistaken assumption across the institution that there is an agreed concept of good teaching*'.

She thought the students were inexperienced and unable to do well in a learner centred pedagogy environment because '*the tradition was to not challenge elders and to listen only*', and that in college, when they were given '*a chance to speak out*' they might '*act out*' with this new freedom and '*not understand how to behave in a way that was conducive to learning*'. She thought it would be challenging to move the pedagogy to learner centred. She believed teachers needed a strong underpinning of theoretical knowledge about their subject aligned with teaching pedagogies but that this was not the case in practice, to use her words:

'Increasingly we are learning the course itself, you only learn to drive the vehicle, you never learn what is happening in the engine. There is no sense that education is philosophy, psychology, sociology, pedagogy. It's a static, taught content'.

I asked her to elaborate and she said, '*materials have been created to deliver specific outcomes*', that management wanted the reform to be '*neat*', '*appearances were everything*' and '*quantitative data ruled*'. It is important to note here her connection of outcomes to quantitative data. Hannah was aware that she had to prioritise self-interest at the expense of what she considered to be professional. She was not happy about this and felt she had been forced to make difficult choices. '*The system won't allow you to operate outside of the remit of your position*':

'If you're not empowered to actually reward students in terms of grades for doing things differently, then they're quite unlikely to do it. If you say 'look, do this innovative project, but I can't give you a grade for this' then there is very little participation. How students perceive they are evaluated limits their creativity'.

Expanding on creativity she said:

'Who is to define what is innovation and how radical should it be, how ground-breaking should it be before it gets to be innovative or how trivial is accepted as innovation? So those are the challenges that we have'.

She said there was no forum to grapple with these concepts. She believed that bringing all the teachers in line was not impossible, that teachers '*could develop their pedagogy together, akin to craftsmen and build a methodology from the ground up*' but there was no space for that.

Cascade. CPD

She said:

'Completing the 40 hours of CPD was not an issue but evidencing it was. Training that can be easily evidenced through attendance is favoured, that's indisputable evidence'.

Hannah said there was a lot of cascade training for new initiatives and didn't believe it was effective:

'As a group of expatriates, the cascade model didn't work. The Directors didn't understand the initiatives and neither did the middle management who gave contradictory feedback. What ended up on the ground was a mass, collective misunderstanding of how we were supposed to be operating as professionals'.

I asked why there were misunderstandings:

'When you are dealing with a profession that requires thinking, people who are thinking, you need autonomy in order to do your job'.

She added:

‘To develop my thinking I need to be forced out of my comfort zone a little bit and start trying other things that could work for the students but it’s a high-risk decision here, there is no room for risk takers in this system’.

She thought this was contradictory:

‘They (the UAE) have new problems to solve, they should be able to build in certain autonomy into professionals’ lives so they can take up these challenges, but.. you know.... constrain me all the time then how can I be expected to do things differently or innovate?’

She referred to teaching as ‘*a calling*’, the meanings she attached to it were related to her faith. She spoke with clear conviction about developing early years pedagogy in the UAE but asked ‘*what is the point in having this knowledge if you cannot share it, you serve no purpose*’. Despite her commitment and years of experience Hannah’s belief was, ‘*I cannot really enable any change or development here*’.

Community support. Community

Hannah was focused on community [REDACTED]

‘Teachers are struggling due to a lack of wider support systems. There are no visible social workers, special needs support, mental health support, this type of support just doesn’t exist here. When teachers try to take on some of this, as we train them to, they start drowning’.

Others had spoken about underdeveloped systems of wider community support.

4.5 Omar

Omar, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] He had [REDACTED]

children and having long-term, stable employment was a priority.

Colleagues. Community

Omar spoke passionately as an educator and had a vision aligned to the strategic plan:

‘It’s a long-term paradigm shift. It would take a long time to shift student’s attitude to learning. I’m not waiting for something to be delivered to me, this is the time for conversing with others, working with what I know to develop my own ideas. Education is critical and not static.’

He referred to his role as *'being in the background engineering the learning environment'*. As a math's teacher, his pedagogy was strongly rooted in *'active learning'*. He wanted to shift pedagogy in his department. He recognised *'his ideas'* were *'different to theirs'* and he *'risked becoming an outsider'*. Implicit in his account was that his colleagues did not feel the same way. He said that he could *'not buy into the culture of chasing exam results'* but a lot of his colleagues had. He didn't believe in lecturing and spoke passionately about it:

'Students can use online lectures, YouTube! Let's stop trying to deliver something in the classroom that's not fit for them all. Let's use the time so students can grasp what they need to'.

I asked what the pedagogy of the department was like and he explained:

'There is a sense of ploughing through content expediently. It's a throwaway, disposable approach, yes, I've done this bit now, and it really doesn't have to be like that. If people were brave it doesn't have to be like this, it's not for the benefit of students. No wonder we are all suffering from stress and other mental health problems, who wouldn't in that situation? There's too much pressure. It's a broken system as far as I can see, too much trying to cram stuff in and not enough quality'.

This was a typical example and shows clearly how the understanding and desire to effect change was there but attempting to manifest that required *'bravery'* or *'caused stress'*.

Management approach. Regulation

Omar said he thought success was *'contingent on management becoming experts on pedagogy to lead teachers'*, but *'the college directors are competing with each other to get the best targets and this is driving bad practice. The directors are focused on things that can be measured and evidenced towards meeting their own targets'* rather than developing pedagogy:

'They want to tell us how to do our jobs, when they should be creating an environment where we can do the job we have trained to do'.

He explained that in the UAE the senior managers had often not come through an educational route and as such teachers saw them more as bureaucrats:

'They love to tell us information. This is outdated now; I think it triggers people. Sitting in these meetings where people tell us things that we either already know or we could have just read, understood ourselves and then discussed. This is something that I find difficult'.

Omar had experience of working for an Academy in the UK where teachers had lost their jobs in a changing political climate with results at the fore. He recognised that certain dispositions coped with this level of risk taking better than others:

‘It’s very important to have autonomy to do the job you’ve been trained to do, that’s crucial, if you take that away from people then you feel your time and passion and investment is undermined. Anything that is a barrier to that provokes an emotional response. I asked myself, what is my calling in life? There are some things that are more attractive, more lucrative, but intrinsically I get my satisfaction from interaction with students and seeing them achieving. If I perceive myself being inauthentic in that, I question what I’m actually doing in this environment’.

Omar’s way of teaching required high levels of autonomy for him to operate:

‘You have to give people the professional courtesy of trust. People will make mistakes but this is proof that they are trying. Trying to standardise classrooms is ridiculous, there are ten teachers and ten different ways of doing the same thing. That’s brilliant! Rather than us all doing the same thing’.

Omar spoke about impact:

‘People are too consumed with numbers, we sacrifice a considered approach, for one that’s now too mechanistic. I sat in a meeting with course leaders from all campuses, it was the final meeting of the year. Someone asked about our impact, what are the benefits? There was no conversation. There was no consideration of what had resulted from all our meetings. What could we say? We had not conceptually created anything together; we had just administered something’.

Omar identified that what had been borrowed by the UAE was not pedagogy but management processes:

‘The managerial systems from the UK were brought over here and are even less effective, the way that people are dealt with can be brutal in an environment that is run on contracts’.

Some of his colleagues originated from economies which pay teachers very low salaries, with political conflict, it was his perception that these colleagues were less likely to take risks and had more to lose. In their minds the performance management tool was all about the annual appraisal and contract renewal.

Experience of Community

He considered how the community should work:

‘high standards, assessments, behaviour, punctuality, they cannot all be addressed individually they are formed through work culture. Having separate rules and regulations for everything individually is miserable’.

For Omar, working with his colleagues was very important:

‘There is synergy between professionals. We do much better in groups. We are all performing the same function in the organisation, in most cases like minded, if we work together we will all have better classrooms. Unfortunately, because of other pressures, that doesn’t end up happening. Teachers end up having no opportunity to work together. Generally, there is no time to develop high quality courses, refined through collaboration.

I asked if he thought he was being successful:

‘I gauge success though feedback from students and colleagues more than results, it’s those conversations that tell you how we are doing. You are in tune with real practice that way. This process tells you how to improve. Being constantly engaged in that, tweaking practice, that’s how I improve’.

He saw collaboration as essential, ‘*so we have a clear idea of where we are going and where to aim our energies*’. He summarised an idea that that this needed to be done in gradual steps and the speed of the changes were leading to inauthentic change: ‘*education doesn’t come off the shelf*’. Overall, he was positive but had significant frustrations, ‘*I feel like a number, I invest way beyond what I get paid for but no-one is really interested in that*’. He hadn’t connected with management who he said, ‘*speak off a script, not from the heart*’.

4.6 Fares

Fares is a Canadian of Pakistani heritage and part of the IT Department at the men’s college. Not a trained teacher, he was interested in developing his skills in education technology to facilitate e-learning. He

HEA & Conferences. CPD

Fares had completed the HEA membership and found it developmental to his practice, he said it was ‘*an opportunity to consolidate my teaching practice*’. As

a researcher he was interested in attending conferences, but funding for this had recently been cut which he felt now constrained his interests and he had handed in his notice. He spoke about '*the fast pace of technological development*' and that he '*had to keep pace with that in order to best serve his students*':

'If I'm not allowed to go out and check new teaching and innovative practices and I cannot apply them in the classroom. Maybe a couple of years ago, when I first joined, I had the passion of motivating students, but that's not there at this point I guess'.

This constraint was a deal breaker in terms of his employment.

Blended learning. CPD

He spoke about the wider pedagogy within the IT department:

'There is a kind of shared view about what differentiation is and what assessment for learning is, but they are trying to sell that as a way of doing things, it's not really something that was forged between us, as *our way of doing things*. It seems to have been packaged and delivered'.

He was talking about management and his use of the word '*sell*' and '*packaged*' was indicative of the lack of dialogue in the department, an idea that many policy directions were '*sold as finished products*'. I asked him to tell me more about this:

'They reinforced existing behaviour for some and teachers who didn't understand it ignored it, some people are resistant to some aspects of it that didn't work, the resistance was there but no-one actually pushed back'.

Teachers had to move their courses online:

'A lot of people as well are suspicious of it. A Luddite³⁸ feeling that if we create a good BBL course online or blended learning course then we can spend half the time in the classroom and then half time independently, which will free a teacher up to manage two classes and have twice as many students they are responsible for, same amount of contact time but with twice as many students'.

I asked him to tell me about the online courses:

'I think maybe a one or two years ago, I would have been more autonomous, where I had flexibility of introducing new methods or activities. Now it's like; here are the five activities you can use; these are the four homework assignments and those homework assignments may not work in all cases I guess'.

³⁸ 19th century workers in Britain who were opposed to technological change because it threatened their livelihoods

The curriculum *'did not enable time to explore in the new online learning spaces'*, so he perpetuated old practices:

'There is an overarching view of education which I sign up for, but I can't help feeling like I'm doing my shift at a factory. There are buzz words that come and go, 'learning by doing', 'assessment for learning', 'student voice' but then they die and then the standards are back'.

40 hours of CPD

Fares commented on the duality of the teacher's role, sitting between his field and the learners:

'So, I can say; you know what, I'm going to go out and investigate a couple of new teaching practices. I can try to apply them in the classroom, but that would be more for my own professional development, or I can say you know what; I'm going to go and learn three new programming languages. If I am well worth with three program languages, so when I'm in the classroom and a student has a question about comparison of the different languages, I can relate better'.

Interestingly he saw his engagement with teaching methods as being *'more for his own professional development'*. I asked him to clarify this tension between the development his subject specialism versus development of teaching practice:

'I would like to improve in my subject to help the students, or I would like to improve in teaching to help myself. If I get a deeper understanding of my subject specialism, this is how I will best help students'.

Contract renewal. Regulation

Fares also spoke about his student evaluations, which were analysed as part of his renewal process:

'To get good teacher evaluations, be nice to your students or they will get you later. Don't mark them late and don't mark them down'.

He went on, *'we get a bonus based on that result so who is going to be honest and throw money away'?*

Fares was not happy about clocking in and out and felt it was symptomatic of a wider distrust of employees:

'Responsibilities are not clear; academics are not used to clocking in and out. It has spawned a lot of misinformation, like if you are one minute late you will lose an hours' pay. This does not create a positive working environment. We have teachers lining up to check out'.

Code of conduct. Community

He spoke about being in a majority '*expat*' environment and integrating by developing a shared code of conduct:

'This is very important. You need your knowledge of this place and the fundamentals, when you are dealing with someone you must follow the code of conduct. You don't question that, if it's not aligned with my personal values, I must adapt. This is the cultural norm and I must fit in with that, never mind what I believe. Projecting your beliefs on others is not appropriate if you are in a conservative culture'.

Fares believed that this must be '*developed*' rather than '*given*'. He was also invested in the need for a high level of trust. In this respect he saw that he and his colleagues '*functioned best*' when they were '*self-governing and self-correcting*'. If other teachers observed his practice and recommended it, this was '*the highest accolade*' for him:

The culture of high achievement or Islamic values is a culture of respect. Respecting the community and environment is important. If the culture is strong, other things automatically fit in with it. High aspirations, assessment, behaviour, punctuality, they cannot all be addressed though individuals being monitored based on rules and regulations, these are formed through an overall culture. Having separate rules and regulation for everything is miserable. You must have this unifying concept.

Student support services. Community

Fares said students were under a lot of pressure. There were addiction issues and mental health problems amongst his students. He felt isolated in his ability to support some serious problems he had in his student group. Others mentioned that SEN, learning difficulties and mental health issues were underserved.

4.7 Caroline

Caroline, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Induction and probation. CPD

She spoke about not experiencing an induction, didn't have any training on pedagogy and spoke only about her training on Blackboard, which she was a

competent user of. She was concerned about the probation period and worried about taking out a loan to buy a car in case she didn't pass: *'it's a threat'*. She spoke about lectures and power points. She didn't mention a mentor.

Teaching practice. CPD

She didn't refer to student-centred learning or pedagogy in any way apart from an implicit assumption it was about lecturing: *'I have no time to adapt and contextualise, the college has 17 campuses and it's running like an industry'*. Regarding the flipped classroom: *'We can't do that because they need to support reading, they can't do it by themselves'*. 'She was eager to work collegially but was surprised when a fellow teacher did not want to share his resources with others teaching the same course. She linked this to an idea that his perceived value was in what he knew, rather than how he taught. She mentioned another colleague was surprised when she shared her planning rather than a concrete resource:

'Well I was sharing a concept, it wasn't a work sheet or a power point, she didn't ask me a second time'.

Innovation spaces. Regulation

The strategic plan's goal was to create innovation spaces and Caroline was using an innovation space but found the technology in it incompatible with what she wanted to do. *'There are smart T.Vs, it's checking a box but nothing to with helping these guys to learn'*. *'Someone decided this, but it wasn't the teachers'*. Caroline had not scored highly on her classroom observation because she hadn't used technology.

'I know they want to go forward with technology and that's it's part of policy. I mean it's in our (classroom) observation. It's reductive because that's no picture of what that looks like, it's just there as a yes or no'.

Caroline had a perspective on innovation:

'The goals and the vision are so very forward-looking it's extremely advanced, but somehow, somewhere in the culture, we don't have the chance to get from where we all are to where we need to be in a thoughtful way. There is no chance to think about it, everyone just has to react. It's something to do with the timelines that are unrealistic and unfeasible. Pushing entrepreneurship and innovation into targets and a timeline is somehow contradictory'.

She believed development of innovation didn't fit the prescribed approach of the strategic plan.

Professionalism. Regulation

She spoke of a sense of de-professionalism which she described as a '*loss of control*':

'Professionals are hired for their qualifications alone. The system values their qualification more than their expertise. Online interviews are very quick, you cannot really understand someone's real expertise in their subject area, they are just looking for a qualified person in front of the class'.

She felt that her expertise was wasted in a system that now taught to a prescribed, narrow curriculum. Her perspective was that:

'There's a notion is that the UAE is hiring professionals to improve the education system, that's clear, but that's not why we are hired by the college, they want PHDs and published research papers to meet criteria, that's very different'.

She sensed a surface only appreciation of her qualifications, rather than the resource of her expertise and research potential, which she believed '*was not being capitalised*'. Her sense of professionalism was diminished:

'My group (from her PHD group) are all doing a lot better than I am. I'm becoming deskilled in this system and adopting bad practices.'

Research. CPD

Caroline had heard of the cuts to conference attendance, which concerned her as she was eager to network in the region within her field:

None of this really seems to be about education, it's about satisfying upper management. The idea of research is about getting published and getting numbers we have to meet in May. The content doesn't matter, just get it published! Add to the numerical target they have. No matter if it's longitudinal research, first concern, but when will you publish?

Goal 2 (appendix 2) had specified a numerical target.

Contract renewal. Regulation

Grade inflation was a common topic about which Caroline spoke in detail:

'You know that the main impact here is on examination results, because we work in a system where that's the only thing that matters, everything we do is how many A's, B's C's, we get lots of F's how do we account for those F's? Lots of A's and B's how can we account for that? Is there

grade inflation, why is there a discrepancy between the final grades and the coursework? So, it's all grade focused'.

The worst aspect of that for her was questions related to this prompted investigation into her teaching competency rather than the curriculum design or assessment itself. This resulted in a sense of uncertainty for her, so strong that it pushed her to teach to the test to ensure that this didn't happen:

'In my role it is difficult for me to act professionally. We all know how the system is set up. No one challenges themselves or others. We can't fail students; it's linked to our graduation targets. My line manager won't question me, it's linked to his targets. No-one digs too deep; we all look the other way, so students are passed. I've become quite cynical to it all'.

Caroline had spoken, as the other teachers did, about an idea of teaching that was compromised in a system focused on targets.

Professional pay scale. Regulation

She spoke of the [REDACTED], as having '*an unclear and ever-changing points-based system*' which she said, '*operates as a deficit system* [REDACTED] *reasons to deny applications for promotion*'. As an example, she said:

'You need 70 points before they will look at the teaching side of the application. You need a minimum of one external and internal grant. I got rejected from an internal grant application because the college would only fund it if research met very specific criteria that met their target on including students in data collection'.

She concluded:

'The criteria means no-one will get promoted and this will impact morale. There is no discretion in the system at all, we are just operating a checklist and there are two levels above us. Each level of the hierarchy there's different criteria and checklists. People do try to work the system, but ultimately there are barriers that are impossible to get past'.

The lack of discretion and professional trust was her main concern.

Target setting. Regulation

She perceived that the teachers in this department were not working together or sharing resources due to an idea that they will lose their unique value and because they didn't understand how to use the ideas shared with them.

Caroline felt very isolated in her classroom. She felt her professional identity had been compromised:

'The original idea that I wanted to make a difference and share my knowledge and ideas died. Whilst I am here, I will survive with bad habits until the end of my contract'.

Asked why she had compromised she replied, '*I altered my reasons for being here, they are now financial*' and went on to say:

'There is something missing in how motivational individuals can be to other individuals, staff or students, where you don't have an emotional connection to education you lose a key aspect of professionalism'.

4.8 Divergence

This is a phenomenological study where teachers were asked about experiences of professionalism. They directed what they spoke about. The four themes categorise four broad areas of professionalism. Their consistent experiences together, represent 'a higher level, objective synthesis' (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009) of their collective experiences. The examples and quotes selected from individual teachers exemplify common experiences. The topics represented below were mentioned only by one individual. In the interests of respecting their views they are represented below.

Work/ Life balance

Dave perceived this was better in the UAE than other countries where he had worked for both students and teachers. Family time was important and took precedence. Salaries were also a lot higher for all nationalities.

Status of the profession

Fares thought that due to the low status of teachers in the UAE, the students and management had little respect for teachers and treated them as '*easily replaceable*' and '*dispensable*'. *The 'constant high turnover of staff is due to the lack of respect shown to them by society'*. He felt disrespected by students and management.

Extrinsic motivation

Fares was the only interviewee who spoke about targets motivating him. '*If I wasn't told to publish three papers year I'd be slacking off*', although he said he had wanted '*a caveat saying I will submit rather than publish*' but his line manager didn't agree to it. He said measuring his progress as part of the PM process was '*positive and could be progressive to his career*'. He also said, '*being given a bonus motivates me to go above and beyond*' despite falsifying

some of his targets. None of the other interviewees were motivated by the idea of a bonus.

Other topics

Other topics raised by individuals included: equivalency of teachers' qualifications, bias of students towards a perceived higher status of WEIRD teachers, wanting more lesson planning, over use of text books in class, scheduled library time for classes were valuable, women accessing management positions was difficult, high teacher/ student ratios in some classes, high staff turnover in some departments, large gratuity³⁹ accumulation jeopardising contract renewal and negative perception of sick leave.

Summary

The presentation of each interview included narrative accounts of what the teachers experienced and how they experienced it. Extracts were selected which exemplified the range of convergence of these common meanings between teachers. These were not isolated opinions but were selected as they represented common experiences. The next chapter covers a stage of interpretive, phenomenological analysis where the established themes are discussed together in relation to the wider socio-cultural context.

³⁹ End of service lump sum. Paid as one month's salary for each year of service at the end of contract.

CHAPTER 5. Discussion

The aim of this chapter is not only a first order analysis of each of the four themes, drawing the seven teachers' experiences together, but a second order account, 'to develop a more overtly interpretative analysis which 'will explore, describe, interpret and situate the participants' sense making of their experiences' (Tuffour, 2017 p. 3). The verbatim extracts, narrative accounts, along with some additional material from the transcripts are drawn together to position the experiences 'in relation to a wider social, cultural, and perhaps even theoretical context' (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006 p 104).

Each of the four themes represent a distinctive way of thinking about an issue. Through describing what all the participants have in common as they experience professionalism, the universal essence for the interviewees is uncovered. Limited Agency was the dominant theme, pervasively threading through all the other themes and is therefore presented first. The second most prevalent, by a significant amount, was Regulation due to the focal awareness of the Performance Management process which dictated much professional behaviour. CPD was third and lastly Community with significantly less references.

5.1 Theme One: Limited Agency

To structure this over-arching theme, I use Heidegger's three elements of the care structure, outlined in 3.3a. Using this philosophical idea, I seek to understand teachers' everyday experiences of 'being-in-the-world'. Heidegger believed that the fundamental essence of our 'being' is that we care and need to live authentically. For the seven teachers these three elements emerged as:

- (1) **Facticity**: their past, *thrown*, experiences of teaching in their WEIRD, socio-cultural context.
- (2) **Fallenness**: their present, organisational context at HCT (being surrounded by others setting tasks and directing them in what do).
- (3) **Possibilities**: the future possibilities that teachers have to conceive of, make meaning and enact their own change.

1) Facticity. The teachers had all actively pursued a subject specialism in their WEIRD backgrounds, acquiring knowledge and experience. All the teachers had been oriented towards implementing their (past) experiences to develop knowledge within their courses, and five of them had clear ideas around implementing SCE/LCE. There was an idea that they could not legitimately participate in meaningful change because the role that their knowledge and skills had in that change was not reciprocal. This was exemplified by Caroline's description of her: '*expertise not valued*', '*feeling demotivated*', '*deskilled*', '*unprofessional*', '*cynical*' and her knowledge '*not being capitalised*'. Dave said courses were 'locked down' and staff '*not being challenged to grow*'. Matt summarised that the college had taken '*intrinsic motivation and made it extrinsic*', people felt they weren't being treated like professionals.

2) Fallenness. Matt, with his managerial experiences, articulated the present situation that teachers found themselves in, '*it is not individuals who are the problem, but that the roles within the system are too tightly defined*'. Caroline talked about '*barriers impossible to get past*'. Heidegger describes this as a 'fallenness: realising the tasks we fall into which, in this case, had closed off possibilities. This can also be understood as an obscuring of a situation, in this case an obscuring of the meaning of teaching. With decisions about *what* to teach at all campuses made centrally, decisions on *how* to teach were indirectly impacted. Teachers spoke about ways in which they were inextricably tied to curriculum and assessment which felt '*closed down*'. This evoked significant responses from everyone because it interfered with their capacity to make meaning of their professional life in terms of both their subject specialism and their pedagogy. Some tried and were frustrated, others like Caroline '*gave up*', Omar '*felt like a number*' and Fares '*individually monitored*' which links to Biesta's description of a way of being where teachers are 'specimens of a more encompassing order' (Biesta, 2010 p.21).

The 'effective governance' of Goal 4 (appendix 4) was linked to a concept of 'employee happiness' measured as a percentage, the metrics for which are unknown. For the purpose of this study, using Heidegger's distinction between authenticity and inauthenticity is useful to gain an insight into the interviewees well-being. Living according to only the first two dimensions of the care structure

is to live inauthentically. What had become delimiting to the teachers' authenticity and driven out other possibilities, was the concept of the accountable, measurable and compliant individual. The interviewees all spoke about how some of the processes had become inimical to human wellbeing: '*I'm not sure what that does to a teacher*', '*no wonder we all have mental health problems*'. Caroline reported being '*isolated*' and '*anxious*' and Omar '*measured individually*' with '*no-one being interested*' in his work. This climate resulted in strong feelings including many being '*demotivated*', Fares '*demoralised*', Omar '*untrusted*' with Caroline '*having to react*' and '*having no emotional connection*'.

3) Possibilities. The closing down of the possibility to conceive of, or enact change in relation to curriculum, assessment, pedagogy and practice was a common experience identified by *all* the interviewees. As discussed in Chapter 3.3, Heidegger wrote about the Dasein (experience of being) as always '*pressing into new possibilities*' or projecting itself in terms of various possibilities, various ways in which to be. Dasein is always '*on the way to being*' (Cerbone, 2008 p.35). The inability of teachers to have any critical or creative input in shaping or contextualising their courses resulted in a sense of mediocrity and effected some more than others. Caroline, Fares and Omar were professionally concerned for their careers and development. Fares had resigned and Caroline was worried about '*being left behind*' as she described her career as '*stalled*'. Hannah, Elizabeth and Omar's focal concerns were for their inability to develop pedagogy. They converged around an idea that what had been eroded, both collectively and individually, was their ability to act on possibilities to widen what education in their subject area might mean. The care structure can be used to understand these subjective experiences of de-professionalism: without possibilities to conceive of, make meaning and enact their own change, teachers' work became inauthentic. With no avenues of possibility open to them, it was this positioning, as a means to an end, which was demoralising and de-professionalising.

This notion of possibility also revealed what the teachers understood their agency to mean. Teachers had a cognitive understanding of teacher agency linked to an expectation of having judgement and control over their work. Common examples were linked to perceptions of the static curriculum including

thoughts such as: *'less assessment'*, *'I'd like to synthesise more diverse readings into my course'*, *'I'm stuck with poor resources'*, *'include less theory'*, *'include more activities'*, *'include different viewpoints'*, *'develop the students' interpersonal skills'*, *'I'd prefer a more critical approach'* and *'more dialogue'*.

Their perceptions of agency also emerged more fundamentally in terms of 'beliefs' (Biesta, Priestley and Robinson, 2015 p.1). Powerfully converging across all the interviews was a sense of search for possibility wider than the individual. The way some spoke about their professional identity was relational, to serve something transcending the separate self, illustrated by Hannah talking about a *'calling'*, connected by Omar and Fares to Islamic values, expressed by Caroline as of some kind of active 'sharing' and 'making a difference' and by Dave as *'a call of duty'*. This can be understood as a belief in the value of a sense of communal *being*. This links to Rogoff's (1994) identification of participation in shared sociocultural endeavours being an essential aspect of learning. The teachers wanted possibilities to be part of creative groups to actively: *'form a collective vision'*, *'develop our potential as staff'*, *'aim our energies'* (in the department), *'generate a creative dynamic in the department'* and *'form a local research team'*. In this respect, for this WEIRD group of teachers, agency included a belief the value of environments, which allowed collective spaces for *being* from which creative practice might emerge.

5.2 Theme 2: Regulation

This theme includes the overarching performance management culture and goes on to detail how that impacted curriculum and creativity.

5.2a Performance management cultures

Performance management was a dominant topic. The teachers in the study were overwhelmingly focused on the impact and it was the focus of much of the discussion across the interviews. The negativity that threaded through much of the interview content was due to professional activity being framed through it. Performance Management was an objective of Goal 4 (appendix 4), where it was positioned as a means of 'efficient' and 'effective governance' to enable 'organisational excellence'. How the teachers spoke about the performance management process was strongly conveyed through their linguistic choices. Words such as: *stifling*, *closed*, *constraining*, *confining*, *unimaginative* and

constricting were indicative of this. It's perceived potency, in their reality, as a control mechanism was very clear. The experiences of teachers converged around a perception of the performance management process as being restrictive. Teachers' responses to this differed, but mostly resulted in setting easily achievable goals, avoiding goals that were subjective or ambitious, setting false goals and falsifying the achievement of goals. Matt referred to the idea, embedded in standards models, that education in some way can be made to work as a more or less perfect input-outcome machine (Biesta, 2016 p.354). As a result, a more nuanced development of their pedagogy did not appear as an easily measurable goal and therefore other goals were chosen.

It was clear that this intentional directedness that the SMART goals had encouraged was limiting to imagining or developing innovative practice. Heidegger's conception of the *dasein* (being-in-the-world) helps to further understand the challenge of the task at hand. The system was based on functional principles, the pursuit of learning broken down into units, each assessed as an individual component. Omar believed education should not be '*off the shelf*' or something to be '*administered*'. In this climate he '*felt like a number*'. Elizabeth referred to teachers working towards '*products*' and '*delivering outcomes*' and the term '*evidence*' was commonly used. Heidegger reminds us of the complexity, or even impossibility of this task, with his hyphenated phrase 'Being-in-the- World', which indicates that 'the world' and 'being' cannot be separated. Matt said education was immeasurable as a '*nuanced art*', and Dave believed education to be about '*discovery and creativity*', he saw not only '*no celebration of innovation*' but that '*innovation was squashed*'. Elizabeth also saw this but recognised it as a limitation of senior management to understand that '*the value is hidden in the process rather than the shiny end product*'. Using Heidegger's concept, the essence of teaching and learning cannot be found in the isolated measures or components, it is so closely associated with the context that it can only be fully understood from a holistic sense within it.

What is significant here is the other forms of CPD activity that the performance management process excluded by its presence. Dave wanted to pursue an alternative award bearing qualification, Caroline and Fares, research activities

and conference attendance. Omar wanted to develop experiential learning in the classroom, Caroline wanted to develop use of simulation programmes and Hannah innovation projects. The teachers were unable to pursue these, using a range of terms such as *'doesn't fit'*, *'not a priority'*, *'dictated'*, *'prevented'*, *'management not interested'* and *'not allowed'*. The targets and focus had been set and had closed-down options.

The teachers did not speak about significant collaborations as they tended to work in isolation. [REDACTED] such as Dave had mentioned the *'creative silos'* that existed prior to the reform. Matt mentioned different seating arrangements and spaces that had been available to staff, that had now gone. Fares mentioned being unwilling to travel to other campuses due to the clocking in and out system not being considered part of his mandatory 8-hour day. Caroline mentioned her *'isolation'* and Dave the *'cliques'* of nationalities who did not mix. Through its individualising focus and reliance on measurable data, the performance management tool had limited both the focus on, and opportunities for, other types of CPD that were more collegiate.

Adding to this narrowing of possibilities, teachers perceived their work as reduced conceptually into work hours (contractually 38 per week), clocking in and out was a contractual requirement and all the teachers mentioned it in a negative way that seemed counter the *'effective governance'* of Goal 4 (appendix 4). This idea, to teachers coming from educational establishments in WEIRD countries, was alien and some, exemplified by Fares, took great affront to it. His perception was that this type of practice was like a *'factory worker, clocking in and out of a shift'*. Their affront seemed to be towards their trusted intellectual work, intrinsically motivated, being unnecessarily externally regulated.

There was a clear convergence of *'performativity'* at play (Ball, 2003). The teachers converged in revealing that they had surrendered their authenticity to processes where they showed some divergence by either masking, embellishing or constructing fictions about their true behaviour. Dave articulated this most clearly: *'I'll say what they want me to say', 'it's a hoop', 'it's in my interests to make them (targets) easy', 'people are demotivated to perform to minimum standards', 'put a cap on what people are prepared to commit to', 'put*

energies into the fiction' and *'systems of punishments and rewards'*. There were strong threads of this running through all the interviews, comments could be unambiguously coded as having strong elements of performativity. The language of frustration was evident as they fought to find meaning within their roles. *'I'm ashamed'*, *'disappointed'*, *'low motivation'*, *'struggle'*, *'compromise the best things'*, *'strangling push'*, *'intolerance'* and *'provokes anxiety'*. The perceptions of the group converge to paint an honest and at times difficult picture of their struggles as they tried to find meaning within a general sense of de-professionalism.

There was a hierarchy of values implicit in the teachers' decision-making processes around what actions they chose to do and not to do. The process had led teachers to prioritise doing something expedient over doing something meaningful. What lay behind Omar's observation of a lack of *'push-back'* from teachers was a perception of high stakes accountability with serious consequences to it. Teachers chose not to challenge or question it in any way. This construction of their performance had become more important to them than their actual performance. The way teachers thought about and labelled the processes was an important factor in determining their response. Exemplified in Dave's interview, three others had also intentionally fabricated or falsified evidence to achieve their targets. Critically, they were all influenced by the means to secure continued employment that lies at the end of the performance management process. It is this aspect which is perceived before anything else. The performance management tool cannot be considered a neutral tool to analyse professional practice, but a channel for other value structures to be filtered through from the wider environment. Likewise, the performance management tool cannot be dismissed as not fit for purpose, it is a semblance where wider influences are manifested. The performance management tool, attached to fundamentally critical life needs such as employment, housing and residency, was not able to operate as a genuine tool that promoted meaningful growth with its necessary risks and failures.

5.2b Curriculum

Matt reported *'no cross-pollination of ideas'*. The colleges had a multidisciplinary approach to education: knowledge was organised within disciplinary teams with

limited opportunities to develop an interdisciplinary approach towards anything from pedagogy, online learning or assessment. Alexander (2009 p.513) writes that curriculum has a broad sense, 'everything that the college does' and a narrow sense, 'what is formally required to be taught'. The latter is what the curriculum at HCT had been narrowed to mean in the experiences of the teachers. A Goal 2 (appendix 2) objective was to 'ensure breadth and depth of academic programmes' and centralised processes sought to prescribe that to align with accreditation demands. The impact of this was evident in the way knowledge was conceptualised by Caroline: '*the idea of sharing knowledge died*', by Fares: '*I can't apply them (new ideas) in the classroom*' and Omar: '*ploughing through content*'. 'The subject areas encourage us to believe there are singular, correct answers and with appropriate expertise we can know everything about something' (Rix, 2019 p.38) and as such, courses became underpinned by a technical rationality which then connected to approaches to assessment. This resulted for all the teachers, to varying degrees, in a stifling of both pedagogy and autonomy over content. Elizabeth, with innovative pedagogies and an interdisciplinary perspective, felt de-professionalised by feeling forced to teach to meet the narrow learning outcomes of regular multiple-choice online tests, which pushed her into teacher-centred modes of teaching to the test. It was the teachers' perception that pedagogies at HCT, including advanced ones, were subsidiary to the curriculum content. Caroline preferred to teach in a way that was teacher-centred but felt de-professionalised by being provided with pre-determined content that didn't allow her to use her subject specialism. Hannah referred to her role as '*driving a car*' and '*using a manual*', Caroline referred to the content as '*dead wood*'.

Teachers recounted processes around curriculum, pedagogy and assessment that had broken down. Typical examples included: no time for curriculum contextualisation, '*irrelevant content*' (Matt), pre-reading for flipped classrooms not being done (Dave and Caroline), parallel communities (Matt), grade inflation (Caroline) and narrow multiple-choice assessments (Elizabeth). The teachers recounted being stuck with problems which they had no authority to address. Matt said, '*teachers need to be able to think*', and Caroline, '*we have to react*'. These were important insights.

5.2c Creativity

Looking through the transcripts for references to creativity or creative projects, there was little to be found. Omar, Hannah, Elizabeth and Matt directly referred to a loss of autonomy. Lack of autonomy, for the teachers, was linked to a feeling of a lack of trust. Without professional trust, teachers such as Dave were unwilling to take risks without the trust of the system behind him: *'it all comes back to having faith in their (the teachers') ability'*. This limited all the teachers' ability to proceed creatively. The language choices portrayed how the teachers felt about the heavy focus on educational outcomes, using terms such as: *'culture of results', 'selling yourself', 'static', 'vested interests', 'aftermath', 'buy in', 'secretive', 'impermanence', 'guarded', 'protective' and 'fear'*. These were not indicative of a system that encouraged creativity. They described a system where training was *'drilled', 'reductive' and 'wholesale'*. Elizabeth described the logic as *'increasing control to increase quality'* and the impact of that as having the opposite effect. Dave perceived that *'efficiency', 'accuracy', 'completion' and 'quality'* were institutionally *'valued'* and it was this that limited creative expression.

The Strategic Plan 2.0 had implied a rethink in the relationship between learning, innovation and how knowledge is created in social spaces. The teachers aligned with this in their references to knowledge building, developing pedagogy and other creative activities which they linked to wanting involvement in wider groups such as: *'colleagues' (Omar), 'research groups', (Fares and Caroline) and 'regional groups' (Elizabeth)*. Dave went further, he saw, the lack of diverse groups as *'a lost opportunity'* to develop pedagogy. Research focused teachers, used to travelling to external conferences, could not conceive how to relocate that research activity internally to the targeted *'applied research environment'* (Goal 2, appendix 2). Reductivist targets saw teachers limiting *themselves* from finding a more creative formation of their practice. The lack of spaces and support for co-agency *within* institutional structures limited localised creative practice. A Goal 4 objective (appendix 4) *'to retain and develop high quality staff'* was compromised due to this. It can be summarised that the wider discourse of the targets and outcome measures had displaced and even starved the development of a research-based orientation within the innovation spaces. To activate this type of practice Hannah spoke about *'building from the*

ground-up and *requiring dynamic processes*. The teachers converged in their view that this needed to be *a long-term change* with some seeing LCE as a *cultural value* or *cultural shift* with others pointing to the need for *a paradigm shift*, *ideological change* and the need for *a change in methodology*.

5.3 Theme Three: CPD

The teachers identified and chose to discuss aspects of CPD that they had experienced: training, award bearing, cascade, prescribed collaborative networks and teacher observations. They also spoke about those they had not experienced. In the context of these, they spoke about how CPD had impacted their pedagogy and practice.

5.3a Technical Training

The learning platform, Blackboard, follows a standard training model, which is undertaken individually and comprised essentially of technical training. Technical training in how to operate the learning management system, according to the teachers, did not clearly lead to advancements in pedagogy. Fares distributed readings to be undertaken on a PDF, Caroline showed her power point slides on an interactive smart board and others created multiple choice tests to measure progress. More technically ambitious teachers like Caroline ran virtual forums and simulations. The presence or use of technology was not an indicator of advancing practice or an automatic site of innovation. The way technology was used by teachers was a reflection of both their understanding of pedagogy and the wider environment's capacity to support that development.

Perceptions and use of technology were closely associated with context. Fares had a negative perception of the implications of digitising his courses. His meanings were constructed around an individualised precarity in relation to his contract: being either replaced by technology or having his teaching load increased due to it. There was a perception that some teachers were using this technology to move to asynchronous online classes. Elizabeth said, *'the focus is on how to control an issue (asynchronous classes) rather than a pedagogical imperative'*. Dave, whose role included running workshops, had chosen a linear training model because he perceived that teachers saw this as an easy option, meaning he would get positive reviews. Anything that posed a challenge, he

thought, could run the risk of not going well. He wasn't prepared to take risks by running collaborative or reflective courses that might be challenging to teachers and give him low attendance or bad reviews. Caroline added to this view, *no-one challenges themselves or others in this college*.

The terms used in both the plans were bare of definition. The first strategic plan included the terms: *distance learning, open learning, mobile technologies, smart learning, learning technologies* and *access programmes through e-learning*. Strategic Plan 2.0 was noticeably different, using phrases such as: *ubiquitous learning, learner centred environments, creative collaboration and immersive learning*, and illustrated in the strategic plan document with photographs of students using technology. The focus has shifted from technology allowing mobile learning to technology allowing innovative learning. The training model however had not engaged the teachers in context rooted discourse, relevant adaptation or discussion. The teachers interviewed did little that went beyond the static universal training model, use of technology was functional and led to little remixing and repurposing. The connection of innovative learning in technology to the promoted learner centred pedagogies had not been formed by the teachers, perhaps leading to the confusion around how it was to be used. Teachers were unsure whether asynchronous learning was permissible or represented bad practice.

5.3b Award Bearing

The college made HEA membership mandatory for its teaching staff in an attempt to professionalise teachers and assure quality through external certification. Being the UK Professional Standards framework, it had significant perceived authority. It was clear that, in Dave's mind, it was a performativity task. The wider context had influenced his approach to undertaking it, and he had therefore done it in a way that was more of a hiatus, at the expense of any real reflection on practice. The meaning, as it presented itself to Dave, was reduced to a mere objective. Fares had undertaken it as a meaningful reflection to *'advance his career prospects'*, but for Hannah and Elizabeth it was *'a time-consuming activity'*, *'not developmental'* and viewed similarly to Dave. Caroline viewed it instrumentally: it might be *'good for my C.V'*. Making sense of this with

a Heideggerian view, a person is always a person in context, the blanket requirement had produced a range of individual responses.

5.3c Cascade

The teachers' experiences revealed a clear culture of using the cascade model for CPD. The idea is one expert will train a number of others, who train a number of others. It is a mode of transmission. Omar's perception of this was revealed when he talked of how management '*loved to tell them information*', inferring his dissatisfaction. Omar was frustrated by this model since he felt he was '*being told things I already know*'. He wanted to get on with building shared experiences, to fit pedagogy into his new context alongside colleagues. Faculty experienced a key-note lecture, at an internal conference, about the flipped classroom technique, and were '*advised to go ahead*' with it by management (Dave). This was a cascade model that went straight from conference presentation to the classroom. There were contextual dynamics here which the teachers who chose to speak about it (only Caroline didn't) identified. These included, a lack of training in student-centred strategies to then use in the class time, SEN which needed accounting for, low reading and comprehension levels in English of the students, unsuitable classroom environments to facilitate group work and preference for transmission (Fares) to '*get through*' curriculum content. The teachers from WEIRD backgrounds were at an advantage in that they were already experienced in setting up learner centred environments. Matt reported teachers had not been given a forum to share any of that knowledge. Elizabeth converged saying that *not* being asked had felt '*devaluing*' to her expertise and experience. Her view was that the Education departments were well placed to support their peers in other departments. Matt mentioned the EFL expertise within his department which was '*ignored*'. Some of the reluctance to use the strategy was tied to misperceptions of LCE (further discussed in 5.3f). Sharing professional experiences is a process that takes time and whilst cascading seems efficient, in this instance the teachers wanted more time to contribute.

5.3d Peer networks

Goal 1 (appendix 1) had aligned 21st-century skills with the WEF's 2015 broad visualisation (figure 1.2). KPIs around this were segmented across 'campus

offerings', 'the local community' 'graduation statistics' and 'achievement of programme learning outcomes'. The latter might have been a responsibility of the prescribed curriculum and assessment group however according to perceptions, the prescribed peer networks were about '*compliance*' and '*compromise*' to meet the accreditation demands of Goal 2 (appendix 2). Matt's involvement was linked to his managerial position. The teachers not involved thought that the groups were *not* about course development. Caroline saw them as '*not even being about education*' and leading to, what Hannah saw as '*unprincipled decisions*' and '*counter to good pedagogy*'. Matt claimed there was '*no space or opportunity to trial, adapt or discuss*' and that '*it's secondary to nearly everything we do here*'. It was unclear whether the remit of the group was to incorporate '21st century skills' into programme learning outcomes, or what these were understood to be.

Others did not mention peer networks within the college. What might be considered more informal networks were based on nationality, seen by Dave as '*cliques*' who reinforced each other's (bad) practice. Hannah used the term '*group of expatriates*' in reference to WEIRD teachers, for whom she said the '*cascade model didn't work*'. Dave referred to these peer groups as '*parallel communities*'.

5.3e Teacher observation

As part of his [REDACTED] Matt observed teachers in the classroom. Of all the interviewees, it was Matt in his role inducting and observing classes who perceived that he had advanced his pedagogy the most. The discussions he had had with teachers following his observations, in his opinion, led them both to insights and areas for development. He mentioned development of '*curiosity*', '*initiative*', '*persistence*', '*adaptability*', '*leadership and social – cultural awareness*' through which both he and the new teachers had developed. He said he felt privileged to be in a position where he could see so many inspiring practitioners. I asked him about other observations, but aside from the new teachers, observations had only occurred as part of a deficit model. Observations only occurred when a teacher's practice had been identified as below par or as part of the contract renewal process. Caroline and Fares indicated being '*stressed*' and '*worried*' about them due to this connection.

Elizabeth positioned observations as ‘*a show*’ and ‘*not representative of what actually happens in class*’.

5.3f SCE/LCE

Between the two Strategic Plans there had been a move away from the use of the phrase ‘*Learning by Doing*’, replaced in the 2017 -2021 document with a more broadly defined *student-centred learning environments* and *ubiquitous learning*, including more abstract concepts such as *innovation*, *inclusive*, and *immersive learning*. The assemblage of pedagogies promoted in the second strategic plan were not further defined, unpacked or in development in any systematic sense within the experiences the teachers spoke about. Fares perceived some pedagogic strategies as reduced to ‘*buzz words*’ and ‘*products*’ implying a surface, shallow meaning, shared by Elizabeth, who said LCE had ‘*come down to a target between talk time and activity time in the classroom*’.

For some of the teachers there was a polarised view of modern and traditional pedagogies. Three of the teachers dismissed the non-western teachers’ pedagogy off hand as ‘*not relevant*’ and ‘*out-dated*’. Dave reported ‘*not wanting to pick up their pedagogy*’ which somewhat fed into Hargreaves’s (2010) idea of an ideological conflict between traditionalism and progressivism (2.1b). Matt’s heightened and more nuanced appreciation of this was directly related to his observations, which had caused him to shift his ideas on pedagogy and discover a less binary distinction between the ‘*traditional and student centred teaching methods*’ that Goal 2 of the second strategic plan had promoted (Higher Colleges of Technology, 2017 p.12). Caroline expressed a feeling from the other teachers that LCE was outside of what was considered normal or understood. Hannah perceived it as ‘*looking chaotic to the untrained eye*’ and Elizabeth converged saying ‘*management don’t understand it*’. The non-citizen teachers were on difficult ground in their new socio-cultural context. Omar considered it ‘*a risk*’ to practice something that others in his department did not understand, aligning with Hannah who also viewed practicing LCE as a ‘*high risk decision*’. The views from the teachers around SCE/LCE were that it was ‘*squashed*’, ‘*gone*’, ‘*misunderstood*’, ‘*not aligned*’ and ‘*not shared*’. Autonomy for the teacher lay in the choice to experiment with LCE as Omar did, or not as Hannah chose to.

There was a clear idea that SCE/ LCE could only work in an environment where the formation of curriculum and assessment was part of participatory practices between both teachers and students. Teachers needed spaces where *they* were the learners, developing what to learn, how to learn and how to be assessed. Dave explicitly recognised LCE as a democratic model that '*doesn't quite fit*'. Matt talked about '*no-time for participation*' and having '*autonomy taken away*'. Elizabeth spoke about creative practice emerging from '*working together*'. Omar resisted the management style of '*telling them what to do*' and clearly articulated his preference for autonomous and participatory work processes. Hannah also thought that ideally teachers '*could develop their pedagogy together*'. Fares saw pedagogy as being '*forged*' and becoming '*our way of doing things*'. Overall, the terms of the Strategic Plan emerged as empty policy phrases due to lack of participatory practices between teachers which resulted in misunderstandings amongst the wider staff. Moving across a continuum between traditional teaching and any version of SCE/ LCE was not seen as viable in the HCT context.

5.4 Theme 4: Community learning

Teachers spoke about ways they were learning, mostly through an individualised acquisition of knowledge and transmission experiences. They also strongly identified Rogoff's third way of learning through its absence: joining with others in the community. Rogoff (1994) refers to this distinct, third way of learning as 'a community of learners' and whilst all learning is a process of transforming participation in shared sociocultural endeavours, a community of learners enable different aspects of learning to emerge (p.210). This theme draws together the teachers' perceptions of being connected to community learning.

5.4a Participation and learning within the teaching community

Induction is a unique phase of professional development and seems pertinent in any case, but even more so in moving internationally where teachers must progress through stages of relating, merging and developing their practice into a new social working environment. Matt, [REDACTED], admitted that the focus was on probation rather than induction as did Caroline and Elizabeth. This focus challenged Caroline because her knowledge and skills were subject to managerial scrutiny in the new context as it merged with differing conceptions.

To make knowledge meaningful, we need to know how it can fit with the requirements of the socio-cultural context which 'situates learning in forms of social co-participation' (Lave and Wenger, 1991 p.13). Differing to probation, induction into a new socio-cultural environment gives opportunities to understand how to remap professional qualifications and expertise to the new context. An identifiable probation period would represent learning through participation that can be understood as a form of 'legitimate peripheral participation' (ibid p.27) where new employees become integrated.

Evident throughout the interviews was that the WEIRD teachers all had underlying democratic assumptions in their understanding of professionalism (outlined in 5.3f). In the CPD mentioned, the teachers expressed a preference for peer observation, classroom observation, discussion groups, peer networking, informal networks, (Matt), learning from other teachers, trialling (Dave), regional groups, interdepartmental groups, inductively formed codes of conduct, (Elizabeth), internal forums, inter-agency forums, (Hannah), creative environments, departmental development groups (Omar), self-governing, self-correcting groups (Fares), time in entrepreneurial spaces and longitudinal research (Caroline). These examples closely encompass Lave and Wenger's 'mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire' (1991).

Putting multinational and multicultural teachers together did not automatically lead to building any shared repertoire around SCE/LCE. Teachers encountered pre-existing practices, but there was little opportunity to relate or map these together through formal or informal networks which were '*not aligned in any shape or form*' according to Dave. In reference to a multi-national staff, Elizabeth thought that '*not everyone was on board*' with '*the paradigm shift*' towards collaborative ways of working for professionals. Caroline had experienced colleagues who did not want to collaborate and were possessive over their materials. Elizabeth also perceived no inter-departmental collaboration and Dave 'cliques'. Omar wanted to '*refine*' courses through collaboration but there was '*no time*' due to the speed of the reform. Elizabeth echoed this saying '*quality was sacrificed for efficiency*' with Dave mentioning that '*efficiency and completion*' were prioritised. These priorities were in tension

with processes to allow mutual engagement and collaboration that might have led to collective learning.

When talking about colleagues with no training in SCE/ LCE, responses were mixed as to whether those teachers could be successful. LBD and the 'flipped classroom' had been presented as strategies rather than rooted in theory. Hannah thought it '*not impossible to build a methodology from the bottom up*' with teachers given strategies in advance of understanding the theory behind them. Diverging somewhat in the idea that this way of working was possible, Matt thought it was difficult to '*pull everyone up*' in the current context, where a focus on skills had been diversionary to development of theory. Dave, Caroline, Elizabeth, Fares and Hannah expressed skepticism over whether this blending of practice was possible in the current climate. Omar was part of professional conversations with his departmental colleagues, and he clearly located his creative aspirations in the realm of these relationships and practice. He saw his (all non- WEIRD) departmental colleagues as the frontier where any dynamic practice would emerge. His perspective aligns to an idea of 'the iterative nature of reality' (Whyte, 2019), the idea that what we create is created with others in conversation. Hannah questioned '*what gets to be innovative?*', indicating that there needed to be a forum to debate and shape the concept from the ground up without, as Caroline said, '*pushing them (innovations) into a timeline*'.

The development of 21st-century skills had been located in the wider campus and community by Goal 1 (appendix 1). Teachers did not indicate any engagement with the idea of 21st-century skills, the term for them was not populated with meaning. The target to *blend innovative and traditional methods* (appendix 2) was not working well. The interviews exposed that the policy phrases across the Strategic plan, and measured in Goal 5 (appendix 5), such as *innovation labs, 21st-century skills, quality, innovation* and *best practice* had not, in the reality of teachers, been understood with a unified meaning. Fares referred to some of them as '*products*' which came and went. In Hargreaves's 'Collegiate Age of teaching' (Hargreaves, 2010), collective ways of working are required *because of* 'proliferating teaching methods that go beyond simple distinctions between traditional and student-centred methods' (ibid p.162). The teachers' perspectives demonstrated that the increasing complexities of

expanding teaching methods and technology use *cannot* be successfully developed by a teacher working in isolation, implementing strategies. A transformation of participation was required to connect knowledge meaningfully the UAE cultural context.

5.4b The wider community

The colleges can be understood as situated within a wider community of provision (Rix 2019), made up of settings and services working together to provide learning and support for young people in the locality. The teachers' experiences of community can be organised according to the six perspectives Rix identifies to frame the types of community (2019 p.40).

Community systems: Wider community concerns mentioned by the strategic plan centred on an objective⁴⁰ policy priority to build external business and industry input to the course content including work experience programmes for the under graduates. These more systematic ideas of community were all tied to strategic partnerships, focused on an objective purpose for the students to become the human capital to build the UAE economy. References to community mentioned by the interviewees were rooted in more normative perspectives.

Community of students: Elizabeth and others had concerns over a lack of a reading culture in home environments. There were general low levels of literacy in standard Arabic, with students using the Khaliji dialect, on top of the struggles of Arabic mother tongue speakers learning in English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Rix (2015) highlights a historical legacy in education initiatives that positions print literacy as 'a fundamental social need' which 'overtook other communication tools' (p.9). This assumption manifested in curricula leaning towards a print form of communication (in English) which doubly disadvantaged the students, all of whom lived within the oral tradition of the UAE. Hannah mentioned that competence in the first language was masked from the monolingual teachers and interrupted the ability of many students to engage as they did not have the level of reading literacy, in either language, required for the flipped classroom strategy to be successful. There were no identified wider

⁴⁰ Economic as identified by Labaree 2017

community strategies to address any of this. Perhaps as a result, others mentioned rampant plagiarism with use of essay writing websites and endemic cheating in exams. This could be said to be a failure to recognise the 'different emergent paths, local priorities and imperatives' (Rix 2015 p.10) within the community of students.

Community Staffing: Teachers in the HCT in no way represented a cross-section of the local community that the colleges served. None of the teachers spoke Arabic so were reliant on being trained in EFL strategies. Within the differing cultural assumptions and language barriers between teachers and the local population emerged misidentification, misunderstanding and poor provision around different aspects of learning. Matt mentioned that equality of access in the public schooling system was a blind spot, with nuances in this not picked up on in the HE context. Some students arrived with significant gaps in learning and unidentified learning difficulties. Engagement with high schools was linked to an enrolment target rather than a learning imperative around sharing student information or educational collaborations. There were high levels of absence, due to family time being prioritised over study, interpreted by some teachers as unauthorised absence and lack of commitment to study. Teachers spoke about contradictions between some teachers' ideas of critical thinking and discussion of politically sensitive views in class discussions.

Community spaces: Teachers displayed unwitting bias in relation to not understanding the impact of prayer times, 5 times a day, and religious holidays on revision, assessments and exams. The role of mosques and majlises⁴¹ in this was not made in order to learn from each other and find community strategies to approach this. The non-citizen teachers made no mention of being connected to the wider community spaces as *citizen* teachers may be expected to be.

Community strategies were tied to students' mandatory community service hours. Connections with '*voluntary community organisations*' was tied to an objective to 'enhance trust in the HCT brand' (appendix 3) rather than a social aspect of learning.

⁴¹ Local community gathering place

Community support: Due to quite recent historical and cultural models and experiences of how people learn based on transmission or learners acquiring knowledge, there was some resistance and misunderstanding of more participatory, learner-centred pedagogies. The very real challenges that these examples reveal are wider than what could legitimately be addressed within the bounds of the classroom or even the college. In the context of the fledgling wider educational provision and services of the UAE, a question of the teachers was around both the quality of wider services and the local community's capacity to address some of these issues for which there was not an evident overall community strategy.

Conclusion

The real tension uncovered here is that the Strategic Plan and the UAE National Vision are broadly seeking the type of activity found in Activist professionalism (Sachs, 2016b p.421) and attempting to structure that through instrumental outcomes and managerial and administrative accountabilities. In a context encouraging conservative practices, with teachers protecting self-interests, the policy active, enquiry oriented, knowledge building groups that the knowledge economy desires were constrained by internal and external regulatory requirements. This aligns with Schweisfurth's research which concluded that LCE, and by extension 21st-century skill development, was not compatible with high stakes testing or management regimes (Schweisfurth, 2019 p. 3). The paradigm shift to allow 'transformative participation in shared endeavours' (Rogoff 1994) potentially leading to unique perspectives and learning was largely absent.

In IPA studies, Smith et al. claim that immediate claims are bounded by the group studied, 'but an extension can be considered through theoretical generalisability, where the reader of the report is able to assess the evidence in relation to their existing professional and experiential knowledge' (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009 p. 4). In an extension to the discussion of the interviews, the conclusion will now present two professional models as key findings of the study.

CHAPTER 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter concludes firstly by answering RQ1: how are the reforms experienced? I adapt Sachs's 2016 model to describe the professional model which operated at HCT. Following this, in response to the teachers' experiences of the incongruences between the reform environment and their preferred practice, I put forward the key features of a normative model of professionalism for the HCT. This answers RQ2: how do the teachers want to work? I put forward some essential features of a future normative model of professionalism for the HCT context. I end with a reflection on the value of this study to the field and a wider comment on the 21st-century skills movement.

6.1 Research Question One

RQ1 asked how seven teachers experienced the reforms. The teachers spoke, using everyday examples, about ways in which they adapted their approaches to professional practices inside the processes of the performance management tool, operationalised to monitor the progress of the strategic plan. Their experiences offer a picture of the features that together shaped the realities of their work lives and helps to explain why their pedagogy and practice emerged as it did. The teachers' reflections point to a form of de-professionalism linked to the centralised nature of curriculum and assessment which limited agency. Another aspect of this de-professionalism was in the micropolitics of how power was relayed through the performance management tool.

6.3a Recommendation for an Integrated model of professionalism at HCT

The Literature (Chapter 2.3a 2.3b & 2.4a) and the analysis of Chapter 5.3, strongly suggest that the higher order pedagogies which are designed to produce so called 21st-century skills require democratic processes to flourish. In considering a model of professionalism for the HCT in the UAE context, Sachs's ideal model of Activist professionalism, which positions transformative practices and the production of new knowledge within a mature, democratic environment of attitudinal change, is unrealistic. Indeed, Whitty and Furlong (2017 p.40) argue that Activist professionalism has yet to be securely established in *any* National system, due to its unregulated basis. The UK, for example, only finding an example of a 'de facto autonomy' in how to teach and what to teach existing between 1950 and 1970 (Whitty, 2008 p.33).

The Integrated model described below intends to create a democratic environment, moving away from the existing HCT model which this study has aligned to Hargreaves and Shirley's description of the 'standards and uniformity' of the 'Second Way'. Looking to how the problems of the 'Second Way' were tackled in the reforms of the 'Third Way' provides some direction. The 'Third Way' was distinguished from the 'Second Way' by 'offsetting the heavy top-down models with socially focused, bottom-up elements' (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009 p.10). This approach was also proposed by Warner, whose 2018 study concluded that 'professional development of teachers in the UAE needed to be embedded in communities of practice in order to respond to the needs of a 21st-century education' (p.10). The integrated model takes a wider stance on 'socially focused bottom-up elements', necessarily locating these in *both* communities of practice and communities of provision, due the nature of the non-citizen UAE workforce. Additionally, the integrated model sets out to address the failings of 'managerially minded' systems (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009 p.16) which led to ambiguity around how the social democracy of the Third Way would be achieved. The model begins to address this by shifting the nature of performance management to necessarily include both regulatory and developmental accountability, positioning them as complementary. I now use elements of the above as the basis for an integrated professional model.

6.2 The experienced model of professionalism at HCT

I locate the findings from the HCT experience within Sachs's model, discussed in Chapter 2.4a (shown in Figure 2.3), as this provides a comprehensive map for comparing and distinguishing approaches to teacher professionalism. I make additions and modify Sachs's model in order to represent all aspects of the teachers' experiences at HCT. I chose Sachs's model as a framework for analysing my findings because it identifies three key contemporary issues that were evident at the HCT: performance cultures, regulatory accountability and teacher standards (Sachs, 2016 p.414) and allows us to see how they intersected to invoke a form of professionalism peculiar to the HCT. Particularly helpful is the identification of the different types of CPD within each model, which aligns closely with the focus of this research which sought to identify actual experiences. Sachs recognises these types of professionalism are not

'clear-cut', but do represent a real 'chasm between competing desires and expectations' (Sachs, 2016 p.419).

The teachers' experiences at HCT sat primarily within Sachs's managerial/functional quadrant of controlled professionalism. According to Sachs (2016), a managerial approach fosters a more technical approach to professional learning, and a functional approach leads to a focus on improving people's performance which was evident in the technical application of the performance management tool. Controlled professionalism is also reminiscent of the 'standardisation and uniformity' which Hargreaves and Shirley term the 'Second Way' along with its 'negative impact on teacher motivation' (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009 p.10) which was also unmistakable. Accountability was managerial and hierarchical, illustrated by the term used across the institution: 'top down responsibility, bottom-up accountability'.

The four features of Sachs's Controlled Professionalism were evident in the HCT: *regulatory accountability and control by Government, upgrading of skills, students positioned as passive recipients of knowledge and teachers as technicians*. However, Sachs's model did not fully represent other elements of the scenario in the HCT.

Three features of Collaborative professionalism were also evident in the teachers' experiences, yet they existed in a functional environment, rather than one which supported attitudinal change and therefore took a different form. Sachs places these three features as typically operating in an environment of attitudinal change, which she defines as 'focusing on peoples' attitudes to work which are intellectual and motivational', rather than functional and 'driven by performance attained by imposition' (Sachs, 2016 p.420). As such these features emerged differently. Firstly, the *prescribed collaborative networks* became functional through processes of regulatory, bottom-up accountability. Secondly, the processes around *professional renewal* were operationalised through contractual accountabilities focused on the achievement of quantitative targets linked to annual appraisal and contract renewal. Thirdly, the *individualised* nature of the teachers' work took on a distinctive 'performative' nature (Ball 2008) in the functional environment. The first four mirror Sachs's

Controlled professionalism with my adaptations, from the collaborative model, highlighted in green in Figure 6.1.

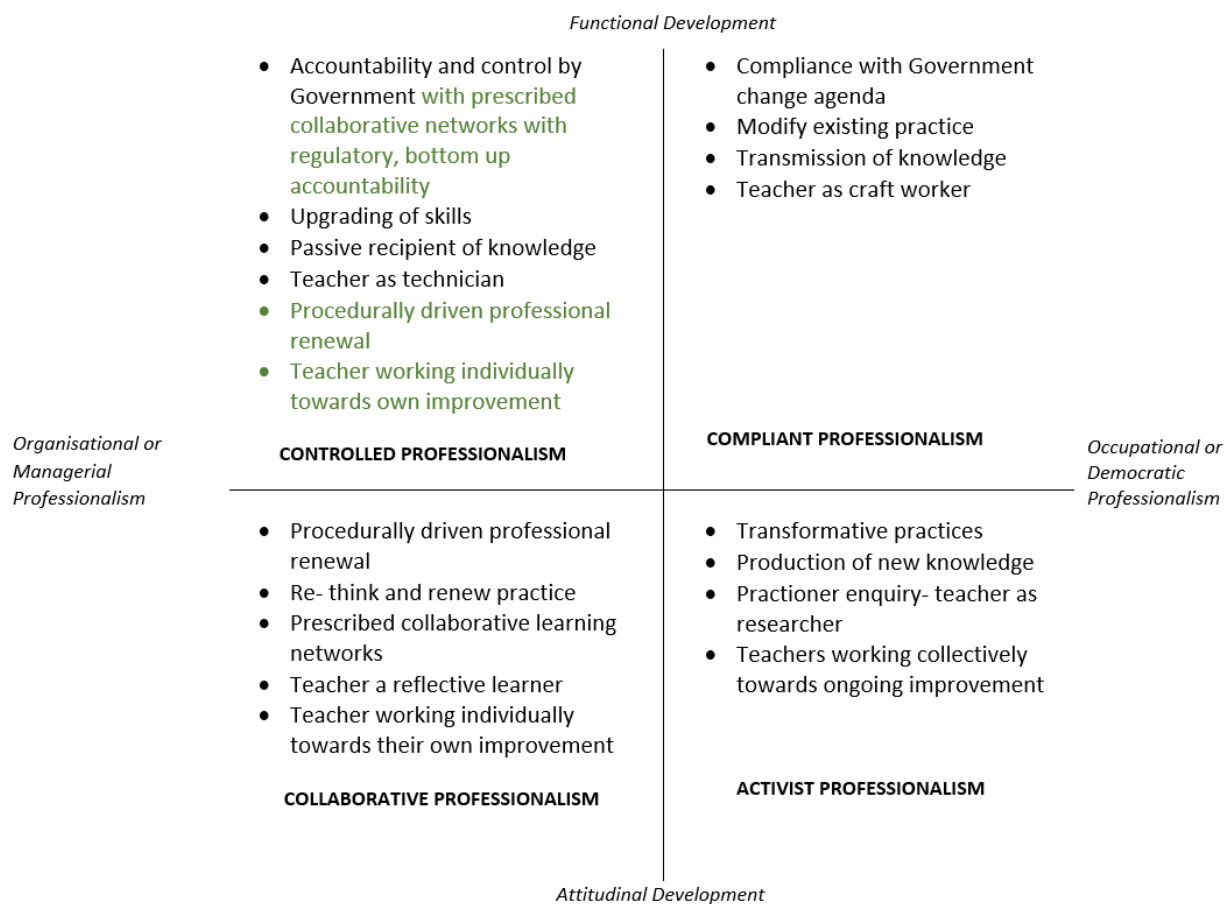


FIGURE 6.1 MODEL OF PROFESSIONALISM IN HCT 2019 ADAPTED FROM SACHS'S 2014 MODEL

Below is a brief discussion of each of the features of the adapted model of Controlled professionalism which operated at HCT, summarising how they link to the teachers' perspectives.

6.2a Accountability and control by Government with prescribed collaborative networks and regulatory, 'bottom-up' accountability.

HCT's large scale, centrally driven reform mirrored features of 'The Second Way of Markets and Standardisation' (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009 p.25), as they aimed to address inconsistencies through standardisation, testing and accountability. The ontology which underpinned the Strategic Plan defined the agenda and set the foundation for the goal oriented and efficient approach to performance management, monitored by regulatory accountabilities which could be described as *hierarchical, bureaucratic, managerial, administrative* and

contractual (appendix 4) (West, Mattei and Roberts, 2011). Sachs identifies that ‘performance cultures are used by governments to link national and international economic agendas with institutional and individual activities’ (Sachs, 2016 p.415), clearly evident in Goal 3 (appendix 3).

The Incheon Declaration 2030, resulting from the World Education Forum of 2015, advocated ‘shared responsibility and accountability’ as a key principle in education (The World Education Forum, 2015). The managerial approach at HCT saw these values reconstituted into the phrase ‘top-down responsibility, bottom-up accountability’ (interview 4.2). The reality of that phrase saw the emphasis move from teachers having responsibilities and being proactive, to being disempowered and accountable to reified targets. This environment weakened the ‘intrinsic moral accountability’ (Eraut, 1994 p.241) of the teachers and emptied meaning from their work.

The collaborative professional networks were controlled and prescribed by senior management. They were set up through functional, top-down processes to focus on curriculum and assessment alignment. The primary goal was to meet the requirements of the Strategic Plan 2.0, specifically Goal 2s aim of achieving accreditation and professional certification of courses (appendix 2). Development was constrained through this, with evidence that this attempt to enhance the international dimension of HCT curricula, resulted in a ‘codification of knowledge that did not significantly acknowledge legitimate diversity of approaches or advances in the field’ (Sachs, 2003 p.179). Critically, in this model, targets and goals can only be an acceleration of dynamics already in play. In this instance, the way that curricula were centralised, removed the ability of the teachers to form ideas at grassroots level. Institutions operating in this way can be considered as always behind, they are unavoidably, through their desire to define the scope of possibility, a construction of the past and potentially limiting to indigenous development.

6.2b. Upgrading of skills

Progressing through levels on Blackboard Learn training was centrally mandated and digital literacy was a priority. The training allowed teachers to repurpose their courses towards online learning and assessment. In the 2017 Strategic Plan 2.0, familiarity with aspects of technology and software was

associated with innovative practice. The training programmes however, were seen by the teachers as having had no significant impact on their pedagogic practice or use of innovation spaces. In the training, technology use had not employed an idea of a co-construction of knowledge between the teacher and the learner (as discussed in Chapter 5.3a). Isolated teachers' responses to Blackboard training resulted in 'the irony that isolation does not create a kaleidoscope of individuality and iconoclastic eccentricity in teachers' classes but dull routine and homogeneity' (Goodland in Hargreaves, 2010 p.161).

6.2c Passive recipients of knowledge

Students were mostly positioned as passive recipients of knowledge in the classroom. This positioning of students connects to the teachers' role being that of a technician. The teachers felt that their teaching priority was heavily oriented to providing the knowledge that was tested in the standardised, online assessments and final exams. Use of SCE/LCE became superfluous to the narrower demands of curriculum and assessment. The incongruence between the top-down, managerial approach of the reform and the 'power sharing' (Bremner 2020) element of SCE/LCE meant that overall, most other aspects of LCE became unviable. The 'power-sharing' that involves teachers and students making 'decisions around what to learn, how to learn and how to be assessed' (ibid p.8) was not possible. Without this fundamental element of LCE, the other aspects: *active participation, classroom interaction, higher-order skills, autonomy, formative assessments and adaptations*, were all either undermined or seen by the teachers as over-shadowed by the narrowed curriculum and assessment regimes.

6.2d Teacher as technician

In practice, the teachers were risk-averse technicians, whose skills and knowledge were focused on the delivery of the curriculum to meet the demands of the final assessment. Alexander (2009) states that 'teaching is always an act of curriculum transformation' (p.9), yet the hierarchical management systems did not allow teachers to contribute towards shaping curriculum. Wenger's (1998) second duality: designed and emergent, became oppositional as teachers were unable to (re)negotiate the curriculum. This links to ideas in critical pedagogy (Giroux.Henry, 2020) that the current, dominant educational

paradigm advocates a model of pedagogy that embraces a technical and instrumental rationality towards teaching and learning (p.1). This was evident. The teachers identified three student-centred approaches which they were expected to use: flipped classrooms, learning by doing and innovation spaces, which might have represented an opportunity to rethink and renew practice, but with limited collaborative spaces or autonomy over curriculum, these possibilities were perceived to be constrained inside the functional environment. Alexander (2009) suggests, in the Anglo-American tradition, pedagogy is subsidiary to curriculum, sometimes inferring little more than 'teaching method' (p.513), which was both perceived and evident in the teachers' practice. The conceptual framework of the strategic plan could only support a technical approach and from this, LCE emerged as disembodied and decontextualised. The flipped classroom and innovation spaces needed to be seeded inside social constructivist pedagogies to sustain coherence and efficacy.

The next two features, placed by Sachs within the collaborative model of attitudinal change, are also present in my adapted model, but sit within a functional environment and so emerge differently in HCT to the way they are depicted by Sachs.

6.2e Procedurally driven professional renewal

The teachers were driven towards achieving contract renewal through the performance management tool which judged them according to whether or not they achieved the targets they had set themselves. The individualised nature of the teachers' work and contractual obligations cast them as the architects of their own renewal, resulting in performativity and self-surveillance (Ball 2008). Teachers described this as resulting in shifting their practice towards individualised training modes of CPD. Management micropolitics (Morley, 2008) explains this, both management and teachers were 'pursuing their interests in the context of the organisation' (p.100) and these 'micropolitical practices', according to Morley, can be lagging behind or even dissonant with the macro policies that aim to engineer a transformation' (p.116). In this case, it was dissonant with curricula and pedagogic growth. From a wider perspective, the study adds to a well-established body of research on the potential de-

professionalising effects of performance cultures (Sachs 2016: Kennedy 2014: Smith 2011: Ball 2003: Eraut 1994).

6.2f Teacher working individually towards their own improvement

The reflective, thoughtful processes identified by Sachs as enabling attitudinal change emerged differently in the functional environment of HCT. The freedom to use the contractual 40 hours of CPD was illusory due to being tied to procedurally driven contract renewal processes and written into SMART targets. This can be understood through Wenger's (1998) identification of a necessary duality, or structural tension, between pre-planned and emergent activities. The targets were individualising and therefore limited possibilities for collaborative ventures. The interviewees described their feelings, ranging from reluctance to inability, to use the 40 hours of CPD developmentally, collectively or creatively. The imbalance of this duality prevented a dynamic of innovation and creativity as the teachers' emergent activities were suppressed. The Goal 5 target of 'employee innovations' (appendix 5) was constrained in this environment.

Summary

Differing from my 2017 IFS, the teachers in this study were selected specifically because they already had experience of the pedagogy that both strategic plans and the UAE National Vision 2021 wanted to develop. This is significant because describing specifically how WEIRD teachers had experienced professionalism at HCT offers a focused picture of teachers as they attempted to blend modern pedagogies into a traditional context.

The 21st-century skills and innovative teaching methods did not emerge in the teachers' practice for four reasons. Firstly, the functional and managerial environment, within which the teachers perceived they worked, discouraged individual, attitudinal change. Secondly, the technical approach of the Strategic Plan 2.0 saw the programme outcomes both dictated by, and dependent upon, the nature of the accreditation processes which were structured outside the arena of practice. The prescribed collaborative groups provided no evidence to the teachers that they had generated the ecologies of cognitive and behavioural skills to include in the programme learning outcomes. Becoming accredited was dependent on external definitions and measurements which were not

necessarily connected to common understandings of 21st-century skills or innovative teaching methods within HCT. Thirdly, teachers were tied to the Strategic Plan through performance management processes, with their focus on goal-oriented rationality and tied to contract renewal this led to easily defined, quantified and evidenced targets being selected. Fourthly, connected to this, the WEIRD teachers, with social constructivist approaches as an element of their previous experiences, found it difficult to make this type of pedagogy work inside the wider environment where there were limited avenues for a co-agential approach to develop shared repertoires. Collectively these elements led to the terms within the Strategic Plan 2.0 becoming 'a phrase that sounds promising at a theoretical (or political) level but means little in practice (Bremner, 2020 p.3). Locating the teachers' experiences inside Sachs's model of controlled professionalism has helped to explain why.

What HCT's Strategic Plan 2.0 had resulted in, perhaps inadvertently, through this instrumental rationality was a focus on the production and reproduction of technical skills in their programmes. If this was the goal, controlled professionalism might have been a logical choice. Yet there were clear aspirations to encourage collaborative and innovative practices in the Strategic Plan 2.0, to ensure pedagogic change. What the teachers experienced was a model strongly reminiscent of Hargreaves and Shirley's 'Second Way', a 'thicket of prescription and standardisation that limits creativity and stifles innovation' (Hargreaves and Shirley, 2009 p.16). Clearly this type of professionalism was not conducive to the production of new knowledge and innovation that the Strategic Plan 2.0 desired. Looking forward, rather than looking at the features from Sachs's model to advocate a movement from one form of professionalism to another, I use Wenger's (1998) concept of a necessary duality between local and global to negotiate a professional model which might achieve a dynamic tension.

6.3 Research Question Two

The second research question asked how teachers wanted to work. The teachers had the experience and wanted to implement the modern pedagogies of the Strategic Plan but were unable to do so for two reasons. Firstly, threaded through their accounts was a need for agency, or using Biesta's term,

subjectification. Subjectification relates to innovative teaching methods and 21st-century skills as Biesta proposes: it is about how ‘individuals can make knowledge their own, engage with, take a stand toward and provide a possible entry into the world’ (Biesta, 2010 p.106). Biesta positions subjectification in a democratic environment. Secondly, teachers wanted to realise their individual capacities within a collaborative ethos, to be part of a community to form a more democratic, relational structure of values. These two themes formed the starting point for the proposed integrated model.

6.4 Integrated Professionalism

The integrated model combines four inter-connected elements which respond directly to the concerns which the interviewees identified as discussed in Chapter 5 and summarised below:

Key findings

- 5.1 Limited agency of teachers
- 5.2 Regulatory approach to curriculum and performance management
- 5.3 Training approach to CPD.
- 5.4 Limited community and co-agency

These key findings translate into five actionable key elements.

Key elements of the Integrated model

- 6.3a. Teacher positioned as subject
- 6.3b. Mix of training and teacher-oriented learning models of CPD.
- 6.3c. De-centralisation and regulatory and developmental accountability.
- 6.3d. Teacher-centred communities of practice.
- 6.3e. Small scale collaborative networks drawing from communities of provision.

Figure 6.2 provides a visual representation showing how the elements connect.

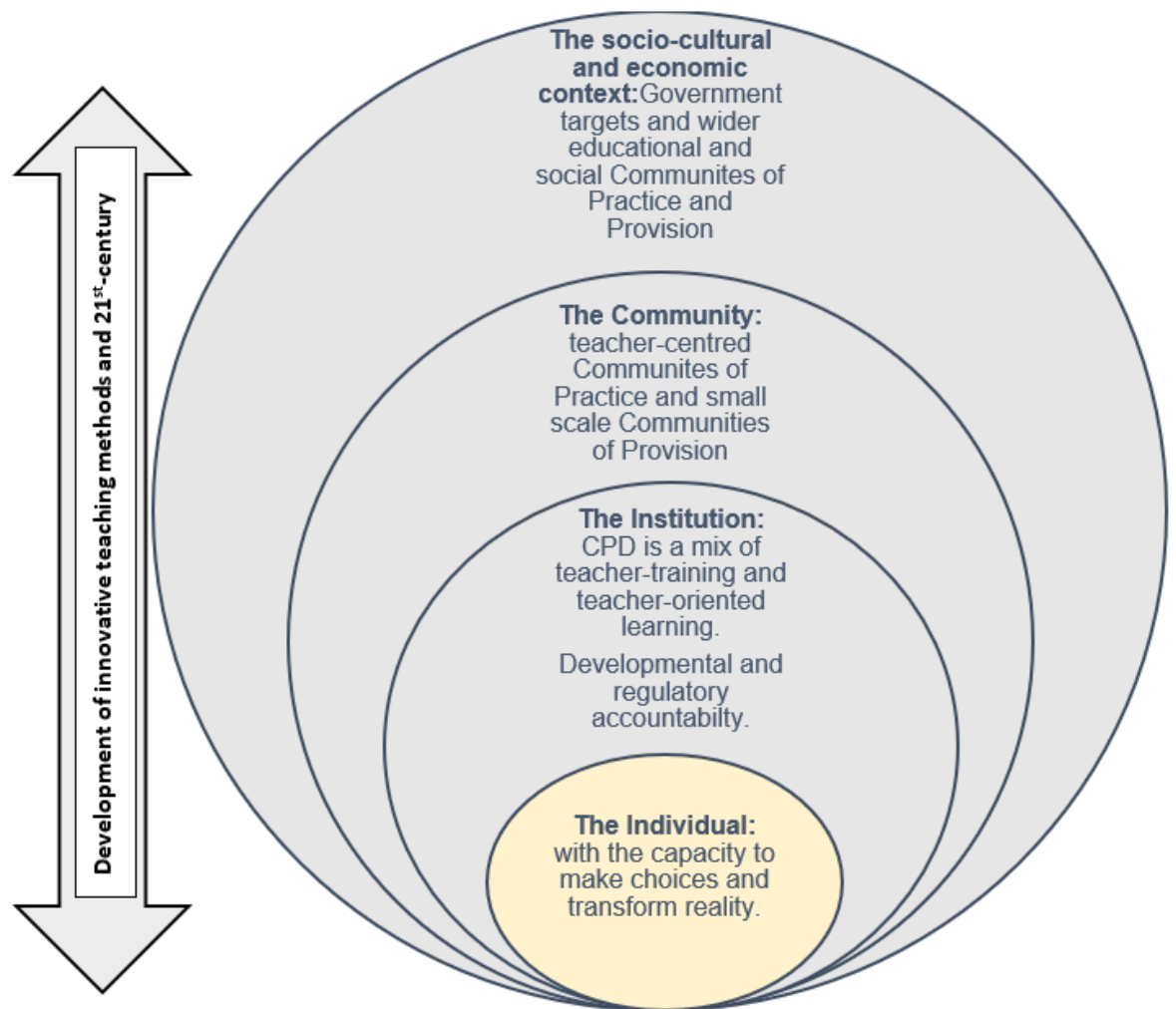


FIGURE 6.2 INTEGRATED MODEL OF PROFESSIONALISM

This integrated model binds the reform reality, as discussed in Chapter 6.2, with three discernible, democratic principles: equality of opportunity for each individual, participation and reciprocity. The model positions the development of innovative teaching methods and 21st-century skills as running across the domains, essentially originating from experimentation and dialogue. These terms become populated with meaning in collaborative spaces. The integrated model is a composite, incorporating the normative and objective values of education (Labaree 2017) and the subjectification value of education (Biesta 2010). Moving towards this model at HCT requires some devolution and decentralisation to redress the top-down management structures and establish democratic processes to reverse the trend of de-professionalism. The model incorporates a balance of change and continuity required to establish the commonalities and diversities around ideas within global pedagogies. Below I

elaborate on each element of the integrated model, drawing on the experiences of the interviewees to illustrate.

6.4a Teacher positioned as subject

Central to this model is that it represents a reconstitution of the human subject. In Sachs's democratic models, a form of subjectification is measured within 'attitudinal development', defined as teachers' attitudes to work. The integrated model goes further than this, drawing on ideas from Biesta of the importance of 'subjectification' which he also refers to as 'the formation of the person' (Biesta, 2010 p.5) as an essential purpose of educational institutions alongside normative and objective purposes. In this study, the concept is applied to the teacher as well as the student. Within the integrated model, the positioning of the person (subjectification) is foundational, essentially underpinning everything else⁴². Informed by Heidegger's care structure, the goal is to orient the individual towards possibilities, aligning with his concept of authenticity. In the integrated model, the individual is the subject, at the centre, with the opportunity and agency to realise their professional responsibilities, with professional and moral accountability. Within this there is a sense of *being* without constraint which involves both potentiality and actuality. This contrasts with the controlled model where the teacher is a technician, positioned as a means to an end.

6.4b Mix of training and teacher orientated learning in CPD with strong induction programmes.

Substantive induction processes are vital for a non-citizen / non-local workforce to address the complex conditions and demands that new employees face, despite their wealth of prior education and experience. These need to be both functional, to fit into the technical needs of the environment, and attitudinal to adapt to the socio-cultural environment. The WEIRD teachers recognised that growth requires a range of CPD, a balance between teacher-centred, context specific CPD and training focused CPD. Features of teacher-oriented learning include a willingness to be led by others' experiences, seen by one interviewee to have had led to more attitudinal change because it localised feedback structures. Inclusion of mentoring, peer coaching and peer observation are further examples of more localised, teacher-orientated strategies required to

⁴² highlighted in yellow

develop understanding within the new context. These would not only offer a valuable socialisation process into the professional context, but have the potential to help build sustainable teacher-orientated learning within communities of practice which contribute to Lave and Wenger's 'mutual engagement, joint enterprise and shared repertoire' (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Mandating well designed induction programmes and specifying and providing for, a balance of training and developmental CPD connected to the performance management process would facilitate this.

6.4c Regulatory and developmental accountabilities

The proposed integrated model includes regulatory targets and accountabilities but to avoid reification, the performance management culture broadens to *require* bottom-up, *developmental* accountabilities. Wenger describes an essential interaction between participation and reification as leading to 'the negotiation of meaning' (Wenger, 1998). Developmental accountability is part of a philosophy of education which argues that any education 'must always contribute to processes of subjectification that allow those educated (including the teachers) to become more autonomous and independent in their thinking and action' (Biesta, 2010 p.21). *Professional accountability* or *moral accountability* sees a teacher trusted to use judgement around curriculum and assessment and is part of more autonomous development.

To encourage teachers to make connections to wider clusters of internal and external stakeholders, working towards local and collective capacity development, there needs to be a requirement to locate individual skills and interests in the context of others, this communicates a principle of collaboration, communication and consultation at the heart of the institution. Ongoing reflection, voice and action could move towards group responsibility for targets. This would include shifting the development of targets onto formal processes within those groups, a *participative accountability* (West, Mattei and Roberts, 2011 p.52) or *network accountability* (ibid p.53), for cyclical development over two or three years rather than individualised targets over one year. This inclusion of wider ideas allows unforeseen possibilities for creativity and innovation, an environment more likely to lead to change. HCT might include a focus in the PMT on a *requirement* for teachers to have both.

6.4d Teacher-centred communities of practice

Lave and Wenger positioned ‘learning as a way of being in the social world, not a way of coming to know about it’ (Lave and Wenger, 1991 p.6). Using 21st-century skills could be said to be a way of being. Castells (2000) cited in Gilbert (2017), suggested that knowledge in the 21st-century has to be reframed away from something we have, a stable body of facts, towards something that we do. It lives in the spaces between experts, it is network expertise, where the network enables connected groups to take ideas further and faster than any individual. (Gilbert, 2017 p.80). In this model teachers are recast as learners, in doing so, semantic spaces are required by teachers to unite practice and build collective meaning around how to develop and achieve the competencies associated with both so called 21st-century skills and SCE/LCE as well as developing an approach to curricula which may begin to consider Eurocentric or Western ideas of curriculum which may restrict indigenous development⁴³.

Schweisfurth’s (2019) question about ‘to what extent LCE is a sound choice for policy and practice in a developing countries’ (or in this case the UAE) is shifted towards *teachers* having the capacity to address her second question ‘under what conditions is it (LCE) a viable one?’ (Schweisfurth, 2019 p.1). Within a community of practice there are opportunities to develop a model of pedagogy that shows no bias towards culturally specific accounts of learning and teaching, this would constitute more viable reform.

A range of accountability mechanisms are required to nurture emergent practices that might develop indigenous research literacy. Producing indigenous knowledge requires close links between teachers and specialists in the field where teachers can build their own learning trajectories. In HCT there was an absence of these direct connections between theory, research and practice. The educational consultancies which the UAE rely on claims that their recommendations are based on academic research, but that research is situated a few steps away from the actual context of teaching. HCT, as a higher education institution, is well placed to form horizontal communities of practitioners, for HE teachers across the colleges to consolidate this research

⁴³ Commonly referred to as decolonising the curriculum.

knowledge base and potentially provide a site for the production of indigenous knowledge, as part of local learning networks or regional hubs. This model does not leave the purchase of best practice to external (abstracted) sources but establishes a climate for it to grow from within learning communities. The diversity of HCT teachers offers a real opportunity for inclusive practice to develop, they are by no means an 'insular' group or 'partial group' whose 'collective and reflective processes lead to limited improvement in practice' (Rix *et al.*, 2015 p.343). As part of the performance management process, identifying the communities of practice that each individual teacher is connected, active or involved in, would begin to show how a teacher is networked and contributing to the wider community.

The model is designed to address the focus on high stakes testing, also a key driver of de-professionalism, by harnessing the inclusive and collaborative agency of communities of practice and provision to drive curriculum and assessment and suggest alternative indicators to testing, to perhaps include more processes involving teacher judgement. However, this is also dependent on the nature of public, or governmental accountability to reduce the impact of external pressure points, one of which is the pressure to succeed in international comparative assessments and rankings.

6.4e Small scale, collaborative networks drawing from communities of provision.

Teachers arriving in the UAE spoke about the difficulty of adapting to the reality of the socio-cultural environment, whilst also attempting to use their expertise. For this reason, in the UAE, communities of provision are vital. The interviewees arrived in the UAE from diverse backgrounds and joined a workforce who are perhaps a less cohesive group than in most countries which rely less on migrant teachers. The teachers in the study were very aware of their partial view of the local culture and knowledge of the learners. In identifying, understanding and responding to the needs of the student body teachers saw themselves as disadvantaged, they needed alliances 'that were not static, but form and are reformed around different issues and concerns' (Whitty, 2008 p.45). In the UAE this would necessarily include more normative community groups who offer services and expertise relevant to each Emirate, be it for the urban colleges of Dubai and Abu Dhabi or the rural campuses of

Ras Al Khaimah or Fujairah. The composition of these would vary according to the students, staff, spaces, support services, strategies and systems that make up the reality of each locality and call for a dialogic form of professionalism.

The UAE contains well established contradictory viewpoints and practices amongst its diverse population as tradition meets modernity, which 'serves to remind its members (non-citizen and local populations alike) that they can both welcome and marginalise others from inside and outside the community (Rix *et al.*, 2015 p.335). It could be said therefore that wider communities of provision are more essential here to build in the perspective of cultural and contextual norms which non-citizens may not be attuned to, such as the ones outlined around literacy. The integrated model widens stakeholder involvement, to include voices who might have 'traditionally been silent in education decision making' (Whitty, 2008 p.44).

The myriad of top-down interests exerting influence on education reform, requires structures to equally enable a diverse range of bottom-up influences which can respond directly to unique realities and societal needs. These are realised through small scale, responsive collaborative networks with network accountabilities 'who co-operate for shared purposes' (West, Mattei and Roberts, 2011 p.52). The inclusion of this principle represents a reorientation of accountabilities to allow channels for reciprocal, local community influence on public education as a form of citizenship. The communities of provision model is an affirmation of the role of the educational institution in providing for social well-being and calls for a re-conceptualisation of the relationships between individuals, communities and institutions. The model aims to establish wide discursive spaces (Sachs, 2016 p.427), where perceptible principles such as co-operation, consultation, collaboration and inclusiveness, that the WEIRD teachers perceived were lacking, provides spaces that lead to the emergence of 'collective imaginings' (Rix, 2019 p.42) with potential for indigenous growth and transformation.

Summary

This study presents some direct suggestions related to HCT and the UAE's Vision 2021. A reconsideration of managerial models is necessary to move away from the idea of 'performance' management with crass individualised responses and quantitative measurements, towards a management tool that promotes and cultivates a different type of conduct which is innumerable. This is found through asking about and then enabling, the teachers' participation in discourse, community building and social action, where advancement is positioned as both individual and mutual. Essentially connected to this, the integrated model advocates horizontal forms of accountability: professional, participatory and network (West, Mattei and Roberts, 2011) or what Biesta (2010) and Sachs (2016) broadly refer to as 'developmental accountability'. Due to the partial view of non-citizen teachers, clear channels for the teachers to access the historical and socio-cultural perspectives of the wider community were also essential to connect, understand and therefore address challenges or barriers to learning peculiar to the student body. Within this there is a flexible, holistic approach to defining 21st- century skills and SCE/LCE from within an institutional collective, explicitly connected with history and current practice. Essentially, it is the distinctive relations between us that determines, directs and nurtures a transformation suited to the creative susceptibilities and priorities of local communities. The study concludes that development within the UAE education community would more likely derive impetus from within localised, grassroots processes which are at the creative frontier of meaning making and indigenous, knowledge-based development.

6.5 Wider recommendations

The findings of this study contribute beyond the immediate context of the research towards a wider consideration of the two questions around 'The Future of Education and Skills 2030', posed by the Director for Education and Skills at the OECD. After posing his first question: 'What knowledge, skills, attitudes and values will today's students need to thrive and shape their world?' (OECD, 2018 p.2), he sets out the OECD position by placing 'learner agency' alongside 'co-agency' of 'teachers, peers, families and communities' as key principles in the learning framework for 2030 (ibid p. 4). Wenger's (1998) duality of 'local and global' is relevant here. The OECD are attempting to create global knowledge that is useful for all local contexts, the list of 'constructs' (appendix 6) suggest a valid range of skills, values and behaviours.

The second question is: 'How can instructional systems develop these knowledge, skills, attitudes and values effectively?' (OECD, 2018 p.2). The stated approach of the OECD is to define and measure the constructs of 21st-century skills (appendix 6&7). The intended scale of measurement is not stated in the document, although accountability is used by the OECD as an instrument in the governance of education at multiple scales with 'a gradual shift of emphasis towards a form of accountability that focuses on the measurement of learning outcomes through large scale testing instruments' (Verger and Parcerisa, 2017 p.29). The use of positivist⁴⁴, quantitative methodologies, in the context of this study, found that the design of the strategic objectives closely twinned with the measurement metrics for success left little room in between for ecologies of meaning making to evolve. This manifested in the classroom through a narrowing of what to learn, closely tied to how to be assessed, to supposedly allow for an objective, fair and systematic outcome. In some respects, within this paradigm, the teacher is perceived as an unquantifiable variable and is therefore repositioned as a means to an end. This study provides an example of how the pedagogy of instrumental rationality, written into the core of HCT's strategic planning and monitored through hierarchical, managerial accountability processes (Nietzsche's 'triumph of rationality'), delimited meaning making and participation. The teachers' lived experiences

⁴⁴ Contemporary positivism: a way of understanding using science.

exemplified how this eroded individual agency and co-agency. Reified targets around *what to learn* and *how to be assessed* limited options on *how to learn*. A clear challenge in 'developing a common language for teaching and learning' (OECD, 2019 p. 9) is how this common language can be shared between communities in a way that encourages agency and co-agency, without the definitions and measurements becoming an unequal expression of the power and hegemony of dominant players focused on human capital alignment.

This study has engaged with ideas of educational reform and transformation at a qualitative level offering a humanistic vision of education. The conclusions reinforce ideas within socio-cultural theories of how learning is imagined, which are important for educational institutions to embrace for indigenous growth, social justice and social well-being. The perceptible principle of the integrated model is democratic participation at all levels: practitioners are positioned inside community processes, co-determining *what* to learn and *how* to be assessed. It is this that creates and widens the scope for teachers to determine the pedagogy of *how* to learn. This model locates meaning making, knowledge generation, innovation and transformation inside the community.

7. References

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8. Appendices

Appendix 1. HCT Strategic Goals. Goal 1. Empowering students with 21st-century skills in a vibrant campus environment engaged with their local communities. HCT 2017 p. 10

GOAL 1

Empowering students with 21st century skills in a vibrant campus environment engaged with their local communities

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Maximize the number of HCT graduates in full-time employment by becoming the employers first choice
- Broaden and enhance HCT's program and campus life offerings
- Develop students' into well-rounded adults with strong academic and soft skills
- Improve retention and reduce the number of at-risk students
- Promote lifelong learning
- Enhance student and alumni services

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPI Name	Targets				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
% Graduates employment	72%	73%	75%	78%	81%
% Graduates employed in a field related to their academic specialization	57%	59%	62%	66%	70%
% Employer Happiness with Graduates academic preparation and work readiness	75%	77%	79%	81%	85%
% Students Happiness	70%	75%	80%	82%	85%
% Students achieving Program Learning Outcomes	85%	86%	87%	88%	90%
% On-time graduation	77%	79%	81%	85%	90%
% Foundation Year Success Rate	74%	78%	80%	83%	88%
% Students Dropout Rate	9%	8%	7%	6%	5%
Average number of hours of community service	25	25	25	25	25
% Students awarded Professional Qualification or Certification at graduation	5%	10%	20%	40%	50%
% on-time delivery of student services	70%	75%	80%	85%	90%
% Alumni happiness	50%	55%	65%	75%	85%

Appendix 2. HCT Strategic Plan 2.0. Goal 2. 'Blend traditional and innovative teaching methods to ensure student-centred learning'. HCT 2017p. 12

GOAL 2

Continuous improvement of academic programs, faculty and scholarship activities to meet high quality standards and industry requirements

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- HCT is recognized as a leading applied higher education institution
- Ensure breadth and depth of academic programs and curricula that continually meet industry requirements and international standards
- Blend traditional and innovative teaching methods to ensure student-centered learning
- Fully embed robust academic quality assurance processes
- Establish an effective applied research environment

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPI Name	Targets				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
# HCT ranking according to QS System for Arab Universities Ranking	40	35	30	20	10
% Programs internationally accredited	0%	45%	90%	90%	90%
% Programs nationally accredited	29%	71%	100%	100%	100%
# Operational innovation spaces	0	3	10	13	15
# Students to Faculty Ratio	19.3	19	18.7	18.4	18
% Programs assessed using HCT adopted Program Quality Assurance Framework	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
# Peer reviewed research papers indexed in SCOPUS per faculty member	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.5
% Spending on research and development activities	2%	3%	3%	4%	5%

Appendix 3. HCT Strategic Plan 2.0. Goal 3. Engagement of strategic partnerships to foster strong connections with industry, higher education institutions, alumni and high schools. P. 14

GOAL 3

Engagement of strategic partnerships to foster strong connections with industry, higher education institutions, alumni and high schools

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- HCT graduates maximize their contribution to the economy
- Enhance trust in the HCT brand by the community
- Proactively broaden, operationalize and build on strategic partnerships

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPI Name	Targets				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
% Graduate entrepreneurs	1%	2%	3%	4%	5%
% Graduates employed in the private sector	30%	35%	40%	45%	45%
% Happiness rate of local community organizations with HCT voluntary work program	75%	77%	80%	83%	85%
% Students receiving employment sponsorship	13%	17%	25%	36%	50%
% Enrolment in Foundation Year	70%	60%	40%	20%	0%

INITIATIVES

1. Private Sector Employment and Sponsorship Campaign
2. Establishment of Connection Program with High-Schools
3. Creation of targeted approach to actively engage partners from strategic sectors

Appendix 4. HCT Strategic Plan 2.0 Goal 4. 2017 p.16

GOAL 4

Provision of quality and efficient administrative services with effective governance

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Attract, develop and retain high quality faculty and staff
- Leverage technology to enable institutional growth and development
- Ensure effective institutional governance
- Improve the effectiveness and efficiency in the management and allocation of resources
- Enable effective processes, performance management and organizational excellence

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPI Name	Targets				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
% Employee happiness	65%	70%	75%	80%	85%
% Emiratisation	23%	24%	26%	28%	30%
% Electronic / Smart Services	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% Internal audit observations closed on time	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
% Budget Utilization	99.0%	99.2%	99.5%	99.7%	100%
% Classroom Space Utilization	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%
HCT 4G Excellence Maturity	N/A	Impactor	N/A	Integrator	N/A
% Institutional Performance Improvement Actions completed on time	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

Appendix 5. HCT Strategic Plan 2.0. Goal 5. 2017 p.17

GOAL 5

Embedding an innovation culture in the institutional environment

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Create opportunities for student innovation
- **Encourage employee innovation**
- Develop and enhance organizational learning

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPI Name	Targets				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
# Innovation awards won by students	2	3	4	5	6
# HCT Innovation Readiness Index	70%	N/A	75%	N/A	80%
# Innovations recognized as patents or intellectual property	1	2	3	4	5
% Innovations based on employee suggestions	65%	67%	69%	70%	72%
# Best practice ideas shared per department or campus	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix 6. List of 'constructs' OECD The Future of Education and Skills 2030 p.17

The list is not exhaustive but constructs are selected that are closely related to the key concepts underpinning the framework.

- Adaptability/ Flexibility/ Adjustment/ Agility
- Compassion
- Conflict resolution
- Creativity/ Creative thinking/ Inventive thinking
- Critical-thinking skills
- Curiosity
- Empathy
- Engagement/Communication skills/Collaboration skills
- Equality/ Equity
- Global mind-set
- Goal orientation and completion (e.g. grit, persistence)
- Gratitude
- Growth mind-set
- Hope
- Human dignity
- Identity/Spiritual identity
- Integrity
- Justice
- Manual skills for information and communication technology (related to learning strategies)
- Manual skills related to the arts and crafts, music, physical education skills needed for the future
- Meta-learning skills (including learning to learn skills)
- Mindfulness
- Motivation (e.g. to learn, to contribute to society)
- Open mind-set (to others, new ideas, new experiences)
- Perspective-taking and cognitive flexibility
- Pro-activeness
- Problem solving skills
- Purposefulness
- Reflective thinking/Evaluating/Monitoring
- Resilience/Stress resistance
- Respect (for self, others, including cultural diversity)
- Responsibility (including locus of control)
- Risk management
- Self-awareness/Self-regulation/Self-control
- Self-efficacy/Positive self-orientation
- Trust (in self, others, institutions)

Appendix 7. Image of 'Annex 2: List of constructs currently reviewed'. OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030 p.17

Annex 2: List of constructs currently reviewed

The following constructs are currently under review based on the following guiding principles:

- **Clear definition:** Does the construct have a commonly used and understood definition?
- **Relevant for 2030:** Does the construct, alone or in combination with others, equip people for future challenges?
- **Interdependent:** Can we say how the construct develops in conjunction with others?
- **Impactful:** Is the construct proven to have a bearing on future life outcomes?
- **Malleable:** Can the construct be developed through the processes of learning?
- **Measurable:** Can the construct be given a comparative numerical value on a scale, or a non-numerical account?

Appendix 8. Cited, verbatim experiences coded into forms of experience, emergent theme and theme.

Dave: cited verbatim experiences coded to forms of experience, emergent theme and theme.		
Quote	Form of experience	Emergent theme / Theme
'I think in HCT, the biggest problem is engagement, so certainly part of the flipped learning concept requires that students do something prior to coming to class so that we can change the whole setup of the classroom to face-to-face interaction. And this has been the most difficult aspect of employing the flipped classroom'.	<i>'The biggest problem'</i> : there are many problems (linguistic) <i>'The students need to do something prior'</i> : they're not, is that their fault? (awareness of others: students) <i>Difficult</i> : it's not straightforward <i>Aspect</i> : its multidimensional <i>Employing</i> : (linguistic , its being used to fulfil a job/ requirement)	Flipped Classroom/ CPD
'we've advised them (faculty) to go ahead with the model, where they provide the content prior to class, and continue with the assumption that students do the work and come prepared'.	we =management (linguistic) advised = cascade (self in different roles: management)	Flipped Classroom / CPD
'there's the cultural problem where they (students) don't expect to do work outside of class, because that interferes with family time. So, they expect to be, in some way, spoon-fed. Everything they need should be given to them in class and it should be very teacher-centred'.	<i>don't expect to work outside of class</i> (awareness of others: students / empathy) (everyday , in culture: LCE not suited) <i>'Expect to be spoon-fed'</i> = dependent (linguistic) <i>'Everything they need, given'</i> = dependent/ transmission (linguistic) <i>They</i> (awareness of others: as dependent)	Flipped Classroom/ CDP
'So, we're imposing our cultural values, it's almost like colonialism. It's the same as pushing democracy in the Middle East. Student-centred learning is a	we, (westerners) (linguistic , first person). comparisons to colonialism & imperialism (<i>pushing</i> democracy).	Flipped classroom / LCE / CPD

democratic model. Somehow it doesn't quite fit'.	(everyday activity in a particular culture) <i>'it doesn't quite fit'</i> (awareness of others / everyday activity (in a particular culture)	
'HEA is a hoop, I submitted a 6000-word essay on my practice. I did it on a weekend. It's not proof, its self-reflection. It could be fiction. It's the fatal flaw, once the target has been set, I will say what you want me to say'.	'Is a hoop' = hoop / inauthentic is/ one dimensional (linguistic) Focally it's a hoop (spatial) 'Could be fiction' = it might not be (linguistic) 'target has been set' = (linguistic , passive voice, disassociating from it) 'I will say what you want me to say' (spatial: focal) (self in different roles)	Award Bearing/ CPD
'No one owns a course anymore, that's fairly clear and that's quite a good thing, in some sense. But that being the case, sometimes they (teachers) don't have the emotional involvement in that course, because it's been dictated to them, and so, if they can't make any changes to that course, it becomes slightly dull for them and probably takes away a lot of the reasons they became a subject specialist. And if they don't believe in that sort of pedagogy, then it becomes very routine, and I think innovation is squashed'.	focal is good change (attention) 'Emotional involvement'= rather than intellectual. (linguistic) Dictated = authority (linguistic) Slightly dull / routine = understated? 'Squashed' = crushing or destroyed emotive word choice rather than a more neutral word choice (linguistic)	Centralisation / Regulation
'Well, we're not allowed to have it anymore. It got to go off all logos and stuff like that. I think it's already gone because that would encourage discovery and creativity'.	<i>'not allowed'</i> = <i>infantilised</i> (awareness of others) (linguistic) <i>'Logos and stuff'</i> (attention: to surface appearance of it, it's not embedded in practice?) Cynical stance / irony = this is a target of the plan. (self-conscious) (awareness of others ; negative, disparaging)	Centralisation of courses / Regulation
'My PM target this year is to perform 75 workshops. No part of that says I must have people at them. So, it encourages me to offer them at times no-one will come to boost my numbers. That will show success at my evaluation. I need 80-% satisfaction of the courses I offer. I therefore make them easy PDs; I	(Own experience) <i>'Encourages me'</i> = <i>it's not entirely his fault</i> (Awareness of others) <i>'Show success'</i> = show but not equate to (linguistic) 'need' = a specific outcome <i>'can't challenge'</i> = he's prevented <i>'in my interests'</i> = individualised	Targets / Regulation / Accountability

can't challenge too much. It's in my interests to make it easy'.		
'Putting everyone in same basket doesn't allow for outliers'	putting = passive, people have no choice but to be the same (linguistic) Outliers = creativity is marginal (linguistic)	Targets /Regulation
'The pedagogy is not aligned between us in any shape or form. Often teachers stick in groups according to nationality, so sharing of pedagogy does not happen. Older members of staff who have been here for decades have a very different relationship with the students which we could learn from, but we are certainly not wanting to pick up the pedagogy from them and they don't get the pedagogy from the western teachers either. They are parallel communities mostly'.	<i>pedagogy not aligned (awareness of others: teachers)</i> stick = unable to move <i>sharing doesn't happen (everyday activity, intersubjectivity)</i> 'we are certainly not wanting' = present continuous (ongoing), we (westerners) certainly = unequivocal (awareness of others, WEIRD teachers including himself)	Collaboration / Community

Appendix 9. Table presenting an overview of interviewee topics.

	Experiences of CDP	Experiences of regulation	Experiences of community
Elizabeth	L&D team: corporate training background, managing blended learning and assessment. Probation over induction Managers: traditional Teachers: LCE Hybrid challenges for WEIRD teachers	Control rather than autonomy High stakes testing contradictory LCE will not deliver enough course content to the pass exams.	Service ethos Explicit code of conduct top-down Standards & efficiency Professionals 'at odds'. Paradigm shift in pedagogy threatening Micro-cultures different Only subject based groups Disillusioned
Hannah	Misunderstanding of pedagogy from managers. No agreed concept of good teaching Need to build pedagogy bottom up Cascade not working No thinking space	Neat, quantitative data, courses static Change difficult	Teaching as a calling Can't enable any change
Caroline	No induction No training on pedagogy Training on BBL No resource sharing Innovative space not appropriate to course content No conference attendance	Qualifications over expertise Narrow curriculum Exams, results pressure Probation/ contract renewal concern Holistic approach compromised in a target focused system	No sharing / working together. No emotional connection
Dave	Flipped classroom not working / cultural factors Battling with Learning by Doing due to speed of change HEA a 'hoop'	Courses locked down Transmission methods Management misunderstanding pedagogy. Targets for CPD: caps creativity Put energies into the fiction Not encouraged to grow	Success measured through colleague feedback Not much mixing of staff groups Parallel communities Self-imposed barriers to change.
Omar	Static curriculum: exams Pedagogy different to colleagues Couldn't shift pedagogy. Managers not teachers Cramming Cascade not effective	Pressure to achieve targets to keep job Appraisal and renewal at fore. No autonomy. No trust Individualised effect Mechanistic approach No empathy	Islamic faith /calling Synergy important No opportunity to work together but collaboration important Speed of change to fast
Fares	HEA developmental Coursera No conferences Subject knowledge more important than skills No shared meanings of pedagogy Online class defence Suspicious of tech roll out	Limited curriculum Factory shift Targets distort outcomes Clocking in No trust	Shared Code of conduct important Need for trust Extrinsic motivation not building community
Matthew	Appreciated mix of pedagogy Misuse of blended learning/ no shared understanding of BL Observations developmental Wholesale borrowing of policy not working	Grades most important Speed of progress at expense of quality ed. Accountability focus Out-put measures Peer networks secondary Extrinsic motivation over intrinsic Low morale	Peer networking for compliance A series of compromises Limited time and space for informal networks