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List of Contents

Abstract

Teacher Identity, Teacher Professionalism – How Do I See Myself?

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This doctoral thesis describes a research study that explores how academic psychologists see themselves in the communities in which they live and work - in this context higher education and their professional body, the British Psychological Society. It examines how professional identity is constructed in such communities and how they underpin their teacher professionalism.

A detailed literature review has taken place, involving an examination of two theoretical concepts – the nature of teacher professionalism and professional identity. The epistemological framework of the study and the narrative inquiry approach both provide a way of understanding the academic psychologists' experiences as lived and told narratives. The relationships that define their lives have also been explored – these include talking to Society staff and students studying on undergraduate degrees in psychology.

A narrative method of inquiry has been used in the form of email interviewing, offering an alternative site for the academic psychologists to reflect upon experiential events and write their accounts. This is complemented by the use of non-narrative methods such as email questionnaires delivered to the students and face-to-face interviews conducted with Society staff. Through the data analysis the emergent themes illustrate how the academic psychologists see themselves and how they are perceived by others.

Conclusions drawn suggest an emerging model of teacher professionalism whereby the academic psychologists are engaged in critical self-reflection to explore their identities using self-images. They also highlight that a multiplicity of identities exist that are shaped by the academic psychologists' varied working communities and are interlinked with their personal lives. Recommendations for organisational practice have also been made, looking at how academic psychologists see themselves as members of the Society and the implications this has for supporting the development of the profession.

Chapter One

Defining Teacher Professionalism: Constructing Identity in the Communities that Teachers Live and Work

Introduction

Changes in higher education have led to uncertainty and unpredictability in which "...our frameworks for understanding ourselves and the circumstances in which we live and work are increasingly complex" (Watts 2000, p.9). Over the last decade there has been a number of social and cultural changes in the higher education system, including the development of an education framework based on semesterisation and modularity, adaptation to a working environment that includes increases in student numbers and quality assurance inspections undertaken by external agencies like the Quality Assurance Agency and the Research Assessment Exercise. As Sachs (2001) argues, such conditions have influenced the nature of teacher professionalism, placing emphasis on professional accountability and effectiveness. However, Harvey and Mason (1995) have commented upon how professional education and training have also become an important aspect of higher education, in which many programmes of study have become jointly designed with, and accredited by, professional bodies. The demands on university teachers of different organisational communities may lead them to question how they see themselves within those communities and involves reflection upon their professional practice. This suggests that an alternative approach to notions of teacher professionalism and identity may be needed.

Background to the Study

The impetus for the research study has been influenced by two factors. Firstly, the diverse nature of the organisation in which the researcher works and secondly, the apparent lack of educational research that examines how self-image can be used to conceptualise professional identity for teachers working in higher education and are members of other organisational communities.

The British Psychological Society

This organisation has been chosen for three main reasons. Firstly, the researcher is an employee of the organisation. The British Psychological Society is a professional body, which was founded in 1901 and incorporated by the Royal Charter in 1965. As Harvey and Mason (1995) note, a professional body may be formally recognised by charter or statutes and include a membership, dependent upon passing professional examinations or taking an accredited qualification or a period of assessed professional practice. The principal objectives of the Society are as follows:

(i) To promote the advancement and diffusion of a knowledge of pure and applied psychology;

(ii) To promote the efficiency and usefulness of members of the Society by setting up high standards of professional education and knowledge;

(iii) To maintain a code of conduct for the guidance of members;

(iv) To require the observation of rules of professional conduct.

The second reason for choosing the organisation, as Katz (2000) notes in relation to the engineering and nursing profession, is that the psychology profession has a large and diverse membership. A large component of the Society's membership includes psychologists working in higher education. These academic psychologists are professionally accountable not only to their employing institution, but to the Society as the governing body of their profession. They are required to have:

> "... a body of knowledge and skills, a prolonged period of training to acquire them, societal acceptance of the legitimacy of expertise, and a professional culture containing ideas relating to organisational modes and ethics and standards" (Greenwood 1966 in Kogan 1986, p.42).

To achieve this, an academic psychologist should have the graduate basis for registration and have successfully completed an approved course of psychology training leading to a recognised form of professional practice. As the teaching of psychology constitutes professional practice, there is an approved Society programme that enables psychology teachers to become qualified chartered psychologists. The Society has formed the Division for Teachers and Researchers in Psychology, which emphasises the dual importance of both research and teaching to psychology. This Division addresses professional issues which concern a significant proportion of the Society's membership who undertake teaching in schools, colleges and universities and through their work, provide and disseminate essential elements of the knowledge-base on which a range of professions, including psychology rely.

The Society is also made up of seven other Divisions. Apart from that for teachers and researchers, there are Divisions which include Clinical, Counselling, Forensic, Education, Health, Neuropsychology and Occupational Psychology. Members of these Divisions include psychologists who offer psychological services to client groups, and psychology teachers working in higher education. Each Division has a training committee, which is responsible for the standard of professional education and knowledge in applied psychology and professional conduct of its members. At undergraduate level, the Graduate Qualifications Accreditation Committee, whose membership involves psychology teachers working in higher education, has responsibility for assuring the standard of psychology education and knowledge for all first degrees in psychology. Through the Society's quality assurance procedures, this Committee and each of the training committees are required to ensure that, "...students who undergo training will be equipped with appropriate knowledge and skills to enable them to practise a particular branch of applied psychology" (Carroll 2000, p.1).

The final reason for choosing the Society is because of its impact on universities as stakeholders, providing education and training within the professional body's explicit requirements. As Katz (2000) notes, this includes:

(i)   The nature of education and training required for entry to a profession;

(ii)   The assessment of knowledge, skills and experiences required for entry to the profession;

(iii)   Ensuring that the providers of professional education and training are suitable.

The Society has a role in maintaining the standards of professional education and training in psychology through its links with higher education provision, whilst encapsulating the entirety of practice through an established knowledge-base of specific skills or competencies. This approach impacts upon the role of academic psychologists because there is a requirement for all members of the psychology profession to be accountable by self-regulating and enhancing their professional practice. As part of the requirements of the Society's Code of Conduct all psychologists must maintain and develop their professional competence, whether this is in an educational context or between the applied psychologist and client. Hence "...public confidence can be gained if the profession openly asserts its expertise, a process which can give greater credibility by the existence of a recognised body of professional knowledge" (Hoyle and John 1995, p.74).

Despite the Society's Code of Conduct, it still remains an open question as to whether "...such legal regulation is able to define the substance of the profession" (Friedlmayer and Rossler 1995, p.165). They argue that there remains debate on the conceptualisation of what it means to be a psychologist and that claims for autonomy and professionalisation become problematic when psychologists who are members of a professional body are regulated according to the body's own standards. Such concerns raise the question about how psychologists who work in higher education i.e. academic psychologists who are also members of the Society see themselves. As Nixon (1996) argues, a dual professional identity may be difficult to sustain at the level of organisational structures and professional practice. This is reiterated by Hartmann (1970) who comments:

> "...that the role of the psychologist in society and his identity is not yet sufficiently defined...the psychologist, whose science and professional practice are not older than this century, is still on the lookout for a professional identity of his own and its establishment in society" (Hartmann 1970 in Friedlmayer and Rossler 1995, p.166).

Educational Research

In exploring the literature, it has become apparent that many research studies have involved pre-service teachers and the search for images to conceptualise teaching in pre-school experiences. In addition, many studies have emphasised schoolteachers' personal life experiences and the way these are inextricably linked to their professional lives. The research study, therefore, will bring to the fore the importance of claiming a professional identity for teachers who work in higher education and are members of other organisational communities, as well as extend the limited body of educational

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research in this area. As Frederickson (2001) remarks, "...how widespread are the views of the highly regarded academic psychologist who told me recently that he did not belong to the BPS [British Psychological Society] because he saw himself not as a psychologist, but a scientist?" (p.629).

Research Aim

Against this background, the reality of the working lives of the academic psychologists are not ignored as the research study takes as its focus the main communities in which they construct and reflect upon their identities, their values and the knowledge-base of their work. In the research context these communities include the environment of higher education and their professional body and the study will explore how academic psychologists see themselves within these communities. More specifically the study will consider:

(i) The way in which academic psychologists understand their professional identity;

(ii) The images used to construct professional identity and shape professional practice;

(iii) The way in which professional identity is managed within the communities in which academic psychologists live and work, and how fundamental these communities are to their teacher professionalism.

Research Design – Undertaking the Study

The Conceptual Framework

Given the research aim, a review of the educational and psychological literature has been undertaken, spanning approximately ten years and using the British Education Index, BIDs PsychINFO Service and ERIC. In exploring the literature, two central concepts have become pertinent to the research study - the nature of teacher professionalism and the notion of professional identity. It is important to note that existing literature in related areas such as professional knowledge and reflective practice, and research work undertaken in the area of teacher images and identity have supported the inquiry. Such work has applicability for the research study providing, "...the conceptual frameworks within which I could ask my questions...and to document my intentions in a research proposal." (Beattie 1995a, p.37) Whilst there are a number of theoretical models underpinning the research described in this Chapter, it is important to note that new models or theoretical insights may emerge as the research findings are analysed.

In exploring the literature in the field of professionalism, it has become apparent that this notion is difficult to define when applied to teachers because of the multiple discourses that exist. As noted in the work of Middlehurst and Kennie (1997), Henkel (2000) and Sachs (2001), the nature of academic practice that teachers are engaged in is complex, involving a specialised knowledge-base, increased demand for professional accountability and effectiveness as well as emphasis upon reflective practice.

In considering such issues in Chapter Two, Nixon et al (1997) and Watts (2000) outline the way in which there has been an attempt to redefine the notion of teacher professionalism, by a questioning of professional values and practices towards what has been defined as the 'new professionalism.' As Hargreaves (1994) argues, this involves a move away from teachers' traditional professional authority and autonomy towards new types of relationships. Barnett (1997) notes that teachers can become engaged in more critical self-reflection, reason and action. Thus, the concept of teacher professionalism will be extended further to include one that involves:

> "...critique - through injecting new frames of thinking and understanding so as to understand the world anew.... and so will extend the professional not only in the domains of knowledge itself but also the domains of the self and the world" (Barnett 1997, p.138).

Underlying this notion is that of 'the self'. Barnett (1997) suggests that trying to understand one's professional responsibilities means reconstructing professional identity, using frames of reference and value systems that have a legitimate claim on the professional self. In the research study, a definition of identity is informed by Dewey's (1938) notion that the longitudinal and lateral aspects of experience intercept and unite. Thus professional identity is "... continually being informed, formed, and reformed as individuals develop over time and through interaction with others" (Cooper and Olson 1996 in Bond et al 1996, p.80). The construction of professional identity is articulated within the telling and retelling of stories or narratives by practitioners themselves. As Beattie (1995b) remarks, these stories provide accounts not only of the professional experience, but also of personal lives. Such research work has focused on teachers' reflective experiences and the conceptualisation of teachers' knowledge which is, "...experiential, value-laden, purposeful and oriented to practice" (Clandinin 1986, p.20). These concepts underpin the research study and are viewed as a fundamental aspect of teacher professionalism, recognising that:

> "...taking up of an identity is a constant, social negotiation that can never be permanently settled or fixed, occurring as it necessarily does within the irreconcilable contradictions of situational and historical constraints" (Britzman 1992, p.42).

As the literature review in Chapter Three discusses, the conceptualisation of self-image has become an important component in shaping professional identity for teachers. The concept of image is used in the research in a way that has been conceptualised by Clandinin (1986). He viewed it as:

> "...a kind of embodied knowledge that is a coalescence of diverse experiences from which new experiences are undertaken and that therefore provides a connection between an individual's past, present, and future" (Beattie 1995a, p.72).

As Henkel (2000) argues, the concept of identity has become important in the formation of university teacher identities, not least in its emphasis upon professional values. This Chapter also examines the way in which organisational reality may undermine or enhance professional identity. As noted by Dutton and Dukerich (1991): "Both organizational image and identity are constructs held in

organization members' minds" (p.547). Whilst researchers such as Henkel (2000) have taken the approach that higher education is the main institution within which academics undertake a process of critical professionalism i.e. construct their professional identity, their values and the knowledge-base of their work, the research study takes this approach a stage further by looking at the influence that other organisational communities have on the reality of the working lives of university teachers. As Wenger (1998) argues, different dimensions of identity may influence identity formation.

Research Epistemology and Methodology

The research does not begin with a specific problem or set of hypotheses. Instead, the researcher is interested in a particular phenomenon that can be understood through the academic psychologists' narratives. It represents an attempt to conceptualise the professional identity of these participants whose "...voices speak as directly as human beings can of experience and...texts spoken by each voice are shaped as story" (Clandinin and Connelly 1994, in Denzin and Lincoln, p.414). The research is informed by an interpretive paradigm. As outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994), here the researcher attempts to gain a holistic view of the context under study and capture data on the perceptions of the participants with a view to analysing the meaning of their experiences and understand multiple realities. Throughout the research, therefore, the researcher's epistemological and methodological stance is that, "...careful dialectical reflection on authentic and evocative written accounts of an experience, can reveal some of the fundamental structures of that experience" (Weber, 1993, p.75). This stance is also reflected in the way in which the voice and place of the researcher are integral in the research. As the research proceeds, a reflective journal will be kept that details a journey, a process of personal and professional reflection as the research inquiry proceeds. This is discussed in more detail in Chapters Four and Seven.

Research Approach

As outlined in Chapter Four, the primary research approach that underpins the study is narrative inquiry because of its focus on human experience. Its holistic qualities mean that it has been used in a range of disciplines including history, drama, linguistics as well as education. Whilst it is appropriate to explore the way narrative inquiry can be applied to the research study, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) argue that this approach is of no great significance because, "...it is more productive to begin with explorations of phenomena of experience rather than comparative analysis of various methodological frames" (p.128). Nevertheless, it is useful to demonstrate the way in which narrative inquiry has been used as a practical resource for conducting research. For example, Elbaz (1988) has noted the way in which narrative as a methodological device has been used in many educational studies in which the data has used participants' stories. Some educational researchers such as Liston and Zeichner (1991) and Goodson and Walker (1991) have concentrated on an examination of life histories and made a case for its use in educational research because of its ability to represent teachers' subjective reality in a way that emphasises their explanations of actions and knowledge. Scholars of biography and autobiography, such as Berk (1980) and Grumett (1980) have focused on understanding one

individual's story within the context of the story itself, seeking threads of continuity and meaning within the person's life. In particular, Knowles (1992) notes that biography has especially referred to those experiences that become the basis for teacher identity i.e. how teachers see themselves.

For the purposes of the study, the researcher has adopted the stance taken by Clandinin and Connelly (2000) in which narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience as lived and told stories and involves a reflective process that can move back and forth in time not only for the research participants but also for the researcher. "With narrative as our vantage point, we have a point of reference, a life and ground to stand on for imagining what experience is and for imagining how it might be studied and represented in researchers' texts" (Clandinin and Connelly 2000, p.xxvi).

Methods of Study

As discussed in Chapter Four, the study has been conducted on a number of interrelated levels. 25 psychology teachers were selected to take part in the study. The selection of the sample was organised around the following criteria:

(i) All psychologists worked in the higher education context;

(ii) They were all chartered psychologists and members of the British Psychological Society;

(iii) They were all represented on the Society's Graduate Qualifications Accreditation Committee responsible for standards and training in undergraduate psychology programmes taught in higher education.

(iv) They all had access to email.

An introductory, open-ended questionnaire was distributed to explore a number of issues relating to the research aim and for context setting. Themes that emerged from the questionnaire were explored in depth, through email interviews with the teachers. As noted in the work of Sproull (1986) and Donmoyer and Moriaty (1999), there is an emerging literature about the use of email that has primarily focussed on the use of email questionnaires. In surveying the research literature, it has become apparent that "...given its growing importance as a medium of communication, discussion of e-mail as an academic *research* tool, has to date been scarce" (Selwyn and Robson 1998, p.2).

Arksey and Knight (1999) note that email can bring exciting possibilities and originality to research design and is an appropriate medium for data collection. A claim to originality in the study is, therefore, made by the use of email as a qualitative research tool in educational research and more specifically, an alterative narrative method of inquiry. By conducting email interviews with academic psychologists and inviting them to write narratives of their experience, the intention is to describe and better understand through the use of self-image, the construction and/or reconstruction of their experiences.

The research study was carried out in a systematic manner using the approach adopted by Wolcott (1990) to produce accounts that were authentic and trustworthy in representing the academic psychologists' views about their professional identity. As in the research work of McCulloch et al (2000), generalisability was not appropriate for this research study: "Because these interviews did not exhaustively probe informants' receptive understanding, but concentrated on their spontaneous, front-of-the-mind thinking it is impossible to generalise from them." (p.122) There was recognition of the need to create a research relationship that ensured a genuine concern with the academic psychologists as individuals and provided a frame through which they could respond to the research questions and provide accounts of their experiences.

The credibility of the study was, therefore, enhanced not only by triangulating the research methods, but also triangulating the data. As Bell (1993) remarks, gathering data from a number of sources and subsequently comparing and contrasting accounts contributed to producing a full and balanced study as was possible. This approach also broadened the researcher's understanding of the relationships that defined academic psychologists' lives within the communities in which they worked, and how fundamental such relationships were in defining their teacher professionalism.

To this end, five semi-structured interviews were conducted with members of staff within the Society, who held responsibility for standards of training and education in psychology. Student perceptions of teacher identity were also sought to discover further meaning that was context-embedded and socially or culturally framed because as Beattie (1995b) argues, the stories that teachers tell are intertwined with classroom experiences. An open-ended email questionnaire was, therefore, sent to those students currently registered on accredited, undergraduate psychology programmes across a number of higher education institutions.

As discussed in Chapter Four, the analysis of the narrative interviews was undertaken using grounded theory, an approach formulated by Glaser and Strauss (1967), whilst the semi-structured interviews and questionnaires used qualitative data matrices as described by Miles and Huberman (1994). As Hutchinson (1988) points out, both methods of analysis provided a means by which to study the diversity of human experience. Thus, in order to fully understand how the academic psychologists' experiences were embedded in their communities, careful examination and analysis of the data took place to "...reveal some of the fundamental structures of that experience" (Weber 1993, p.75).

Chapter Five presents the research findings by using the themes that have emerged through the data analysis process. These themes signposted the way in which the academic psychologists saw themselves and how the other participants perceived them. In Chapter Six, the research findings are explored in-depth to ascertain what they might mean using the theoretical frameworks discussed in the literature review chapters. This Chapter has also undertaken a critique of the research methods used, paying particular attention to the use of email as a narrative research method.

Finally, Chapter Seven draws the research to a close by providing a retrospective evaluation of the study and its contributions to the field of teacher professionalism and research methods. It has also made a number of recommendations for the case study organisation and identified new directions for further research. As Hall (1996) notes: "The strength of the conclusions rests on the strength of the research methods for collecting appropriate data and the ability to convey enough of the data to allow readers to form their own impressions, as a basis for agreeing or arguing with my interpretation" (p.16).

The research study has been designed as an in-depth interpretive study that explores the written accounts of academic psychologists and how they see themselves in their varied working environments. As Beattie (1995a) recognises: "Our professionalism calls for us to be authentic and accountable, not only to ourselves but also to those others whose narratives are linked to ours within our professional environment" (p.95). But what is meant by teacher professionalism and how fundamental is professional identity to this concept? The next stage in the study will involve an exploration of the academic literature in these areas.

Chapter Two

The Nature of Teacher Professionalism

Introduction

As identified in Chapter One, the focus of this study is to explore how academic psychologists see themselves within the communities in which they live and work, how their professional identity is constructed and the way in which identity influences their teacher professionalism. In exploring this issue, it is appropriate to undertake a review of the literature that provides a conceptual framework for the research study. To this end, the literature review in Chapter Two will consider popular notions of teacher professionalism, as well as discuss the possibilities of redefining teacher professionalism that involves a more critical reflective practice. This links to Chapter Three as the literature review explores the nature of professional identity, not only at an individual level in terms of self-image, but also in terms of the communities in which the academic psychologists work and the way in which defining teacher professionalism can reshape the way in which their identities are formed.

Current Debates on Teacher Professionalism

Issues of teacher professionalism are now evident in much of the educational research literature, particularly in relation to schoolteachers. However, it is also apparent that there is an emerging literature that has explored changing definitions of teacher professionalism through the work of, for example, Barnett (1997), Watts (2000) and Sachs (2001). Such work will be applied to the research area. An exploration of the literature has also indicated that there are competing discourses about the nature of teacher professionalism. This point is reiterated by Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) who comment upon how current debates about teacher professionalism reveal different views about what it means to be a teacher professional. Whitty et al (1998) also note, "…it is certainly a struggle among different stakeholders over the definitions of teacher professionalism and professionality for the twenty-first century" (Whitty et al 1998 in Sachs 2001, p.152).

An attempt has been made to find a model of professionalism specifically for the occupation of teaching, rather than fitting teaching around the criteria derived from other professions. Eraut (1994a) developed a model that emphasises three aspects linked to professional practice:

(i) The concept of a professional practitioner derived from both a view of professional accountability and an analysis of the teacher's knowledge base;

(ii) The concept of a professional school that serves the needs of its clients, that is effective and demonstrates quality in its processes and promotes teacher professional development;

(iii) A framework for determining client needs.

Whilst Hoyle and John (1995) have questioned whether teachers are professionals according to certain absolute criteria because of the complexity of defining teacher professionalism, this model does outline the way in which teachers have been characterised by what Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) have defined as classical professionalism. Like Eraut's (1994a) model, this involves having a specialised knowledge-base, a strong commitment to meeting client needs and self regulated control over standards of training and practice. Thus teacher professionalism has been described as, "...the quality of practice and the public status of a job" (Sockett 1996, p.23).

Yet it can be argued that such notions of teacher professionalism have been overtaken by more recent debates. Sachs (2001) has argued that there are currently two major discourses that are shaping how teachers see themselves. It can be argued that these discourses, which have applicability not only for schoolteachers but those working in higher education, are linked to democratic and managerial professionalism, in which the former has emerged from the teaching profession itself and the latter has been reinforced by external policies that emphasise teacher accountability and effectiveness. Watts (2000) points out that the increasing emphasis on accountability has led to a shift in how teacher professionalism can be redefined because as Brennan (2001) notes, such impacts have changed the nature of academic working lives in terms of their roles, responsibilities and relationships within academic institutions:

> "The impact of a market philosophy into higher education has led to significant changes in the working lives of professionals and these changes in turn raise issues and questions concerning the very nature of professionalism itself" Watts (2000, p.14).

Where teacher professionalism has been defined it also has been suggested that: "The three concepts of knowledge, autonomy and responsibility central to a traditional notion of professionalism, are often seen as interrelated" (Furlong et al 2000, p.5). Linked to such notions of teacher professionalism, Furlong et al (ibid) also argue: "It is because professionals face complex and unpredictable situations that they need a specialised body of knowledge; if they are to apply that knowledge, it is argued that they need the autonomy to make their own judgements" (p.5). Similarly, Bond (1996) has argued that the combination of autonomy and access to knowledge has enabled professionals to exercise reflexivity in their professional practice. In this context, it can be argued that a key dimension of teacher professionalism relates to the way in which teachers integrate their professional practice with knowledge through their behaviour and actions. This is the case not only for teachers working in schools and colleges, but also academic practitioners working in higher education. In this context, and given the aim of the research study, it is useful to consider the way in which both knowledge expertise and reflective practice remain central aspects of teacher professionalism.

Professional Knowledge
The difficulties in defining teacher professionalism become more prevalent for teachers working in higher education because of the multiple contexts in which they find themselves operating. As Watts

(2000) suggests, having an academic knowledge base does not necessarily make an academic a professional, "…it is an academic knowledge of the subject discipline combined with a professional knowledge of teaching and education that are embraced by the word 'professional' (p.13). Both Chown (1996) and Eraut (1994a) have argued that academic teachers need both educational expertise and subject expertise if they are to be regarded as 'true' professionals. As Goodlad (1992) notes, irrespective of what professionals actually do, their knowledge claims are strongly influenced by the need to sustain the ideology of professionalism.

Whilst it has been argued that academics identify more strongly with the "…characteristics and structure of the knowledge domains of their discipline…" (Becher 1989 in Taylor 1999, p.41), Downie (1990) argues that the extent and depth of knowledge possessed by individuals and sections within any one profession will vary. This recognises that there is some difficulty in identifying quite what that knowledge is, as Calderhead (1988) summarises:

> "The nature of teachers' knowledge is not well understood but its complexity, and the ways in which different types of knowledge are developed, are clearly crucial in our efforts to understand and improve teacher education" (Calderhead 1988, pp.8-9).

In further considering Calderhead's (1988) point about how relevant knowledge is constructed in teaching, Eraut (1994b) asserts that the notion of professional knowledge lacks transparency because of the difficulty of conceptualising different types of knowledge. He argues that in higher education, propositional knowledge tends to be available in a public, codified form such as course syllabi - although as Williams (1998) argues, such knowledge is open to personal interpretation. In contrast personal knowledge is acquired by experience. However, as Williams (ibid.) notes, whilst both personal and professional knowledge are both easy to separate, they are inadequate to explain the nature of professional work. Process knowledge is also required in order to carry out the necessary processes that contribute to professional action,

> "…professional work of any complexity requires the *concurrent use* of several different kinds of knowledge in an *integrated, purposeful manner*. Yet, this is difficult to achieve without significant interaction between formal teaching and professional practice, and specific attention to developing the appropriate modes of thinking" (Eraut 1994b, p.120).

This argument can be linked to the fact that teaching in higher education remains "…in a somewhat anomalous position because of its dual knowledge base" (Eraut 1994a, p.227). For example, Katz (2000) points out that propositional knowledge has been the focus for professional university courses, whereby academics accrue a growing knowledge base built upon experience as practising professionals and researchers. However, Barnett (1994) has argued that the incorporation of different types of professional education into higher education has resulted in a downgrading of its distinctive forms of practice-based knowledge, due to the emphasis that professional education can place on a core knowledge-base.

The problems that exist in the relationship between professional knowledge and teaching led Schon (1983) to categorise specialist forms of knowledge as 'rational' and 'standard.' He termed this 'technical rationality' and argued that this view of professional knowledge "...powerfully shaped both our thinking about the professions and the institutional relations of research, education and practice" (p.21). Behind his critique is the argument that professional knowledge should be interpreted with the broadest possible meaning because practice is value laden, ambiguous and open to multiple interpretations and actions. As Hoyle and John (1995) note, at the core of his argument is the notion of Polanyi's (1967) tacit knowledge, in which people know much more than they can say. Schon (ibid.) outlined the importance of knowledge as implicit in everyday actions. In order to make use of this knowledge, he introduced the concept of reflection-in-action as a means by which professional knowledge could be represented in the nature of practice.

The foregoing argument has a number of implications for university teachers' professional knowledge. Chown (1996) has commented that teachers need both educational expertise and subject expertise if they are to be regarded as true professionals. This is reiterated by an earlier argument by Downie (1990), who argues that teachers must have a wide range of knowledge as well as specialised knowledge in some spheres. Yet as Astley (1992) also remarks, consideration needs to be given to how specialist knowledge should be taught, what needs to be taught and what decisions will be taken over appropriate learning environments.

Bines and Watson (1992) have argued that the development of professional knowledge for teachers impacts not only on the relationships between teachers of the professional elements of courses and teachers of academic disciplines, but also in terms of the teaching/learning processes and knowledge about the subject area:

> "This may well undermine the discipline, leading to potential conflict over course content, teaching methods or assessment, especially when profession-based staff retain a strong loyalty to their particular professional culture and discipline-based staff maintain traditional conceptions of, and approaches to teaching their subject" (Bines and Watson 1992, p.134).

Calderhead (1988) has outlined how the research work on teachers' professional knowledge has emphasised what teachers know about teaching and learning and the ways in which such knowledge is acquired and developed. Day (2000) argues that making the professional knowledge-base of teaching explicit is fundamental to increasing understandings of the ways in which the personal and social contexts inform teaching, in terms of thinking and actions. There has been a shift in methodology away from cognitive approaches to teacher thinking towards a conception of professional knowledge based on phenomenology and ethnographic traditions, which have emphasised the experiences of teachers and the interactions of their personal-professional elements of their lives as significant in the conceptualisation of teaching:

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"Teachers teach in the way they do not just because of the skills they have or have not learnt. The ways they teach are also grounded in their backgrounds, their biographies, in the kinds of teachers they become" (Hargreaves in Smyth 1995, p.viii).

Elbaz's (1983) work marked the turning point in the research on teacher thinking as her study provided the basis for a conceptualisation of teachers' practical knowledge that arose out of personal experiences and influenced actions. Clandinin's (1986) work has built on that of Elbaz (ibid.) in terms of linking such knowledge to past experience and to ongoing practical situations and more is said about this work in the next Chapter.

Later work by Connelly and Clandinin (1986, 1995, 1999) and Clandinin and Connelly (1986, 1996, 2000) has emphasised how teachers' personal, practical knowledge is an essential component in understanding the professional environment in which they work. In particular, their research work in the field of personal practical knowledge shows how teachers' knowledge is far more complex than that of subject matter knowledge or teaching techniques. Their conceptual framework of the 'professional knowledge landscape' identified teachers actively engaged as reflective practitioners, who through telling their classroom experiences were holders and makers of knowledge. This suggests that "...it is not only an understanding of teacher knowledge and the education of teachers that will make a difference but attention to the professional knowledge context in which teachers live and work" (Clandinin and Connelly 1996, p.44).

Reflective Practice

The view of what it means to be a professional has also been influenced by the concept of reflective practice. The work of Dewey (1938) is extremely important in this area. Hatton and Smith (1995) identify four key issues that emerge from Dewey's (ibid.) original work:

(i) Whether reflection is limited to thought processes about action or is inextricably bound up in action;

(ii) The time frames within which reflection takes place and whether it is immediate, short-term or more extended and systematic;

(iii) Whether reflection is by its nature problem-centred or not;

(iv) How consciously the individual reflecting, takes into account wider historic, cultural and political values or beliefs in framing and reframing practical problems to which solutions are being sought. The process was identified as 'inquiry' by Dewey (ibid.) and later defined by Schon (1983, 1987) as reflection-in-action.

Gilbert (1994) has argued that the concept of reflection has been widely interpreted by teachers, for example pre-service and in-service teachers, to clarify and evaluate their ideas about their own teaching practices. For example, Van Manen (1977) has described reflection as technical, whereby the focus is upon enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of practice. Bengtsson (1995) notes expressions

such as 'reflective teaching', 'reflective thinking', and 'the teacher as professional'. Others include Hoyle's (1974) notion of the extended professional, and Stenhouse's (1975) notion of the teacher as researcher. For Schulman (1987) reflection relates to:

> "...What a teacher does when he or she looks back at the teaching and learning that has occurred, and reconstructs, renacts, and or recaptures the events, emotions and the accomplishments. It is that set of processes through which a profession learns from experience" (Schulman 1987, p.15).

However, applying an interpretative approach to practice can enhance communication and shared understandings of teacher experiences. Knowles and Cole (1994) have argued for a form of reflective practice whereby the ongoing process of critically examining and refining practice takes place as part of the reflection process. They argue that to become a teacher is a lifelong process of continued growth rooted in the 'personal' whereby reflection is a complex, ongoing process of interaction and interpretation throughout life.

In this sense the notion of reflective practice allows teachers to deliberate and reflect upon who they are, what they think they do and what students perceive they do. As Hatton and Smith (1995) note: "Such tacit knowledge is derived from the construction and reconstruction of professional experience, in contrast to applying technical or scientific rationality" (p.35). This argument is also reiterated by James (1992) who remarks upon the importance of the personal in the reflective process and the way in which professionals are honest with themselves and colleagues in describing their feelings regarding professional actions. In this way teachers better understand who they are and what they do *as* teachers.

Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) have argued against teacher professionalism simply being confined to personal practical reflection as the best way of delivering education. This argument is extended by Barnett (1997), who remarks upon the way in which the notion of reflection in teacher professionalism is superseding that of 'criticism' because it carries reflexive and self-monitoring connotations. Whilst researchers such as Williams (1998) and Knowles and Cole (1994) have argued for a critical reflective practice in higher education, this has received little attention in academic teaching practice, despite the rhetoric. This is reiterated by McLean and Blackwell (1997) who suggest that whilst quality inspections have provided opportunities for discussion about the need for reflective practice in teaching, the need to define and establish quality in higher education has focussed more on maintaining standards and accountability rather than developing teaching that resides in reflective thinking.

Barnett (1997) suggests that it is the 'knowing self' that matters in higher education and it is important to "... include knowledge forms and reflective practice that can address the tact of teaching that inheres in the embodied and existential qualities and virtues of being a teacher" (p.48). Day (1993) outlines the need for critical reflective practice to deal with the reflective processes, which are central to learning. This is reiterated by Armaline and Hoover (1989) who argue that by critical reflection, teachers can

become empowered as transformative intellectuals, who on the one hand are engaged with students in critical reflection, and on the other hand are "...employing pedagogy to give themselves and students an active voice in learning and living experience" (p.43). As McLean and Blackwell (1997) suggest, academics can become involved in individual and collective critical self-reflection and professional dialogue by taking the initiative, defining excellence for themselves, and by linking theoretical informed ideas to practical evidence. Sockett (1996) also reiterates this point, arguing that it is not enough to think of teaching simply in terms of technique or subject knowledge; nor should it be confined to matters of technical rationality and competence.

Redefining Teacher Professionalism

So far in this Chapter, discussions of teacher professionalism have emphasised the importance of professional knowledge and critical reflective practice as an integrated, experiential process used in making professional judgements and forming part of professional learning and discourse. Changes to the nature of higher education have led to significant changes in the working lives of professionals, and in turn has raised issues and questions concerning the nature of teacher professionalism itself. As Partington (1999) comments, "...the term 'professional' is more complex and sensitive, especially in respect of academic staff and their work..." (p.248)

In considering such issues, Watts (2000) argues that the concept of teacher professionalism should require teachers to re-evaluate their professional values and practices. These principles can be seen as emergent values that can inform teacher professionalism in higher education. Thus, there needs to be a shift away from professionalism as the ideology of service and specialist expertise to a claim whereby "...professionalism is not based on the cultural capital of expert knowledge, but on professionalism as necessarily involving continuous learning" (Nixon et al 1997, p.12).

In reconceptualising teacher professionalism, Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) have argued for "...positive visions of teacher professionalism that are complex, collaborative and competency-based within a 'post-technocratic' world" (p.20). These include:

(i) Flexible professionalism - In which shared professional communities and cultures of collaboration have developed in order to heighten professionalism;

(ii) Practical professionalism - This attempts to accord status to the practical knowledge and judgement that professionals have of their work and encourages reflective professionalism;

(iii) Extended professionalism - Here skills are derived from a mediation between experience and theory and high value is placed on professional activities;

(iv) Complex professionalism - Professions should be judged by the complexity of the work tasks, which comprise them in order to enhance professionalism.

Nixon et al (1997) also argue for a teacher professionalism that is located in a post-modern tradition, rather than accepting traditional notions of professionalism which involve concepts of knowledge, autonomy and responsibility. Similarly, Jennings and Kennedy (1996) reiterate the need to move away from viewing competency-based approaches to professional work as merely a practical activity, which can cope with a range of professional actions toward the integration of knowledge, skills and personal understanding within reflective critical practice. Thus as Ming-Lee (1999) argues, there is a shift in emphasis away from teaching competencies rooted in knowledge and practical skills towards a more holistic definition of teacher professionalism.

In analysing teacher professionalism it has become apparent that: "Achieving the actuality of professional lives in teaching is not easy. Nor is it totally clear what this aspiration for professional lives might mean..." (Hargreaves and Goodson 1996, p.4). Winfield (1998) also observes that in gaining an underpinning body of knowledge, teacher professionalism must include those experiences from outside the workplace. Thus as Quicke (2000) argues, crucial to the practice of new professionalism is the recognition that "...central to professional activity is the quest to understand the other as a person, in the full knowledge that people's personalities are not fixed but ever-changing..." (p.314).

This view is reinforced by Barnett (1997) who suggests that the professional engages with multiple audiences and the different discourses that they comprehend. This is not dissimilar to Sachs' (2001) idea of the activist professional in which the professional self is central to understand one's professional responsibilities. As Pennington (1999) argues, this approach is fundamental to a new professionalism in higher education, ensuring that teachers engage with the kinds of critical self-reflection, critical reason and critical action. This has been defined by Barnett (1997) as a process of critical professionalism that involves:

> "...injecting new frames of thinking and understanding so as to understand the world anew (and so will operate at the highest *level* of critical thought), and will extend the professional not only in the domain of knowledge itself but also in the domains of the self and the world" (Barnett 1997, p.138).

In order to bring about the state of critical being, Moon (1999) notes that the domains of understanding and self-reflection need to be incorporated into the practices of teachers working in higher education. Through this process of critical professionalism, teachers can also begin to question many aspects of their professionality. This process can also involve a questioning of identity in terms of constructing values and shaping practice. Indeed, Hughes (1958) has drawn attention to how the term can relate to an individual's identity, with profession as a symbol for a desired conception of one's work - and hence of one's self. The concept of 'the self' is still viewed by Barnett (1997) as an important element in defining professional identity, and as Nixon (1995) notes, includes the educational values that teachers as professionals hold for themselves. It would seem that "...a reflective practitioner in

education needs to integrate their skills and professional role within themselves as a person, rather than merely acquiring a set of techniques" (Jennings and Kennedy 1996, p.21).

It is clear from exploring the literature that redefining teacher professionalism requires a greater conceptual understanding of how teachers see themselves in the varied communities in which they live and work. In addressing such issues, the research study will attempt to show that "...what is required is a greater reflexivity by academics in respect of their underlying professional values" (Nixon 2001, p.173). In this context, teacher professionalism can relate to what individuals experience it as being and as Jenkins (1999) notes, the notion can be given meaning that is highly valued and understood.

Chapter Three

Constructing Professional Identity – What it Means to be a Teacher

Introduction

In the previous Chapter, the researcher concluded by arguing for a teacher professionalism in which teachers critically reflect upon how they see themselves in the multiple communities in which they live and work. In exploring the educational literature, it is evident that there exists an abundance of research that has focused upon how schoolteachers see themselves and how images can be used to create their professional identity. Goodson (2000) has commented upon how this research has provided a valuable insight into understanding the ways in which "...teachers achieve, maintain and develop their identity, their sense of self..." (Ball and Goodson 1985, p.18). The concept of 'self' has been connected with particular images of what it means to be a teacher. Images are often projected through, and can be conceptualised as, a way of portraying particular core values and actions for personal and professional identity.

As Beiijard (1995) notes, identity forms part of one's self image in terms of who or what someone is and the various meanings that can be attached to oneself. For teachers, identity may also be influenced by their experiences of the organisations in which they work, as well as their values and beliefs about what it means to be a teacher. Given this context, the Chapter will also consider how professional identity is mediated by the organisational realities and uncertainties within which teachers work. This will include not only organisational structures, but also the social interactions that occur. Consideration will also be given to the nature of teacher professionalism and the impact on professional identity, especially in the context of multi-organisational membership.

The Influence of Image on Teacher Identity

This section examines the implications that self-images hold for teachers by exploring the educational research that exists in this area. Whilst these studies are focussed upon research conducted at schoolteacher level, it can be argued that the notion of image has applicability for this study because as Beijaard et al (2000) argue, identity formation involves an ongoing process of interpretation and reinterpretation of experiences as one lives through them. Through self-evaluation, identity is continually informed, formed and reformed as individuals develop over time and interact with others. This self–evaluation and identity is part of one's image and involves:

> "...a stimulus for self-interrogation that can sharpen our professional identities as teachers, by providing the contextual, historical and political background that makes self-interpretation more meaningful and identity more complete" (Weber and Mitchell 1999, pp.130-31).

In other words, individuals not only create images, but are also shaped by them. "The image is generally imbued with a judgement of value and constitutes a guide to the intuitive realization of the teacher's purpose" (Elbaz 1981, p.61).

The way in which identity, image and experience are linked has been a source of discussion in philosophical and psychological literature as well educational literature. Crites (1971) makes the link between image and experience by arguing that it is through image that "...I develop the aesthetic forms within which my experience and my sense of personal identity take shape" (p.124). Johnson (1987) argues that it is our experientially-based ideas, imaginings and visions of the future that shape the persons we are and become.

Hoshmand (1998) has commented upon how psychological theories have associated identity development with self-structures and personality. As Fenstermacher (1978) comments, the thoughts and feelings of individuals can be used as clues to understand developmental and information processing structures. This is reiterated by Forrester (2000) who views image as an active, dynamic process rather than a passive one. As Calderhead and Robson (1991) note, this includes the ability to recall, adapt and manipulate those images in reflecting on action in a particular context such as teaching rather than representing "...a subject who is on the one hand depersonalized, that is, essentially interchangeable with other subjects..." (Elbaz 1991, p.7). In this context as Clandinin (1986) argues, memory of experiences recorded in images will be incomplete and selective. This is reiterated by Forrester (ibid.), who argues that images of the self can be simultaneously held even where they are contradictory.

Educational researchers such as Johnston (1992) remark that images become embodied in individuals and are expressed through language and actions, providing a language that can help teachers make explicit the subconscious assumptions upon which their practice is based. Bolotin and Burnaford (1994) outline that there exist not only positive or derogatory representations, but complex images of teachers as they struggle with stereotypes of themselves that do not always do justice to their work or purpose. For teachers, identity may already be shaped through deeply ingrained stereotypical images, as noted by Polan (1993): "...the teacher is an image, a cliché in the sense of both stereotype...where the image predetermines what the person means to use..." (p.32).

Zeichner and Tabachnick (1981), Britzman (1986) and Cole and Knowles (2000), amongst other educational researchers, have demonstrated that even before taking up teaching as a career, people have already formed preconceptions of what teachers do and who they are. Cole and Knowles (1993) explored the phenomenon of shattered images in the teaching process, particularly for pre-service teachers. They argued that pre-service teachers often have firmly rooted images of themselves as teachers, which can often include idealised and contrived images and expectations of self as a teacher. Such images are frozen in time, based upon specific individuals or events.

As Britzman (1986) clearly states, such images can serve as a frame of reference for prospective teachers' self-images. Ross (1987) and Bullough (1991) suggest that pre-service teachers will play out their personal images of teaching, despite the contextual realities. In Ross's research (ibid.), pre-service teachers selected attributes and practices of their former teachers and synthesised them through an idealised image of the teacher they wanted to become. Crow's (1987) study of four preservice teachers provided additional evidence of the way in which these teachers viewed themselves as their role identities were strongly linked to their biographies. Building on this work, Knowles (1992) linked success and failure in beginning teaching practices to role identities and images of teaching formed over years of prior educational experiences in family, classroom and school settings. In his research, preservice and beginning teachers with strong identities rooted in positive formative life and school experience, had less difficulty coping with teaching practice than those with negative experiences.

Similar research has also been undertaken by Calderhead and Robson (1991). In their study, twelve student primary teachers on a B.Ed. course were asked to identify their understandings of teaching, learning and the curriculum they held on entry to the profession, and how these understandings related to interpreting their own and others' practice. They found that students held particular images of teaching, mostly derived from their experiences as school pupils, which were influential in defining their classroom practice.

The images that can emerge as teachers explore their professional identity may be more complex than the images that students form about their teachers. Britzman (1986) has argued that the teacher's world is uncomplicated and linear in the eyes of the students. However in Efron and Bolotin's (1994) research, they commented upon how students will hold images of teachers depending on their personality and styles of teaching. What seems apparent in both points is the way in which students internalise the role and images of teachers, but as Bowers (1980) notes these images may take on a life of their own, with one image becoming more prominent than another.

Fischer and Kiefer (1994) found in their research that although many images are implicit or imposed on teachers, the most profound ones are actively constructed through professional practice. "We found that it is the reflective teacher who constructs images about professional roles and practices" (p.30). They captured a multiplicity of images from a wide range of teachers who illustrated patterns of images and processes of imaging teachers' lives. Similarly, Beattie (1995a) discovered that by reflecting upon image it is possible to make connections and to understand their implications for teacher identity. Given the multiple images that can exist, Weber and Mitchell (1999) have argued for the need for teachers to face such images, as these are "...integral to the form and substance of our self-identities as teachers" (Weber and Mitchell 1995, p.32).

The notion of image grounded in experience and as a component of personal practical knowledge has been used "...as a structural framework through which we think about the world in which we live and work and through which we construct the new ways of thinking about it and living in it" (Beattie 1995a, p.72). The concept of image used here has been conceptualised by Elbaz (1981, 1983) and Clandinin (1986). Elbaz (1981) in her research on teachers' practical knowledge included the term 'image' to describe the relationship between practice and the teachers' experiences:

> "On this level, the teacher's feelings, values, needs and beliefs combine as she formulates brief metaphoric statements of how teaching should be and marshals experience, theoretical knowledge, and school folklore to give substance to these images" (Elbaz 1981, p.61).

Elbaz's research (1981, 1983) found that the level of image for the teacher was most powerful in organising her knowledge and in bringing it to bear on practice. She also found that the teacher used specific images as a focal point and a means of summarising her practical knowledge. For example, the teacher provided a number of different images, which shaped her professional identity, defined as 'imagery of self.' Clandinin's (1986) research built on the work of Elbaz (1981, 1983) and explored the personal experiences of two teachers in order to understand experience as it occurred in the form of images. The difference between these two pieces of research was that the construct of image in Elbaz's (ibid.) research did not take into account the private experience invested in an image, which was a clear focus in Clandinin's (ibid.) research.

> "The task of the present study is to offer a conceptualisation of image as a central construct for understanding teacher's personal practical knowledge and for linking such knowledge to past experience and to ongoing practical expressions...The present study reaches both into the teacher's personal and professional experiences to offer a conceptualisation of image" (p.19).

In his study, the conceptualisation of image was presented through the examination of two images. The first was an analysis of the teacher's 'classroom at home' image and the experiential link to her educational and personal private life. The image also had roots in four areas of the teacher's experience: in her professional experience; in her professional training; in her own school experience and in her private life. As Clandinin (1986) remarks, these professional and personal experiences were linked to the teacher's classroom practice by the image of 'classroom in the home.'

Johnston (1988, 1990) also used the perspective of 'personal, practical knowledge,' linking this to professional experiences in the classroom context to understand curriculum decision-making through teacher images. Through the processes of interview and feedback, various images emerged as the teachers explored their involvement in school-based curriculum change and what formed the basis of their actions. For example, one teacher had an image of teaching as 'meeting the needs of students' and undertook to change the curriculum by developing a new subject when the reality she experienced in her classroom did not match this image. Another teacher used the image of a 'refuge' for students to

'shelter.' The teacher attributed such images to his own personal experience of school and provided the impetus for his actions in bringing about curriculum changes through developing a new school subject.

The concept of image defined by Clandinin (1986) was also used by Beattie (1995a) in her research, which involved a collaborative story of teaching and learning between herself and another teacher. Her research showed how her teaching colleague lived out her life as a teacher within an understanding of her image of family relations: "...I heard again those accounts and descriptions of living and teaching within the context of relationships" (Beattie ibid. p.74). Here the images of 'team' and 'family' were used to describe the teacher's self and her classroom reality.

What these research studies depict is the way in which images take into account professional and practical experiences and guide the teacher's thinking and action, based upon a judgement of values, beliefs, attitudes and goals. This is further illustrated by Cole and Knowles' (2000) research, which involved working with two experienced teachers in an inquiry into their practice. The images that were formed helped the teachers and the researchers to understand and talk about teaching in a way that more accurately took into account its complex and personal nature. Such studies seem to be underpinned by Weber and Mitchell's (1995,1999) suggestion of a need for 'a teacher gaze' through which to examine:

> "...ourselves individually and collectively, a stimulus for self interrogation that can sharpen our professional identities as teachers by providing the contextual, historical, and political background that makes self-interpretation more meaningful and identity more complete" (Weber and Mitchell 1995, pp.130-1).

Thus, it is important to consider the implications that images hold for teacher professional identity. As Olesen (2001) remarks, images highlight the subjective dynamic of identity.

The Changing Nature of Professional Identity

Given the fact that: "Higher education is facing a crisis which in part, is a crisis of professional self-identity..." (Nixon 1996, p.5) there seems to have been little growth in the research work that has:

(i)   Explored the notion of professional identity for teachers working in higher education and how images can be used to conceptualise professional identity;

(ii)   Emphasised their personal life experiences and the way they interact with their professional lives.

Perhaps this is because it is difficult for "...even self-aware professionals to forge new identities by modifying images that they have held all their lives - images that are rooted both in the mythology and the reality of teaching" (Weber and Mitchell 1995, p. 31). However, a recent study has been undertaken by Henkel (2000) that deliberately sets out to examine the concept of professional identity

in relation to academia. This work starts with the assumption that the concept of identity is central to individual academics and the working of academic systems. Henkel (ibid.) argues that higher education reforms and changes have created an impetus towards a more structured environment, encouraging new 'professional' academic identities. Academics in 11 institutions were interviewed in a total of seven disciplines: biochemistry, chemistry, physics, sociology, history and english. She concludes that the academic profession in Britain has been relatively adaptive in the face of changes that have taken place within higher education, and that there remains at the heart of academic identity a commitment to academic values, teaching and research.

Whilst this study takes "...the discipline and the enterprise, or the higher education institution as the main institutions or communities within which academics construct their identities, their values, the knowledge base of their work..." (Henkel 2000, p.22), Taylor (1999) has also considered the different interrelated levels of academic identity:

(i)   Level one involves relationships with the employer and work;

(ii)   Level two involves identification with the academic discipline i.e. I'm a psychologist;

(iii) Level three involves a more universal image of academic entity, which overlaps disciplinary boundaries. This emphasises the vales of academic autonomy and freedom i.e. I'm an academic.

Taylor (ibid) argues that these different levels recognise both the diversity in the professional lives of academics and its uniformity. Wenger (1998) has also argued for five different dimensions of identity, which are useful in thinking about professional identity. These are:

(i)   Identity as negotiated experiences where teachers define who they are by the ways they experience themselves and become aware of their own identity;

(ii)   Identity as a community membership – more is said about this later in the Chapter;

(iii) Identity as a 'learning trajectory' whereby teachers define who they are by where they have been and are going;

(iv)   Identity as a 'nexus of multi-membership' whereby teachers can define who they are by the ways they reconcile their various form of identity into one identity;

(v)   Identity as a relation between the local and the global whereby teachers define who they are by negotiating broader local ways of being with broader styles and discourses.

These definitions emphasise that "...identities are never unified...and increasingly fragmented and fractured, never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions" (Hall 1996, p.4).

Teachers' Professional Identities –Realities and Uncertainties

Olesen (2001) has argued that: "Professionals are individuals who, in a specifically direct way, incorporate the societal knowledge and on an institutional level professions stabilize subjective views

and practices" (p.291). This suggests that teachers' construction of their professional identities are linked to the organisational realities in which they work, and involve social interactions in which individuals know what to expect from others and what or who it is that they are expected to be.

Similarly, Cooper and Olson (1996) have also argued that there are many facets that contribute to the development of teacher identity. These include historical, sociological, psychological and cultural influences that shape the continuous process of teacher identity. This is reiterated by Hoshmand's (1998) narrative study of seven American psychologists who offered personal accounts of their moral and professional development. In one participant account, comments were made about the conflicts felt about academic psychology in terms of professional roles and responsibilities, education and training and efficacy of practices. For another participant, the promotion of education reflected a broader agenda rather than meeting the immediate needs of the profession but recognised the importance of teaching in training future generations of psychologists. Here their teacher identities were influenced by the contextual complexities within which they worked.

Consequently, professional identities provide a sense of belonging, which Taylor (1999) describes as a boundary formation. The way in which professional identities emerge in such contexts has been discussed by Dutton et al (1994) and Giola and Thomas (1996). They have explored the way in which organisational images can shape the strength of a member's identification with that organisation. As Dutton and Dukerich (1991) have noted, perceptions of how others perceive their institution are often tied to how members perceive their organisation. Giola and Thomas (ibid.) argue that it is unlikely that a change in image can be sustained without an associated change in identity. Dutton and Dukerich (ibid.) also note that the relationship between an individual's sense of organisational identity and image and his/her sense of identity and values suggest a personal connection between professional action and individual motivation.

From this perspective, identities are constantly shifting and negotiated as they are influenced at a macro and micro level and by individuals and groups. Yet Wenger (1998) has outlined how identity is also a negotiated experience. Similarly, Greenfield and Ribbins (1993) have argued that organisations are themselves social constructs that are continually refreshed and renewed through negotiations of individual people who may be members, or wish to become members of the communities that construct them. Building up an identity can, therefore, be described as an interaction between an individual and an institution. This may occur in two different ways:

(i)   Henkel (2000) argues that where a sense of stability and coherence exists within an institution, this may limit the possibilities for reconstructing individual identity;

(ii)   Czarniawska (1997) notes that where there is a state of radical change in an organisational environment, an individual identity can become reshaped and a new identity can be expressed through such changes.

Organisational realities, therefore, accept that "...people are inherently part of organizations, that organizations themselves are expressions of how people believe they should relate to each other" (Greenfield and Ribbins 1993, p.55). As Dutton et al (1994) point out, when members of an organisation identify strongly with the organisation, the attributes they use to define the organisation can define them. Such identification will also inform professional practice, despite the individual's beliefs about the organisation itself. This is because:

> "...each person responds in her own way to that institutional setting with dramatically different consequences for the place that each occupies on the [professional knowledge] landscape..." (Connelly et al 1997, p.93).

Where members view their organisation as a distinctive culture, Ashforth and Mael (1989) have argued that they are more likely to experience a strong sense of identity. However, where there exists uncertain organisational conditions, Bernstein (2000) has argued that teacher professional identities emerge out of retrospective and prospective identities. Here, retrospective identities use as their resource narratives of the past that provide exemplars and criteria for the present and future. Alternatively, prospective identities use as their resource narratives that will be ground in the identity of the future. As Sachs (2001) notes, prospective identities are important in considering teacher professional identity because they "...create a new basis for social relations, for solidarities and for oppositions. In this respect prospective identities involve a *re-centring*" (Bernstein ibid. p.76). This would seem to suggest that organisational structures are based upon ideas about experience, about how individuals come to understand what they do and what is happening to them.

Consequently, as Giddens (1979) remarks, organisational structures are social constructions that involve interactions between individuals or groups and recognise the existence of knowledge and social practices. As these organisational structures begin to change, teachers' professional identities may be re-established. This is evident in higher education as Henkel (2000) remarks, "...policy changes that expose higher education to such influences as massification, bureaucratisation and juridification may be disturbing to the values and structures within which academic identities have hitherto been sustained" (p.21).

Such processes may conflict with existing professional identities. In a schoolteacher story outlined by Connelly and Clandinin (1999), the teacher described herself as a passionate curriculum maker, but struggled with the tensions between the mandated curriculum and the curriculum that in the end she felt she had to teach. She continually questioned her identity because she believed both 'plotlines' in her head were the ones she should live by. This indicates how such tensions can be enforced by the host/employing institution encouraging a limited number of teaching practices or behaviours. In this context, it can be argued that as reflective practitioners it becomes more difficult to "...innovate, create and incorporate new knowledge and understanding" (Brown et al 1999, p.208). This comment is further developed by Connelly and Clandinin (ibid.) who tell a teacher's story of professional identity

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whereby institutional control on staffing shaped the teacher's practice. Thus as Astley (1992) argues, it is possible for a body of cultural and professionally defined practice to be imposed on teachers.

Van Manen (1977) has argued that the processes of teaching and learning can establish communication and common understanding. However, in terms of professional identity this may cause conflict between meeting the needs of different organisational communities. There may also exist a contradiction between organisational-framed practice and professional values. For example, in another teacher story described by Connelly and Clandinin (1999), a teacher struggled over what she was required to teach by her employing institution and what she believed should be taught. The teacher attempted a different teaching style, encouraging students to reflect on their own practices, but her identity was also bound up in the need for her students to pass their professional examinations. Connelly and Clandinin (ibid.) outlined that such dilemmas experienced by this teacher and others in the research were:

> "...partly connected with the identities each teacher [lived] out in her work and, partially, these matters are connected to the discrepancies each [experienced] between her identity and the formal curricular expectations of her role" (Connelly and Clandinin 1999, p.85).

This highlights Olson's (1985) point that teachers cannot always shape professional practice by themselves. They also require management to support them in this process, providing them with the necessary resources to help them improve practice: "Outsiders can work with teachers to identify and analyse dilemmas, evaluating the consequences of their resolution, and working out ways to deal with the many dilemmas that exist in teaching" (Olson ibid., p.306). Yet as noted by Carlgren (1999), whilst teacher thinking and reflection are embedded in teaching practice, the way that practice is shaped may be determined by organisational practices and may conflict with the kinds of professional action taken and professional knowledge valued by members of the organisation. This highlights the fact that "...identities cannot be merely 'read-off' from a given context, but may take many forms, and may encompass individual practices of modification and resistance" (Halford and Leonard 1999, p103).

From a Foucaultian perspective, Quicke (2000) has commented upon the way in which power can limit the scope of reflective practice, "...it is easy to underestimate the extent to which these processes might be an expression of power-constrained relations and a power-induced construction of the reflective self" (p.311). Quicke (ibid.) argues that a reflective professional, as defined by Schon (1983) would have difficulty in becoming a reflective practitioner if he/she failed to take account of power realities and conflicts at an institutional level. Teacher identity may, therefore, have to be modified as a consequence of professional experiences, although, "...they remain an important frame of reference from which classroom actions of self and others are evaluated" (Crow 1987, p.106).

Redefining Teacher Professionalism – Shifting Professional Identities

Whilst Downie (1990) notes that in accepting their role, practitioners identify themselves with the values of that profession and the duties that go with it, it can be argued that changes in teacher professionalism can reshape the way in which identities are formed. As Clarke and Newman (1997) note, "...managerial discourses create the possibilities within which individuals construct new roles and identities from which they derive ideas about the logic of institutional change" (Clarke and Newman 1997 in Sachs 2001, p.152). McCulloch et al (2000) argue that an influx of external agendas, including top-down directives and legislative initiatives has profoundly changed the structures and frameworks that shape teachers' identity. Thus, the current notions of teacher professionalism can be contested. This is reiterated by Chown (1996) who remarks that "...those who wish to construct a contending definition of teachers as autonomous, professional practitioners face urgent challenges" (p.16). This suggests that there exist:

> "...questions of identity and a historic connection with discursive and interpersonal struggles...As the knowledge of a particular group, it issues from a particular perspective. Others may understand it; but are unlikely to endorse it" (Blake 1997, p.158).

In this context, the changing nature of academic institutions, with their increased emphasis on teacher professionalism, may lead to "...altering aspects of identity and images within dramatically shorter timescales. Consequently, the conceptualisation of identity should include dimensions that account for the ability of organizations to learn and adapt quickly" (Giola and Thomas 1996, p.398). This argument outlines the fact that teacher identity is neither "...unproblematic [nor] singular in nature" (Weber and Mitchell 1995, p.109). In an attempt to negotiate professional identity, such negotiations will always be inequitable because as Atkinson (1999) remarks, where individuals are members of communities that construct them, power will be distributed throughout the social world. As Foucault (1980) also argues, power will be distributed inequitably in organisations and people's sense of self-identities inevitably become shaped by the operations of power. As Nixon (1996) notes: "The academic workforce...now includes a plurality of occupational groups divided from one another by task, influence and seniority within the institution" (p.8).

Townley (1993) argues that Foucault (1980) saw these mechanisms of power affecting everyday lives. As Dreyfus (1996) remarks, such power can emphasise the way in which everyday practices of individuals and groups become coordinated to produce, perpetuate, and delimit what people can think, do and become. This means that it may become difficult to redefine professional identity that is consistent with "...our educational values and our struggle to live our professional lives in the way which are most appropriate and consistent with these values and the moral purposes of our professional deliberations and actions..." (Walker 2001, p.192). The opportunities to recreate a professional identity may be diminished as "...the permitted forms of self-reflection are arrested at superficial levels. The self is revealed and exposed and is asked to take on given external agendas" (Barnett 1997, p.101).

It is apparent that the current discourses in teacher professionalism reflect the way in which professional identity for teachers working in higher education can be shaped. Sachs (2001) comments that a model of professional identity has emerged that is externally defined as the professional identifies with notions of accountability and efficiency. In these circumstances, "...the taking up of identity is a constant social negotiation that can never be permanently settled or fixed, occurring as it necessarily does within the irreconcilable contradictions of situational and historical constraints" (Britzman 1992, p.42). For teachers this may be mediated by their own experiences in and outside higher education as well as their own beliefs and values about what it means to be a teacher and may involve negotiating their professional identity.

Identity and Organisational Communities

Halford and Leonard (1999) note that much of the literature on professionalism and identity has assumed that professionals develop distinctive identities as a consequence of their occupation. For example, Friedson (1994) emphasises the way in which there exists a shared identity in terms of professional qualifications and identification with the occupation amongst those belonging to the same profession. He also argues that the shared experience of professional training "...does not merely insert "knowledge" into people's heads, but also builds expectations and commitments...specialised occupational identities get constructed" (p.99). This has implications for teachers who not only work in higher education, but also work in different professional environments, whose professional identities can be assumed to be linked to particular bodies of knowledge and expertise.

It can, therefore, be argued that professional identities will be influenced by the situations in which individuals work. As Henkel (2000) notes in her study, "...it is possible to see academics as both distinctive individuals and embedded in the communities of primary importance to them..." (pp.250-251). It can also be argued that identities are further influenced by the fact that teachers are able to become members of more than one organisational community. Wenger (1998) has argued that identity involves a 'nexus of multi membership' whereby: "An identity combines multiple forms of membership through a process of reconciliation across boundaries of practice" (p.163). This is an important definition for the research study because it recognises that multiple communities – in this case higher education and the professional body - are central to the production of an individual's professional identity. It also concurs with Busher's (2001) suggestion that people construct self-identities through membership of what he defines as 'academic discourse communities' in order to meet the demands of those communities.

So it can be argued that the notion of identity entails what Wenger (1998) has identified as the experience of multi-membership. For example, Gilles and Harris (1992) argue that the development of professional education courses require a closer partnership between the subject and professional tutors, higher education institutions and the professional body. Consequently, Wenger (ibid.) also argues that

identity requires an individual to reconcile the different forms of membership. So members of a professional body who are also teachers working in higher education may require an understanding and application of "…an accepted body of knowledge that integrates the propositional, the personal and the process orientated in order to demonstrate professional expertise" (Katz 2000, p.24). As Wenger (ibid.) argues: "It requires construction of an identity that can include different meanings and forms of participation…" (p.160).

This point is illustrated further by Jarvis (1999), who recounts the experience of a nursing teacher who took a year of unpaid leave to return to university to work towards a higher degree. In that time the teacher gained a great deal of new knowledge. Upon her return to employment, her enthusiasm was dampened by the fact that due to professional constraints she had been unable to introduce into her professional practice some of the things she had learned from her studies. All she was able to do was to make small adjustments to her own practice.

It is clear that multi-membership includes what Wenger (1998) has identified as "…the living experience of boundaries…" (p.161) which involves a dual relationship between identities and the communities in which individuals work. As Burke (1995) suggests, this may also be influenced by the kind of knowledge used and valued by professionals, which may differ to that required and organised in higher education institutions. Taylor (1999) also suggests that academic notions of identity are multi-levelled, as the following account illustrates:

> "First I must clarify that from my perspective it is central to the role of psychologist to be an educator, whether one's chosen area of functioning is teaching, research, service…I have found that although the content of my work is unique to the discipline, my efforts as an educator are common across many areas" (Reich 1998 in Hoshmand 1998, p.50).

For the research study, the different professional environments that university teachers work in may impact on their teacher professionalism because: "Both organizational image and identity are constructs held in organization members' minds" (Dutton and Dukerich 1991, p.547). Shaping professional practice, therefore, involves a process of analysing individual and cultural experiences, meanings and perceptions and assumptions. There is not only an interpretative understanding of both the nature and quality of educational experience, but an exploration of the organisational realities within which these teachers work. As Wenger (1998) argues, "…there is a profound connection between identity and practice. Developing a practice requires the formation of a community whose members can engage with one another and thus acknowledge each other as participants" (p.149).

It is evident from the literature review in Chapter Two and Chapter Three that constructing a professional identity may be, "…in dialogic relation and it is this tension that makes for a "lived experience" of teacher" (Britzman 1992, p.29). As Wenger (1998) comments: "Indeed our identities are rich and complex because they are produced within the rich and complex set of relations of

practice" (p.162). Given such complexities, the research study will not only consider the way in which professional identity and practice is constructed and shaped at an individual level, but inevitably will explore the diversity that may exist for academic psychologists working in different communities in which professional identity may not always accord. This involves the study of university teachers' lives from their point of view in which "...teachers not only hold diverse self-images but also actively construct these images..." (Bolotin and Burnaford 1994, p.30). These images can not only provide a lens through which the academic psychologists' professional identity can be understood, but allow them to "...rethink the visions we can have about what teachers become and who we can become as teachers" (Britzman 1992, p.42).

Chapter Four

Research Methodology

Introduction

Having situated the research and explored the academic literature, this Chapter will describe in detail how the research has been conducted. This will include a critical review of the research design, including the epistemology and research approach, the methods of data collection and analysis and their appropriateness for the study. It is worth reiterating that the aim of the study is to explore how academic psychologists see themselves within the communities in which they live and work. More specifically the study will consider:

(i) The way in which academic psychologists understand their professional identity;

(ii) The images used to construct professional identity and shape professional practice;

(iii) The way in which professional identity is managed within the communities in which academic psychologists live and work, and how fundamental these are to their teacher professionalism.

Research Design

Research Epistemology and Methodology

The research study is underpinned by an interpretive paradigm. As Easterby-Smith et al (1991) argue, the starting point for the study is that reality is socially constructed rather than objectively determined. The researcher, therefore, attempts to articulate the structure and meaning of human experience with a view to interpreting and understanding multiple realities and the potential meanings or possibilities of human experiences, rather than gathering facts to measure how often certain patterns occur.

The research study is grounded in a "...philosophical position which is interpretivist in the sense that it is concerned with how the social world is interpreted, understood, experienced or produced" (Mason 1996, p.4). In this context, the aim is to appreciate the different constructions and meanings that people place upon their experiences and to focus on discourses, practices and interpretation as meaningful elements of individual lives, which are complex and often multi-layered. This is reiterated by Miles and Huberman (1994) who argue that the role of the researcher is "...to gain a 'holistic'...overview of the context under study" (p.6).

The research study also recognises the importance of the voice of the researcher, rather than limiting the influence of her values and experiences as far as possible. In this context, the researcher is not the "...objective agent depicted in some positivist views of scientific enquiry. The researcher has an influence..." (Arksey and Knight 1999, p.55). As Janesick (1994) comments, this approach goes

beyond positivist paradigms that place an emphasis on knowing what they are looking for and hypothesis testing and instead, attempts to capture the perceptions of the participants as well as the researcher drawing upon her experiences and thinking reflectively.

Research Approach

The primary approach to the research study is that of narrative inquiry. "Because of its focus on experience and the qualities of life and education, narrative is situated in a matrix of qualitative research" (Connelly and Clandinin 1990, p.3.). Cortazzi (1993) argues that the advantage of this approach is its focus on less problematic situations, life transitions or turning points as in the life history or biographical method, and on the everyday life of the teacher. This approach also emphasises the richness of narrative and is linked to Crites' (1971) notion of the narrative quality of experience which he claims has three dimensions, "...the scared story, the mundane stories, and the temporal form of experience itself..." (p.305). These three dimensions constantly reflect and affect each other. Thus, the epistemological objective of narrative inquiry is meaning:

> "Meaning may be viewed as context-embedded (historical) and culturally-framed but also transferable and subject to critical evaluation. Through interrogation of personal stories researchers can seek that meaning which is underlying, widely-shared or deeply-rooted in some common element of human experience" (Weber 1993, p.72).

Both Clandinin and Connelly (1986) and Cortazzi (1993) have explored the way in which narrative inquiry is able to provide stories of teachers' actual experiences and so reflect the values, beliefs and perspectives embedded in those stories. This occurs by a process of reflection in which images form an important part of the narrative. As Crites (1971) notes: "Mind and imagination are capable of recollecting the narrative materials of experience..." (p.308). This argument is also underpinned by the work of Carr (1986) who makes the case that when individuals note something of their experience, either to themselves or to others, they do not do so by simply recording experience over time but in a storied form. He concludes that educational experience becomes the stories that teachers tell. In this context, keeping a sense of the experiential whole is part of the study of narrative. This point is also emphasised by Swidler (2000) who argues that narrative inquiry has the potential to access individual voices and to offer "...deeper, sensitive and accurate portrayals of experience that have escaped positivist quantitative research and less sensitive, objectivist qualitative research" (p.553).

The Research Questions

The design of the research questions was underpinned by the aim of the study and influenced by the literature review that had taken place. In order to establish how the academic psychologists saw themselves in the communities in which they lived and worked, questions were designed around three key areas: issues of professionalism, teacher images and professional identity. An important aspect of the research study involved teachers being asked questions about their understanding of notions of

professionalism and how they saw themselves (Appendix A). A framework was devised which included the following questions:

(i)   We talk about the 'psychology profession'. What does this mean for you?
(ii)   In your view, what role does academic psychology play in defining psychology as a profession?
(iii)   How do you see yourself?
(iv)   How does being an academic psychologist fit with your image of yourself and your career?
(v)   Do you think psychology students that you teach see you as a real psychologist? What images do students have about being a psychologist?
(vi)   How have your experiences as an academic psychologist shaped your professional identity?
(vii)   Is professional identity linked to other identities? Please provide examples.
(viii) How does the BPS influence your professional identity?
(ix)   How feasible do you think it is to promote a sense of common purpose and professional identity across the psychology profession, rather than distinguishing between 'academic' and 'applied' psychology?

These questions were designed to "...understand the meaning of the participants' lives in the participants' own terms" (Janesick 1994 in Denzin and Lincoln 1994, p.210). Given the research approach and the research methods to be adopted the researcher decided to ask the academic psychologists two additional research questions. The first question asked about the research process itself- particularly the use of email as a research tool and the second question asked about whether they found the process a reflective one, in terms of thinking about their professional identity. As Hoshmand (1998) notes in her study, such questions served as a tool for data gathering for the researcher and as catalysts for reflection for the academic psychologists.

In designing the research questions, the researcher wished to understand the relationships that influenced the lives of the academic psychologists in their varied working communities. In the research context the academic psychologists relationship with the staff who worked for their professional body, and psychology students were explored following the analysis of the interviews with the academic psychologists. Further research questions were, therefore, constructed to ascertain their perceptions of how they saw the academic psychologists (Appendix B and C). Questions included biographical as well as substantive questions based upon the main themes of the teacher interviews. These questions were linked to issues of professionalism, professional identity and their conceptualisation of how they saw the teachers. As Foddy (1993) notes, these questions were open-ended, encouraged the participants to express themselves in their own words and allowed for complex motivational influences and frames of reference to be identified.

The Research Population

Determining the research population and the sample to be selected was underpinned by the conceptual framework of the study and the research questions posed. The researcher also wanted to explore different perspectives on the research topic in order to understand the relationships that influenced the academic psychologists' lives as well as to enrich the data analysis. The research study adopted a

similar approach to that of McCulloch et al (2000) who not only spoke to teachers, but also 'key informants' i.e. administrators, policy-makers or inspectors. Similarly, in the research study, such informants included managerial staff working for the Society and students registered on undergraduate degrees in psychology.

As Parry (1992) argues, exploring different perspectives highlighted the way in which the everyday life of individuals was complex and multifaceted. However as Bell (1993) comments, the selection of the population to be researched was also dependent on the timescale of the project and practical considerations. This point is reinforced by Arksey and Knight (1999): "For qualitative researchers in particular, sampling is an exercise of judgement which balances practical concerns (time, money access) with the research foci and with the degree to which *the researcher* wants to generalize from the data" (p.58).

Given this context, the researcher had to select a sample of the population to be studied. This involved the researcher using her judgement to satisfy the needs of the study. Hence non-probability sampling, sometimes referred to as purposive sampling, allowed the researcher to target three different groups of participants who would make key participants. As indicated by Cohen and Manion (1997), this meant that the samples could be selected based on the participants' typicality, as detailed below. As Robson (1993) notes, this approach was chosen because there was no intention or need to make a statistical generalisation to any population beyond the sample in question. This allowed the sample size to be smaller.

Academic Psychologists

Given whom the research questions were to be targeted at and the main research method to be used, 25 participants were selected by purposefully choosing those academic psychologists who not only taught psychology at undergraduate level, but also were members of the Society who through their work, held responsibility for providing and disseminating the academic knowledge-base of psychology at this level. So typically, the academic psychologists:

(i)   All worked in higher education and taught on Society accredited psychology programmes at undergraduate level;

(ii)   Were members of the British Psychological Society and represented on the Society's Graduate Qualifications Accreditation Committee, responsible for defining the academic knowledge-base in psychology for first qualifications in psychology in higher education;

(iii)   All had access to email.

Society Staff

The research study wished to understand the relationships that influenced the academic psychologists' lives in the communities in which they lived and worked. As one of these communities involved the British Psychological Society, it was important to talk to those members of staff who worked closely

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with the academic psychologists. To achieve this, the researcher decided to access those staff who worked in the Membership and Qualifications Directorate of the Society. Given the size of the Directorate and the criteria the researcher purposely selected the five team leaders, all of whom worked closely with academic providers of psychology programmes in higher education.

Students

Given that the academic psychologists were not only members of the Society, but taught on undergraduate degrees in psychology that were accredited by the Society, the researcher decided to explore the relationships that influenced the academic psychologists' lives in this context. Hence, the researcher decided to access students enrolled on university, undergraduate degree programmes in psychology that were accredited by the Society. To do this, the researcher used the Society's Student Members Committee as the sample. Thus, there were 30 students in total all of whom met the criteria for selection, as well as having access to email.

Having made some initial decisions about what the researcher wished to research based upon the conceptual framework of the study, the research questions to be asked and about where and from whom the researcher was to obtain the data, it was necessary to establish how the study would be trustworthy, credible and ethical.

Making the Research Credible

Arskey and Knight (1999) note that in the positivist tradition of research, it is notions of validity, reliability and generalisation that underpin research design. However, they also argue that such notions cannot be so easily applied to qualitative research, although it is still important that researchers demonstrate that what they do is fit for their research purpose. As the research was located in an interpretive paradigm, the notions of validity, reliability and generalisation were replaced by the concepts of consistency, credibility and authenticity which allowed the researcher to provide "…an account that communicates with the reader the truth about the setting and the situation as the [researcher] has come to understand it" (Altheide and Johnson 1994, p.496). As Connelly and Clandinin (1990) have argued in relation to narrative inquiry, such accounts are not written according to a model of cause and effect but according to the explanations gleaned from the overall account. This links to the underpinning research strategy, "…the purpose is to produce an accurate description of the interpretative narrative accounts individuals or groups use to make sequences of events in their lives" (Polkinghorne 1988, pp.161-162).

The purpose of the study was to explore meaning, rather than survey the extent to which the participants agreed with the researcher's questions and response categories. Thus, generalisation was not appropriate as the researcher did not wish to claim that the findings from the samples described above could be applied to a whole population. However, it was considered feasible that a number of fuzzy propositions could occur which carried an element of uncertainty. As Bassey (1999) notes, a

fuzzy proposition can report that "... something has happened in one place and that it may also happen elsewhere. There is a possibility but no surety" (p.52). This approach can overcome the tension noted by Connelly and Clandinin (2000), between writing a narrative that represents the experiences of the research participants and creating a generalisable theory, which means that the richness of the narrative experiences will be lost.

Similarly, reliability was not appropriate because the research study was not "...looking for principles that are true all the time and in all conditions...rather the goal is understanding of specific circumstances, how and why things happen in a complex world" (Rubin and Rubin 1995 in Arksey and Knight 1999, p.54). Hence, it was necessary for the researcher to demonstrate the credibility and trustworthiness of the study by considering what Guba and Lincoln (1989, 1994) have described as consistency and authenticity:

(i)   Consistency - the researcher demonstrates how the research will be conducted and that the research findings are plausible and transparent;

(ii)   Authenticity - a range of multiple realities are demonstrated as well as the research helping, "...members [participants] develop "more sophisticated" understandings of the phenomenon being studied..." (Guba and Lincoln 1989 in Seale 1999, p.469).

As noted in Chapter One in order to ensure consistency and authenticity, the approach used by Wolcott (1990) was applied to the study. This included:

(i) Careful reading of the dialogue and responding appropriately;

(ii) Recording accurately;

(iii) Writing early;

(iv) Offering informed interpretations;

(v) Subjectivity not objectivity;

(vi) Writing accurately.

Following these principles allowed the research study to be carried out in a systematic and transparent way, while also allowing the researcher to present trustworthy accounts which accurately represented the academic psychologists' views of their images of teaching and issues of professional identity. Yet, as noted by Hall (1996), encouraging the participants to talk about their experiences may not guarantee greater authenticity, since their accounts of their lives will be culturally embedded. "Given their professional task and status, both men and women educators learn how to construct and represent their lives for public consumption, and the rhetoric may bear little resemblance to the reality" (p.30). In an attempt to overcome this problem, the research study provided the opportunity for what Cooper and MacInytre (1996) call 'post hoc rationalisation.' In other words, the participants were asked to authenticate their accounts.

In order to further enhance the credibility of the research study, the researcher used triangulation. This included triangulation of research methods as well as data triangulation. As Seale (1999) remarks, triangulation has the capacity to enrich data, increase depth and consistency as well as exposing multiple constructed realities and contradictions. Cain and Finch (1981) have argued that the multiplication of methods can help to deepen an understanding of different aspects of the same phenomenon. The use of data triangulation by interviewing psychology students and staff from the Society broadened the researcher's understanding of the self-images that academic psychologists constructed as part of their professional identity and the relationships that defined their professional lives. In this context, methodological triangulation was also used "…less as a strategy for confirmation and more as one for in-depth understanding and completeness" (Arksey and Knight 1999, p.24).

Negotiation and Access in the Field of Study - Ethical Issues

To ensure that the conduct of the research was ethical, it was underpinned by the British Educational Research Association's Ethical Guidelines (1992). Yet Mason (1996) argues that it is not always easy to adhere to ethical codes of conduct. In designing the research study it became evident that the guidelines could only serve to establish a minimum threshold and could not resolve 'everyday' ethical matters. Clandinin and Connelly (1988) note that even where negotiation has been achieved and ethical principles applied, a productive study cannot always be guaranteed:

> "In these settings, while the quality or "fit" of description is clearly uppermost on the researcher's agenda, problems regarding such things as privacy, deception, and confidentiality can become key personal and professional ethical concerns" (Soltis 1989, p.196).

Figueroa (2000) has argued that ethical issues are prevalent in every aspect of educational research. Moving through each phase of the research process, the researcher may be confronted with ethical considerations and will need to resolve how such matters can be practically managed. Judgements and decisions made about such ethical issues will be made in the actual research context and involve considerable reflection. Of course, as Figueroa (ibid.) rightly remarks, not all researchers will share the same values or interpretations in their own research. Ethical difficulties, therefore, become resolved in a given situation. Simons and Usher (2000) refer to this as 'situated ethics':

> "…education research is a social practice, or more accurately a variety of social practices, each with its own set of ethical issues. Researchers cannot avoid weighing up often conflicting considerations and dilemmas which are located in the specificities of the research situation and where there is a need to make ethical decisions but where those decisions cannot be reached by appeal to unambiguous and univalent principles or codes" (p.2).

It has been argued that in undertaking educational research: "Ethical principles are abstract and it is not always obvious how they should be applied in given situations…"(House 1993, in Kushner 2000, p.56). In negotiating access into the field of study, permission was needed from the Society to access those academic psychologists who were also members of it. It was clear that: "Ethical decisions have to

be taken against a background of institutional complexities, personal responses and multiple, often conflicting expectations" (Simons and Usher 2000, p.5).

This dilemma was partly resolved by seeking permission from the Society's Board of Directors to undertake the project and access its membership, followed by writing to the participants to seek their consent. In so doing, the researcher also considered the possibility that a number of academic psychologists might not wish to be involved in the research study on professional grounds. Recognising the responsibility the researcher had towards the research participants it was, therefore, decided that:

    (i)   All participants would be asked for their consent to take part in the study.

    (ii)   All participants would remain anonymous;

    (iii)   All information would be treated with the strictest confidentiality;

    (iv)   All participants would have the opportunity to authenticate their interviews and make any amendments;

    (v)   All participants would receive a final copy of the interview;

    (vi)   All participants would be advised about what their interviews would be used for.

Whilst being committed to providing opportunities for the expression of the teacher's voice through the interviews, a crucial role of the researcher was to ensure that the participants' voices were not taken for granted for the sake of telling 'their story.' Witherall and Noddings (1998) remark upon the power of narrative inquiry to expand our understandings and provide rich contextual information about people. The researcher was concerned that if any work did become published there would not be any control about the way in which the readership might interpret the work. Clandinin and Connelly (1996) and Coles and Knowles (2000) both argue that because narrative inquiry involves real people and not just research texts, there is an ethical responsibility towards the research participants and how these texts may shape their lives.

The right to privacy of the participants versus the opportunity to disseminate research publicly must also be considered in this context. Any research findings or conclusions that were to be published from the research study would require the permission of those participants that had taken part in the research and they would have the right to view anything written for publication and request amendments as necessary. Thus, the personal nature of narrative inquiry means that issues relating to ownership of data continue throughout and beyond the life of the research study. As Soltis (1989) concludes, educational researchers must be, "...ethical in *purpose* as well as in the *process* of doing research" (p.128).

Defining the Research Methods

Having given consideration to how the study would be credible and ethical, it was necessary to define the research methods that would be used in order to collect and analyse the data. Whilst Guba and

Lincoln (1994) argue that both qualitative and quantitative methods may be used appropriately within any research paradigm, Filstead (1979) also argues that the combination of quantitative and qualitative research can be viewed as incompatible because they represent divergent epistemological paradigms for conceptualising social reality. Hari Das (1983) comments that qualitative methods are more holistic in perspective than quantitative methods and conclusions that emerge from qualitative research are more impressionistic rather than definitive. Rather than focusing only on a few variables such as curriculum design, teaching and learning methods and the layout of the classroom, the phenomenon is understood as complex, influenced by many variables. With quantitative techniques, the emphasis is on the collection of metric data, using well-designed instruments, classifying the data into response categories and synthesising the collected information to evaluate the existing body of knowledge or generate new knowledge. As Knight and Saunders (1999) note: "They are defective to the degree that they fail to capture meanings and complexities. The alluring, meaning-free simplicity of the data of these methods is a poor basis for policy-making reform and practice" (p.154).

Qualitative research methods look for, and meaningfully interpret human experiences. They do not assume as Denzin (1978) remarks that human behaviour can be categorised and analysed within theory in the form of hypotheses, in which likely causal connections between the constituents of the hypothesis are investigated. As Morgan (1983) remarks adopting these methods of research assume that experiences can be subjected to experimental, statistical or causal control and manipulation. Instead, the researcher draws randomly on selected samples of human experience. It is also noted by Hammersley (1996) that the practical character of research can often lead to problematic presuppositions where quantitative and qualitative research is viewed as "...more or less simply different approaches to data collection, so that preferences for one or the other or some hybrid approach are based on technical issues" (Bryman 1988, p.5).

However, it can also be argued that, "...great advantages can be obtained by creatively combining qualitative and quantitative methods" (Filstead 1979 in Bryman 1988, p.108). For the research study: "What is being implied here is a form of methodological eclecticism; indeed the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods is often proposed..." (Hammersley 1996 in Richardson et al 1996, p.167). There were three reasons for this:

(i) Triangulation: The data obtained from both quantitative and qualitative methods would enhance the credibility of the research study;

(ii) Facilitation: Quantitative research could be used to facilitate qualitative research. In this context, the questionnaires would be used as a preliminary to the interviews to provide the opportunity for participants to give their views on the topic being researched;

(iii) Complementarity: The questionnaire responses could complement the information provided in the email interviews and facilitate an improved understanding of the relationship between variables.

In designing the study, the researcher also had to consider the practicalities of conducting research "...against real constraints in social research such as time and money that are available" (Burgess 1984, p.163). Accordingly, both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis have been adopted that are appropriate for *this* research study, as described below. What the researcher has tried to achieve is a "...methodologically aware eclecticism in which the full range of options is kept in mind, in terms of both methods and philosophical assumptions" (Hammersley 1996 in Richardson 1996, p.174).

Qualitative Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

The Use of Narrative Methods

Narrative inquiry can not only include phenomena, but also method because it names "...the structured quality of experience to be studied, and it names the patterns of inquiry for its study" (Clandinin and Connelly in Denzin and Lincoln 1994, p.416). This is also reiterated by Carter (1993) who argues that narrative defines both the method and object of inquiry in teaching and teacher education and is a central focus for the conduct of research in this field.

Beattie (1995a) argues that narrative research methods can provide educational researchers with different kinds of knowledge and different ways of representing it. They also have "...the potential to bring new meaning to the experiences of change, of growth, and of professional development in a teacher's life" (p.8). Connelly and Clandinin (1990) outline the following narrative methods that are associated with qualitative techniques in educational research:
(i) Story telling;
(ii) Interviewing;
(iii) Journal records;
(iv) Field notes of the shared experience through participant observation;
(v) Autobiographical and biographical writing.

The two narrative methods chosen for the purposes of this research study were interviewing and journal records. These methods were important for a narrative inquiry approach because as Clandinin and Connelly (1994) note, they created data that was more or less collaboratively constructed, was interpretative and researcher influenced.

Email Interviewing

The type of interview technique adopted for the purpose of the research study was that of email interviewing. This was a non face-to-face method that provided an alternative narrative method of interviewing because the academic psychologists were given the opportunity to reflect upon biographical events in their lives. It was, therefore, chosen because "...it shifts our attention from the conceptual to the experiential" (Connelly and Clandinin 1986, p.308). Using telephone interviewing -

another non face-to-face research technique - was not appropriate in this context: "Because they [researchers] wish to learn about the world as informants see it, they will need to use judgement in reacting to complex and not–always-clear answers to their questions" (McCulloch et al 2000, p.122). As Arksey and Knight (1999) point out, questions tend to be fixed-response ones rather than open-ended. Furthermore, it is difficult to record responses and participants are not prepared to spend a long time answering questions. Face-to-face interviews would have enabled the academic psychologists to tell their stories. However, given the geographical locations of the participants and the fact that, as noted by Selwyn and Robson (1998) email had been widely used for questionnaire distribution rather than as a tool for conducting interviews, this method offered exciting possibilities, placing an emphasis on the written words of the academic psychologists as opposed to the spoken word as well as offering "...an alternative site and the space in which to construct those extended narratives/stories" (Henson et al 2000 p.179).

In addition, email interviewing provided the opportunity to understand the experiences of the academic psychologists: "...through the construction of personal philosophies, images... narrative method offers an interpretative reconstruction of parts of a person's life" (Connelly and Clandinin 1987, p.134). Yet as Bauer (1996) notes, the interviews were not without structure because the researcher used questions to explore and expand on the text. In this sense the email interviews were semi-structured in format because the researcher had a specific agenda to follow and selected beforehand the relevant topic areas to pursue (Appendix A).

Journal Records

Another narrative method was the use of a journal which was kept by the researcher for several reasons. Writing the journal involved adopting some of the techniques outlined by Rainer (1978) and included:

(i)   Lists – This allowed the researcher to write lists of activities, such as things that needed to be done for the research or problems encountered throughout the research process and how they were resolved;

(ii)   Portraits – This allowed the researcher to describe a person. This involved describing individuals who were of personal significance in the researcher's life;

(iii)   Altered points of view – This allowed the researcher to record different perspectives on any given activity, such as that of the dissertation supervisor.

As King (1996) notes, adopting this approach made the research process more transparent and involved exploring the role of the researcher in the study. Hence in completing the journal, reflexivity became an important source of insight for the researcher and took place on a number of interrelated levels:

(i)   By reflecting upon the research practice, for example exploring the value of certain research methods;

(ii)   By reflecting upon the role of the researcher as it changed and evolved throughout the study;

(iii)   By reflecting upon how the study impacted on the personal and professional experiences of the researcher and vice-versa.

As argued by Gergen and Gergen (1993), by means of critical reflection and an exploration of the research process, it was possible for the researcher to broaden an understanding and transcend the boundaries in which the research had been carried out. Consequently, "…in the process of writing the research story, the thread of the research inquiry becomes part of the researcher's purpose" (Connelly and Clandinin 1990, p.10).

Non-Narrative Research Methods - The Use of Semi-Structured Interviews

The design of the study also involved the use of non-narrative methods of research, such as semi-structured interviews which were conducted with members of Society staff. These interviews were classed as non-narrative because they would not require the participants to reflect on biographical events in their lives. The interviews were face-to-face and semi-structured, with the researcher selecting beforehand the relevant topic areas and themes to pursue and using an interview guide which contained the key research questions. As Burgess (1984) remarks in his research, the guide acted as an aide-memoir, which was used to ensure that the same topics were covered in all the interviews. The researcher was still free to follow-up questions and probe comments made by the participants and they would be encouraged to further clarify and elaborate on these by providing examples for illustration. Furthermore as Bell (1993) notes, there was still freedom for participants to answer the questions in terms of what they saw as important about a particular topic.

Data Analysis - The Use of Grounded Theory

In order to explore the narrative accounts of the academic psychologists, a method of analysis was required that had the capacity, "…to capture the complexity of problems and the richness of everyday life…" (Corbin 1986 in Chennitz and Swannson 1986, p. 91), as well as gain an understanding of what constituted reality for the academic psychologists in their educational settings. This was an important aspect of the narrative inquiry approach, as noted by Clandinin and Connelly (1994): "The search for…patterns, narrative threads, tensions, and themes that constitutes the inquiry that shapes [email interviews] into research texts is created…" (p.423).

In this context grounded theory, a method formulated by Glaser and Strauss (1967) was an appropriate research tool for analysing the email interviews because it offered "…a systematic method by which to study the richness and diversity of human experience and to generate relevant plausible theory which can be used to understand the contextual reality of social behaviour" (Hutchinson 1988, p.127). It also allowed the researcher to analyse large amounts of text: "…within the framework of GT [grounded

theory]...one will look in vain for a theory of text and for any more explicit understanding of the term text" (Titscher et al 2000, p.75).

In the research study the use of this approach involved the development of concepts and theories that emerged across the data. This method of analysis entailed the comparison of events or incidence in the research situation and allowed the generation of categories through the use of coding. Easterby-Smith et al (1991) describe the method of analysis in seven stages as detailed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Seven Stages of Grounded Theory

1. Familiarisation of the transcripts
2. Reflection, evaluation and critique;
3. Conceptualisation - validating concepts methodically;
4.Cataloguing concepts;
5. Recoding and redefining concepts;
6. Linking analytical frameworks so that experiences become clearer;
7. Re-evaluation.

The researcher adopted a similar approach by reading, and rereading the narrative accounts of the academic psychologists and reflecting upon these in the light of the research literature described in Chapters Two and Three. This reading highlighted variables raised by the participants that seemed to be important for understanding the text. As Strauss (1987) notes this involved a "...detailed grounding of systematically and intensely analysed data, often sentence by sentence, or phrase by phrase of the field note, interview or other document..." (Strauss 1987 in Titscher et al 2000, p.76).

However, at this stage the researcher was not sure how credible these concepts were and went back to the data to search for them again, methodically coding where they appeared by writing code words down the right hand margin of the transcript. As outlined by Glaser (1978), this approach allowed the researcher to discover the dominant processes in the social setting in order to analytically develop generalised constructs and theories relevant to the topic being researched. Jones (1987) also notes, "...research should be used to generate grounded theory, which 'fits' and 'works' because it is derived from the concepts and categories used by social actors themselves to interpret and organise the world" (p.25).

In order to catalogue the concepts the researcher attempted to label each one using the words of the participants. This was done a couple of times to refine the coding, to ensure that concepts fitted with the participants' experiences and to order the categories for the data analysis. As Strauss and Corbin (1994) argue, theory could then be generated from the data or if there were existing theories, these were elaborated and modified.

"A grounded theory that is faithful to the everyday realities of a substantive area is one that has been carefully induced from diverse data...Only in this way will the theory be closely related to the daily realities (what is actually going on) of substantive areas, and so be highly applicable to dealing with them" (Glaser and Strauss 1967, p.239).

The Use of Qualitative Data Matrices

In analysing the semi-structured interviews, the method of analysis identified by Miles and Huberman (1994) was adopted. This involved drawing up of a number of matrices whereby each theme which had emerged from the analysis of the interviews with the academic psychologists was taken in turn, listed across the top of the page and participants down one margin, as the following example in Table 4.2 demonstrates:

Table 4.2 Data Matrix

Example	Theme–How professional identity is understood in the organisational communities - HE context
Participant BPS 1	Identity defined by the environment that academics work in p.3 Academic psychologists who are members of the profession don't see their primary allegiance with BPS but HE p.2

The researcher then worked though each interview cataloguing the various responses made by each participant to the main themes. As Easterby-Smith et al (1991) comment, this allowed patterns to emerge which demonstrated either commonalities or differences with the themes. In selecting the data, the words of the participants were paraphrased with an indication of where those comments lay in the text. As Miles and Huberman (1994) remark, this approach provided opportunity for the researcher to go back to the full material and underpinned Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) argument that it is the responses to the questions of meaning and social significance that ultimately shape the research texts.

Quantitative Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

The Use of Questionnaires

The methods of data collection described so far have been underpinned by qualitative methods. However, it was decided to use both qualitative and quantitative research methods because as argued by Easterby-Smith et al (1991) they can be used to study both 'hard facts' and human perceptions. The use of a quantitative questionnaire formed an important element of the research study, allowing the researcher to ask for the participants' perspectives in order to inform the development of the research. Firstly, a postal questionnaire was used as an introduction to the follow-up interviews with the academic psychologists and to provide background information, including biographical detail.

Secondly, an email questionnaire was sent to the students and included questions that allowed the opportunity to express their views on the topic being researched. Both type of questionnaires made use of open questions to provide a sense of the issues to be explored and as Mason (1996) notes, they were designed to be flexible and sensitive to the social context in which the data was produced.

The Use of Data Matrices

The method of analysis as described above was also adopted in order to analyse the questionnaires. This qualitative method of analysis was used because both the postal questionnaire and email questionnaire were designed to be open-ended in order to seek opinions and views and acted as, "...a good check on the interpretation of interview data, as well as a way of exploring how widely views, feelings and understandings are shared" (Arksey and Knight 1999, p.33). In this sense, as Miles and Huberman (1994) argue using matrices captured the findings of the questionnaires in order to deepen in the researcher's understanding of the phenomena under study. This reiterated that for the study both "...quantitative and qualitative methods were 'inextricably intertwined' not only at the level of specific data sets but also at the levels of...analysis" (Miles and Huberman 1994, p.41).

Conducting The Research Study

The Pilot Studies

Earlier in the Chapter, consideration was given to the way in which the conduct of the study would be undertaken in a credible and trustworthy manner. This element was also enhanced by undertaking a series of pilot studies that served a number of purposes:

(i) They allowed the researcher to focus the research study;

(ii) They provided an opportunity to test out the schedule of questions in both the questionnaires and interviews, to ascertain whether they were clear and understandable and appropriate in the light of the literature review and research aim;

(iii) They allowed the researcher to respond to practical considerations (time, resources, access).

The Academic Psychologists

In preparing for the main study, a pilot questionnaire was distributed to a sub-sample of the intended research population which involved twenty academic psychologists all of whom worked in higher education institutions based in the East Midlands or London and were members of the Society. Each participant was also represented on the Society's Training Committees in Psychology. The questionnaire included an accompanying letter explaining the purpose of the questionnaire and the timescale for responses. The nature of the questions included mixing closed and open-ended questions. As Youngman (1984) notes, this encouraged responses and broke up the tedium of yes/no questions. A second letter and questionnaire were sent out to those participants who had not responded. A total of ten questionnaires were received. The responses and comments identified a number of problems and these were taken into account in revising the questionnaire for the main distribution. For example:

(i)   The pilot questionnaires were sent out eight weeks prior to Christmas and this may have affected the response rate;

(ii) The timescale for the return of the questionnaire by participants was too long. Again, this may have affected the response rate. As Bell (1993) notes, two weeks is a reasonable time for completion;

(iii) The researcher had not devised a system of coding the questionnaires.

In considering the use of in-depth interviewing as the main method of data collection with the academic psychologists, two pilot interviews were arranged. However, due to illness and work commitments these interviews did not take place. Consideration was also given to the use of email as a research tool in educational research. Selwyn and Robson (1998) have argued that whilst email has been used for data collection in organisational and market research, in general this has focused upon the use of email as a quantitative instrument, such as electronic questionnaire distribution rather than using it as a qualitative research tool to collect data that has the potential to enhance reflective practice.

Given that email-based interviews had not been widely used as a research tool in educational research, in order to refine the strategies and techniques for undertaking the interviews, piloting the method was a crucial part of the study. Pilot email interviews were, therefore, arranged with three participants chosen from the sub-sample of the intended research population. As Beattie (1995a) notes in her research, the questions to be asked in the email interviews formed part of a semi-structured interview schedule and were used as a probe through which to explore and gain a deeper understanding of the issues identified in the questionnaire. During the interviews, participants were encouraged to give open-ended answers by supplementing further questions. In analysing the email interviews, the interview schedule was revised for the main study.

(i)   Although three interviews had been arranged only two interviews were completed. The third interview never took place despite the researcher's repeated attempts to contact the participant via email. As Thach (1995) argues, it is easy for a participant to disregard email and to delete messages. Sproull (1986) also comments upon how participants may be concerned about the possible violations of privacy or lack of anonymity and that the medium is too impersonal for certain kinds of questions. It was decided that in the main study, each participant would be further contacted by email and where there was no response to the initial contact with the participants, only two further attempts at contact would be made.

(ii) Design issues, such as layout and presentation of the email interviews also needed to be considered to ensure answers to the research questions were gained. The lack of research methods literature on email interviews meant that a set of guidelines about how the interviews would be conducted needed to be designed to provide the participants with a clear framework within which the interviews could be conducted and to ensure that the

consent of the participants was obtained. Thach (1995) comments upon how participants are more likely to participate in the email research if they have given their consent. The guidelines were also piloted as part of the interview process and revised.

(iii)   Given the number of questions on the interview schedule, and the number of supplementary questions to be asked it was anticipated that the pilot interview would take approximately three weeks to complete. This was an unrealistic timescale and in reality, the interviews took up to ten weeks to complete. This was due to interruptions in the interview process for both the researcher and the participant, which occurred through illness, holidays and out of office business. This did not seem to affect the flow of dialogues and was offset by the depth and richness of the responses.

(iv)   With email interviews, the geographical location of the participants was not relevant, unlike in face-to-face interviews. This meant that the study could be broadened and participants could be accessed outside the East Midlands/London area.

(v)   Storage of data by email had to be carefully considered, because of the possibility of computer failure, so the material was copied on to disk, printed out and stored securely. Hard copies of the interview transcripts were also printed. This raised issues of confidentiality. It was important to also allow the participants to modify and approve the transcripts. This would be undertaken by emailing the completed interview using an attachment, which could be printed off by the participant. Participants would be asked to amend the text using bold and not to delete any text from the original transcript.

(vi)   It was important that participants did not delete the interview otherwise the constructed story would be destroyed. It was decided that a hard copy would also be sent to the participants.

(vii)   Transcription was not an issue, as the words of the participants were already committed in a written form through the use of email.

The Society Staff

Pilot semi-structured interviews were conducted with two members of staff who had the same criteria as the sample of participants chosen for the main study. Piloting the interviews helped to assess whether the questions were clear, understandable and unambiguous. As Arksey and Knight (1999) note, it also helped to establish how long the interviews would take to conduct and the sequencing of the questions. This helped to reconsider the wording and phrasing of the questions in the light of the literature reviews and the research aim. It was decided to continue to record the interviews, and as Easterby-Smith et al (1991) note, this freed the researcher to be perceptive and sensitive to events, so

that lines of inquiry could be followed through as necessary and to allow the researcher to carefully listen to the views of the participants.

The Students

A pilot email questionnaire was sent to a sub-sample of the intended population to be researched i.e. five students, all of whom were registered on an undergraduate degree course in psychology at a local university. The email questionnaire was used instead of the conventional postal questionnaire because as Thach (1995) argues, it had the advantage of costing less to administer, both in terms of money and time.

The purpose of piloting the study was to assess the way in which the format of the questionnaire was suitable for its purpose and to check the wording of the questions. A number of problems were identified and were quickly addressed before the main study, because as Kiesler and Sproull (1986) remark the questionnaire was already developed in a computer format and changes could be made readily on the screen:

(i)   Given that the questionnaire was to be sent by email, the layout of the questionnaire was redesigned and sent as an attachment;

(ii)   The questions were rephrased to allow for open-ended responses which would provide more in-depth responses;

(iii)   As with the email interviews, the geographical location of the participants was irrelevant and the study was broadened to access all students who were members of the Society's Student Group, not just those locally based;

(iv)   It was decided that if the researcher had time, the questionnaire could be followed up by an email interview, to enhance the depth of the responses already received.

(v)   Because of the open nature of electronic networks, a questionnaire would be emailed to each participant to ensure confidentiality.

The Main Study

Having conducted and analysed the pilot studies to ensure that the research study was fit for purpose, the main study took place.

The Academic Psychologists - Questionnaires and the Use of Email-Based Interviews

A revised questionnaire (Appendix D) was distributed to a sample of 20 academic psychologists. There were 14 returns and those participants who had agreed to take part in the research gave permission for the researcher to use email addresses within their own higher education institutions to conduct the interview. The interview schedule used in the interviews was revised (Appendix A) based upon the analysis of data from the pilot study, as well as the theoretical underpinnings of the research and literature survey. As with the work of Nias (1989, 1998) the interview schedule had been framed in terms of key questions to encourage teachers to reflect broadly upon their experiences. From the 14

participants who gave their consent to take part in this element of the research, 10 email interviews were conducted. Even though the four remaining participants had agreed to take part, they dropped out of the interviews by not responding to the email questions. All participants had access to email and were not constrained by geographical location as in the pilot interviews.

The participants who did take part were sent revised guidelines (Appendix E) detailing how the email interviews would be conducted. Keeping an accurate record of the interview, to ensure that the sequencing of the email dialogue was not lost was vital to the study. For this reason, the email guidelines specifically asked the participants to reply at the top of the message to ensure that the sequence was maintained. This allowed the researcher and the participant to return to earlier parts of the dialogue and to reflect on both the questions and responses before moving to the next question:

> "The aim was to give the respondent the experience of engaging in a conversation with the researcher which was directed by a commonality of interest, rather than by either the researcher's questions alone or the informant's current concerns" (Cooper and MacIntyre 1996, p.33).

Participants were invited to email at length about what they had in mind in response to the questions. This ensured that the participants' narratives were not pre-formed by researcher bias. As the interviews progressed it became apparent that the "...interviewer and the participant [were] both caught up in the phenomenon being discussed, ...trying and wanting to understand" (Weber 1986, p.69).

The Semi-Structured Interviews with the Members of Staff

Five semi-structured interviews were conducted using the revised interview schedule (Appendix B). Each interview was recorded and lasted between forty minutes to one hour in length and was transcribed. This freed the researcher to observe verbal and non-verbal expressions. The face-to-face element of the interviews required attentive listening, not only in terms of what was said, but the emphases used or the tone of the participants. As King (1996) notes, part of the researcher's critical awareness includes becoming conscious of how mannerisms and responses can affect the participants and vice-versa:

> "The power of suggestion through an 'approving' nod or a 'disapproving' shake of the head can lead to a change in the interviewee's response so that it no longer represents what that individual originally intended to convey" (King 1996 in Richardson 1996, p.185).

Each participant was provided with a copy of the transcript and given the opportunity to not only confirm that the interview was an accurate record of the discussion, but to further reflect upon the interview topics and make any other comments. The confidentiality of the participants and their anonymity was assured.

The Use of Email Questionnaires -Interviewing Students

A study was also undertaken using an open-ended questionnaire, which was emailed to thirty students (Appendix C). The questionnaire was sent as an email attachment and designed so that students could produce their responses following each question and either could be returned as an email attachment or as a cut and paste document. Follow-up reminders with a copy of the questionnaire were sent with a touch of a few buttons. 14 students responded in total. Where open questions were asked the participants were able to email at length about what they had in mind in response to the questions.

From Conducting the Research to Making Meanings of Experience

The research design provided a framework in which to explore the experiences of the academic psychologists, firstly by allowing them to reflect upon how they saw themselves in the communities in which they live and work and secondly by exploring how they were perceived by others. As argued by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), understanding narrative experience has credence in qualitative research because it successfully captures personal and human dimensions that cannot be quantified into facts and numerical data. As the next Chapter demonstrates, one way of capturing such experiences has been through the use of email interviews that have offered the creation of an alternative narrative method of inquiry in which stories emerged and experiences were shared.

Chapter Five

Research Findings - Presenting the Data

Introduction

This Chapter outlines the research findings from the narrative accounts of the academic psychologists and the interviews and questionnaires conducted with the staff of the British Psychological Society and students. The research findings are presented using the concepts that have emerged from the data and are based on the researcher's interpretations. In adopting this approach each participant has been invited to reflect upon his/her transcript and the emerging concepts to see whether they are considered central to his/her way of being and to confirm or modify the researcher's interpretations. This approach recognises that: "Individuals' narratives are situated in particular interactions but also in social, cultural, and institutional discourses, which must be brought to bear to interpret them" (Riessman 1993, p.61). The members of Society staff were also asked to authenticate their transcripts. This also reiterates the importance of representing the participants' voices in the research study.

Presentation of the Data - The Use of Matrices

The emergent categories are linked to the aim of the research study and are used to describe the research findings and to comment upon them. They have provided a means by which to understand each participant's perspective regarding teacher professionalism, their self-images and constructions of professional identity. They are central to the research study and serve as signposts about how academic psychologists see themselves, how they understand their professional identity and how others perceived them. Each theme will now be explored in more detail by presenting the data in the format of matrices. These matrices provide the researcher with a framework to work through each interview or questionnaire in turn, cataloguing the various responses by the themes. Miles and Huberman (1994) have argued that the basic strength of qualitative matrices lies in the inclusion of text. Each matrix, therefore, presents the data in the written words of each participant, describing their experiences.

Biographical Detail

The matrices presented below describe data from three sources:

(i)   The ten narratives of the academic psychologists, all of whom were members of the British Psychological Society and members of the Society's Graduate Qualifications Accreditation Committee. Those participants who took part worked in post-1992 higher education institutions and were based in departments of psychology across the UK. They were all senior academics, each of whom had worked in their organisation for over a period of five years, except one member who had made a recent move to a new institution. All participants held some teaching responsibility on undergraduate psychology programmes that were accredited by the Society and six participants were involved in teaching on applied,

postgraduate psychology programmes. In presenting the findings each participant has been given a code number (e.g. AP1, AP2 etc). An excerpt of a transcript can be found in Appendix F. As noted above, these are the words of the participants and have not been amended.

(ii)   The interviews conducted with five members of staff from the British Psychological Society. Each participant who took part had worked for the Society over a period of five years and all were team leaders who worked closely with academic psychologists on various Society committees and boards. These included quality assurance and accreditation of psychology programmes, admissions, examinations, membership and research. An excerpt of a transcript can be found in Appendix G. In presenting the findings each participant has been given a code number (e.g. BPS1, BPS2 etc).

(iii)   The email questionnaires distributed to students studying on undergraduate degrees in psychology, all of which were accredited by the Society. Thirty questionnaires were emailed. There were 14 responses, with 5 students in their final year, 6 students from Year Two and 3 students from Year One. Each student that took part in the study was a representative of the Society's Student Members' group. In ascertaining which psychology degree each student was studying on it was found that 9 students were studying on Single Honours Psychology degrees, 4 students were studying on Combined Honours Psychology degrees and 1 student was studying on a four-year sandwich Psychology degree. A completed questionnaire can be found in Appendix C. In presenting the findings each participant has been given a code number (e.g. S1, S2 etc).

Reflections on Psychology as a Profession

All the participants were asked for their views on how they saw psychology. There were a number of different interpretations provided in trying to describe psychology as a profession as outlined in Table 5.1. The views of the academic psychologists did not clearly articulate a common purpose and their views were varied. For example, psychology as a profession was linked to the notion of training, teaching, applying psychological skills and research and the diversity of views are aptly summarised by the comments made by AP10. This was also noticeable in the different views expressed by the BPS staff, which seemed to highlight the diversity of psychology as profession. However, what was noticeable from the responses was the apparent emphasis on training, skills and knowledge. There was some emphasis placed on psychology as a profession being synonymous with applied psychology, but there was also recognition of the scientific practice. This diversity was also noticeable in the comments made by the students, who sometimes compared psychology as a profession with other professions such as the medical profession. They also saw psychology as being very broad, encompassing other fields of psychology such as clinical and forensic, rather than simply involving academic psychology.

Table 5.1. Reflections on Psychology as a Profession

Academic Psychologists	Staff	Students
Professional implies that one's qualifications are accredited as properly trained in a tradition...I think we use the term 'profession' for psychology to emphasise that it is serious (teaching profession) and not pop... AP1	To try and define psychology as a profession is pretty difficult because...it's quite diverse...it's almost like although you have the profession of psychology, the different areas within that are all distinct professional areas from each other, now they may be the basis in psychology, but for example occupational psychologists are very different to say forensic psychologists and in their practice... BPS1	Psychology is a fascinating subject, which encompasses many aspects. It is not just a profession but a vocation...S2
I think I equate the psychology professions with the BPS really... My definition of psychology is linked to a notion of training which ensure individuals calling themselves psychologists all share a basic generic knowledge of human functioning and training in research methodology. AP2	I suppose really the ways of working and the techniques that are used...because even if, when you're working in the research context or in the context of the applied setting, the principles you adopt and the methodologies you use would be the same, and to me the key thing about being a psychologist is that you are a scientist, and that doesn't matter what area of psychology you're... BPS2	Psychology is a profession because they are not only teachers but other types of psychologists such as forensics which I want to do. S5
I am not sure that psychology is a profession. It encompasses many different professions including teaching etc., but there is value in thinking about core issues, which unite Psychologists in all these professions. AP3	I actually think there are a lot of mental health professionals and lots of professionals that work within the same client groups that psychologists do, I think that what separates psychology out from almost all of them... is the evidence-based practice...if something is a psychological treatment, it is recognised as such because there is empirical evidence that it backs up that it works, and it's the skills that psychologists have in research and collecting data, analysing it and...replicating those studies that actually makes them psychologists. BPS3	I would personally view doing a degree in psychology as nonvocational per se. However, I think that as a career in itself 'psychology' is an entirely appropriate path. I hope to get onto the clinical psychology postgradship and this is vocational. S7
Not sure psychology has a single identity as a profession. The split between Practitioner and Academic/Researcher appears to loom large...Despite the potential for a professional identity focused around better understanding of human behaviour, I don't think a single identity exists. When asked what I do, I would never say, I'm a psychologist. I would say I'm a lecturer. If surrounded by lecturers I might say I'm an academic psychologist... AP4	...I think that's how I identify a professional psychologist, somebody who's done a set, structured, identifiable training, obviously that the Society's accredited pathway and then who is building on that training, applying that training by working in a setting...and obviously being bound by the code of conduct, also dealing with people who are answerable to a code of conduct and ethics and can be brought to account if they stray from the straight and narrow in terms of their professionality. BPS4	I think psychology offers more career opportunities - that's why I dropped sociology. It is a profession because you have to belong to a professional body if you want practice. S8

Academic Psychologists	Staff	Students
Being part of a profession means less to me as an academic psychologist...it says that what I do has more than ivory value...AP5	...within the Society, since the profession of psychology is synonymous with the vocation of applied psychology I would say the salient feature of that profession are linked to the application of the principles of behavioural science to situations having the potential benefit from the same by an individual (or individuals) known to have reached a level of knowledge and skill to enable them to practise without supervision. Those principles are evidence-based and, by implication must be known before they can be applied. BPS5	Looking at clinical psychology this is a profession, but then so is teaching the subject, so may be it's more than one profession. S10
The concept of psychology as a profession appeals to me because of the application of knowledge and skills which is inherent in the idea. So being able to offer the study of psychology as chance to develop skills which can then be used either in the profession of psychology or other professions is a real bonus...AP6		I see psychology as a broad subject, branching into many other subject areas. I agree that psychology can be seen as a profession; in so much as it holds the same status as Doctors, lawyers etc. Perhaps it could be also thought of as a learning body from which many other organisations and subjects seek information and advise. S12
To me psychology as a profession means applying psychological research findings to a particular area of human functioning, such as in educational, occupational, clinical settings. To me this should ensure evidence-based practice. There is also an element of advancing knowledge within any of these areas through further research...AP7		It is because if you want to go on to practice in psychology, which I would like to do eventually then you need to have a professional body which regulates what those practitioners do. S14
Professional regulation, codes of conduct, control of entrance, focus of interest, view of the discipline. AP8		It's not just a profession, because you don't have to be a member if you teach, but it's important if you want to be a Chartered Psychologist. S15
Mainly through accreditation processes – what counts as core, but as least as influential are RAEs and QAA definition of psychology and funding pressures – focus on labs and equipment. AP9		As a clinical practice - by this I mean that it is part of the clinical profession, although not all those who work in clinical psychology are psychologists, some are psychotherapists. S16
The psychology profession means the whole discipline for me. That is those persons, qualified and carrying out psychological activities, that could be research, practice and teaching (psychology). AP10		Now I see it as a highly regarded profession since I've been studying on the programme. S20
		I think it's too diverse to be just one profession. I don't see that academics and clinicians have much in common and I don't really see how science figures in clinical practice...S21
		Psychology as a degree is just as good/creditable as any other degree, however, I would also agree that it is a profession. You have a profession in psychology, but not a profession as a psychologist. S23

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Academic Psychologists	Staff	Students
		...I would consider psychology to be a 'thinking type profession, rather than a manual ('doing') type of profession. I do however, consider that to be a professional psychologist ought to require membership to an overall governing body...S27
		A gateway to a masters in occupational psychology, which is a profession in itself....as opposed to psychology which is very broad S29

Academic Psychology and the Development of Professional Knowledge

The academic psychologists and BPS staff were asked how they thought academic psychology informed the development of the profession. As noted in Table 5.2., many of the academic psychologists wrote about the way in which academic psychology underpinned the professional practice and provided a generic knowledge base for psychology. Academic psychology was, therefore, seen as underpinning the professionalism of psychology because it defined psychological knowledge. The views of the BPS staff provided a broader perspective on this category. Some emphasis was placed on seeing academic psychology as underpinning the practitioner base of psychology, particularly through research. It was also apparent that applied psychology (as opposed to academic psychology) also informed the development of the profession. In exploring this concept further, students were asked how curriculum coverage on their degrees affected the teaching of their programme. In this context the teaching of psychology was more linked to having a core knowledge base.

Table 5.2. Academic Psychology and the Development of Professional Knowledge

Academic Psychologists	BPS Staff	Students
Academic psychology contributes to professionalism; training to criteria and awarding qualifications, and the academic psychologist has responsibility in teaching contexts for students etc. Psychology couldn't be a profession (no area could call itself professional) if the academic training didn't exist. AP1	I think academic psychology as a profession isn't... particularly obvious as a professional area...I think a lot of people are familiar with psychology as a degree to do, and then people can go off into psychology or just go into anything else, you know, administration or whatever, but I don't think academic psychology as a profession is as clear an area as clinical, educational...it doesn't feel as obvious as a profession...BPS1	...the programme is more focused on issues which relate more to practising psychology as a profession. S2

Academic Psychologists	Staff	Students
I think academic psychology has three important roles, one is obviously about educating future generations of psychologists and also informing other disciplines about the appropriate application of psychology in their specific area...and the third is research...I think in a long winded way that academic psychology informs BPS practice in terms of defining an appropriate generic knowledge base for psychology and then implements this and helps to begin to define the profession psychologist. AP2	I suppose again problem solving aspects really, the orientation which you would take...although obviously that's slightly different in terms of being an academic isn't just about the research that you do, there is a teaching element as well...there is a specific way in which psychology is taught... BPS2	I know that I have to take a course that is accredited by the Society... S5
It defines the content of psychology – i.e. what counts as knowledge within Psychology. Academic psychology is the contact point for many people...The Society is dominated by academic psychology, and therefore academics are very influential in the debates about how the profession should conduct and order itself. AP3	...the way that psychologists are trained includes so much of the research training...and the academic input, that it's ingrained into them, that's the basis of their practice, and so I think that even if they aren't directly involved with it themselves, they are still reading articles, keeping up-to-date with the...developments...of the profession...Academic psychology underpins the practitioner base of psychology and what underpins the practitioner base is evidence-based practice...BPS3	Not to a noticeable extent, although we are currently studying attention and thinking - one of the key areas that joint honours students do not study...S7
Psychology is a profession because psychologists have formed a professional body that says psychology is a profession. I'm not sure this is a process undertaken by academic psychologists. I understand that we are vastly underrepresented within the professional body. This probably reflects how the professional identity lies with their employer...Behind the scenes, however, academics provide a huge input into defining psychology as a discipline, if not psychology as a profession. AP4	I suppose I regard academics as a group of psychologists who maybe aren't in settings which are as structured as professional colleagues...academics I regard as people who potentially could work in a much wider, more diverse...less controlled environment where they are less subject to regulation and Society control and they can be working in so many diverse areas...I suppose you think of academics as different to professionals, I regard them as being more ...closeted in their ivory tower, dealing mainly with their own students, obviously dealing with their own research...BPS4	We are taught certain modules that other students aren't as these are needed for GBR...S8
		...there is a need to cover certain areas, but there are options you can take. S10

Academic Psychologists	BPS Staff	Students
There is obviously a key role in academic (research) psychology for contributing to the collection and dissemination of evidence...One might argue that academic psychology defines the profession very much, given that education and training starts for all professionals in academic departments...AP5	The purpose of the profession of the academic psychologist is to identify such principles by empirically-based methods. ...I think that all psychology begins with academic study...and various parts of that academic study filters down to professional applied psychology, that's not to say that the reverse can also happen, things are discovered govern the nature of the discipline and the science of human behaviour...that would suggest that applied psychologists also inform the profession. BPS5	Perhaps it is because my degree course must cover certain subjects...S12
Academic psychology informs the development of professions because of the research findings etc and therefore provides credibility.... AP6		...in psychology we have to study certain areas to be an accredited course. S14
Psychology didn't really take off until it became an academic subject...Academic psychology follows the same principles e.g. in terms of ethical considerations. AP7		I know we have to do core areas at level two and a number of option modules if we want to get BPS recognition. S15
I don't think that academic psychology makes a profession, although what it provides is a useful basis. Just because a subject is on offer at tertiary level would not automatically mean that that subject was a profession...It's the existence of a recognised professional body which makes a profession, although a lot may depend on people's perceptions, as not all professions may have a professional body...AP8		I think it does because you have to cover certain subject areas which gives you a rounded psychological knowledge and can go on to study applied psychology. S16
I suppose in terms of the expertise in terms of psychology – or my part of psychology – knowledge of the area, research, key ideas and critiques of them. Working within that framework – and recognising the limits – when I don't have expertise. In terms of research way of collecting data, issues around confidentiality and ethics...In terms of teaching and what I teach...behaving professionally around colleagues ...AP9		There are certain subjects that have to be covered...Sometimes it seems as though we rush through a topic just to get it covered...S20

Academic Psychologists	BPS Staff	Students
Academic psychology presents a body of knowledge that a psychologist should be familiar with. It also presents and provides experience of the approaches, methods and techniques that psychologists should be aware of. It also presents through its content the value system and behaviour that members of the profession should be aiming to adhere to. AP10		...we don't get much choice of subjects. At level one we had 9 core modules...at level 2 we do 8 core modules and have to choose 2 of a possible 3 electives... S21
		I believe that the teaching requirements centre around research modules and the core modules of our course.... S23
		...At the moment this means that we have certain modules which must be taken (and passed) to qualify for GBR to BPS. We are 'expected' to take those modules and have these ascribed to our programme automatically... S27
		Others are core to an accredited psychology degree and so have to be taught. S29

Perceptions of the Self – Understanding Professional Identity

As one of the aims of the study was to explore how the academic psychologists saw themselves, a specific question was asked about how they understood their professional identity. As noted in Table 5.3., there were mixed responses here. Some of the participants saw themselves as being an 'academic psychologist,' some an 'academic' and others 'psychologist.' In exploring this further, these identities were interpreted as working professionally as a teacher, lecturer and researcher. What was also apparent was how some of the participants wrote about the teaching or researching of psychology as 'a tool of their trade,' adding to a body of psychological knowledge and this was an important part of their professional role. One participant commented upon how he drew on professional identity when it suited. Their views emphasised the fluidity of identity.

Table 5.3. Perceptions of the Self – Understanding Professional Identity

Academic Psychologists
I might prefer to say that we are all professionals if we are doing psychology and trained to do psychology; there is a distinction between the scientist-professional and the applied or practising professional. I am a scientist-professional in this context. AP1
My first response is that I see myself as a psychologist but I will try to unpack what I think that means. I think of myself as a teacher and a researcher professionally…AP2
I am a teacher and a researcher. It is my role to help keep the discipline alive by adding to our body of knowledge and sharing this with students. Increasingly my role involves passing on skills, teaching people how to learn and research…I am an academic psychologist. Psychology is first and foremost a body of knowledge and it is as much a 'tool' of my trade as it is of any psychology practitioner…AP3
I see myself as an academic who has a psychological focus to his research. As an academic psychologist, I probably have more in common with an academic sociologist than a psychology practitioner. People appreciate what a lecturer (academic) does but not a psychologist. Maybe this is why I feel my identity is tied to academia. AP4
Professional identity is something I tend to draw on as it suits…even then it's professional identity of the discipline, rather than me personally that is at issue. My professional role is academic credibility…I would therefore see my professional role as contributing to the activities of the BPS. AP5
I regard myself as an academic now since I'm not currently directly involved with practitioner work though I work alongside practitioners… In other respects I suppose I could regard myself as a practitioner since I definitely use psychological knowledge to inform my academic practice i.e. teaching and learning… AP6
I still do teaching in psychology and am still a psychologist at heart. The principles of evidence-based practice and the other areas must underlie how I behave as a manager, and I still very much identify myself as a psychologist. Working directly with the subject (e.g. as an external examiner and member of GQAC) still makes me feel at home! AP7
I see myself primarily as an academic I think this is how I see myself – if not an administrator. Whether I am a 'real' psychologist' is an interesting question. AP8
I suppose my first response is in terms of encouraging students to use psychology in real world settings and as relating to people's lives and experiences. That's why psychology interested me – and informs my teaching. AP9
I see myself trying to promote what I see as the proper image of psychology as a discipline and profession. Since the main service I provide is psychology education I see my professional role as trying to ensure that the consumers, mainly students are given an appropriate perspective on psychology. AP10

How the Academic Psychologists are Perceived by Other Participants

Whilst acknowledging how the academic psychologists understood their professional identity, it was also important to understand the relationships that defined their lives. Hence both the BPS staff and students were asked how they saw the academic psychologists. As noted in Table 5.4., for the BPS staff there seemed to be an emphasis on how their teaching underpinned the development of the profession through the psychological knowledge-base. This linked with the comments that had been made in Table 5.2. about the development of the profession and the role of academic psychology. Yet, what also became apparent was the tensions that existed between being an academic psychologist as a member of the Society as well as the separation between academic psychologists as researchers and academic psychologists as practitioners. The students recognised that the teaching was more professional because their programmes had a core academic knowledge-base for Society accreditation.

This was not always perceived as fundamental or beneficial to their learning or the way the programme was taught.

Table 5.4. How the Academic Psychologists are Perceived by Other Participants

BPS Staff	Students
I think this is part of the problem when you look at a lot of psychology departments. Again the psychology department that I was in, I was surprised just how few members were actual members of the BPS...they don't see that as their primary allegiance...I think that if you wanted to try and encourage academics to be members of the Society they would have to obviously change the way they see themselves and see the way their career could develop by being a member of the Society and I don't think that's particularly clear at the moment. BPS1	I think that the teaching is more professional I suppose because of what has to be taught. I mean there are lots of modules required for GBR...S2
...if you are an applied psychologist you've got your professional identity in terms of if you're a clinical psychologist you've very firmly got the Division and they are your peer group in terms of who you work with and the context; academics, it differs so much between departments anyway but institutionally too and then really at what level you're doing it I think for academics on postgraduate courses and postgrad level teaching, that's different for undergrads, but in terms of...their impact and contribution to the discipline is very much from the starting point, they're the one's that train the psychologists of the future, so from the point of view of their professionalism, it's...the starting point if you like....BPS2	...there are certain modules that have to be covered- this means that the teaching has to include certain subjects as a requirement. S5
In some respects an enormous one and in others none at all...there are some bits of academic psychology that are very closely related to practice... the academic psychologist which is looking at the applied type thing...ways in which psychologists might apply knowledge, that link there is obvious and the influence is very big, is actually having a real affect on real psychologists...because the training involves so much...academic training, research training, it's ingrained in them to do that...BPS3	...however as the lecturers are all members of the BPS, I suppose the teaching is more professional. S7
I suppose because they're teaching psychology knowledge to students this is then applied to professional practice...used by practitioners of psychology, although in saying that, although if the academic psychologist is not in a mainstream and truly academic setting, then how much of their research would actually become to be used in the applied context is interesting...I think most of them...naturally hold themselves above say their practitioner colleagues...after all they- the professionals are only applying... what they're finding out and areas in which they are pushing the boundaries out...they're almost forging ahead, they're pushing through the boundaries to the overall development of the discipline and its knowledge...BPS4	...but we're all taught by the same lecturers so there is no difference how we're taught, although it's better if your lecturer is a member of the Society. S8

BPS Staff	Students
I think one of the problems psychology has is some of the applied branches so closely resemble activities carried out by non other professionals, but in order to distinguish between a psychologist and a non-psychologist working in a fairly similar area of employment, it's the scientific principles that the psychologist has to rely on to define their own professional identity...Of course there are psychologists who are both academic and applied but even these individuals probably develop their science first. BPS5	The teaching is different for this course than for others as there is a need to cover certain areas...S10
	I have never considered this question, owing to the broad range of subjects on offer to me...I have enjoyed my studies and have gained a broad understanding (and not found that the degree only concentrates on one or two aspects). S12
	The teaching has been very broad, but then I can study psychology with another subject so I have chosen IT. S14
	The teaching is linked to the core areas but it has been very interesting and has included applied areas which is important if you want to be a psychologist. S15
	This [the teaching] gives the modules more professional status, because it is done by more recognised staff... S16
	...we don't go into as much detail as I would expect other Universities do. S20
	...I think (hope!) that the course has been designed to give us a good all-round knowledge which we might not get otherwise. S21
	...the teaching in these areas appears to be done by the more senior members of staff, with option modules taken by specialist but less esteemed members of staff. This gives the core modules more 'professional' credibility. S23
	...The greatest emphasis is placed on the GBR-affording modules, sometimes making other modules appear less important. The heavily prescribed programme can sometimes make it difficult for students wishing to pick up other modules of a more vocational or interesting nature. Whilst I'm pleased my Uni places such great emphasis on gaining GBR, it can be disheartening to only have time for a few 'other' modules amongst what some see as the more boring GBR-affording modules (who says Stats is boring??!!) . S27
	...Some teaching seems pointless and not practical such as the historical aspects etc... S29

Images of the Self and Career

Part of the aim of the research was to explore how the academic psychologists used self-images in constructing their identity and shaping their professional practice; they were asked how being an academic psychologist fitted with their image of the self and career. As noted in Table 5.5., being an academic psychologist did not always 'fit' with the participants' images of themselves or their careers.

Again, there was the dichotomy of being a 'teacher,' 'researcher' or a 'practitioner' as opposed to being an academic. In this context, the image of 'administrator' was also mentioned. Some of the participants also wrote about how they might be seen by their employer or other academic colleagues who saw them differently within an organisational context. In particular, one participant suggested that a career move would change her institutional image from academic psychologist to 'manager'. It was noticeable that in answering this question, the participants did not always link their response to events or activities that signified personal growth or accomplishment.

BPS staff were also asked to provide their images of academic psychologists. Their images tended to reinforce the concept of 'lecturer' and 'researcher,' although one participant explored how academic psychologists' identities were 'mixed' in the sense that they were also 'training' applied psychologists. This linked to the image of 'psychologist' used by another participant and the fact that his knowledge of psychology was what underpinned teaching; this related to the image made by two participants about 'ownership of knowledge.' Nevertheless, these comments emphasised how the academic psychologists were educators whether they were involved in teaching, training or researching.

Table 5.5. Images of the Self and Career

Academic Psychologists	BPS Staff
My 'image of myself does not square well with being an academic psychologist. I think I might have been more usefully employed elsewhere, various jobs have emphasised teaching and research, at present it's research.... My image of my career has changed over the years. Early on I didn't know what to expect, now I see ceilings, inevitable limitations (based on my knowledge of my personal skills, abilities, but limitations) My image changes with the attitudes of people around me...being an academic impacts on these things. AP1	I mean for me an academic psychologist is a lecturer primarily...because obviously that's the perspective I've seen them first of all and also...I see them as a lecturer, I see them as a researcher, but a researcher in terms of end product, publications you know...so there's somebody who writes for books or journals or whatever...but primarily I see them as the lecturer...what they do is...they lecture and they research, now what they happen to be researching and lecturing is psychology, you know...BPS1
Being an academic psychologist is part of my image I suppose. I am afraid that having had a career break to bring up children etc. and continuing responsibilities re: children, I have never thought very strategically about my career... I don't feel there is a professional me who is a psychologist and another person 'off duty' so to speak AP2	I think I would say that they're probably people who have skills to be very analytical...critically analytical and that they have the tendency to apply that in lots of different situations, not just in their academic research...very enthusiastic within their field, but I think you could say that about a lot of academics, I just don't think that it's psychologists, but I think the thing that really sets the academic psychologists aside from some other academics is the...analytical skills, the analytical research skills. BPS2
I didn't ever set out to be an academic psychologist. I entered teaching with the aim of being part of the solution to the misuse of psychology. AP3	When you work on the Scientific Affairs Board, they...tend to be true academics, they tend to be people who spend their whole careers doing research...working usually in the university departments, they're lecturers and researchers, with the Membership and Qualifications Board, you tend to be working with a lot of people who do work in university departments, but a lot of time they're training professional applied psychologists, so they have that identity as well, and a lot of them are doing both...BPS3

Academic Psychologists	BPS Staff
Career-wise I would like to get more involved in the practitioner side of things but they are making it very difficult for us academics.... On the image of myself psychology is either seem as interesting or a joke. Some appear to have the impression that hard sciences such as physics are the only real sciences. Given the stereotype of physicists, though, I am happy with the image of myself as an academic psychologist. AP4	...It's the fact that you are a psychologist that you are a teacher and principally psychology comes first, that's your grounding, it's a phrase I use a lot, but that's where your roots are...the fact that you've got that knowledge...albeit in your specialist field as well as the broader context, but that's what your giving back, you could teach anything but it's the fact that you are a psychologist that you're teaching psychology...BPS4
I think I have reached the point where the next logical career move within the institution would actually take me out of academic psychology...It would make my institutional identity 'manager', not 'psychologist' and since I have left behind opportunities to retain psychological identity as a researcher, little in terms of academic psychology would be left...what actually matters to me most about being an academic psychologist is the subject matter of psychology itself! AP5	What defines psychologists and their professional identity is ownership of a certain area of knowledge and...by ownership that must imply competence of a certain area of knowledge, it need not be wholly the entire spectrum of psychology, in fact no one would have such a command. BPS5
I see myself essentially as a lecturer/academic who happens to be a psychologist and therefore has the advantage of being able to draw on psychological principles and examples from practice to inform teaching...As for career routes I feel I'm now in the academic route because of the absence from practice. AP6	
I don't think being an academic psychologist so much 'fits in' with my image of self and my career, rather it has shaped both, the former to a small extent and the latter almost completely.... My image of myself has been influenced by my choice of career and vice-versa. AP7	
If people ask me what I do normally I reply 'I teach' and if pressed say, criminology. I rarely mention psychology or the university. As for my career I see myself as basically a competent administrator trying to keep a show on the road in difficult circumstances and if I were to seek further advancement it would be in university management. AP8	
I suppose I see my self as both an academic and psychologist –they are equally part of me. There are tensions about my kind of psychology, yes, but not between being an academic and being a psychologist. In part I think that may be because I'm not a practising psychologist – so there aren't too many tensions between the academic world and real world. AP9	
I see myself as an 'academic psychologist.' I could have been an 'academic something else' or I could have been a 'practising psychologist' or an applied psychologist. I happen to be an academic psychologist. I have never though of myself having a planned career, hence the idea of fit (or not fit) doesn't arise for me...I think that being an academic psychologist fits less well with my career – at least in the last few years. I now seem to spend too much of my time doing non-academic and non-psychological tasks and responsibilities e.g. admin, person management...AP10	

Student Perceptions

The issue of how students perceive academic psychologists was explored not only with the students, but also with the academic psychologists and the BPS staff. Nearly all the participants across the three groups in Table 5.6. commented that students would see the academic psychologists as lecturers and researchers. From the students' responses it was also apparent that not only did they perceive the academic psychologists as teaching a specific subject, but also for some students, being a member of the Society informed that teaching. Yet again, when the students were asked to use images to describe the identity of an academic psychologist most apparent were the images of 'lecturer' and 'researcher.' When the students were asked whether these images linked with their experiences, it appeared that their lecturers as 'researchers' also informed the students' knowledge base by discussing their research in classes. A different image to emerge was that of 'professional', which was also seen as important and linked to the fact that some of the 'lecturers' were also members of the Society.

Table 5.6. Student Perceptions

Academic Psychologists	BPS Staff	Students
Some students are terribly deferential and probably idolise psychology as a profession in which they would like to work- they'd like to be like their lecturers...One is a performer when lecturing, a bit of a father figure when tutoring and so on, some students are a bit frightened to come and see me I think. AP1	I kind of mentioned it earlier really, which is that they're lecturing and that they are researching...BPS1	Resourceful lecturer encouraging and dedicated - Help given on the right course text, useful reading materials, on writing practical reports. S2
I think the fact that I am trained as a cognitive therapist and did analytic training and counselling before gives me added credibility with some in terms of the subjects I teach. This means that some see me as a real psychologist.... I suppose their images of the profession are linked round the notion of Psychologists defining themselves via their professional body that regulates entry to the profession. AP2	Very much facilitator...to me a classic academic should be, welcoming ideas from students and enable them to flourish in that way...I suppose the other main one is things to do with information gathering and very much, I suppose that's more the research angle but it's the experimenter I suppose that's the key thing...I suppose it comes back to the concept of being a researcher/scientist. BPS2	Researchers, lecturer - Some talk about their research in the lecturers or seminars which is interesting. S5

Academic Psychologists	BPS Staff	Students
I think students don't know what psychology is when they first start although by the end of their programme they will almost certainly see Psychology as an evidence based profession which is preoccupied with research. AP3	When I was a psychology student...I had different impressions of different kinds of academic psychologists as well, I found that ones that are working in...biological foundations, biological psychology tend to be quite precise, very hard nose scientific sort of people and the one's that work in social psychology tend to be lefty and float around a bit...but now I've got a much wider view, experience of psychologist since...I mean obviously since I've worked here...BPS3	Although I'm not sure which lecturers are members of the Society, most of our lecturers are generally friendly and approachable, whilst maintaining a strong academic presence. Some of the senior professors are more aloof, as they are more involved with research -The lecturer's we've had have mostly been fun to listen to and animated discussions have been generated by their interactions with us. S7
I don't know if academics are seen as real psychologists by students. Obviously, they teach the subject but are they real? I think through teaching the importance of psychological research and then undertaking that research we are seen as real in that sense. By this I mean that we teach students how to undertake psychological research, we also demonstrate that we ourselves do undertake psychological research. AP4	I think that students very often have respect for the learning...and again the creativity of the academic psychologist they're dealing with and working with ...I can imagine that students do see the academic psychologist as slightly more unworldly, slightly less practical people, whereas again they see the professional psychologists very firmly rooted in practice. BPS4	My lecturers are very enthusiastic about their subject, some are researchers - I think it again links to being a member of the Society - We get told about the Society in our classes which is very useful and informative. S8
I suppose they see me more as a lecturer than a psychologist because I am involved in teaching and research. AP5	...I think they will perceive them as lecturers, possibly researchers depending on the seniority of the academic psychologist, but it's not necessarily the profession that will be most significant but the fact they are academics who work in a specific discipline or subject field which will be more apparent. BPS5	Some of my lecturers teach subjects which I'm really interested in so they appear more enthusiastic, than others, but they're all very supportive -There was one lecture which I didn't understand at all so I went to see the lecturer who was very helpful. S10
I'm fortunate that I have some experience in an applied field so yes I think my students see me as a real psychologist, although I have to say they I think see my academic colleagues who do not have similar experiences in the same way...Students are often fascinated by psychology findings so see being a psychologist as a having a 'special eye' on the real world with psychology as a profession being seen as a valuable contributor. AP6		They are hard working, abreast of recent work taking part in the BPS and its subsections, and are engaged in research of their own -I have found that many of my lecturers are members of the BPS, and one in particular has recently had some of her research published in The Psychologist S12
From their view of me, they would only see an academic psychologist, although I always include applications of psychology in all teaching sessions. Those who see more of me, and other psychology staff, would probably be put off joining the academic profession by the amount of marking and administration involved! AP7		A lot of them are doing research; some have had research published, lecturers in psychology - Well, they are all psychologists who teach on the course or research in applied areas. S14

Academic Psychologists	BPS Staff	Students
I think an ex (very ex) 'real psychologist' still with a foot in the door. I think perceptions may well vary, depending on the student group. Undergraduates have very hazy ideas about the profession, whilst forensic postgraduates are very much more focused and become more knowledgeable as the course progresses. AP8		Researchers, scientists doing applied research in the field, BPS member...S15
Working with students can be fun. I enjoy their input and ideas. Makes me feel more in touch with people's lives. And helps to understand the difficult circumstances of their lives – but also find being a teacher frustrating – when students won't engage with things as much as they need to so as well as they could. Being asked what they can get away with in terms of reading – taking a very pragmatic approach to learning. AP9		A lot of them are too busy being lecturers to be anything else! - Some lecturers are very informative in their lectures and put themselves out to help you. S16
I think some students see me as a psychologist, but in an academic sense. I suppose this is the image that they hold of me - a lecturer, teacher whose specialism is psychology. AP10		Professional...The lecturers are always highly organised compared to my other subject. However, sometimes they have a patronising air about them. They are very professional in their approach to the subject. S20
		Conformist and obsessed with being scientific. S21
		Professional, serious, dedicated, the professor who spends hours away from his family doing research on a topic that is causing many problems to the academic world at that time - Certain of our lecturers tell anecdotes about research that have done on key issues, such as IQ testing... S23
		My lecturers are committed, up-to-date knowledgeable – they have a very professional approach to their lecturing and to the subject... S27
		They have a professional attitude to their teaching. This is underpinned by the fact that many of them are members of the BPS. S29

The Development of Professional Identity and how it is Understood in the Communities in which Academic Psychologists Live and Work

Given that part of the aim of the research study was to explore how identity was managed in the communities in which the academic psychologists lived and worked, they were asked specific questions about how their experiences as academic psychologists had informed their professional

identity. The responses in Table 5.7. suggested that their professional identities were embedded in the profession of academia and this was underpinned by the self-images of teacher/lecturer and researcher outlined in Table 5.5. However, there was also recognition that belonging to the Society had enhanced their identity, as discussed in more detail in Table 5.8. below. The significance of identities in social contexts was also explored and it was noted that these were linked to professional identity.

The accounts of the academic psychologists also highlighted that their constructions of identity linked personal events to professional understandings. This was particularly noticeable when the participants were asked about the significance of other identities, as outlined in the last column of Table 5.7. In these cases, such identities were based upon underlying values. What was also significant was the way in which the professional identities of the academic psychologists were embedded in their personal as well as professional lives. Their views emphasised the way in which their experience of their work and lives were closely linked and contributed to how they saw themselves.

Table 5.7. The Development of Professional Identity and how it is Understood in the Communities in which Academic Psychologists Live and Work

Academic Psychologists and HE	Academic Psychologists and the BPS	Academic Psychologists Identities in Other Contexts
In the early career stages the issue of identity never really arose. Now I suppose it's a matter of comparing oneself with other professions, among other things with other psychologists and in other fields. Probably I perceive my identity in the context of past and present research, publications. AP1	I think that in terms of image there is a very broad professional identity...In terms of how psychologists see themselves, I think it's bound up with professional relationships, the ups and downs...AP1	You don't escape being a psychologist wherever you are and whoever you are with, so one's identity transfers to all situations potentially...Among psychologists one has a different perceived 'identity' from that which naive outsiders ascribe...All these things merge and some are more important than others in determining how one feels about oneself, evaluates oneself and one's status, perceives one's social family and academic positions. AP1
I suppose it has made me much more aware via teaching about practice issues of the need for stronger evidence base for various aspects of practice. This has resulted in me defining myself partly as researcher and increasingly even seeing that as one of the most important parts of my professional identity as a psychologist...I feel that I am a psychologist and will always be a psychologist even if I were not formally working as a psychologist. AP2	I think BPS helps to define psychology in the UK and therefore what it means to be a psychologist. AP2	I do not feel that my identity is fragmented in this way. I feel quite strongly that I have a sense of self/identity that is fairly continuous and is central to my being. In some ways being a psychologist is a part of who I am, in the same way as being a mother, wife etc. all contribute to how I define myself. AP2

Academic Psychologists and HE	Academic Psychologists and the BPS	Academic Psychologists Identities in Other Contexts
My engagement with research and the teaching of research has helped me to think about how I should be myself ethically and professionally and also about how I should present myself to the public, and to others within the profession...Being involved in GQAC and as a QAA subject reviewer has also helped me to decide where I stand in psychology, particularly in relation to the professionalization debate. AP3	The Society influences my professional identity in several ways. I react to some of the ways in which people talk about professional identity in the Society, so sometimes I find myself forming opinions based on rejection of some of the things that others say...I adopt certain practices, particularly in relation to ethics...I also feel the Society influences my professional identity by providing a certain image to the public. AP3	I'm pretty sure I was drawn to studying psychology because of my experiences as a mother, a woman, a user of services. Now my professional identity is informed by feminism...It is very circular because both personal and professional identities interplay. It feels as if my work is my life's project and I often find it difficult to create clear boundaries between work and my 'other life'. This is particularly true in relation to reading and research. AP3
Now that I've become an academic psychologist, my experience defines research as a more fundamental aspect of my professional identity than teaching...There are indicators such as subject reviews, RAEs that now allow for an evaluation of my professional capacities. Currently they are at a Departmental level and I feel my professional identity as an academic psychologist is influenced by the status of the University I work. AP4	Through the Psychologist, current research and professional issues are discussed to make me more aware of what the current professional agenda is. My identity is probably influenced by other professions perceptions of psychology...Membership of committees also provides insight into how the Society works and other's opinions of the profession. AP4	Professional identity is informed by the identity of psychology in the public domain, the identity of psychotherapy/counselling, the identity of the education process, the identity of the BPS...Maybe personal identity, in that who I am may influence what I perceive psychology to be. AP4
I think I have been quite lucky to find somewhere where the quite rapid growth of psychology within the institution had allowed me to develop in some directions more quickly than I might have elsewhere. This has given me the confidence to take on a more visible professional identity e.g. in relation to things like external examining, GQAC and accreditation visits...AP5	Not sure you can really claim a professional identity without being a member...Membership makes your identity visible to others and provides peer validation for your credentials AP5	Maybe my gender is identity a little...I am sure my personal identity also must affect my professional one. I am fairly organised and thorough person, I think, which probably is at least consistent with a professional identity. I suppose it is influenced by observations of others in the role over the years...AP5
My experiences as an academic psychologist have shaped my professional identity in that I am acutely aware of the rigour with which research is carried out and so feel able to lend some authority to observations...AP6	The BPS lends some credibility and authority to my identity as a psychologist and whilst its constraints may at times feel burdensome but its publicly considered status does have clout. AP6	I teach gender and psychology and regard myself as a feminist so this has a bearing on how I am perceived...My professional identity is completely bound up with my personality and other identities which have some personal significant for me. Psychology is not a dry subject, and is brought to life by personal experience and personal investment AP6
There are certain tensions in terms of time, where a teaching academic psychologist...spends time with student related activities (e.g. marking, pastoral care, course development etc) which could be spent being a 'proper' academic (conducting and writing up research, preparing other publications, disseminating research findings etc.) Externally set priorities can mean that a administrative activities take valuable time away from being 'a psychologist' AP7	Being a member of the BPS probably does influence my professional identity, as it gives an 'official' ownership of the identity 'psychologist' and reading the Psychologist/being a member of BPS committees can be seen as an additional point of contact...The influence should of course work both ways – members' professional identities also guiding change and development in the BPS. AP7	Underlying values inform what I think and do, regardless of whether I am working or not. I have to do things professionally however, that I sometimes would rather not do or not having time to perform as I would wish to according to my personal identity. My professional identity doesn't change, though just my professional behaviour. AP7

Academic Psychologists and HE	Academic Psychologists and the BPS	Academic Psychologists Identities in Other Contexts
It not easy to compartmentalise one life in this way; the two feed in to each other, and I am not necessarily conscious of wearing one hat or another. Reading, teaching, administering researching and just talking to others as an academic all feeds into professional identity. AP8	Yes, it brings being a profession to the forefront, physical reminder that the profession exists, and that I am part of it. It has also served to give a focus to what I do, and to see my activities as part of a wider scale. The emphasis on ethical issues and professional conduct are important. AP8	My other identities I tend to keep very discrete, so I tend not to talk (or think) about psychology in them – but it does permeate through at intervals. AP8
Being an academic psychologist is about teaching and relating to students and has provided space in which I think about my professional identity. But I think I share many ideas with other academics who are not psychologists – especially those I meet in sociology, cultural and women's studies – some of whom started life as psychologists. Psychology has more permeable boundaries for me than for some Psychologists, I think. AP9	Some bits of the BPS relate to my identity more than others...The BPS means to me firstly professional issues, which as an academic psychologist relate less to my day to day work...In terms of BPS my sense of myself as a research psychologist and as a teacher comes most from POWS (Psychology of Women's Section)...BPS does influence my identity but as much in terms of 'I'm not that kind of psychologist' at least as much as 'I am that kind of psychologist'. And via particular groups within the BPS rather than the BPS as an entity. AP9	My professional identity is also linked to other identities which are important to me – as a woman – older woman, white woman, as committed to environmental issues...and to my research interests...And to other non-psychological identities. I spend a lot of time with people who are not psychologists – and it's sometimes there that I feel more like a psychologist. AP9
I suppose being an academic psychologist has defined my identity in terms of my role as a teacher and the values I hold in order to be that person. But I also feel this is just one element of who I am. I am a psychologist, I am a researcher – these also inform my identity. But I also feel my identity is sometimes subsumed by what I am expected to be within the organisation I work for. AP10	It [the BPS] informs who I am in terms of being a member of a professional body. It is another element of my professional identity and is influenced by the work that I do for the BPS e.g. GQAC although again this is underpinned by the values I hold. AP10	My professional identity is part of who I am – it is influenced by not only factors in my professional life but on a personal level as well. Inevitably these factors all play a part in defining who I am AP10

Professional Identity – The British Psychological Society

The comments in Table 5.7. indicate that the professional body was also influential in the formation of the academic psychologists' professional identity and *that* identity was part of the academic psychologists' professional selves. Given that all the academic psychologists were members of the Society, and they had commented upon the way in which the Society influenced their professional identity, this matter was also explored with the BPS staff and students who had commented in Table 5.6. upon how some of their 'lecturers' were also members of the Society. In Table 5.8., many of the responses from the students outlined how having lecturers who were members of the Society enhanced their credibility as well as being more 'aware' of what they taught. What was interesting in talking to the BPS staff was how they viewed the Society as not meeting the needs of the academic psychologists, despite the perception of the academic psychologists that being a member enhanced their professional identity. The BPS staff views seemed to suggest that emphasis was placed upon promoting professional applied psychology.

Table 5.8. Professional Identity – The British Psychological Society

Academic Psychologists	BPS Staff	Students
I think that in terms of image there is a very broad professional identity...In terms of how psychologists see themselves, I think it's bound up with professional relationships, the ups and downs. AP1	Well it becomes difficult for the Society, because it's the professional versus the scientific... Now here in the BPS we're both, but we're not supporting researchers, lecturers, be that in applied or non-applied areas...BPS1	It is essential to have lecturers being members of the Society, their membership enhances their teaching credibility. S2
I think BPS helps to define psychology in the UK and therefore what it means to be a psychologist. AP2	I suppose it does to an extent because you have academics as members, but as a profession it very much developed out of the academic remit which is why to me it seems odd that we're now accused of not being a Society that supports the academic because they're the ones that started it all.... which is why the Division of Teachers and Researchers have hit a recruitment freeze because they've got all those that were interested in the Society and they're not going to get the others until that image has changed. BPS2	A lot of our lecturers are members of the BPS, but you wouldn't know who is and who isn't - the teaching doesn't seem any different. S5
The Society influences my professional identity in several ways I react to some of the ways in which people talk about professional identity in the Society, so sometimes I find myself forming opinions based on rejection of some of the things that others say...I adopt certain practices, particularly in relation to ethics...I also feel the Society influences my professional identity by providing a certain image to the public. AP3	I think the Society was seen to a certain extent from the outside doing a lot for professional applied psychologists...for academic psychology all it was doing was...rewarding research excellence...so I think that probably contributed to the view that there wasn't really anything to be gained for academic psychologists by being part of this club. In the last few years that has changed...university environments are much more competitive, people have to perform, we've got research assessment exercises, teaching assessment exercises...there's lots more for the Society to do, benchmarking, negotiating with research councils...BPS3	I suppose they're more aware of what they teach. This doesn't affect what we've been taught as much as the lecturers' personal predilection to certain approaches does. S7
Through the Psychologist, current research and professional issues are discussed to make me more aware of what the current professional agenda is... AP4	...the academics certainly at the moment don't feel that the Society is particularly geared towards them and what they're trying to achieve, what they stand for...I'd perhaps have to say that at the moment if anything there might be a perception amongst academics that the Society doesn't particularly influence a view of them as a body in particularly beneficial way...BPS4	I think that if you're lecturer who is a member of the Society then you're more aware of current issues in psychology and that's good for teaching. S8

Academic Psychologists	Staff	Students
Not sure you can really claim a professional identity without being a member...Membership makes your identity visible to others and provides peer validation for your credentials. AP5	I believe a significant number of academic psychologists think the Society is aligned with the applied area...those academic who have seen fit to join the Society will presumably be not only influenced by this Society, but may be also influenced by other professions...Those who have chosen not to be in the BPS...will probably continue their lives without influence of the BPS unless we were extremely proactive in changing their views. BPS5	I know one or two lecturers on the course who are members of the Society, because they talk about it sometimes in their lectures, and so it's very important to them. S10
The BPS lends some credibility and authority to my identity as a psychologist and whilst its constraints may at times feel burdensome but its publicly considered status does have clout. AP6		I would imagine that owing to being members of the BPS and lecturers it would put them in an ideal position to advise on the course structure and content. They would be aware of what fundamental knowledge must be known in order to continue studies in psychology, and as they are working with students will be aware of how best to teach this information. I would expect my lecturers to be a member of the BPS, just as I am. S12
Being a member of the BPS probably does influence my professional identity, as it gives an 'official' ownership of the identity 'psychologist' and reading the Psychologist/being a member of BPS committees can be seen as an additional point of contact. In these senses the BPS crystallises the variety of different identities that various kinds of psychologists have...The influence should of course work both ways – members' professional identities also guiding change and development in the BPS.AP7		I suppose this is very important because it gives our lectures a certain context and we know that our lecturers are BPS members which enhances their status. S14
Yes, it brings being a profession to the forefront, physical reminder that the profession exists, and that I am part of it. It has also served to give a focus to what I do, and to see my activities as part of a wider scale. The emphasis on ethical issues and professional conduct are important. AP8		It's important that if lecturers are teaching on an accredited programme they should be members of the Society, because they will have a better understanding of the profession. I think it's also important that they're researching in the field because this means that the teaching is more advanced. S15
Some bits of the BPS relate to my identity more than others...The BPS means to me firstly professional issues, which as an academic psychologist relate less to my day to day work...In terms of BPS my sense of myself as a research psychologist and as a teacher comes most from POWS (Psychology of Women's Section)...BPS does influence my identity but as much in terms of 'I'm not that kind of psychologist' at least as much as 'I am that kind of psychologist'. And via particular groups within the BPS rather than the BPS as an entity. AP9		If I was taught by a lecturer who is a member of the BPS and one who is not I can't tell the difference, so maybe it doesn't affect them at all, unless they see themselves as more superior to others who aren't. S16

Academic Psychologists	BPS Staff	Students
It [the BPS] informs who I am in terms of being a member of a professional body. It is another element of my professional identity and is influenced by the work that I do for the BPS e.g. GQAC although again this is underpinned by the values I hold. AP10		Gives them confidence as professional and recognised psychologists. Provides support and confidence for them in their research interest. S20
		They all seem very enthusiastic about the BPS when they talk about it, and I think some of them think that it makes them more credible as lecturers. S21
		This gives them more credibility as lecturers, as an accredited member of staff always appears more professional than a non-accredited one. There doesn't appear to be any difference in the style of teaching or their personality while teaching. S23
		It gives them more prestige - if you teach then you are expected to be more involved in the subject area and this is reflected by being a member of the Society.S27
		I would hope that being a member of the BPS would help those lecturers to feel they have the support network of such a large organisation behind them should they need it. I personally hold those members of staff who are BPS members in a higher regard than others. Being a member of the BPS shows they have a commitment and passion for their subject area, and are prepared to explore new findings in their field rather than relying on past knowledge and experience. S29

Developing a Common Professional Identity Across the Profession

Both the academic psychologists and the BPS staff were asked whether it was possible to create a common professional identity across the profession, as outlined in Table 5.9. What was most noticeable from the responses was the diversity of psychology as a profession which linked to their earlier comments in Table 5.1. and the distinctions that exist between academic and applied psychology. Some academic psychologists did, however, reinforce the fact that these two groupings shared common goals in terms of meeting professional standards and codes of conduct, but

professional identities could still differ within these groups. Others were clear that it would be difficult or impossible to achieve.

Table 5.9. Developing a Common Professional Identity Across the Profession

Academic Psychologists	BPS Staff
There is tremendous overlap between applied and academic psychology – the applied psychologist applies theory and If they are teaching within a university they are drawing on research data to train practitioners; the ethical principles that apply to professional conduct apply to academic as well as practising psychologists...Individual differences among professionals, identity if you like would determine to what extent they could identify with a common purpose...AP1	I think the problem is...that the identity of psychology is so diverse...to try to develop a common sense of identity, it's the sort of thing that's going to be very difficult to do, because it's such a cultural thing...I think traditionally we have seen applied psychologists providing services and I think with academic psychologists we haven't actually seen them as a service provider even though that's obviously what they're doing you know by lecturing. BPS1
I think difficult especially because of the nature of academic psychology and the lack of recognition by the Society...the two should not be treated as distinct entities as we all represent the profession, but inevitably our professional identities will differ as we find ourselves working within different organisational contexts. AP2	...it's one discipline with its different areas or different fields...I suppose it is possible to promote it because having been at the Centenary Conference this year...there was very much a sense of common purpose...but I think we've got a long way to go ...Ideally there wouldn't be a distinction between the two because the grounding of any psychologist is the same ...BPS2
On the whole we are talking about two separate groups of people here with quite different jobs to do and problems to face. However we all have a concern with establishing basic standards of professional conduct, ethical principles and presenting the body of knowledge of psychology in a clear, consistent and coherent way...AP3	I think there is a strong sense amongst psychologists that it's something that has to happen if the discipline is to flourish...we are dependent on each other on a sense...the Society can do bits and pieces, we can have joint conferences that are both academic and applied...but the world for academic psychologists has become a lot more competitive as well and the ways in which...the ownership of knowledge and the way in which knowledge is used... I think psychology is very diverse, but I don't think the diversity is necessarily between the academic and the professional...BPS3
Theory should inform practice and vice versa. Academic and applied psychology are two sides of the same coin. Either side would be considerably undermined without input from the other side...Many academics do not have access to the applied environment. Many practitioners do not have access to the academic arena. In a sense, through publications such as the Psychologist, the BPS contributes towards academic knowledge of practitioners. The flow from the opposite direction is less tangible. AP4	...As far as I can tell without any input from academic psychologists...certain aspects would continue to function...if the discipline claims to be a profession as well as a scientific subject, then it has to be bound by certain constraints which mark it out as a profession as opposed to a purely scientific research, very academicy subject...I think it might be difficult...because the two groupings are really pursuing different ends and they really see their careers going in different directions...they're diverse and the way that's going...BPS4
I think difficult...academic psychologists are having to confront issues that they might have hidden from before – e.g. relevance of their work, ethical issues, nature of research funding – which have always been there for applied psychologists. AP5	...I would say that the separation between the various Divisions is very bit as great as the separation between the applied and the academic psychologists...I'm not sure what the distinction is...whether it is just academic versus applied psychology or whether in a group of academic and applied psychologists versus another group of academics...I would probably dispute the dichotomy is a straight academic versus applied and the academics who are not part of the BPS themselves are professional psychologists because of academic study and research which informs the profession. BPS5
I think it's probably impossible to do this since some academic psychologists would not view applied psychology as equal value...The main objective should be to ensure that the status of applied psychology is seen as equal if different and that links between academic psychology and applied psychology need to be strengthened and made more explicit. AP6	

Academic Psychologists	BPS Staff
I think all academic psychology should be applied, including in a teaching context, but I can also see that for the purposes of the professional body, there has to be some categorisation, simply to make the society manageable – there needs to be sections/divisions, to ensure the necessary focus and coming together of like-minded psychology professions. AP7	
Not all people who see themselves as 'academic' necessarily see them as professional, and many do not like the BPS as an organisation (especially in terms of 'closed shop', protecting psychology, seeing itself as the guardian of the discipline, dictating what people can and cannot do – all the so-called 'academic freedom' debate). Thus, I'm not sure there necessarily is a sense of common purpose and professional identity (though personally I see it as being worth aiming for). AP8	
There should be equal status amongst the applied/academic psychology because we are all part of a professional community of people who do psychology, look at the world in psychological - and empirical terms, although we do psychology in very different ways, different values and ideas about hoe to go about our business. AP9	
Psychology is very diverse and there does exist a divide between academics and applied psychologists...I think that working towards a common professional identity would be very difficult to achieve but certainly a goal that is worth aiming for. There will always be some diversity between the two groupings I would have thought simply because our professional identity will be influenced by the organisations in which we work, as well as our underlying values. AP10	

Presenting the Data in Context

It became clear from presenting the data that the transcripts of the academic psychologists provided written accounts of their actual experiences *in their words*. The academic psychologists had found the research process a reflective one, in terms of thinking about their professional identity, for example:

"It has made me explore my views but I don't think I have questioned them so much as simply trying to identify issues and put them into words…it has made me realise that I enjoy being a psychologist and were I able to choose again I would still do the same job unlike some of my colleagues." AP2

"I think the issues reflect my views in terms of how I see myself…my perception…and I find that my ideas seem quite changed from those I had at the beginning of the whole chartering exercise when I first began to think about my professional identity." AP3

"…yes the process has been a reflexive one – I did not necessarily question my identity as such but in terms of the questions asked I suppose I reflected upon who I am and how I think about these issues…" AP10

Consequently, encouraging the academic psychologists to reflect upon and write about their experiences offered a way for the researcher to interpret their experiences in order to better understand how they understood themselves. By deconstructing each text and detecting "...categories that are 'grounded', or rooted empirically in the data and conceptually in the research issues..." (Arksey and Knight 1999, p165), the concepts that emerged linked the views of the academic psychologists with the comments of the BPS staff and psychology students. However, different voices of the participants emerged, providing an understanding of what constitutes reality for them as well as making meaning of their experiences. These categories are analysed in more depth in the next Chapter.

Chapter Six

Research Analysis – Making Sense of the Findings, Making Sense of the Methods

Introduction

In this Chapter, the emergent themes will be discussed by the researcher considering what they might mean when compared against the theoretical frameworks that have been located in the literature review. Adopting this approach has enhanced the authenticity and credibility of the research study, as well as providing a way of contextualising the experiences of the academic psychologists. The discussion of the findings is also set against the research aim, which is to explore how academic psychologists who are members of the Society perceive themselves, and addresses three issues:

(i) The way in which psychology teachers understand their professional identity;

(ii) The images used to construct professional identity and shape professional practice;

(iii) The way in which professional identity is managed within the communities in which academic psychologists live and work and how fundamental these are to their teacher professionalism.

This Chapter will also undertake a critique of the research methods used, paying particular attention to the use of email as a credible research tool.

Making Sense of the Findings

Reflections on Psychology as a Profession.

In the research findings, the perceptions of the academic psychologists, BPS staff and students highlighted the different interpretations of psychology as a profession and its diversity. The participants tended to refer to psychology in the context of a profession, rather than a discipline, but it was not defined as a single profession, because it was seen as encompassing academics as well as other types of psychologists working in applied areas of psychology. Hoyle (2001) has also suggested that despite the formal designation of teaching as a profession what can be defined as a professional activity might not always be clear as noted by the academic psychologist AP10 in Table 5.1. of Chapter Five, (p.55).

Keogh's (1998) narrative about her career and life in psychology also makes the point that what it means to be a psychologist is not entirely clear, because of its diversity, beliefs and activities: "I have spent my professional life as a psychologist, yet I am hard put to define or describe psychology as a profession" (p.139). This also emphasised Eraut's (1994a) point that achieving the actuality of professional lives in teaching and establishing whether or not teachers are professionals according to certain criteria will be difficult to achieve, because of the complexity of defining teacher professionalism. As academic psychologist AP3 commented in Table 5.1. (p.54), being a professional was seen as desirable, but it was not always clear why. The comments of the BPS staff also reflected

the diversity of psychology as a profession and what it actually encompassed. This was particularly noted in the comment made by BPS1 in Table 5.1. (p.54).

The students also held different views of psychology as a profession, reiterating that: "...There is no singular version of what constitutes professionalism or teaching as a profession..." (Sachs 2001, p.150). This was reiterated by the view expressed by student S12 in Table 5.1. (p.55). The participants in McCulloch et al's (2000) study also described teaching as having the potential to be a profession, but what made teaching a profession differed for each individual. For example, one participant in that study remarked, "...the essence of professionalism for me is ethical. It depends on one's stance to what one does, rather than the skills and the day-to-day delivery of the service that one gives" (p.45). Similarly in the research study, the academic psychologists held many different views of what constituted psychology as a profession, as well as the BPS staff.

Academic Psychology and the Development of Professional Knowledge

Friedson (1994) has argued that professional identity can be linked to a specific body of knowledge and expertise. This was reiterated in the comments made by AP3 and AP9 in Table 5.2. (pp.57-58). Furlong et al (2000) has also remarked upon how professionals need a specialised body of knowledge. Academic psychology was seen by these participants as underpinning professional practice and provided a psychology knowledge base not only through teaching, but as recognised by AP6, through research and this enhanced the professionalism of psychology. A similar comment was also made by Becher (1989) who argued that research into beliefs about teaching found that many university lecturers hardly consider themselves teachers and instead, saw themselves more as members of their discipline. The research findings, however, suggested that for some of the academic psychologists such as AP2 in Table 5.2. (p.57) "...the discipline was a tangible social, as well as an epistemological construct" (Henkel 2000, p.189).

Thus as noted by Furlong et al (2000), the concept of knowledge was central to the notion of professionalism, but as Winfield (1998) remarks the ownership of professional knowledge was related to how the profession established their status, a comment also made by AP3 and AP4 in Table 5.2. (p.57) in the previous Chapter. Such comments also complement Downie's (1980) argument that knowledge can give a profession its social importance. Such links were also visible in the research work of Hoshmand (1998). For example, one participant in her study remarked upon how crucial professional knowledge was to the viability of psychology as a discipline, and to her meaningful participation as a member of the profession. A similar comment was also echoed by AP10 in Table 5.2. (p.59).

This view has also been reiterated in Samuelowicz and Bain's (1992) research, whereby academic teaching was seen as a transmission of professional knowledge within the framework of an academic discipline which prepared students for postgraduate study and ultimately as training for a future

profession, a view also reflected by AP5 in Table 5.2 (p.58). In the same way, Astley (1992) has remarked that the relationship between knowledge and practice inevitably raises issues about the relationship between academic and professional knowledge, research and practice, staff and students. Whilst Barnett (1994) has argued that this may lead to the downgrading of distinctive forms of knowledge because of the emphasis on theory, what was clear from the views expressed by the BPS staff such as BPS3 and BPS5 in Table 5.2. (pp.57-58) was the way in which academic psychology underpinned practice.

What their comments also reiterated was how the discipline appeared to be "...interwoven into the ways teachers – as subject-matter specialists – conceptulize the world, their roles within it, and the nature of knowledge, teaching and learning" (Siskin 1994, p.152). In the research findings, as in Siskin's research, (ibid.) the academic psychologists' views did not directly reflect the subject matter, but the discipline became apparent through their chose of words as is apparent in the views expressed by all the academic psychologists in Table 5.2. (pp.56-59).

In essence, these views seemed to underpin Schon's (1983) view of professional knowledge as implicit in everyday actions, in which the academic psychologists shared both educational expertise and subject expertise. As Elbaz's (1983) study on teacher thinking illustrated, teachers actively used knowledge to shape the work situation and their professional practice, as noted in the comment of the academic psychologist AP9 in Table 5.2. (p.58).

Perceptions of the Self – Understanding Professional Identity

Halford and Leonard (1999) have argued that it is widely assumed that individual identities are determined by work roles. Such assumptions seemed to be reflected in the comments made by the academic psychologists who saw themselves in terms of being a 'teacher' or 'researcher' or both. However, the importance of contributing to the discipline was also seen as a crucial part of the academic psychologists' professional role as noted by AP3 in Table 5.3. (p.60). A similar view was reiterated in the narrative by Keogh (1998):

> "First I must clarify that from my perspective it is central to the role of psychologist to be an educator...I have found that although the content of my work is unique to the discipline, my efforts as an educator are common across many areas" (Keogh 1998 in Hoshmand 1998, p.50).

Whilst it could be argued that all the academic psychologists contributed to the work of the Society, their role in this context appeared not to dominate the formation of their professional identities. Interestingly, Reich (1998) has also reflected upon how as an academic psychologist, she felt it was important to contribute to the profession, although no comment was made about the influence this had on the formation of her professional identity. "I began this work within focused areas linked directly to psychology, then moved into broader fields. My first such encounter was with the APA Accreditation

Committee..." (p.59). In the research study, the recognition of the professional role in terms of academics teaching psychology and how this was applied in a professional context was more apparent in the views expressed by BPS4 in Table 5.4. (p.61).

How the Academic Psychologists are Perceived by Others

In asking the students how they understood the role of the academic psychologists, what became apparent was the dynamic that existed between psychology as a subject and the professional practice of the academic teacher in this context. Thus, the students' views such as S23 in Table 5.4. (p.62) emphasised Halford and Leonard's (1999) suggestion that individual identities were determined by their work roles: "Thus identity is etched on individuals as they fill certain occupational slots" (p.103).

Here the students recognised the value that the teaching had on their degree programmes, because it was underpinned by professional accreditation and allowed them to acquire the relevant subject knowledge to apply this in a professional setting. In this sense, "... the specifity of practice of the discipline and to the embodiment of that discipline in the body of the teacher..." (Phipps 2001, p.130) was seen as important. What was apparent was how the nature of the curriculum defined the students' images of knowledge and the roles of the academic teachers as noted by S5 in Table 5.4. (p.61). What these comments also suggested was the way in which the students expected teachers to have certain behaviours and knowledge, as noted by S16 in Table 5.4. (p.62). This point is reiterated by Britzman (1986) in her research. She argued that "...within this context of school structure students construct images of the teacher's world..." (p.445). Similarly, the students in the research study constructed their images based upon certain assumptions: "[The classroom's] relationship to the school structure is taken for granted and thus becomes invisible..." (Britzman ibid., p.445)

Images of the Self and Career

In this context, the participants were provided with the opportunity to reflect upon how they saw themselves as academic psychologists using the construct of self-image. It is worth remembering that an image:

> "...reaches into the past, gathering up experiential threads meaningfully connected to the present. And it reaches intentionally into the future and creates new meaningfully connected threads as situations are experienced and new situations anticipated from the perspective of an image" (Connelly and Clandinin 1988, p.60).

What was apparent from the research findings, as noted by Johnston (1992) in her research, was that the images evolved from the individual's experience and his/her personal meanings associated with those experiences. Different self-images emerged and given that these were significant for each academic psychologist, the researcher has quoted some of their views to provide greater illustration.

Given Images

What the research findings also showed was the way in which being an 'academic psychologist' did not always fit with the participants' images of themselves. In this context, multiple images dominated, e.g. 'psychologist', 'teacher', 'researcher' and 'administrator.' This was particularly reflected in the comments of AP2:

> "The profession is sometimes viewed as being careful to protect itself in terms of eligibility, standards, regulating numbers in professional training and so on. I suppose it has made me much more aware via teaching about practice issues of the need for a stronger evidence base for various aspects of practice. This has resulted in my defining myself partly as a *researcher* and increasingly even seeing that as one of the most important parts of my professional identity as a *psychologist*. I do not want to be identified with a lot of practitioners who practise and who may even write about practise issues but with no real evidence base, because they do not do any research based on their practice. So I suppose my professional identity is about *researcher, academic teacher and administrator*. I recognise that I have practitioner skills but I do not identify myself as mainly an active practitioner any more for the reasons given above. I feel that I am a *psychologist* and will always be a psychologist even if I were not formally working as a psychologist." AP2

Such images have been described by Fischer and Kiefer (1994) as 'given images' whereby the "...office of teaching, the institutional role, shapes the images held by the teacher" (Fischer and Kiefer in Burnaford and Bolotin 1994, p.41). What was interesting in the comments of the academic psychologists as well as Fischer and Kiefer's (ibid.) study was the way in which the images informed the participants' practice, for example:

> "I see myself essentially as a lecturer/academic who happens to be a psychologist and therefore has the advantage of being able to draw on psychological principles and examples from practice to inform teaching." AP6

This point was also made in Elbaz's study (1981, 1983) whereby a teacher used specific self-images as a means of summarising practical knowledge such as a 'good, energetic teacher', a description that suggested a feeling of competence.

Shattered Images

Such remarks also reflected what Cole and Knowles (1993) referred to as 'shattered images' in which teachers' hopes, images and expectations were shattered by exposure to the realities of schools, classrooms and teaching. Similarly in the research study self-image was often at odds with the participant's organisational reality:

> "Career-wise I would like to get more involved in the practitioner side of things but they are making it very difficult for us academics...On the image of myself psychology is either seen as interesting or a joke. Some appear to have the impression that hard sciences such as physics are the only real sciences..." AP4

Although Cole and Knowles (1993) research explored the phenomenon of shattered images in relation to preservice teachers, significant for one or two academic psychologists was the way in which such images were at odds with experience:

> "My 'image' of myself does not square well with being an academic psychologist. I think I might have been more useful employed elsewhere, various jobs have emphasised teaching and research, at present it's research. My image of my career has changed over the years. Early on I didn't know what to expect, now I see ceilings, inevitable limitations, (based on my knowledge of my personal skills, abilities but limitations)" AP1

These images reflected how "...teaching is a complex endeavour demanding that each individual, by virtue of personality, focus predominately on one part of a range of meanings because the who is too complex for one vision to control" (Provenzo et al 1989, p.553) In their research, which investigated perceptions and attitudes of teachers towards their work, the images that were used revealed a struggle to name what a teacher was: " You've got to be the mother, the preacher, the teacher and everything" (p.553). Fischer and Kiefer's (1994) study, which explored how teachers portrayed their views about teaching also found how teachers saw themselves in multiple roles. "Like a parent and a social worker she [the teacher] gets involved with her students, but she feels there is never enough time to do what has to be done..." (Fischer and Kiefer in Burnaford and Bolotin 1994, p.34). The views expressed by the Society staff also seemed to emphasise the multiple images of an academic psychologist:

> "I see them as a lecturer, I see them as a researcher...I never really see them as specialists in a particular area of psychology..." AP1

These comments demonstrated how "...throughout their teaching careers, teachers not only hold diverse images of themselves but also actively construct these images" (Fischer and Kiefer in Burnaford and Bolotin 1994, p.30).

Changing Self-Images

Fischer and Kiefer's research (1994) found that teachers told how their views about teaching changed during their careers.

> "Irene's early image of teaching confined her to the role of taskmaster, giver of information...In her desire to change she began to look more closely at what was happening among her students and turned to her colleagues for guidance and new ideas" (Fischer and Kiefer in Burnaford and Bolotin 1994, p.32).

Similarly in the research study one academic psychologist commented:

> "I didn't ever set out to be an academic psychologist. I entered teaching with the aim of being part of the solution to the misuse of psychology. My engagement with research and the teaching of research has helped me to think about how I should conduct myself ethically and professionally and also about how I should present myself to the public, and to others within the profession." AP3

Fischer and Kiefer (1994) have suggested that such case studies illustrate how images can change over time and grow in meaning, whilst also informing professional practice. This is further highlighted by the following comment from one academic psychologist.

> "I think that being an academic psychologist fits well with my image of myself. The kinds of things academic psychologists get involved in are things I enjoy - reading, thinking critically, researching etc." AP10

Personal Images

The academic psychologists' comments also reflected the findings in Grant's (1992) study of how three teachers perceived, organised and gave meaning to themselves, their experiences, and their world, whereby the participants' images were also drawn from personal beliefs. In the research study, the words of the participants were imbued with the personal as well as the professional.

> "Being a psychologist is part of whom I am, in the same way as being a mother, wife etc. all contribute to how I define myself." AP2

This is reiterated by Keogh (1998) when asked about the relationship between the personal, social and professional:

> "Looking back, I realize that there have been consistencies in my commitments and concerns over time, commitments that have been expressed in the kind of research I have undertaken, in the substance of my teaching and in my efforts to influence policy. My professional life has been driven by my underlying values and beliefs about what is important, especially the well-being of children" (Keogh 1998 in Hoshmand 1998, p.141).

Hence, the research findings also emphasised the experiential link between the academic psychologists' personal and professional beliefs as further illustrated by the following view:

> "I suppose I see myself as both an academic and a psychologist - they are equally part of me." AP9

This point is noted in the research work of Johnston (1992) who emphasised how professional and personal experiences seemed to contribute to the formation of the teachers' images, and Clandinin (1986) who found in one teacher's narrative account how the image 'classroom at home' was rooted in the participant's personal and professional experiences. The images expressed in the academic psychologists' accounts as described above, tended to have their origin in their professional lives and their academic practices and/or future knowledge and actions. These images were, "...a kind of embodied knowledge that is a coalescence of diverse experiences from which new experiences are undertaken and that therefore provides a connection between an individual's past, present and future" (Beattie 1995a, p.72).

Student Perceptions

Exploring the images that the academic psychologists used to express themselves provided a way of understanding how they constructed their reality. It was also important to talk to students to see how they saw the academic psychologists and the views of the BPS staff were also sought. The academic psychologists were also asked how they thought the students saw them. As commented by AP5 (p.66) BPS5 (p.66) in Table 5.6., the views of the students reflected their self-images.

What became apparent in the study, as noted by Fisher and Kiefer (1994) was the way in which students had internalised the roles and images of the academic psychologists as noted by the student S14 in Table 5.6. (p.66). The self-images described by the academic psychologists seemed to stem from the students' reactions to their lecturers. This reflects Calderhead and Robson's (1991) findings, whereby student teachers tended to hold particular images of teaching based on their experiences as school pupils. These views also reflected Britzman's (1986) remark that it was within the school structure that students formed images of their teachers. "The teacher's world, in the student's eyes, was straightforward and linear, hardly complex at all" (p.445). It was also within this context that the students' perceptions of the academic psychologists were based upon their role as lecturers. This point has been raised by Efron and Bolotin (1994). In their research, which explored teachers' images of themselves, they also asked about the teachers' images from the students' perspectives. Some of the teachers in Efron and Bolotin's (ibid.) study believed that their students had different images of teachers depending on their personality and styles of teaching, whilst others recognised that students saw their relationship between the students and teachers as one of conflict. Similar to their findings, in the research study some of the academics psychologists' comments revealed "...the struggle that teachers' experience as they shape their relationships with students..." (p.75). This point is made more evident in the reflections of the academic psychologist AP9 in Table 5.6. (p.67).

As Freidlmayer and Rossler (1995) also note, the self-perception of psychologists can exert an influence on other peoples' image of the profession. For the academic psychologists such as AP2 in Table 5.6. (p.65), "... their sense of self [appeared] firmly rooted in their own sense of competency..." (Efron and Bolotin 1994, p.75). It was apparent from the research findings how some of the academic psychologists' thinking was embedded in their experiences and their disciplinary practices, as expressed by AP6 in Table 5.6 (p.66). Similarly, Henkel (2000) found that in considering student experiences the academics tended to discuss what the students could learn in studying the discipline. As outlined above, the academic psychologists were more concerned about how their teaching was perceived. In this context, the students' thinking tended also to be embedded in their experiences of learning and support from their lecturers. Friedlmayer and Rossler (1995) have argued that the expectations of clients - in this case students - may influence the perceived professional identity of psychologists as noted by S8 in Table 5.6. (p.66). Whilst Henkel (2000) has commented that the influence of the discipline works against the development of a generic professional identity in the academic profession, from the students' perspective, the discipline of psychology and its professional

body was seen as an important part of being an academic psychologist as noted by S12 in Table 5.6. (p.66).

The Development of Professional Identity and how it is Understood in the Communities in which Academic Psychologists Live and Work

In analysing the research findings it can be argued that the professional identities of the academic psychologists were "...linked to particular bodies of knowledge and expertise..." (Halford and Leonard 1999, p.105). However as noted by Jones (1999), this is dependent on which profession an individual belongs to and he has argued that the professional identity of teachers is not so clearly determined. His point is that specific identities may be attached to both professions as a whole as well as particular professional groups. Consideration is given to this argument by exploring how the academic psychologists' professional identities were developed and understood within what Wenger (1998) has described as a nexus of multi-membership - in this case higher education and the British Psychological Society and how central this was to the production of the academic psychologists' identity. Both these communities are discussed in the next sections.

Higher Education

In analysing the responses of the academic psychologists, their professional identities tended to be embedded in the profession of academia. They looked to their occupation as teachers for their identity as suggested by AP3 in Table 5.7. (p.69). Such comments echoed Henkel's (2000) research, in which higher education was viewed as the main institution within which academics constructed their identities, values and the knowledge-base of their work. In particular, Henkel (ibid.) found that for the majority of academics, teaching was essential to their professional identities. For some the dynamic between teaching and research was also central.

The academic psychologists' professional identities, therefore, were not simply attached to the notion of teaching. What also became apparent, as noted by Beijaard et al (2000) in their study of teachers' perceptions of professional identity, was that the conception of a teacher as a subject expert did not take into account the complexity of teaching and the different conceptions of the teacher, such as a classroom manager. In the research study, when the academic psychologists were asked how they perceived themselves in terms of their professional identity, it became clear that they did not only see themselves as subject matter experts, but also recognised how other factors fed into their professional identity, a comment reiterated by AP8 in Table 5.7. (p.70).

This argument is also reiterated by Goodson and Cole (1994) whose research explored teachers' professional knowledge and development. They found that with each teacher they interviewed, qualitative shifts in self-perception had occurred over time. Whilst initially the teachers had been striving toward professional practice based upon a narrow and technical view of teaching based on subject knowledge, over a period of time re-identification had occurred. As they comment: "Along

with the expanding conceptions of teaching came increasing role complexity and a related need to develop new knowledge of herself as teacher" (p.95). Such complexity has been reinforced by Beijaard et al's (2000) study in which pedagogical and didactical aspects of teaching were relevant to the teachers' professional identity. AP9 in Table 5.7. (p.70) also noted this feature.

Yet as Goodson and Cole (1994) found in their research, the teachers' perceptions of their role changed beyond the technical and pedagogical to the institutional. "They began to see themselves as contributing members of a department..." (p.95). Whilst the research findings suggested that academic psychologists' professional identities were manifested in their classroom practices, it was also clear that "...part of the experience of teaching is continually constructing a sustainable identity as a teacher." (Coldron and Smith 1999, p.714). As became apparent in the research findings, this was influenced by the dynamic between academics, their institution and their discipline. This finding also concurred with the work of Czarniawska (1997) who found that individual identities could be affected by the organisational environment of an institution in a state of change. This point is further illustrated by Henkel's (2001) study of the implications of higher education reforms in England, Sweden and Norway where she found that such dynamics tended to be underpinned by quality assurance policies, which challenged academic identities. Whilst the research findings did not suggest that the academic psychologists' identities were being challenged in this context, for participant AP4 in Table 5.7. (p.69) it was clear that such factors had implications for that academic psychologist's construction of identity and the dynamics between the individual, discipline and institution in which his professional identity was shaped and developed. This linked to Bernstein's (2000) notion of 'retrospective identity' and emphasised the way in which professional identity was influenced by external factors such as teaching subject reviews and research assessments. However for AP5 in Table 5.7. (p.69), becoming involved in such activities was viewed as providing a more visible professional identity.

Czarniawska (1997) has also argued that building up an identity can be described as an interaction between the individual and the institution. This is noted in Southwood's (1995) study, which looked at primary school headship. Southwood (ibid.) defined professional identity in terms of the characteristics of the 'situational self', i.e. how one is in interaction with others. These characteristics were attributed to an individual's occupation and manifested in the workplace. However as argued by Foucault (1980), such identities can inevitably be conditioned by the operations of power in society. This point is reiterated further by one academic psychologist who firstly remarked:

> "I think I have been quite lucky to find somewhere where the quite rapid growth of psychology within the institution had allowed me to develop in some directions more quickly than I might have elsewhere. This has given me the confidence to take on a more visible professional identity..." AP5

But later commented:

> "I think I have reached the point where the next logical career move within the institution would actually take me out of academic psychology...It would make my institutional identity 'manager' not 'psychologist' and since I have left behind

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          opportunities to retain psychological identity as a researcher,
          little in terms of academic psychology would be left…" AP5
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The image of 'academic manager' has been discussed in the research work of Henkel (2000), who found that the concept had a wide range of meanings for individuals, depending upon their own existing academic identities and their institutional environment. Undertaking such a role, "…meant negotiating a boundary and finding ways to move between two worlds. They had to radically reshape rather than wholly reconstruct their identity" (p.249). A similar remark was made by AP10 in Table 5.7. (p.70) and emphasised the fluidity of identity.

Thus, as Dutton and Dukerich (1991) have argued, the relationship between individuals' sense of organisational identity and their own sense of who they are has suggested a personal connection between action and professional identity and their organisation. This argument is reinforced by the research study conducted by Giola and Thomas (1996), which looked at how management in higher education institutions make sense of issues during strategic change in academia. They found that unfamiliar expressions and actions that may be consistent with a new vision for an institution could destabilise existing identity and images of those individuals working in the institution. The remarks of AP5 and AP7 in Table 5.7. (p.69) suggested that this process could result in taking on a different identity, which may have a positive or negative impact.

What these comments also illustrated was that within the context of higher education, identity might not be enduring. Dutton et al (1994) have suggested that images of an individual's work organisation can shape the strength of his or her identification with that organisation. As the research findings suggested, this may lead to substantive improvement in terms of how an individual perceives one's self, although as the above research findings have also highlighted, changes in organisational identity can also be detrimental to an individual's image.

Professional Identity - The British Psychological Society

Clearly the academic psychologists' professional identity involved identification with an academic discipline. Taylor (1999) also makes this point, by arguing that an academic's identity is signalled through reference to the discipline. Yet the research findings have also indicated that, "…it seems appropriate to soften the stricture on the conception of identity as more or less fixed to include a dimension of fluidity" (Giola and Thomas 1996, p.394). This has enforced Greenfield and Ribbin's (1993) argument that organisations are themselves social constructs that are continually refreshed and renewed through negotiations of individual people who are in them, of them or wish to gain membership of the communities that construct them.

Busher (2001) has also remarked upon how people construct self-identities through their membership of what he defines as 'academic discourse communities' in order to meet the demands of such communities they wish to become members of. This comment is reiterated by AP5 in Table 5.3. (p.60).

In this context, whilst Henkel (2000) recognised that higher education was the main institution within which academics constructed their professional identity, in the research findings the narrative accounts indicated that the professional body was also influential in the formation of their professional identity and was part of the academic psychologists' professional selves as noted by AP7 in Table 5.7. (p.69).

Similarly, Hoshmand's (1998) autobiographical accounts echoed how important being a member of a professional body was to each participant's sense of professional identity. However, for some of the participants professional identity was also associated with a personal conflict. For example, one participant "...identified conflicts he felt about academic psychology failing to prepare students to meet the demands of professional service..." (p.179). In the research study, whilst being a member of the Society was sometimes seen as constraining, it also validated the participants' professional identity as academic psychologists as suggested by AP6 in Table 5.7. (p.69). This argument was also reflected in the comments of AP9 (p.70) who recognised that the professional body was influential in terms of the participant's professional identity, but only to a certain extent.

The recognition that the professional body contributed to the academic psychologists' formation of their professional identity underlined how the organisation was of primary importance to them, "...these communities can be seen as shaping individual identities for example in the myths, knowledge traditions and formative relationships..." (Henkel 2000 p.251). It became apparent that being a subject specialist in the field of academic psychology provided the underpinning body of professional knowledge that all psychologists should be familiar with. Yet as outlined by Wenger (1998), the construction of an identity included different meanings and forms of participation. The comments from BPS4 in Table 5.8. (p.71) reflect this point.

Such comments underpin Atkinson's (1999) argument that where individuals gain membership of communities that construct them – in this case the BPS - such negotiations will be inequitable, since the power will be diffused throughout the social world. Foucault (1980) has argued that such power will be distributed inequitably in organisations, thus personal identity and action will be inevitably conditioned by the operation of power in society. However in the research findings, being a member of the professional body was at least "...a matter of acquiring and then redefining an identity that is socially legitimated" (Coldron and Smith 1999, p.711). In the research findings, S27 in Table 5.8. (p.73) also legitimated this professional identity.

The views of the staff and students suggested that images of organisations shaped how an individual defined one's self within that organisation. As Dutton et al (1994) remarked: "When members define themselves with attributes that overlap with the attributes they use to define the organization they are strongly identified with the organization" (p.256). The reflections of the academic psychologists such as AP7 and AP8 in Table 5.7. (pp.69-70) illustrated this point further, whereby their membership of the Society had shaped the strength of their identity with the organisation. As noted by Dutton et al (ibid.),

such reflections served as an important reference point, which connected the members, i.e. the academic psychologists with their organisation. Yet this was not the only influence. The academic psychologists' experiences involved multi-membership that had "...created, a dual relation between identities and the landscape of practice..." (Wenger 1998, p.161) which was shaped and reflected in their professional lives.

Academic Psychologists' Identities in Other Contexts

The professional identities of the academic psychologists were bound up in dimensions of their lives as commented upon by AP3 in Table 5.7. (p.69). This is further illustrated by Maclure's (1993) research that explored the notion of identity as an 'organising principle' in teachers' jobs and lives, identity was "...a resource that people used to explain, justify and make sense of themselves in relation to others and at the world at large" (p.311). The professional identities of the academic psychologists had also become part of their self-image as noted by AP2 (p.68). Likewise, Nias (1989) in her study of primary school teachers found that they had "...incorporated their professional identity into their self image (i.e. they felt like teachers)" (p.181).

This point is underpinned by the findings of Hall (1996) who undertook a study of women managers in education. This study showed how the women's professional identities were socially constructed from interactions with significant others, such as family, friends and teachers, and those interactions occurring within and outside education. From these experiences, the women managers developed a sense of who they wanted to be. Contrary to these findings, Maclure (1993) found that the teachers seemed more varied in their sense of selves and much less secure in their identity as teachers. In the research findings, the academic psychologists used the notion of identity to make sense of who they were, which was bound up with values and actions as noted by AP6 and AP7 in Table 5.7. (p.69).

Such remarks reiterate Atkinson's (1999) point that people are individuals, even if notions of individuality are socially and culturally determined, and that the social group membership – in this case academic psychologists – is related to personal identity in dynamic and contradictory ways. This view of identity refuted the singularity of the term and served as a reminder that identity was a shifting phenomenon, a point also noted by AP1 in Table 5.7. (p.68).

In his study of how doctoral students struggled to join academic discourse communities, Busher (2001) has also reflected upon how constructing personal and work-related identities provided a struggle between their own constructed views of the world and the cultural demands of the communities that they wished to become members of. This was because existing members of these communities powerfully sustained such cultures. In Busher's (ibid.) research study, the construction of personal and professional identities were interlinked involving their work-related identities and their notions of self-hood. "Linked to this are their images of themselves, and how those images are linked to the various aspects of their lives to which they give greater or lesser importance" (p.15). In the research findings

the academic psychologists' professional identities were linked to a network of personal concerns, values and aspirations that they encountered throughout their lives, as illustrated by AP1 and AP3 in Table 5.7. (pp.68-69).

Developing a Common Professional Identity Across the Profession

When the research participants were asked whether it was possible to create a common professional identity across the psychology profession, many of the academic psychologists such as AP3 and BPS staff such as BPS1 in Table 5.9. (p.74) felt that the profession lacked shared values. This point was also made by Hoshmand (1998) in her study, whereby the participants remarked upon how the profession was divided and not unified: "It is a challenge to facilitate conversations among different constituencies in the profession who represent diverse and sometimes competing interests" (p.189).

The concept of diversity also underpinned the comments made by the academic psychologists and reflected their views about the complexity of the profession. This point is noted in the narrative of Keogh (1998) who commented upon the differences that existed between academics and practitioners "...it is not surprising that as a profession we do not have a clearly articulated common purpose, that our goals are varied, and that the language and terminology of our discourse differ" (Keogh in Hoshmand ibid, p.139). AP3 in Table 5.9. (p.74) also felt that the concerns of applied psychologists were different from those academics, leading to different understandings and perspectives.

The way in which professional identity has been framed in terms of academic versus applied psychologists has also been commented upon by Reich (1998) as misleading, a suggestion also made by BPS5 in Table 5.9. (p.74). Reich (ibid.) believed that there was a need to find linkages between science and practice in order to change the current perception of the profession. One academic psychologist, AP4 in Table 5.9. (p.74) also expected greater collaboration between researchers and practitioners. This commonality was linked to: "The belief in having access to objective knowledge forms a basis for the psychologists' identity and support demands for professionalization" (Freidlmayer and Rossler, 1995, p.166). This was reflected in the comment made by BPS2 in Table 5.9. (p.74).

This remark also emphasises Freidson's (1994) point that a basic element of professionalism will be related to a commitment to a specialist body of knowledge and skills of special value. In this sense, the intellectual interest in their work and belief in its value was important whether the academic psychologists were academics or applied psychologists as remarked by AP1 in Table 5.9. (p.74) These views also reinforced the way in which the professional identities of the academic psychologists were "...a complex and heterogeneous mix of individual and community values, commitment to particular forms of knowledge or epistemological frameworks and a sense of worth or self esteem" (Henkel 2000, p.255). Yet there was recognition by AP9 in Table 5.9. (p.75) of the importance of the profession as a community. Thus as noted by Hoshmand (1998) in her study, the importance of both academic values and professional values held by the academic psychologists was significant in terms

of the integration of both academic and applied psychology. Such views also reiterated Wenger's (1998) argument that identity involves community membership, which gives the formation of identity a significant social character and familiarity that individuals experience in certain social contexts.

An Emerging Model of Professionality

The taking up of an identity is what Britzman (1992) has defined as "...a constant social negotiation that can never be permanently settled or fixed..." (p.42). It was apparent that the academic psychologists' identity was mediated by their own experiences inside and outside the communities they worked in as well as their own beliefs and values about what it meant to be a teacher. It is in this context that Barnett's (1997) notion of critical professionalism, as explored in Chapter Two demonstrates the importance of the academic psychologists extending their professionality in the domains of the self and the world by reflecting upon how they see themselves. "As teachers, or other professionals, the stories we tell tell us who we are and what we will become. Our stories are our professional world, the map of our experience" (Cortazzi 1993, p.139). Exploring how they understood their professional identity using the concept of self-image revealed the reality of their working lives and allowed them to express how they saw themselves, how their professionality was constructed and how their identities were located. As Cole and Knowles (2000) argue "...knowing ourselves as persons is very much part of knowing ourselves as professionals" (p.15). This was enhanced by the nature of the research methods used to undertake the study as discussed in the next section.

Making Sense of the Research Methods

An important element of the research study was the nature of the research methods adopted. This included the narrative method of interviewing which provided the possibility of understanding the experiences of the academic psychologists, including both personal and professional accounts in their lives. This approach, which actually used email interviewing, differed to the semi-structured, face-to-face interviews that were undertaken with the staff from the Society, because they did not require them to reflect upon biographical events in their lives. The email interviews provided written accounts about how the academic psychologists' saw themselves. Given that there is limited knowledge about the use of email interviews, this aspect of the research methods is discussed in considerable detail and comparisons are made with the other research methods that have been used, which included face-to-face interviews and email questionnaires. Consideration will also be given to the use of grounded theory and data matrices.

The Use of Email Interviewing

An exploration of the literature has indicated an absence of research that has adopted email interviewing as a qualitative research tool. The researcher was only able to identify three studies. The first study by Foster (1994), used email interviewing to examine the way in which academic teachers planned, designed and reviewed their subjects. However, the study did not provide detail of the

research data and its potential qualities for enhancing reflective practice and professional development. Two further studies by Russell and Bullock (1999) and Henson et al (2000), provided crucial evidence about the role of email interviews as a forum for teachers to reflect upon who they were in the exchange of stories about teaching. Such aspects of email interviewing were a major strength in the research study, offering, "...an alternative site and the space in which to construct those extended narratives/stories" (Henson et al 2000 in Coles and Knowles, 2000 p.179).

In the research study, the email interviews were able to "...capture [the teachers'] stories in juxtaposition, freeze-frame stories, thus allowing for a unique way in which to reflect on experiences" (Henson et al 2000 in Coles and Knowles 2000, p.179). The email accounts of the academic psychologists provided a better understanding of the self-image they constructed and not only highlighted how those images reinforced previously held beliefs, but also how professional identities constantly change. The participants commented upon the opportunity that email had provided to reflect upon and review their responses.

> "Email was good in the sense that I could reflect before responding. Sometimes for days. It was also quick and convenient. I doubt I would have hand written my responses." AP4

> "This is the first time I have encountered email research (as a participant) and I have found it very convenient. An added advantage (apart from being cheap to run, compared with travelling all over the country trying to arrange individual meetings) is the gap in time between delays in responding were precisely because the question was challenging me to think hard about it, and not answering straight away gave me time to reflect on what I really thought about the topic." AP7

Because the research involved accounts that were constructions of experience, it was important to demonstrate the trustworthiness of the research. Authenticity became a priority because the teachers' narratives provided accounts of their actual experiences. Yet as noted by McCulloch et al (2000) in their research, the participants did not always have to answer in the same way. "All that can be said is that the way the interview played out meant that the point was not spontaneously made at that time in that specific setting. At another time, in another interview, the point might have been made differently" (p.122).

As Seale (1999) notes, asking the academic psychologists to authenticate their accounts helped the researcher to develop a greater understanding of the phenomenon being studied although it was recognised that: "While we are striving, in our research approach, for recall of authentic, cognitive events, we have to recognize that such recall, while always being theoretically possible, will not always be achieved, particularly in the confines of a time-limited interview" (Cooper and MacIntyre 1996, pp.45-46).

Nevertheless email provided "...space for our stories-a place where characters emerge, evolve, and dialogue with one another..." (Henson et al 2000 in Cole and Knowles 2000, p.178). As Russell and Bullock (1999) comment in their research, the use of email exchange helped to understand particular features of teaching more fully within the research context, enabling the participants to pick up on issues that might have slipped temporarily out of view. One academic psychologist in the research study also noted this point:

> "The questions were interesting and stimulated me to question some things. We don't usually have to think about psychology from the perspective of other professionals in e.g. clinical, occupational – I mean see through their eyes. Also it's interesting to think about the range of professional activities that one is involved in wearing different hats." AP1

Yet as noted by Connelly and Clandinin (1990), part of the difficulty with this method was portraying the way in which the earlier experiences of the academic psychologists were re-storied to reflect later experiences, because they can shift and change over time. One way to achieve this might have been to conduct the email interviews over a longer period of time to demonstrate the ongoing complexities of writing and then rewriting the accounts as the inquiry proceeded. However, there was only a certain amount of time to conduct the interviews and as commented by Connelly and Clandinin (2000), encouraging a participant to respond and reflect further on one point might have left other points uncovered or less developed, reiterating the selective interest of the research as the interview proceeded.

Whilst some of the participants took time to reflect upon their responses, one participant commented upon how using email had demanded a more rapid response. This participant had not taken the time to reread the dialogue as it proceeded and reflect before responding. Yet the depth of the responses from other participants provided a rich data source and was linked to what Thach (1995) defined as 'candid' responses. It was not unusual to find references relating to personal as well as professional experiences. This was enhanced by both the researcher and participants spending time reflecting upon such responses as the interviews progressed. For example:

AP6: "My experiences as an academic psychologist have shaped my professional identity in that I am acutely aware of the rigour with which research is carried out and so feel able to lend some authority to observations/judgements based on the robustness of empirical inquiry..."

R: "I think that's interesting. In considering the issue myself I have found that my professional identity is linked not only to the working context and the culture within which I work but other identities, which are important to me...These identities merge with each other and are influenced by each other in terms of how I live my life as a whole..."

AP6: "I absolutely agree with you. For instance, I teach gender and Psychology and regard myself as a feminist, so this has a bearing on how I deliver psychological material and how I am

> perceived. Similarly I am a parent so when talking about
> socialisation I feel I can lend some credibility from my own
> experience. My professional identity is completely bound up with
> my personality..."

A similar comment was made by Russell and Bullock (1999): "...[the researcher] was adept at not giving 'the right answer' on issues and opinions that I raised via electronic mail. Instead he would ask more questions to help me reflect on a deeper level and get to the heart of the matter" (p.138).

As illustrated above, using email interviewing meant that, "...an almost instantaneous dialogue between researcher and subject can be arranged if desired" (Selwyn and Robson 1998, p.2). Inevitably, delays occurred throughout the process for both the participants and the researcher because of work related pressures and holidays, to the point where the email responses became unexpected. Both Thach (1995) and Selwyn and Robson (ibid.) have pointed out that this asynchronity is an attractive feature of email. This comment is reiterated by Russell and Bullock (1999): "One of the beauties of e-mail is that you never quite know when you will get a response..." (p.134). This meant that sometimes there was a lapse between exchanges, but the researcher did not wish to pressurise the participants into responding immediately, but instead wished to establish what Wicksteed (2000) has defined as a non-coercive exchange. Thus the researcher asked questions which pointed the participants towards deeper meanings, for example, *'How have your experiences as an academic psychologist shaped your professional identity?'* (Appendix A): "With an exploratory, phenomenographically-slanted approach, one hopes to avoid forcing the respondents into a predetermined framework" (Foster 1994, p.93).

Boshier (1990) has argued that using email can encourage a conversational form of writing. This has also been reiterated by Kiesler and Sproull (1986) who referred to email communication as 'talk' or 'dialogue.' However, Hawisher and Moran (1993) have commented upon the way in which email can often be composed rapidly and is not subjected to reflective scrutiny that typically is given to language inscribed on paper. This was the case in one or two of the email interviews.

> "The email process is good because theoretically it allows time
> to consider the questions and form an appropriate response.
> Unfortunately in practice there are so many other emails flying
> in that it is sometimes difficult to respond in a measured way -
> with hindsight I should have put your questions in a folder and
> then reminded myself to address them in good time." AP6

In such cases, the email interviews felt more like a question-and-answer approach - they did not always feel conversational. In conducting the interviews, the researcher had to learn to adopt a different approach that involved feedback and reflection, which was sometimes not always achieved. For those participants who reflected over their responses, this led to more thoughtful written accounts rather than the immediacy of the spoken word. "The text can "say" many different things in different contexts" (Hodder 1994, p.394). Hodder (ibid.) also suggested that the written word can often allow language and meaning to be controlled more effectively although Barritt (1984) has commented that written accounts will be more coherent and selective rather than include tentative or rambling

conversations. Most of the email interviews took this form although for one or two participants, their responses were more conversational and a, "...mosaic of perceptions and thoughts..." (Weber 1986, p.70) as suggested in the following comment.

> "Interesting to reflect on my professional identity - in many ways I think I deal with the contradictions and sense of being seen as an outsider by not thinking about it! Particularly of interest at the moment because I put in for Voluntary Retirement/Redundancy. Wonder how I would cope with not being a psychologist-what would I call myself etc etc. Waiting to hear so in limbo and so anxious in case it doesn't come through, that no space for thinking about identity and coping with its loss..." AP9

Comparing Email Interviewing with the Other Methods of Data Collection

The credibility of the research study was enhanced by the researcher triangulating the research methods. These included interviewing staff of the Society and devising an open-ended email questionnaire for students who were studying on undergraduate degrees in psychology. As noted by Hall (1996) in her research study, what was said or written by these groups of participants reflected their values and their understanding of what it meant to be an academic psychologist. In the research study these views often corresponded with those of the academic psychologists, hence providing the researcher with a deeper understanding of their individual experiences.

Email interviews overcame many interpersonal problems common to conventional interviewing by dissolving the boundaries of time and space whereas the face-to-face interviews with the BPS staff were restricted to a time limit because of factors such as work pressures. They were also disrupted by the use of a tape-recorder and notes being taken by the researcher. The email interviews, therefore, provided a different context for communication in which such barriers did not exist. Telephone interviewing might have also overcome such problems because as Arskey and Knight (1999) note, the participants cannot be seen. This type of interviewing was not conducive to the study because the researcher wanted to seek the perceptions and opinions of the academic psychologists through their narratives, rather than looking for precise answers. An important element of this was the time to reflect upon their responses rather than being placed under pressure to answer immediately.

Whilst in the face-to-face interviews the place of the researcher and participants entered into the consciousness of individuals in terms of status, age and gender, thus had a bearing on the interview relationship, these factors were not visible to the researcher in the email interviews nor in the email questionnaires conducted with students. The direction of the dialogue was thus not influenced in that way: "Email brings people into contact who would not otherwise meet one another and places each on equal ground" (Boshier 1990, p.51).

Whilst Hawisher and Moran (1993) have commented upon how the lack of cues such as one's appearance, tone of voice and facial expressions may encourage participation in email discussion, both

King (1996) and Selwyn and Robson (1998) have suggested that non-verbal communication and listening are integral to an effective interview, ".... feelings and thoughts, though often unspoken and sometimes denied, form part of a silent or hidden dialogue of the interview" (Weber 1986, p.69). For instance, the researcher nodding, making brief utterances or appearing to listen carefully encouraged each BPS staff participant to speak freely and as a consequence, introduced new questions or unexpected topics areas as demonstrated in the interview with BPS4 on the following page.

Yet in transcribing the interviews, "…the pauses, the inflexions, those stumbling beginnings and half-completed words became uniform symbols on a page…" (Collin 1986, p.389) as noticeable in the example below:

```
"I mean for me an academic psychologist is a lecturer
primarily…because obviously that's the perspective I've seen
them first of all and also…I see them as a lecturer, I see them
as a researcher, but a researcher in terms of end product,
publications you know…so there's somebody who writes for books
or journals or whatever…but primarily I see them as the
lecturer…what they do is…they lecture and they research, now
what they happen to be researching and lecturing is psychology,
you know…"BPS1
```

The fact that no transcription was required in the email interviews meant that the written words of the participants were not altered, unless they had made the changes themselves when authenticating their accounts. Mishler (1986) argues that when such interviews take place between the researcher and participant, the transcripts will become part of the ongoing narrative inquiry. This saved the researcher time and eradicated the errors that can occur in transcription as with the face-to-face interviews because: "With email interviewing the data that is eventually analysed is exactly what the interviewee wrote" (Selwyn and Robson 1998, p.4). Nevertheless, linked to the ease of data analysis were the technical realities of undertaking email interviews and presenting them for research purposes. For example, one or two of the interviews (Appendix F) began on the last page, although there remained a clear dialogue between the participant and the researcher. As Synodinos and Brennan (1988) argue, the potential to lose data due to software or hardware problems meant that backup paper and disk copies of the interviews were required as the interviews proceeded.

Knight and Saunders (1999) comment upon how the researcher will use different ways to build trust and to encourage the participants to 'open up.' However as Easterby-Smith et al (1991) point out, the researcher may be in a considerably more powerful position in relation to the participants because there is greater control about what information is gathered and how it is interpreted. Carter (1993) also notes that it is the researcher who accesses the relevant literatures, frames the study, provides the interpretation and modulates the voices of the research participants.

In the email interviews and face-to-face interviews with the BPS staff an attempt was made to resolve this issue by using follow-up questions and key words provided by the participants as prompts for example:

```
R:     So how does academic psychology fit into this context?

BPS4:  Umm, I suppose I regard academics as a group of psychologists
       who maybe aren't in settings which are as structured as
       professional colleagues, so you see in some contexts we do talk
       about professional academics...

R:     You've used the term 'professional academic'. Can you expand on
       the meaning of this?
```

This enabled the researcher to further understand their perspectives and experiences relating to the focus of the study and to "...construct meaning in ways that evoked the qualities and feelings of the experiences being described" (Beattie 1995a, p.51). Nevertheless, the researcher had governed the direction of the research by choosing the topic and specific questions. The kinds of questions asked and the way they were structured provided a frame within which the participants shaped their accounts of their experiences. As the research questions needed to be linked to the aim of the study, more time should have been spent in testing the questions for each group of participants at the pilot stage by using a bigger sample. As noted by Janesick (1994), this would have enhanced the credibility of the study by ensuring that the participants fully understood the questions being asked, that irrelevant questions to the research topic were not asked and key aspects that emerged from testing the pilot questions were not ignored.

With both the email and face-to-face interviews, an attempt was made to generate a collaborative approach to the research, which engaged both the participant and the researcher. As Oakley (1981) notes, this allowed for greater disclosure, mutuality and reciprocity between the researcher and the participant. However, the researcher was aware of the ethical considerations. The decision to use email had heightened concerns about violating the participants' privacy or disclosing the identity of the participants. As Thach (1995) remarks, given the open nature of electronic networks it became more difficult to ensure anonymity. This is because email systems automatically send the participant's address along with the response. So, whilst it was more difficult to assure anonymity, the name and responses of each participant remained confidential to all but the researcher.

The researcher was also aware of the hierarchical relationship that existed in conducting the interviews with the members of staff who worked for the Society. This occurred not simply in terms of the research, but also because of the status of the researcher and each participant within the organisation. As Burgess (1984) notes, this can create an immediate impression of the researcher and may place limits on the role that the researcher adopts. This status difference was not evident in the email interviews because of spatial and temporal distancing between the researcher and participant.

This collaborative approach was impossible to achieve with the email questionnaires because of their non-relational quality. This issue could have been overcome by following up the responses from the email questionnaires with email interviews. Some of the responses in the questionnaires were not as reflective as they might had been if email interviews had been conducted. Despite Selywn and Robson's (1998) comment that email response rates to questionnaires tend to be increased especially when an initial email is sent requesting participation in a study, email interviews might have encouraged a greater response rate than the questionnaire, which was less than average. This might have been caused by the timing of when the email questionnaires were delivered, i.e. at the end of the autumn term when students were preparing for examinations and holidays or as Thach (1995) argues the participants had disregarded or deleted the email. Selwyn and Robson (ibid.) have also observed that computer-based communications may be more simplified due to time and space constraints. Conducting email interviews with the students would have enhanced the credibility of the research study by enabling the researcher to further understand their perspectives and experiences relating to the focus of the study and to "...construct meaning in ways that evoked the qualities and feelings of the experiences being described" (Beattie 1995a, p.51).

It became clear that the formulation of a relationship between the researcher and participant was an important element of the research study. In the email interviews the research relationship was influenced as much by the academic psychologists as the researcher. For example, despite the request for their responses within three working days, email allowed them to choose when to respond and whether to respond at all. In addition, the academic psychologists knew each other; it was possible that the research participants would let each know of the research relationship, which in a sense made anonymity problematic. This was also the case for the BPS staff. This reiterated the fact that even when anonymity has been guaranteed, it is not always meaningful.

As Thach (1995) points out, with the email questionnaires it was more difficult to guarantee the students' anonymity because their names would have been included in their replies and the credibility of the email questionnaire compromised. To resolve this problem each participant had to be emailed separately. In the email interviews the problem of anonymity might have been reduced if they had involved those academic psychologists who were unknown to each other. Yet, this raised another issue. The depth of the academic psychologists' responses could be attributed to the fact that the participants felt more comfortable about being open in their email exchanges because they knew the researcher. The same might be said for the interviews with the BPS staff. Thach (1995) has argued that in-depth email responses may be linked to the fact that the participants become shielded from the social context of communication. Had the participants been unknown to the researcher a different sort of email exchange might have resulted. All that can be said is that in the research study "...the positive effects of the researcher's prior knowledge of the participants led to a more reflexive commentary" (Wicksteed 2000, p.477). The written accounts seemed more thoughtful, offering insightful reflection afforded by the time to think and to choose one's words.

The Use of Grounded Theory and Data Matrices

As the research progressed, what became apparent to the researcher was that the narrative accounts of the academic psychologists, the interviews with the BPS staff and the student responses in the email questionnaires presented data that was rich and voluminous. Using grounded theory illuminated a number of significant themes for the research study, as well as illustrating emerging theoretical developments and making explicit the conceptual framework of the study. However, there was recognition that the timescale of the project had placed limitations on what could be achieved with the data although both grounded theory and data matrices dealt with a large volume of in-depth material which would otherwise have been difficult to analyse and interpret.

As noted by Corbin (1986), it was easy to become overwhelmed by the data especially in the early phases of the research endeavour. With the narrative interviews, the researcher felt that for much of the time the analysis of the data using grounded theory was chaotic and messy, but it eventually took form with themes and categories beginning to emerge. This was aided by writing code words down the right hand margin of each transcript that was analysed. Whilst this process felt intuitive, the cataloguing of each concept also felt more mechanistic, a point also made by Easterby-Smith et al (1991). It was also noted that some concepts could be used to explain different contexts, for example there were overlaps with the self-images described by the academic psychologists which were presented by the category *'Images of the Self and Career'* and the category, *'the Development of Professional Identity and How it is Understood in the Communities in which Academic Psychologists Live and Work'*. As Pidgeon and Henwood (1996) remark, the grounded theory approach aims to seek similarities *and* diversities. In analysing the data the focus tended to be on the former but this still allowed the researcher to collect "…a range of indicators that point to the multiple qualitative facets of a potentially significant concept" (Pidgeon and Henwood 1996 in Richardson 1996, p.93).

With the data matrices, it was noted that the quotes entered in the matrices could have been thicker in order to more fully understand the meaning of the data. As Miles and Huberman (1994) note, the matrices only displayed a small percentage of the available data, because the researcher had condensed the words of the participants. However, it was possible to go back to the transcripts of the BPS staff and email student responses. Sorting the data from the semi-structured interviews and email questionnaires using the data matrices also provided a mechanistic process to the point where selecting data chunks for entry highlighted commonalities with the themes from the narrative interviews. The researcher analysed to a lesser extent data chunks that highlighted distinctions or ambiguities with the themes.

Such issues might have been overcome by the use of the NUD.IST software package to manage the data that had been collected. Lange and Burroughs-Lange (1994) have commented that without the use of a computer the work of recording and carrying out initial and further identification of categories can

be tedious. "It also delays the critical theorising processes which need to begin early and continue throughout the life of the research" (p.620). Yet this approach could have led to a more mechanistic approach rather than creatively handling the data and obscuring crucial conceptual issues. Hollway and Jefferson (2000) have outlined the problems of fragmenting the data when using computer-assisted qualitative data analysis. This is reiterated by Richards and Richards (1994), "...there is a common tendency for clerical coding to dominate and analysis to be postpone" (p.454).

With both methods of analysis, it became evident that when data was interpreted, adopted and discarded, this was a reflection of the influence of the study's aim, the questions posed and the literature on the researcher's sense of what was important, a comment also made by Riessman (1993). For example, AP2 (Appendix F) had written her narrative in a certain way because the researcher defined the topic. This raised the question of who determined what the narrative meant and whether alternative readings could be possible. A different kind of interaction might have produced a different account. This issue emphasised the importance of the authenticating the researcher's interpretations of their accounts and enhanced the credibility of the study.

However, in the study, the influence of the researcher was not disregarded, but as Altricher and Posch (1989) comment, was considered an important element of the research. This recognised that the analysis of qualitative data not only involved methods and outcomes, but values. "The foregrounding of the inseparability of knowledge and power and the emphasis on reflexivity are not techniques, but a reminder that research is never a purely technical and programmatic process" (Simons and Usher 2000, p.182). Furthermore, in contributing to substantive theories that explain educational phenomena, the results of the data analysis were "...representations of reality rather than true reflections of it, no matter how rigorous the research methodology happens to be" (Jarvis 1999, p.121).

Making Sense of the Findings - Collecting and Analysing Data

Given the research epistemology that underpinned the research study, the use of email interviewing and grounded theory allowed the researcher to understand the multiple realities of the academic psychologists and the potential meanings of their experiences and emphasised that:

> "...the study of experience is the study of life, for example, the study of epiphanies, rituals, routines, metaphors and everyday actions. One learns about education from thinking about life and one learns about life from thinking about education" (Clandinin and Connelly in Denzin and Lincoln 1994, p.415).

Moving between the written words of the academic psychologists provided a means of understanding their experiences in the varied communities in which they lived and worked. However, the use of both email interviewing and grounded theory produced a large volume of in-depth material which meant that for the purposes of this study their words had to be expressed by either blending them into the text

or instead, referring the reader back to the preceding Chapter and the location of the participants' words to save space. Nevertheless, the experiences of the academic psychologists were illuminated further by thematic analyses of the semi-structured interviews conducted with the BPS staff and the email questionnaires sent to the students, and helped the researcher to understand the relationships that influenced the academic psychologists lives. In this context the chosen methods of data collection and analyses allowed the researcher to:

> "...stand back from the problem to get a new perspective, work with contradictions; explore new relationships; turn the problem around, perhaps even upside down; understand basic motivations and apply them; see behind rationalizations; and ask and try to answer the question 'what is the meaning of this?'"(Mostyn 1985 in Brenner et al 1985, p.140).

Chapter Seven

Conclusions

Introduction

This Chapter pulls together the main strands of the research study and puts them into context by providing an overview of the outcomes of the research findings, and the extent to which the researcher has met the research aim. It gives consideration to the significance of the research study, its implications for further research and its limitations. Furthermore, a number of recommendations for policy and practice for the British Psychological Society will be made which have arisen as a consequence of undertaking the study. Finally, time will be taken in this Chapter to reflect upon the research process itself and the impact that this has had on the researcher.

Overview of the Research Findings

The aim of the research study was to explore how academic psychologists who are members of the British Psychological Society perceived themselves and addressed three issues:

(i) The way in which psychology teachers understood their professional identity;

(ii) The images used to construct professional identity and shape professional practice;

(iii) The way in which their professional identity was managed within the communities in which they lived and worked, and how fundamental these communities were to their teacher professionalism.

The way in which psychology teachers understood their professional identity

The study demonstrates how the academic psychologists identities were "...a complex and heterogeneous mix of individual and community values, a commitment to particular forms of knowledge or epistemological frameworks and a sense of worth or self-esteem" (Henkel 2000, p.255). There existed a wide range of meanings about what it meant to be an academic psychologist for each participant depending upon how they saw themselves and how their identities were managed within the communities in which they lived and worked - in the research context this included academia and their professional body, the British Psychological Society. This reiterated Knight and Saunders' (1999) view that constructing teachers' professional identity can involve teachers balancing various competing and complementary cultures.

The academic psychologists also constructed their professional identities through their interactions both within and outside their academy. These identities were further shaped and influenced by the experiential link that existed between the academic psychologists' professional and personal lives and contributed to how they perceived themselves. As noted by Clandinin and Connelly (2000), the distinction between the personal and the professional had become blurred. The identities of the academic psychologists were bound up in dimensions of their lives and as noted by Nias (1998) had become part of their self-image.

The images used to construct professional identity and reflect upon professional practice

The literature review in Chapter Three involved an examination of the implications that images hold for teachers and the way in which they have been used to conceptualise teachers and teaching. Asking the question, '*how do you see yourself?*' encouraged the academic psychologists to construct images of themselves. The academic psychologists' understanding of their professional identity was centred upon their discipline, i.e. in terms of seeing themselves as 'psychologists,' but they also used other images to describe how they saw themselves. Such images described a multiplicity of identities and included 'teacher', 'researcher', and 'administrator' or a combination of these. As noted by Fischer and Kiefer (1994), these self-images were influenced by the nature of the environments in which they worked. In addition, as Johnston (1992) remarks such images provided a language for the academic psychologists to make explicit their subconscious assumptions on which their practice was based.

Their self-images also included mother, wife and feminist and indicated how their professional and personal lives were interlinked. Hoshmand (1998) has argued that there are gender differences in the developmental achievement of identity. For example, in the research study one academic psychologist commented upon how she was drawn to psychology because of her experiences as a mother. Her personal experiences had influenced her career and reshaped her professional identity. Whilst such comments were not remarkable, they were valuable for their very typicality. For these academic psychologists, their knowledge and understanding of their situation was from their standpoint and as noted by Minster (1991), involved not only constructing personal identities but also female cultural identities by defining themselves in their roles and relationships to others.

This finding emphasised how the narratives of the academic psychologists were threaded with stories of shifting self-images, which located aspects of their professional identities within the academy. They involved a level of critical reflection that went beyond questions of proficiency and rationality and instead, encouraged a thoughtful examination of how personal and professional contexts influenced their identities. Thus, the images were subject to reconstruction and reinterpretation. Their professional identities were also constructed and managed through membership of their professional body, the British Psychological Society. There was a sense of 'belonging' to both communities, although being part of the professional body and supporting and promoting psychology was integral to the academics psychologists' identities. This reiterated that their identities involved "...an experience of multi membership..." (Wenger 1998, p.158) which were sustained across boundaries of practice and took on different forms of participation and meaning.

The way in which their professional identity was managed within the communities in which they lived and worked and how fundamental these were to their teacher professionalism

The academic psychologists' understanding of their professional lives involved linking professional knowledge and practical experience. Each participant had a sense of how they saw themselves, how this linked to not only the present, but to the past and sometimes to future actions. "It is an openness of understanding and developing a professional self-identity" (Barnett 1997 p.141). Their professionalism

involved reflecting upon their underlying professional values and beliefs and re-emphasised the importance of being a critical professional "...reflecting on practice, refining approaches, collecting stories and discovering a creed of values and principles" (Phipps 2001, p.135).

Central to the academic psychologists' professionalism were the values they held, which not only underpinned their professional lives but also contributed to how they defined their lives. This was also shaped by the institutional structures within which they worked, and reiterated Foucault's (1980) point that interactions between agency and structure can contribute to the shaping of a person's identity as a consequence of the unequal power distribution in organisations. The influence of such organisational realities also shaped the academic psychologists' senses of self-identity and their professional values, sometimes creating tensions in terms of sustaining different professional identities against the requirements of external and internal accountability and efficiency within the communities in which they lived and worked.

Significance of the Study

(i) To the Participants

At a time of continuous change and uncertainty in higher education, this study has given a group of academic psychologists the opportunity to critically reflect upon their professional practice and their identity in the communities in which they live and work by offering an "...additional space in which to write [their] descriptive narratives in a convenient and timely manner ..." (Henson et al 2000 in Cole and Knowles 2000, p.179). This is noted in the comments made by the academic psychologists at the end of Chapter Five and reiterated further by the following comment:

> "It has been interesting to reflect upon my professional identity - in many ways I think I deal with the contradictions and sense of being an outsider by not thinking about it! Particularly of interest at the moment because I put in for Voluntary Retirement/Redundancy. Wonder how I would cope with not being a psychologist. - what would I call myself etc etc. Waiting to hear so in limbo at the moment...so this has given me space to think about identity and coping with its loss. Also my boss and I are working on the assumption that I would continue to do some teaching and project supervision, and to write up research...so I would have plenty of time to come to terms with not being a psychologist. And to finding out whether it's what I do or what I am/how I think/tackle issues." AP9

This study provided a unique way for the academic psychologists to reflect upon their own knowledge, skills and understanding as they composed their email narratives. These narratives involved a reflection that was not simply located at a technical-rational level but included an ongoing process of interaction and interpretation in the midst of their lives. Thus, the study also provided a "...framework through which we think about the world in which we live and work and through which we construct the new ways of thinking about it and living in it" (Beattie 1995a, p.72).

(ii) To the Field of Professional Identity

This study contributes to the small body of academic work that has explored the notion of professional identity as an important component of university teachers' lives and particularly supports the work of Henkel (2000) who viewed identity as central to academics, in which they saw themselves as both distinctive individuals and embedded in the communities of primary importance to them. One way that identity can be constructed is by making conscious through reflection those self-images that define university teachers' professional lives. The study, therefore, adds new knowledge to the field of professional identity by demonstrating that the concept of self-image has applicability not only for schoolteachers and preservice teachers but for university teachers as well and can have a wide range of meanings depending upon their own existing academic identities and their institutional environments, thus reiterating the interrelated levels of identities and forms of knowledge that can exist which can be shaped across communities of practice.

In this context, the study also adds to the work of Connelly and Clandinin (1999) by providing a sense of understanding university teachers' experiences in the midst of their experiences rather than ignoring the realities of their working lives. Taking this approach has also supported a model of teacher professionalism that involves critical reflection, reiterating how knowing oneself as a person is an important part of knowing oneself as a professional: "...we are all products of the personal experiences that influence the ways we each conceptualise and carry out our roles as teachers" (Cole and Knowles 2000 p.195). Consequently, the study has highlighted the importance of extending the "...professional not only in the domain of knowledge itself but also in the domains of the self and the world..." (Barnett 1997, p.138).

(iii) To Educational Research Methods

This study also contributes knowledge to the field of educational research methods by recognising the importance of email interviewing as an alternative narrative method of inquiry to understand experiences as lived and told stories. The use of this method is a claim to originality within the study, offering an alternative site in which teachers can write accounts of their experiences in the midst of living their experiences, thus providing a forum for them to explore and critically reflect upon how they see themselves. It can, therefore, be argued that use of email interviewing has created "...a richly textured research text that represents the complex narratives of experience..." (Clandinin and Connelly 2000, p.142).

It is evident that whilst there is an emerging literature surrounding the use of email in academic research, especially email questionnaires, there is little literature that has considered the use of email as a qualitative research tool, particularly in educational research. The research study has clearly impacted on the development of this area. This is further evidenced by a number of factors:

   a)   The interest shown by the academic psychologists in using this method;

b) Having run a seminar on the use of email interviewing at a higher education institution, the researcher has been asked to run further seminars, as well as take part in conference presentations;

c) The opportunity to write a co-authored research article.

These major points have proved the significance of the study in a number of different ways and the potency of the subject as one for academic study. Moreover, they throw up many intriguing possibilities for further research as detailed below.

Implications for Further Research

In asking the academic psychologists to reflect upon those experiences that make up their professional lives, further research could be undertaken to explore the impact that this study has had on the academic psychologists and their professional practice, the changes in their self-knowledge and their identities. This might also involve undertaking a life history study of one or two academic psychologists who had interesting stories to gain a sense of "...those formative experiences and relationships of a personal character which lie outside the narrowly defined professional life" (Thomas 1995, p.11). For example, asking the academic psychologists to identify when they began to have a sense of identity and place in the profession and how this identity had developed, might not only further illustrate the shifting nature of their professional identities but illuminate the complexity of professional identity, as well as providing opportunities for the academic psychologists to further reflect upon issues that may have slipped temporarily out of view.

The research findings highlighted how the academic psychologists constructed multiple identities, seeing themselves as teachers, researchers, and managers. Such findings could be further explored to see how the academic psychologists adapted their frameworks of knowledge and values to sustain these identities at the level of practice. This could also consider how the imposition of new purposes and structures experienced by the academic psychologists in their communities of practice led to the emergence of new professional identities.

The gendered implications of the study should not be ignored. In constructing their identities, some of the academic psychologists saw themselves as a mother, wife or feminist, reinforcing how such identities were significant in their professional lives. These findings could be used to explore how gender interacts and shapes professional self–images. For example, by using a narrative inquiry approach these academic psychologists could be asked to reflect upon the way in which they have to juggle their professional and personal lives at the level of practice. In addition, it would be interesting to consider whether these identities become more difficult to sustain at the level of practice or are devalued as careers progress, hence masking their visibility.

Such research could also be undertaken using a feminist approach, providing an opportunity to further seek out and discover culturally interesting material about the academic psychologists' experiences as women in their institutional environments. This approach would also give them a further forum to describe their experiences in their own terms and reflect on their experiences as women in a specific context, as well as the researcher further reflecting on her experiences as a woman: "Although narrators do most of the speaking, interviewers [can] offer anecdotes to narrators' extended descriptions, thus contributing their own subjective self-reflection to the project" (Minster 1991 in Gluck and Patai 1991, p.38).

Limitations of the Study

Conducting the Research

Whilst the credibility of the research study was enhanced by the researcher interviewing staff of the Society and delivering an open-ended email questionnaire for students who were studying on undergraduate degrees in psychology, as noted by Hall (1996) in her research study, what was said or written by these groups of participants reflected their values and their understanding of what it meant to be an academic psychologist. In the research study, these views often corresponded with those of the academic psychologists hence providing the researcher with a deeper understanding of their individual experiences. However, it was not always clear why certain research questions had been asked and the way they linked back to the research aim. For example the question which asked: *'How feasible do you think it is to promote a sense of common purpose and professional identity across the psychology profession, rather than distinguishing between 'academic' and 'applied' psychology?'* was only asked to the academic psychologists and the BPS staff. Whilst the question generated some interesting responses, it did not shed any further light on the phenomenon being studied. As discussed in the previous Chapter and commented upon by Arksey and Knight (1999), the researcher recognised the importance of piloting the research questions more carefully and the difficulty of scrapping questions, even if they touched on interesting areas. In this context, more appropriate research questions could have been designed to explore how the BPS staff, all of whom were educational managers/administrators, constructed their identities and managed them within the varied professional environments in which they worked. Such insights could have been useful for not only understanding their self-images, but would have offered a "...different interpretations of a situation or different arguments in favour of understanding a phenomenon in a particular way" (Morgan 1983, p.374).

Interpreting the data using grounded theory and data matrices sometimes threw up anomalies which were not presented in Chapter Five nor discussed in the preceding Chapter. As Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) note, whilst this would have slowed the process of interpretation down, such anomalies might have provided new insights or theories which would have strengthened the credibility of the study. For example, in Chapter Five one of the academic psychologists commented upon sharing

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"...many ideas with other academics who are not psychologists -
especially those  I  meet  in  sociology,  cultural  and  women's
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studies – some of whom started life as psychologists. Psychology has more permeable boundaries for me..." AP10

Studying the culture, beliefs, and perceptions of academic lecturers who are members of the same organisational community, but from a different departmental community could have enhanced the credibility of the research study even further and reiterated the importance of carefully selecting the research population. As Cortazzi (1993) points out, where similar experiences or perspectives are evident in the narratives of a number of teachers, then this might be evidence that such perspectives are cultural. "Cultural ways of being of interest are constraints on attitudes, beliefs, and crucially important key concepts about the way things are or ought to be and most especially about the way people are, what they need, and how they should behave" (Polyani 1979, p.212).

Adopting a Narrative Inquiry Approach

The researcher reflected upon whether the approach was that of narrative inquiry or whether it had simply involved devising a series of research questions to learn about how the academic psychologists perceived themselves. Certainly the research questions had been framed in an attempt to conceptualise the professional identity of the research participants whose "...voices speak as directly as human beings can of experience and...texts spoken by each voice are shaped as story" (Clandinin and Connelly 1994, in Denzin and Lincoln, p.414). It can, therefore, be argued that using narrative inquiry provided a critical approach for reflecting upon professional and personal identities.

Given that academic psychologists' voices in this field had been relatively silent, the intention of the narrative inquiry was to hear - or by using email - to read their accounts of how they perceived themselves, and to understand their experiences narratively, as well as the researcher's experiences as the narrative inquiry proceeded. Although this approach reflected the multiple levels at which the inquiry proceeded, the researcher was conscious of having to treat the academic psychologists as the subject of the research, inevitably looking at their experiences from the 'outside.' However, both the researcher and participants were engaged in a critical self-reflection about how they saw themselves. In this sense, the researcher had engaged in a narrative inquiry with the academic psychologists.

Yet Clandinin and Connelly (2000) have argued that in undertaking narrative inquiry, researchers should begin with experience: "...it is more productive to begin with explorations of phenomena of experience rather than comparative analysis of various methodological frames" (p.128). This raised a tension about the place of theory in the research study as a narrative inquiry vis-à-vis the requirements of undertaking a doctoral level thesis, in which theory appeared in a number of separate chapters. Such tension faded to the background whilst the research work was being conducted, but then came to the fore again once the data was ready for analysis. As noted by Hall (1996) in her research, all that can be said is that the theoretical frameworks informed the interpretation of data.

An important element of the narrative inquiry was its authenticity and plausibility. By interpreting and understanding the experiences and views of the participants, the rigour of the study relied upon

providing an authentic representation of 'what was' for each participant's situation and his/her understanding of it. Yet, as Conle (2000) argues, given that narrative inquiry involved understanding experiences as lived phenomena, if the academic psychologists re-told their stories, the plot lines could change and emphasises shift. Furthermore: "The story may be interpreted quite differently by someone who understands the story differently..." (p.57).

In adopting a narrative inquiry approach, the intention was to capture the subjectivity of individual experiences, rather than looking for generalisability. This created a tension in presenting the research findings because the researcher had generalised the themes rather than representing the lives of the academic psychologists as individual experiences. However, the tension noted by Connelly and Clandinin (2000) between writing a narrative that represents the experiences of the research participants and creating a generalisable theory, which means that the richness of the narrative experiences will be lost, was partly overcome by the researcher adopting Bassey's (1999) notion of fuzzy propositions in which "...something has happened in one place and that it may also happen elsewhere. There is a possibility but no surety" (Bassey 1999, p.52). This underpinned the epistemology of the research study which aimed to look for meanings with a view to understanding multiple realities and allowed the researcher to look at common threads and elements across participants. As Bassey (ibid.) further remarks, this is not an admission of frailty in the way the research has been conducted and could provide an opportunity for academic psychologists, as well as other professionals within the Society to enter into discourse about the research findings.

Recommendations for Organisational Practice

It is important to consider the implications that the research study has for the British Psychological Society and the recommendations that have emerged through the research analysis.

The research study provided the opportunity for the academic psychologists to engage in professional discourse. However, this study has only focussed on a small sample of academic psychologists. Frederickson (2001) has questioned how widespread the views of academic psychologists are within the Society. There is a need for the organisation to consider at the level of the individual member, how academic psychologists see themselves and the implications this has for promoting and supporting the development of the profession. It can be argued that images, if carefully collected may influence members' "...thinking, feelings, and their construction of reality in ways that facilitate organizational transformation" (Sackmann 1989, p.468). How academic psychologists see themselves within the Society may strongly influence their judgements and behaviours. In this context, encouraging them to enter into a professional discourse could enhance the development of Society policy in this area.

The study can also support the current research work that is being undertaken within the British Psychological Society regarding the recruitment of academic psychologists. In particular, the research study can aid in the evaluation of the academic psychologists' perspectives and expectations of the

Society. How the academic psychologists view themselves may be a indicator of why they choose to become/not become a member of the Society and this element can be further explored by considering the type of value systems that exist in the current culture of the psychology profession.

This issue also links to how the Society can promote a common purpose and professional identity across psychology. Clearly what the academic psychologists held in common were the values that underpinned how they saw themselves, combined with the images of themselves and their careers. In the study, many of the academic psychologists believed that promoting a common purpose would be difficult to achieve but a worthwhile aim. It is clear that psychology is a diverse community, whereby the distinction between academic psychologists and applied psychologists exists. Reiterating the views of Mackay (2000), there is an opportunity for the Society to further explore ways of strengthening a common sense of purpose and professional identity among psychologists whereby language and terminology of discourse between academics and applied psychologists have some commonality. Asking the question, 'How do I see myself?' may encourage psychologists to consider what their professional roles and responsibilities are as a member of the Society.

The Researcher Reflects – How Do I See Myself?

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) have emphasised how narrative inquiry involves a process whereby the voices of both the participants and the researcher are heard. Adopting this approach provided an opportunity for both the researcher and participants to reflect upon how they saw themselves as the interviews progressed. More specifically, the approach involved the researcher keeping an experiential text that took the form of a personal journal during the period that the study took place and allowed for a reflective exploration about the research process and its impact. The reflexive nature of the journal, therefore, led to an exploration of the self and the personal constructs used to view the world "...to dig deeper...into the heart of the words, beliefs, and behaviours we describe in our journals" (Janesick 1999, p.513). Thus as argued by Peskhin (1985), the researcher brought to the study two selves - the human self and the research self, in which the researcher's values and purposes were central to the inquiry.

When I started the research study, I anticipated that my role as researcher would evolve so that the research process became a personal process. Thus, the research did not involve me as a detached observer but meant that I was engaged in the research as a whole person. Working closely with a group of academic psychologists who clearly contributed to the work of the psychology profession had led me to question how they saw themselves. However, the chosen topic went beyond simply being of interest at a professional level. Implicit in undertaking the study was the desire to learn about who I was and how I saw myself – it provided a way of attempting to claim a personal identity.

> *29/8/00*
>
> *I have drafted my Introduction to the Thesis. It has made me think about my professional/personal experiences - of my work in education as a manager and the dilemmas of professional identity I faced when trying to do research and where it would be located. In addition, with the pending house move and planning a wedding I have been questioning who I*

am. I know very little about my mother's side of the family. It's something I want to know more about. It's almost like I want to know who I am before I get married - as if I need to know my identity before it changes.

As the research proceeds, this journal may help to come to terms with some of these issues, hence the reason why narrative inquiry seems so appropriate, because I also have a voice in the research.

From the start of the project I was engaged in a learning process as I attempted to not only find an appropriate research methodology but also an appropriate research method. At times I felt very excited, although somewhat anxious about treading into unfamiliar territory. This was reiterated by the shortcomings in the literature. However, this not only justified the research method I eventually adopted, but also provided interesting possibilities. There were times during the study when there existed periods of ambiguity and confusion, but these moments eventually emerged as new ideas about email interviewing, especially in discussion with my supervisor.

29th March 2001
Tutorial with HB. Explored the dilemmas of email research in terms of three main issues: prompts, short answers and self-reflexive. This is one of the advantages of using this process. It may be timing consuming but it gives participants that opportunity for greater self-reflection. Respondents can reflect on emerging theory as part of the reflective cycle.

Thus, the conduct of email interviews not only informed my research, but also informed and challenged me to think about the nature of interviewing and the role of the researcher. I recognised that the feedback and interpretations of the interviews contributed to a rich understanding of the academic psychologists' experiences.

Coinciding with these discoveries, I began to explore the literature particularly in the field of professionalism and professional identity. It became clear that just as the academic psychologists' narratives became a fundamental part of their professionalism, the research study had also provided a vehicle for gaining insight into myself as a professional. This became apparent as I reflected over my professional identity within an organisational context:

9th January 2002
At work we've all been issued with draft contracts of employment – they were issued before Xmas and seemed to create quite a lot of tension. What is most apparent is the recognition that there has been a shift in organisational identity...The organisational structure has changed considerably over the last few years and this has certainly contributed to a change in its identity, but the issue of the revised contracts of employment seems to have reinforced such notions. But this change has led to a shift in my own professional values and beliefs and questioning of how I see myself within this structure.

As the academic psychologists wrote about their perceptions, it became clear that their professional and personal lives were inextricably intertwined. The journal also was able to capture similar fragments of my experience, in attempt to sort them out. Hence there was a concern with "...the question of how to live one's life as a whole, and with questions about the nature of individual human existence, character, and personal identity (Carr 1986, p.73). The questioning of my relationship with the organisation I worked for and in my personal life was interlinked. I believe this was because I was experiencing a number of life changes - the death of both grandparents, a pending marriage, all of which enhanced the

relationship between the research and myself. It had become one of increasing involvement to the point where I had begun to refocus not only in terms of how I saw myself personally, but the impact that this had on my professional life.

10 June 2001
I have been thinking about my own professional practice, where I want to go over the next few years. I think now family and home seem to be taking precedence: getting married, wanting children. But my professional life will still be important and I can see it taking a different direction...

There is no doubt that the experience of undertaking the research study has involved a process of personal and professional reflection and development during a period of great change in my life "...I have through my research developed intellectually, grown in self-awareness and ultimately become, as well as a researcher, the subject and consumer of my own 'findings'" (Collin 1986, p.385). It has been of great value to me.

Framework for the Email Interviews with the Academic Psychologists

Send email interview guidelines and wait for response before beginning the interview
Topics – Questions serve as guidance and may be framed differently. Follow-up questions may also be required.
Role of researcher – May at certain points spend a moment reflecting with the participants

Professions/Professionalism
We talk about the 'psychology profession'. What does this mean for you?

In your view, what role does academic psychology play in defining psychology as a profession?

Self –Images/Images held by others
How do you see yourself?

How does being an academic psychologist fit with your image of yourself and your career?

Do you think psychology students that you teach see you as a real psychologist? What images do students have about being a psychologist? The psychology profession?

Professional Identity
How have your experiences as an academic psychologist shaped your professional identity?

Is professional identity linked to other identities? Please provide examples.

How does the BPS influence your professional identity?

How feasible do you think it is to promote a sense of common purpose and professional identity across the psychology profession, rather than distinguishing between 'academic' and 'applied' psychology?

The Research Process
Please provide comments on the following:

The research process, particularly using email as a research tool

Whether you have found this process a reflective one, in terms of your own professional identity.

Questions for the BPS Staff in the Semi-Structured Interviews

Procedures for the Interviews

I am currently studying on the Doctorate in Education programme at Leicester University and the research project is a programme requirement, which eventually will be incorporated into a thesis.

The interview will be taped. Are you happy for this to happen?
Everything that you say during this interview will be confidential and your anonymity assured.
The interview will be transcribed.
You will be given a copy of the interview. This is your opportunity to comment upon it and make any amendments. More importantly you will be asked to confirm that this is an accurate record of the discussion.
Are you happy for the data contained in the interview to be used in the project?

Context

The research explores the professional identity of psychologists who work in the higher education context, how this identity is managed within the professional environment (which includes HE and the BPS) and whether it is possible to generate a common sense of identity across the psychology profession.

In order to broaden our understanding of the topic to be researched we need to understand the relationships that define academic teachers' lives. Such relationships will include teacher colleagues, students, administrators, senior managers, professional bodies and parents. In this research context the relationship with the professional body is explored, in particular key staff who have links with academic psychologists in terms of membership, examinations, accreditation etc. What I am trying to explore is your perceptions/views of teacher professional identity for academic psychologists.

Questions fall under two themes: the psychology profession and professional identity. Follow-up questions may be asked.

Psychology as a Profession

What identifies psychology as a profession?

What role does academic psychology play in defining psychology as a profession?

Professional Identity

What are your perceptions of academic psychologists? What images would you use to describe them?

How does the Society influence the (professional) identity of an academic psychologist?

What images do you think students enrolled on psychology courses hold?

How feasible do you think it is to promote a sense of common purpose and professional identity across the psychology profession, rather than distinguishing between 'academic' and 'applied' psychology?

To:
cc:
Subject: Research Questionnaire - Issues of Identity for Academic Psychologists

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to ask for your help with a piece of research that I am conducting. I am currently studying on the Doctorate in Education programme at Leicester University and the research project is a programme requirement, which eventually will be incorporated into a thesis. I am also a member of staff here at the British Psychological Society's Leicester Office responsible for accreditation of undergraduate degree programmes in psychology.

The research topic focuses on professional identity, how academic psychologists define it and how it is managed within their working environment? Over the last four months, I have been interviewing academic psychologists working in higher education who also members of the Society to explore these issues. In order to broaden our understanding of the images that academic psychologists use in defining their professional identity, I need to understand the relationships that define teaching life. Such relationships include teacher colleagues, administrators, senior managers, professional bodies and parents. However, in this research context, I wish to explore the relationship with students such as yourselves, in terms of your perceptions of teacher professional identity.

My reason for emailing you is to see if you would be willing to take part in this questionnaire, which is being emailed to yourself and other University representatives of the British Psychological Society/Student Members Group.

Please find attached a copy of a *brief* questionnaire, which I would be grateful if you would complete and return to me by Monday **19th November 2001** at the above email address. Your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence. If I don't hear from you by this date I will assume that you do not wish to take part.

W

Research questions for studen

I hope you will be able to take part in the research and thank you in advance for your help.

Best wishes,

NALITA JAMES

Questionnaire Transcript for S27

EMAIL QUESTIONNAIRE

I would be grateful if you could complete the questionnaire and return it to me by Monday 19th November 2001. Please answer all questions. A number of questions have a tick box.

Your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence.

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1. Which psychology programme are you studying on?
BSc Psychology (4yr thick sandwich degree– including one year work placement) –Middlesex University

2. What year are you in?
Fourth (final) year

3. Is the programme that you are studying accredited by the Society?   **Yes**

4. Why did you choose to study psychology?
Was unemployed for a few years, hit 30th birthday and decided to do something with my life! DSS sent me for Careers Counselling – had one day-long psychometric and careers profile calculated– two things kept coming up – Psychology and Architecture!! I chose Psychology after discussing at length with my Careers officer– excellent advice given –chose a BPS accredited course right from beginning –did one year college Access Course as a 'foundation' for my undergraduate degree, which re-affirmed my desire to explore psychology in greater depth.

5. Psychology is often seen as being a profession. How do you see psychology?
As a vocation – psychology can be seen as a similar profession to being a Psychiatrist, but without the ability to prescribe medication (thus requiring the medical doctor's qualifications). I would consider psychology to be a 'thinking' type profession, rather than a manual ('doing') type of profession. I do however consider that to be a professional psychologist ought to require membership to an overall governing body (hence my strong support of BPS accredited study, and postgraduate plans for seeking 'chartership'in specialised area(s) of psychology.

6. The psychology degrees that are accredited by the Society must cover certain key curriculum areas. How does this affect the teaching on your programme?
At the moment this means that we have certain modules which must be taken (and passed) to qualify for GBR to BPS. We are 'expected' to take those 7 modules and have these ascribed to our programme automatically – only students specifically NOT wishing to gain GBR have to ask specifically for changes to their moduls if they wish. The greatest emphasis is placed on the GBR-affording modules, sometimes making other modules appear less important. The heavily proscribed programme can sometimes make it difficult for students wishing to pick up other modules of a more vocational or interesting nature (e.g.– Forensic Psych, Occupational Psych., Consciousness, Emotion, etc). This could limit advanced knowledge of potential career paths, since fitting in non-GBR modules can be frustrating and difficult to 'timetable'. Whilst I am pleased my Uni places such great emphasis on gaining GBR, it can be disheartening to only have time for a few 'other' modules amongst what some see as the more boring GBR-affording modules (who says Stats is boring??!!). I am informed that my uni is looking to alter it's programme a little, so slightly less modules will be required for GBR, freeing up some space for other interesting areas of psychology to be explored, but this will not happen whilst I am an undergraduate! (Shame!)

7. Many lecturers who teach on accredited psychology programmes are also members of the Society. How do you think this affects their identity?
I would hope that being a member of the BPS would help those lecturers to feel they have the support network of such a large organisation behind them should they need it. I personally hold those members of staff who are BPS members in a higher regard than others. Being a member of the BPS shows they have a commitment and

passion for their subject area, and are prepared to explore new findings in their field rather than relying on past knowledge and experience. In addition, those staff members who are seen to be actively involved in presenting and publishing, either through the BPS channels or elsewhere, show a dedication to furthering the advancement of psychology. This shows they are more in touch with the latest developments– enabling their teaching to be more accurate, up-to-date and relevant to the student body as a whole.

8. What images would you use to describe their identity?
Committed
Up-to-date
Relevant
Interested
Knowledgeable
See previous answer!

9. In what way do these images link with your experiences on the programme? Please provide examples.
Seeing some of my lecturers at various conferences and events that I have attended shows they are as passionate about psychology as I am – this is an inspiration, and gives much needed support to nervous students taking their first steps into the professional world of psychology. One of my lecturers is the News in Brief editor for the Psychologist – his direct involvement with the BPS and with the prominence of regularly published items means he is held in high regard by many (however, this also means he can often appear somewhat unapproachable).

10. Since you started the programme, how has your understanding of psychology expanded?
I now have a greater understanding of what psychology is about– particularly the statistical reasoning –the scientific proof that is sought in our investigations makes this subject much more relevant and justified as compared to other 'social sciences'. My year-long work placement completely changed my opinion of relevance of psychology in practice– we only see the academic side of things in university –we read studies and conduct (often boring) experiments – on my placement year I finally got to understand how psychological theories apply to real-life situations and how they can support and explain behavioural patterns and anomalies. I am now more committed that ever to carving out a career for myself as a professional in the field of psychology in the future. I know much more now about dealing with people, but some of this probably comes from taking any university degree, and is thus not necessarily attributable directly to the psychology that I study.

11(a) Would you be willing to take part in an email discussion if required?   **Yes**

(b) If yes, can I use the email address that I have used in this questionnaire?   **Yes**
                                                                                        (a.phillips@mdx.ac.uk)

12. Do you have any other comments that you would like to make on the topic being researched?
In my role as Chair of the BPS Student Members Group I guess I could be considered somewhat biased in my pro-BPS viewpoint. However, I feel very strongly about my psychology studies and my future career in these areas, and I am greatly encouraged by the support and backing provided by the BPS. I cannot see why professional psychologists would not become part of the organisation, and sincerely hope that the governmental legislation we have planned to make all psychologists chartered, registered and accountable gets the go-ahead sooner rather than later.

Nalita James
41 Wyndale Road
Knighton
Leicester LE2 3WS

Wednesday 27th February 2001

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to ask for your help with a piece of research that I am conducting. I am currently studying on the Doctorate in Education programme at Leicester University and the research project is a programme requirement, which eventually will be incorporated into a thesis.

The research topic focuses on professional identity, how it is defined by yourself as an academic psychologist, how it is managed within the professional environment and whether it is possible to generate a common sense of identity across the psychology profession. My reason for writing to you is to see if you would be willing to take part in this questionnaire, which is being distributed to yourself and other academic psychologists working in higher education, who also have been/are currently represented on the Society's Committees responsible for training and standards.

The questionnaire will be followed up by an email discussion which will include a series of further questions. A transcript of our discussion will also be forwarded to you, asking for your comments and further feedback.

Please find enclosed a copy of a questionnaire which I would be grateful if you would complete and return to me by **Friday 9th March 2001** at the above address. Your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence.

I hope you will be able to take part in the research and thank you in advance for your help.

Best wishes,

NALITA JAMES

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed as an introduction to a follow-up interview/email discussion on the research topic, professional identity. The questionnaire focuses on three main areas: your role as a psychologist working in higher education, the influence of the British Psychological Society and issues around professional identity.

I would be grateful if you could complete the questionnaire and return it to me by **Friday 9th March 2001.** Please answer all questions. A number of questions have a tick box.

Your responses will be treated in the strictest confidence.

TEACHING

1. Which psychology awards do you teach on at present?

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2. Which areas of psychology do you teach?

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3. Apart from teaching, what other roles and responsibilities do you hold? Please include those inside and outside the classroom.

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4. In what way has your professional role changed since you began teaching? Please include influences inside/outside the institution you work for.

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THE BRITISH PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

5. Are you a member of the Society?   Yes ☐   No ☐

6. Are you a Chartered Psychologist?   Yes ☐   No ☐

7(a). Do you teach on any courses that are accredited by the Society?   Yes ☐   No ☐

(b). If yes, what are their titles?

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8. Why are you a member of the Society?

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CONSTRUCTING PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY

9. How is your professional identity shaped/influenced?

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10. "Higher education is facing a crisis which, in part at least, is a crisis of professional self identity."(Nixon 1996,p.5 What are your views on this statement?

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....

11(a) Would you be willing to take part in an email discussion?   Yes ☐   No ☐

11(b) If yes, please provide me with an email address for the discussion to place.

....

12. Do you have any other comments that you would like to make on the topic being researched?

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Thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Notes of Guidance for Conducting Email Interviews

A little while ago you completed a questionnaire, which focused upon professional identity, how it is managed within the professional environment and whether it is possible to generate a common sense of identity across the psychology profession. You agreed to take part in an email interview, which will address the issues raised in that questionnaire. Please read the following guidelines and if you are still happy to take part in the interview, please reply to this email and I shall send you the first question. The email interviews will consider the issues that arose in the questionnaire in more depth. The data gathered through the email interviews will provide a transcript of your account. These accounts will be used to inform the research study.

In undertaking the email interview please note the following guidelines:

(i) If you are still willing to take part in this study, please reply to this email straight away.

(ii) The interviews will be conducted in strictest confidence and your anonymity will be assured throughout the research project.

(iii) You will be asked eleven substantive questions.

(iv) These questions will be sent to you one at a time. Please respond to the question by email. Each question may be followed up by supplementary questions.

(v) It is anticipated that an ongoing dialogue will occur. In order to achieve this, please ensure that you answer on top of the message and question sent to you. PLEASE DO NOT ANSWER AT THE BOTTOM OF IT. This will ensure the sequence of questions and answers is not broken.

(vi) Please do not delete any part of the email dialogue. This will be our record of the conversation.

(vii) Please reply to each email question within three working days if possible. I will also try to reply to your response within that timescale.

(viii) It is anticipated that the email dialogue will be completed within ten weeks.

(ix) Once the dialogue is complete you will be asked to authenticate your account.

(x) The completed dialogue may be followed up by further email discussion.

Excerpt of Transcript for AP2

In presenting this excerpt the following points should be noted:

Given the technicalities of using email, the interview transcript starts on the last page.
The transcript has been anoymised.
The transcript has been authenticated by AP2.

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…To:   Nalita James/British Psychological Society
cc:
Subject:  Re (8):  research interview

I do not really feel that my identity is fragmented in this way.  I feel
quite strongly that I have a sense of self / identity that is fairly
continuous and is central to my being.  In some ways being a psychologist is
part of who I am, in the same way as being a mother, wife etc all contribute
to how I define myself, but there is an essential continuity about the
roles.

In my private life I try to downplay the psychologist bit although
it does heavily influence my approach to life.  I am married to a
psychiatrist and sometimes people who are introduced to us for the first
time seem a bit threatened by the combination and we
occasionally get comments about 'reading minds etc.' I have learnt to
describe myself as a lecturer/teacher and my partner as a doctor in some
situations.

Sorry of this does not make sense, but it is quite difficult to put into
words.
Hope the research is going well

naljam@bps.org.uk writes:
Q7. Is your professional identity informed by any other identities e.g.
personal identity?
---------------------- Forwarded by Nalita James/British Psychological
Society on 23/07/2001 16:35 --------------------------
…ac.uk on 17/07/2001 18:49:08


To:   Nalita James/British Psychological Society
cc:
Subject:  Re (7):  research interview
The profession is sometimes viewed as being careful to protect itself in
terms of eligibility, standards, regulating numbers in professional training
and so on.
I suppose it has made me much more aware via teaching about practice issues
of the need for a stronger evidence base for various aspects of practice.
This has resulted in my defining myself partly as a researcher and
increasingly even seeing that as one of the most important parts of my
professional identity as a psychologist.  I do not want to be identified
with a lot of practitioners who practise and who may even write about
practise issues but with no real evidence base, because they do not do any
research based on their practice.  So I suppose my professional identity is
about researcher, academic teacher and administrator.  I recognise that I
have practitioner skills but I do not identify myself as mainly an active
practitioner any more for the reasons given above.
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Sorry this may not be very clear but some of the material around
professional identity is I think quite difficult to put into words. I feel
that I am a psychologist and will always be a psychologist even if I were
not formally working as a psychologist. I think it is about the way I think
and possibly influences the way I interact with others.

Hope you can make some sense of this.

naljam@bps.org.uk writes:
Q6. How have your experiences as an academic psychologist shaped your
professional identity?
---------------------- Forwarded by Nalita James/British Psychological
Society on 17/07/2001 16:17 ---------------------------

...ac.uk on 17/07/2001 11:30:54
To: Nalita James/British Psychological Society
cc:
Subject: Re (6): research interview
I think the fact that I am trained as a cognitive therapist and did analytic
training and Counselling before that gives me added credibility with some in
terms of the subjects I teach. This probably means that some see me as a
'real ' psychologist. However not all students want to be psychologists,
they are simply interested in he subject and aim to pursue other careers or
others who do not seem to know exactly what they want to do. I think for
many the notion of being a psychologist is about helping people and
        frequently about clinical psychologists. We have to educate them into
the other specialism in psychology. An increasing number not want to do
forensic psychology or criminology, sometimes without really knowing much
about it. I think they have images of 'Cracker' and psychological
profiling. They quite quickly come to appreciate the role played by the
BPS in terms of accredited courses, standards, and so on and I suppose their
images of the profession are linked round the notion of Psychologists
defining themselves via their professional body that regulates entry to the
profession.
naljam@bps.org.uk writes:
Q5. Do you think the psychology students that you teach see you as a
'real' psychologist? What images do you think they have about:
 (a) being a psychologist
 (b) the psychology profession?
---------------------- Forwarded by Nalita James/British Psychological
Society on 17/07/2001 09:54 ---------------------------
...ac.uk on 16/07/2001 10:07:54

To: Nalita James/British Psychological Society
cc:
Subject: Re (5): research interview
Being an academic psychologist is part of my image I suppose.   I am afraid
that having had career breaks to bring up children etc. and continuing
responsibilities re children, I have never thought very strategically about
my career. I am lucky enough to really enjoy doing my job (mostly) and I am
grateful for that given the way many people feel about their work.

It is almost a style of being, if that makes any sense. I don't feel there
is a professional me who is a psychologist and another person ' off duty'
so to speak.

naljam@bps.org.uk writes:

Q4. How does being an academic psychologist fit with your image of
yourself and your career?
--------------------- Forwarded by Nalita James/British
Psychological Society on 11/07/2001 16:25 ---------------------------

...ac.uk on 06/07/2001 08:08:26
To: Nalita James/British Psychological Society
cc:
Subject: Re (4): research interview
My first response is that I see myself as a psychologist but I will

try to unpack what I think that means.   I think of myself as a
teacher and a researcher   professionally. Even although I have been a
psychologist along time I am still fired by the subject and I would not want
to do anything else really.   My training has encouraged me to have a very
evidenced based approach to problem solving and I tend to tackle issues very
systematically.   This can tend to make me somewhat irritated by sloppy
thinking. I normally find myself thinking/ asking is their any evidence for
this? How good is the evidence etc.? Can we produce any evidence etc. A
fairly pragmatic approach to life I suppose, fostered further by my training
as a cognitive therapist. I see myself as someone who enjoys teaching and I
think I am a good teacher and colleagues confirm this.   I want to convey my
enthusiasm for the subject to students and encourage them to think above all
else.

I do feel quite strongly that certain responsibilities come with
being a psychologist. these I suppose are best summarised in the code of
conduct and I do take these very seriously. Because of the subject area we
work in some people may read more into what we say that may be intended so I
try hard to think before I speak.

I suppose I see psychologists all sharing a broadly equivalent knowledge
base and I primarily teach about it rather that practise it in one context
of my working life, research aspects of it in another, and practise
sometimes. The knowledge base and the methodological approach provide
continuity.

naljam@bps.org.uk writes:
We've talked a bit about the psychology profession - and the
role of the academic/practitioner psychologist. Now I'd like to talk
about how you understand/identify with your professional role:
Q2 In this context, how do you see yourself?
--------------------- Forwarded by Nalita James/British Psychological
Society on 05/07/2001 15:11 ---------------------------
...ac.uk on 03/07/2001 09:49:30
To: Nalita James/British Psychological Society
cc:
Subject: Re(3): research interview

I have never felt that there is a problem here as professional
training is mostly conducted from academic departments so that staff
teaching the undergraduate courses are colleagues of the practitioners
running the postgraduate courses. Indeed in many instances Practitioners
from the postgraduate courses are also members of the undergraduate course
teams and vice versa. I think this provides useful opportunities for cross-
fertilization. Also the fact that postgraduate training also involves many

practitioners both coming in to teach sessions and providing placements and supervision means that there is a real dialogue continuously occurring between academia and the 'real 'world of practice. On reflection I think that the way training has been structured via BPS actually facilitates this as practitioners are very much part of the course development and validation process. Of course membership of BPS committees is another way that influence is exerted and via the Divisions of BPS and organisations like AHOPD who discuss change and lobby quite effectively.

naljam@bps.org.uk writes:
If I have understood what you have outlined correctly: that
academic psychology underpins the training for all professionals (for
example, it
starts in academic departments, and professional training courses are
validated by teams including a high proportion of academics)

--------------------- Forwarded by Nalita James/British
Psychological Society on 02/07/2001 16:51 ---------------------------
...ac.uk on 29/06/2001 17:14:42
To: Nalita James/British Psychological Society
cc:
Subject: Re (2): research interview

I think academic psychology has three important roles, one is obviously
about educating future generations of psychologists and also informing other
disciplines about the appropriate application of psychology in their
specific area be it in health care, business or whatever and the third is
research. I think academics and practitioners tend to be fairly similar in
the way they address issues perhaps down to their training and their shared
knowledge base. Working within a school of social science, I do find that
psychologists are qualitatively different from many other social scientists.
We all seem to have more in common with each other
than is the case in other disciplines and I do feel that BPS does play a
unifying role here. Not all academic psychologists may be members of BPS
but they all know about it, we all teach about and conform to the BPS Code
of Conduct. Sociologists do not seem to have the same consensus or shared
body of knowledge as psychologists do and I think it is perhaps to do with
BPS being more influential in our professional lives than say the British
Sociological Association is for sociologists. So in a long winded way I
think academic psychology informs BPS practice in terms of defining an
appropriate generic knowledge base for psychology and then implements this
and helps begin to define the profession >>psychologist. An example may
help. I teach research ethics on the first year BSC Psych and when I teach
about the BPS Code of Conduct and give out copies to the students, many of
the students report this as being a formative experience where they start to
define themselves early on as psychology students and they become aware of
the value of psychology as a profession in all its forms. Strange but I have
not given all of this too much thought previously.

naljam@bps.org.uk writes:

It's interesting that you haven't mentioned academic psychology
in the context you've described below.
I'd be interested to know your views on the role that academic
psychology plays in defining psychology as a profession?

To: Nalita James/British Psychological Society
cc:
Subject: Re: research interview
I suppose that in some ways I equate the 'psychology' profession
with BPS really. I see 'real' psychology being about the areas and
the practitioners under the auspices of the BPS or APA or equivalent
professional bodies. I became aware of this when interacting
with Greek psychologists. In Greece training and membership of their
professional body is not well regulated and all sorts of people who have
studied a little bit of psychology call themselves psychologists and
sometimes work as such. It made me aware more keenly of how my definition
of psychologists was linked to a notion of training which ensure that
individuals calling themselves psychologists.

naljam@bps.org.uk writes:
Thanks for agreeing to take part. Here's the first question.

Q1. We talk about 'the psychology profession' but why? What
does this mean for you?
---------------------- Forwarded by Nalita James/British
Psychological Society on 28/06/2001 16:55 ---------------------------

Nalita James
27/06/2001 16:31

Excerpt of Interview Transcript for BPS4
Date of Interview -13th August 2001

R: In some ways you've moved on to my next question. What images would you used to identify an academic psychologist? How do you see them in that role?

P: At the risk of sounding facetious I have to say, well you can't restrain yourself from having a little picture, well I can't, having a little picture in my mind of the erm, shall we say the slightly dishevelled, perhaps bearded, because...isn't that funny, that's another thing...I find it quite difficult to envisage women as academics, whereas again, that probably reflects my generation and my...probably more my generation, whereas I have quite a strong vision of a male academic in his ivory tower, again...perhaps this reflects some of my own experience of being a student, where the professors are always, had their little rooms which were about six inches thick in dust and heaped to the ceiling with books and papers, and complete disorder and they used to sit there looking extremely learned behind their desks but in a state of complete and utter chaos...almost in another little world of their own, this is my experience again, sorry, coming to the fore, you go and have a tutorial or whatever and sometimes you get the impression that they weren't with you, something had gone click in their...and they were off on a particular tangent and very much immersed in their research or teaching interest, so I suppose I almost envisage them as slightly unworldly people in a way whereas you imagine the professional psychologists normally have their feet in the real world because they're dealing with, sorry academics, but dealing with very much real people in real life.

R: You haven't used the word psychologist to describe the academic in this context?

P: Mmmm, no, no again it reflects my own view, my fundamental perception that maybe a psychologist is somebody who's out there, practising in the big wide world and practising, applying their training, their knowledge on the public, rather than applying their knowledge in a teaching context.

R: So how do you think students enrolled on psychology courses see the academic psychologist?

P: Oh gosh...I'm just trying to think about those psychology students I've dealt with and what they've said...what has come over to me I think is that students very often have respect for the learning, erm and again the creativity of the academic psychologist they're dealing with and working with...but insofar as I could judge, I think the impression's often come over that they are, can be a bit unworldly, you see it's difficult because I deal with students more in a professional type context because those students are working towards set aims and a vast majority towards the aim of being recognised by this Society as a professional psychologist, so they're very wrapped up in the sort of advice they need from their institution about the right way for them to go, the right courses they have to do, where they have to get to, I mean even something as prosaic as the right documentation they have to produce in order to convince us that they are on the right track to a qualification and I think they often find that the academic psychologists that they're dealing with don't seem to often appreciate the importance of sheer practicalities , but it's absolutely vital that they get the right advice about the right courses and that they do have to produce the right documentation to us show what they say they've done, so I think there is this twofold perception of students, that they can admire, you know hold them in high esteem as far as their learning and academic credentials go, *but* I think they often get a little bit frustrated because they don't see them as practitioners who can help them to achieve the quickest way, what they want to achieve, which the ones that I deal with normally means registration...I can imagine that students do see the academic psychologist as slightly more unworldly, slightly less practical people, whereas again they see the professional psychologist very firmly rooted in practice, with their focus on what's happening in real life because they're dealing with real people, with real problems.

R: How do you think academic psychologists see themselves?

P: I have to say I think that most of them, now if I say I would see them as almost having a sense of superiority I don't mean that pejoratively, they naturally hold themselves above say their practitioner colleagues, but I think there is a sense about them that after all they - the professionals, are only applying what they are erm, if you like finding out and areas in which they are pushing the boundaries out, that they are the, they're almost forging ahead, they're pushing through the boundaries to the overall development of the discipline and its knowledge, then the practitioners almost come up on their coat tails and, and apply the scientific knowledge that they've erm , well that they've accumulated and, and take advantage, shall we say, of the advances in the discipline that they've forged ahead with, that's, that's a slight feeling I do get and so in saying they're superior I don't mean, they regard themselves you know, necessarily as better in the simplistic sense of the word with their professional colleagues, but I think they feel that they're the ones who are really, erm taking the discipline forward erm, they're the innovators, reinforcing the concept of the professional Society, and then the professionals come up and almost pinch, well not pinch their ideas, far from it, but them they're the ones who just build on the ideas they've already come up with or applied the ideas they've already come up with ... I had a conversation with the Chair of the Admissions Committee who is very much involved in the practitioner...the professional practice side of the Society but also he works in an academic institution and he actually gave me a little bit of insight into a particular context of the other side...

R: So how do you think the Society influences the professional identity of an academic psychologist?

P: Umm, good question, I find that difficult to answer because everything that comes through to me, gives me the impression that the academics certainly at the moment don't feel that the Society is particularly geared towards them and what they're trying to achieve, what they stand for, so you'd have to...I'd perhaps have to say that at the moment if anything there might be a perception amongst academics that the Society doesn't particularly influence a view of them as a body in a particularly beneficial way if you see what I mean... it goes back to what I was saying earlier...academics often register for particular purposes, being asked to be supervisors for people or maybe yes, in the context of doing consultancy work...

R: So it's not just about being a member of the Society, but other external factors influence?

P: I think that's true in quite a lot of cases, yes, because again I hate to say it, but a lot of academics don't think it's worth the bother of joining the Society for its own sake...juts a perception that comes through, again having spoken to people, read things...

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