No Pay, No Profession? Why Aren't Educational Expedition Leaders Professional?

by

Thomas Hampson

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Abstract

Professionalism is a social construct with multiple definitions across a variety of occupations. Meaning, it is concept that has been created and widely accepted by society; the central point of inquiry for this research being, does the educational expedition sector have a definition of professionalism? Briefly, the educational expedition sector is a subsect of the outdoor industry which specialises in the delivery of experiential education and education in remote wilderness environments.

The predominant understanding of professionalism seemingly refers to the accepted behaviours within an occupation. Previous research has often relied on the examination of these behaviours along with characteristics and attributes demonstrated by the individual and accepted by the wider occupational field. Consequently, researchers typically develop a list of what they interpret to be professional while alluding to three common conceptions: 1. a preference for professionalism to be founded in traditionalism; 2. ambition for professional status enforces a power differential among the occupations at varying sociological levels; 3. how professional identities are affected by the internalisation and an unconscious assimilation to professional ideals enforced by an occupation. However, though the lists and literature share some commonalities, there is no fixed definition of professionalism. Further, the contextualised investigation of professionalism as a sociological phenomenon is more commonly conducted within more traditional professions (medicine, law, accountancy, education etc.) as opposed to occupations which may strive for similar recognition and status.

Therefore, through phenomenological principles this thesis aims to achieve three objectives with the purpose of informing the current understanding of professionalism and professional practice within the educational expedition sector. These are: 1. to examine the interpretations of professionalism adopted by experienced educational expedition leaders who have worked for the British Exploring Society (BES) as they have the potential to influence the definition of the outdoor professional; 2. to explore competing definitions of professionalism taken from established professions, thus informing differing interpretations of professional identity; 3. to develop a learning model that demonstrates a strategy informing notions of professionalism that could be accepted within a scheme of Higher Education (HE). By analysing competing interpretations from established professions, it is hoped that this research project may begin to assist the educational expedition sector to move away from traditionalised methods of professionalism and begin modernising its commonly held principles. That is, to take a step towards becoming known as a profession, and not pejoratively as an ‘industry’, or ‘sector’, or trade. To achieve the aims a qualitative methodological approach was used. Data had been collected via field observations, focus groups, and semi-structured interviews. Due to the Covid-19

pandemic, expedition-based field observations could not be conducted, yet the premise and potential influence of this method is still discussed.

Contrary to previous research, this study refrained from developing a strict definition of professionalism, as might be derived from the data collected. Instead, it concentrated on exploring concepts pertinent to its understanding within the educational expedition sector. The key findings were: 1. The existence and potential implications of the hidden curriculum on aspiring leaders; 2. The effects of an implicit struggle for status, prestige and sociological hierarchy enforced by meritocracy; 3. The development of a learning model illustrating the socialisation of aspiring leaders, and the effects of the aforementioned common conceptions on their professional identities.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to be clear, there are a number of friends and family I would like to acknowledge for their continuous and unwavering support. However, I would like to thank Doctor Clive Palmer and Doctor Paul Gray above all for their endless encouragement, tuition, and sheer commitment to my success. Without their advice, I have no doubt this thesis would have been a compilation of late night, caffeine induced thoughts entwined with a multitude of questions with seemingly no answers. Perhaps I should have produced such a compilation anyway, what a fun read that would have been…

I am not often known to be a man of few words, especially in writing, but reaching this point leaves me a little speechless. To be able to look at a completed thesis and reflect upon the time it has taken me to reach this point, it all seems unbelievable. Regardless, at risk of typing an emotional speech reminiscent of several academic trials and tribulations, I will simply say thank you to all those who encouraged my success.

Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition/Explanation
Fire	This is a term used by the British Exploring Society to define or refer to a group of young explorers under their care throughout the expedition process.
ML (Mountain Leader)	This refers to a national governing body award which many educational expedition leaders typically obtain and are expected to obtain, adhering to industry standards.
Quality Mountain Day(s)	This is an industry term referring to how much experience one has leading in the mountains. It also refers to the prerequisites required to have in order to apply for the Mountain Leader training/assessment.
RCI (Rock Climbing Instructor)	This is an industry term referring to a national governing body award.
SPA (Single Pitch Award)	This is an industry term referring to a national governing body award.

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Why Aren't Educational Expedition Leaders Professional?

1. *Introduction to Professionalism:*

This research project will explore notions of professionalism in the outdoor industry, specifically within the educational expedition sector, which would benefit from a move away from a traditionalised perception of professionalism and begin modernising its commonly accepted principles. Modernisation in this thesis is achieved via an increased understanding of what professionalism is within the outdoor industry or more precisely the educational expedition sector and the influence it has at different societal levels. To modernise its perception may enable the outdoor industry to continually appeal to newer generations of students and become more commonly accepted as a profession not, pejoratively, an industry or sector. The appearance of the outdoor industry and the educational expedition sector encompass occupational roles which are seen as "just a job" as opposed to a profession or an occupation with professional standards. This notion provided the starting point for this project.

An overview of emerging themes to date are: **Predetermined Outcome** for educational experiences facilitated during expeditions; **Professionalism in Context**, demonstrating individualised professional identities; and **Providing a Service**, which is recognised as a criterion for becoming considered a profession. I realised that as a researcher I was learning and growing in confidence whilst conducting these interviews and have fully integrated the making of reflexive field notes into my practice. These notes are useful in shaping and honing my technique to collect data in the field. Some reflexive notes are included in this thesis to help provide clarity for the reader and an insight into the author's decision-making processes. See appendix one for 'Introduction; Narrative of Lived Experiences and Reflexive Accounts'. These accounts demonstrate reflexive reasoning that supports the methodological approaches used in this project. Reflexivity in this project is defined acknowledging personal changes brought about by the research process and exploring how they affect the research process (Palanganas *et al.*, 2017).

Described below are the aims and objectives supporting this project's qualitative methodology.

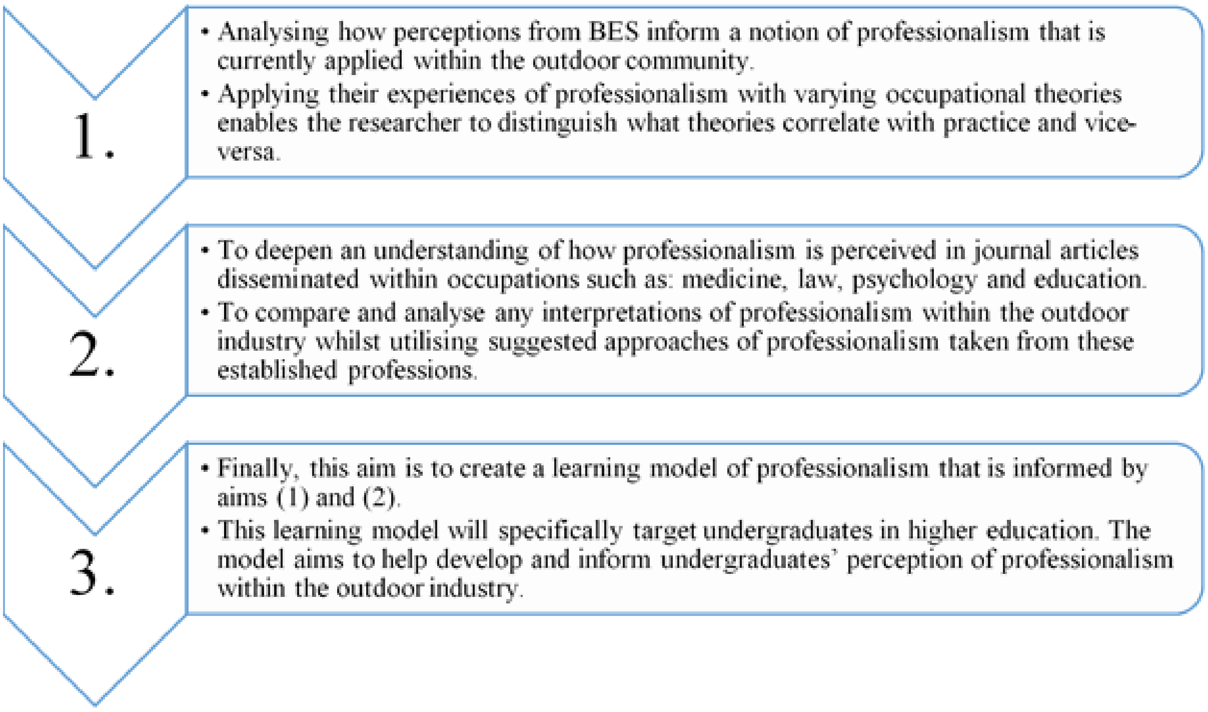
Aim: This research investigates different interpretations of, and beliefs in, professionalism as they pertain to outdoor expedition leaders.

Objectives: In investigating professionalism as a phenomenon, this study has three objectives (utilising a qualitative approach):

1. **Examine the interpretations** of professionalism adopted by experienced educational expedition leaders who work or have worked for the British Exploring Society (BES), as they have the potential to influence the definition of the outdoor professional;
2. **Explore, compare and contrast** competing definitions of professionalism taken from established professions, thus informing differing interpretations of professional identity;
3. **Develop a learning model** that demonstrates a strategy informing notions of professionalism that could be accepted within a scheme of higher education (HE).

Figure One, 'The winning formula', sets out the narrative of this thesis. The assertion here is that sectors of the outdoor industry are striving for professional status. My research aims to understand how they might achieve it in the context of other professions.

Figure One: The winning formula



In addition, it is pertinent to clarify here the context of this thesis. References to the outdoor industry, outdoor sector(s), the educational expedition sector, and key stakeholder(s) have been mentioned throughout. The term ‘outdoor industry’ is used as an all-encompassing representation of the individual sectors offering a product or service such as: leisure, adventure, rehabilitation, and education, naming a few of many. The use of the term ‘outdoor sector(s)’ represents and refers to individual sectors, such as the educational expedition sector, which is where this thesis seeks to make a significant contribution. Finally, the term ‘BES personnel’ refers to participants who work/have worked for BES, including both senior salaried employees and volunteers. BES personnel have a breadth and wealth of educational expedition experience, as illustrated within this research project.

Despite the long history and growing field of practice, expeditions have received minimal attention and little investigation within formal educational research in the United Kingdom (U.K.) (Allison and Von Wald, 2010:220). Outdoor education has its roots embedded in rich history. It is recognised by the likes of Plato (Hattie *et al.*, 1997:43), Aristotle (Rabbås, 2015), and Socrates (Stonehouse *et al.*, 2011) who discuss it in its raw, and earliest form of experiential education. However, British overseas expeditions had only began to arise in 1932 when late Surgeon Commander G. Murray Levick (a member of Scott’s last Antarctic expedition 1910-13) founded the Public Schools Exploring Society, known today as the British Exploring Society (Allison *et al.*, 2018:6). In 1969 and 1970, two youth development charities were created: Project Trust and Gap Activity Programme who offered overseas work placements. In 1972 the Young Explorers Trust (YET) was founded in association with the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) to assist in expedition approval and funding. Then, in 1984 Raleigh International (formally known as Operation Raleigh) emerged as the next youth expedition organisation (Beames, 2003:289). As such, BES is one of the longest running organisations of its kind (Stott and Hall, 2003:160). Utilising expeditions as an educational tool, the aims of such expedition providers are traditionally expressed as youth development, growth, and learning in remote regions of the world (Allison *et al.*, 2012; Beames 2003:289). Unlike Outward Bound courses which are founded in a Hahnian philosophy, educational expeditions derive from a heritage concerned with science and adventure to promote youth development (Allison *et al.*, 2018:6). Therefore, for the purposes of this investigation the definition of educational ‘expedition’ has been adopted from Allison *et al.*, (2012:488):

physical journeys (e.g. walking, sailing), have some degree of uncertainty involved (e.g. of destination) and some self-sufficiency (e.g. carrying personal equipment and food supplies). In addition, youth expeditions typically take place in locations that are different from the young people's own environment or culture (e.g. urban to wilderness, developed country to developing country).

In contrast to their founding name, BES offer educational expedition programmes to private and independent schools and colleges which represent the majority of the young people selected to participate. Similarly, BES's volunteer(s) and paid leaders are drawn from various occupations including universities, teaching, medicine, industry, and public services. Therefore, BES had been chosen as a focal point for this research study due to its variety of members and their occupational backgrounds, its historical founding as an educational expeditions provider, and their professional identity within the sector. Participant inclusion criteria is discussed further in figure six.

This research project will include interpretations of professionalism from wider professional communities, as well as associated notions disseminated within the outdoor industry. The concept of professionalism is debated within many occupations and has myriad definitions in different contexts. In higher education (HE) professionalism has been defined as an adherence to a set of standards, code of conduct, or collection of qualities that characterise accepted practice within a particular area of activity (Universities UK *et al.,* 2004). In medicine, professionalism has been defined as a 'commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities, adherence to ethical principles, and sensitivity to a diverse patient population' (Klein *et al.,* 2003:26).

Larkin (2003:115) suggests that the outdoor industry as a profession is looking for public recognition whilst not following the normal procedure, which Larkin describes as: '(1) having a motive of service beyond self-interest; (2) the development of a specialised body of knowledge; (3) a code of ethics; (4) restrictions on admission to the profession, and (5) public recognition as a profession which is where this research project seeks to make a significant contribution.' There is value in identifying criteria that leaders in the outdoor industry deem to be professional, how these may impact the definition of the outdoor profession, and what processes can be implemented to assist in the definition's development. Hammer (2000) recognised and established a list of structural components that help occupations gain recognition as a profession:

Structural attributes of professions and professionals include:
(1) Specialised body of knowledge and skills;
(2) Unique socialisation of student members;
(3) Special relationships with clients;
(4) Professional Associations;
(5) Equivalence of members;
(6) Code of ethics/conduct;
(7) Vital service to society;
(8) Licensure/certification;
(9) Governance by peers;
(10) Social Prestige, and
(11) Autonomy

This list does not correlate with Larkin’s (2003) claim for public recognition but does identify a service to society. However, regarding Larkin’s (2003) claim about the normal procedure, it could be suggested that the outdoor industry is working to develop each of these structural components without being traditionally recognised as a profession. This may be an attempt at a modern approach to becoming a profession. A traditional interpretation of professionalism outlined by Biesta (2015) argues that professions are special areas of work. They promote human wellbeing, and they need a highly specialised body of knowledge and skills, as well as functioning relationships of authority and trust. An outdoor expedition leader operates in a dynamic environment that could be interpreted as a special area of work. An outdoor leader can promote human wellbeing (Ritchie, 2014), for instance during an educational expedition. Outdoor leaders also require specialised knowledge and skills in order to operate effectively and safely in the outdoors. These skills cannot be practiced without building strong, effective relationships of authority and trust with potential clients, students, and other leaders.

1.1. Ethical Implications:

Although there is no simple definition of professionalism (Noordegraaf and Schinkel, 2011), it is easy to identify mutually agreed criteria across different occupations including outdoor education. Each interpretation of professionalism mentioned thus far specifies a code of conduct/ethics and ethical practice as a requirement for professional standards. Codes of ethics illustrate moral principles aimed at guiding professional practice. These principles exemplify ‘common morality’ assigned to a specific professional field or occupational role (Keefer and Ashley, 2001:378). Those working within professions are expected to adhere to these principles. For guides, these principles ensure that individuals demonstrate the occupation’s interpretation of professionalism, much like Biesta’s (2015) interpretation. This might suggest a distinction between occupational/professional ethics across different professions; however, Mac Iver (1922) suggests that medical ethics do not completely differ in quality or level from engineering ethics. Though there are similarities across the two different occupations, Banks (2009) highlights a tendency to associate professional ethics with ethical codes, which may shed light on Mac Iver’s (1922) distinction. To clarify, codes of ethics are written sets of norms that usually identify ‘ethical principles and rules or standards of professional practice which are externally generated’ (Banks, 2009:5), originating from outside the individual practitioner. On the other hand, professional ethics focus on the conduct, the actions of those within the role of a professional practitioner. Therefore, in agreement with Martin (2000) I believe that the idea of professional ethics is reducible to duties, dilemmas, and responsible decision-making.

Similarly, Nowakowski (2010) describes professional ethics as professional deontology. They both require a strong sense of morality, moral character, and moral standards, all of which define the actions of members of a given profession. This sense of morality assists the decision-making process. It enables practitioners to function effectively in their occupation and protects them from ‘mistakes which are axiologically significant’ (Nowakowski, 2010:488). In the same way, Bowen (2017:321) suggests deontology ‘is entirely based on rational decision making and objective moral autonomy’ and ‘only decisions made from a basis of goodwill or pure moral intention are ethical’ (323). However, morality, much like professionalism, is a multifaceted concept that can be refined with age and experience, and thus practitioners become more deontological or duty-based in their decision-making with the passage of time (Wright, 1985). These interpretations of deontology highlight the importance of moral decision-making, which suggests it can only develop with age and experience. However, I would argue that age and experience alone do not determine a strong moral compass. An ability to justify one’s action does not dictate its righteousness. Hall (2020:4) discussing Kantian ethics describes deontology as duty-based ethics; ‘it judges morality by examining the nature of actions and the will of agents rather than goals achieved’. Therefore, I suggest that if educational expedition leaders are making decisions they believe to be morally just, these are decisions that adhere to professional ethics and their occupational code of ethics.

It would be difficult to assess the degree of professionalism from a deontological perspective. Judging right from wrong is at least in part subjective by nature. What someone deems morally just may not appear so to someone else. On the other hand, a code of ethics is implemented to help guide these decisions. Who decides what is ethically righteous for an entire occupational field? Nowakowski (2010) explains how deontological standards are preserved by the traditions of subsequent generations and that, consequently, professional standards are formed and reformed over time. However, I suggest the teaching of deontology is one criterion which influences the development of professional identity, and as generations, society, and professional culture develop, so do ethical perspectives. Korkonosenko (2013) explains that deontology is also a law, it exists as a force, not a force of the state, but a force of a society. This element of law suggests a notion of jurisdiction, a consciousness to understand the parameters of an occupational role, and the potential for disciplinary action that may result from a breach of ethical practice. Similarly, this perspective aligns with Berleur's (2005) interpretation which notes clauses of deontology become terms of service. These terms of service imply the use of deontological/professional ethics, guided by an organisation's code of ethics, and influenced by the individual practitioner's moral compass. Bowen (2017:323) describes how viewing an action, or in this case a service, via a deontological lens would mean that the organisation 'is acting from moral principle and if the action is challenged it is morally defensible'. How can deontological/professional ethics, individualised morality and commitment to duty be assessed if they could conflict with each other and if each is morally defensible?

In agreement with Nowakowski (2010), Rossiter *et al.*, (2005) explains how professional codes of ethics the justified norms of the profession and the applications of those norms are interpretive. Thus, the individual practitioner is the 'locus of control for ethical decision-making' (Rossiter *et al.,* 2005:89). Therefore, how the practitioner responds to these duties and dilemmas will be individualised. Beck and Murphy (1997:41) suggest that a code of ethics, when used as guidelines and/or rules, can accentuate 'morally salient features of a situation' which can further develop 'attitudes or virtues' that enable an individual to work and interact with others in an ethical fashion. On the other hand, Brooks and Normore (2005) argue that an individual can have a strong understanding of ethical theory and be able to explain what it should look like implemented, but may not have the ability to do so. They further suggest that a strong sense of morality or moral character wisdom would assist in the application of these ethical standards and by extension in 'ethical decision-making' (Rossiter *et al.,* 2005:96).

Therefore, identifying professional ethics, codes of ethics, and/or codes of conduct as a professional criterion found across multiple occupations would require the professional to have a strong understanding of their ethical obligations and of morality. This notion is supported by Keefer and Ashley (2001:395) who explain that:

> Professional ethics codes attempt to apply and extend common morality to the special obligations that derive from specialised professional knowledge.

However, an understanding of professional knowledge resulting in these special obligations is not the monopoly of the traditional professions. Educational expedition leaders have multiple obligations governed by strict professional ethics. In addition, having professional knowledge does not mean that an individual has reached the height of morality or has become morally virtuous (Martin, 2000). Keefer and Ashley (2001) explain that personal moral judgements should be tested and refined by appeal to experience. This recognition of moral virtues or becoming morally virtuous is significant and underlies the value of professional ethics in the practice of outdoor education. Hunt (1996) suggests that Outward Bound was interested less in skill sets, and more on moral formation. This notion, supported by Stonehouse *et al.,* (2011:20) highlights the importance of virtue, ethics, and values as 'significant motivation in the inception of outdoor education in the 20^{th} century'.

Before further discussion of the nature of virtue and its relation to professional ethics, ethics and morality will be discussed. This will be a largely philosophical discussion which aims to illustrate what it means to be a professional and the special obligations bestowed upon professional practitioners and/or educational expedition leaders. Doing so will cast new light on professional leaders and their practices in an effort to overcome the notion that occupations which are established professions deserve respect whilst occupations that are not established professions do not. Similarly, other perspectives will be included to create a holistic understanding of different theories encompassing professionalism. These perspectives include sociological paradigms, governmental procedures, and theories from higher education. Doing so will lay the foundations of the fundamental premises which have been developed to support this thesis, whilst also introducing the topics of subsequent chapters.

1.2. *Virtue and its professional association:*

The notion of virtue as explained by Rabbås (2015) equates to the notion of excellence. Rabbås (2015:620) suggests that in his work *Nicomachean Ethics,* Aristotle discusses two kinds of human virtue: intellectual virtue and ethical virtue (also known as virtue of character). Rabbås identified the most important intellectual virtue, called *phronesis*, for its ethical association and its general applicability. It is more commonly known as practical intelligence. In other words, if a professional practitioner, like an educational expedition leader, has a strong sense of intellectual virtue, they may have phronesis. Phronesis could therefore be considered an excellent ability to understand in general what to do practically (Rabbås, 2015), which arguably relates best to professional ethics. However, Rabbås (2015) asserts that this sense of phronesis cannot be narrowly restricted to contexts such as a profession or craft. However, if an educational expedition leader has a strong intellectual virtue, then given the nature of their occupation, as well as an understanding of phronesis as practical intelligence, the term can certainly be applied to either a profession or craft.

In addition to intellectual virtues, there are many character virtues; those discussed by Rabbås (2015:621) are:

(1) Courage;
(2) Temperance;
(3) Generosity;
(4) Magnanimity, and
(5) Justice.

Rabbås (2015) suggests that the character virtues define the end to be aimed at, and a sense of phronesis clarifies the appropriate way to pursue that end. By interpretation then, character virtues in this sense are a set of morals, and when coupled with phronesis demonstrate an ethical and moral approach to achieving that end. Therefore, if an educational expedition leader has a strong understanding of these virtues and adheres to the educational expedition leader's code of ethics/professional ethics, then arguably, that leader personifies a clear example of professionalism when applying these virtues and following their occupation's code of ethics to achieve their end. Manifested, it would remain an individualised (re)interpretation of morals, virtues, and ethics applied pragmatically. It is clear then that if professional ethics concern the conduct and actions of the professional practitioner, and ethical codes are guidelines, the practitioner requires much more than professional knowledge to be professional. The ability to demonstrate and to operate with moral and ethical virtues is one of the special obligations mentioned earlier.

Aristotle in his sixth book of *Nicomachean Ethics* (Ameriks and Clarke, 2000:12) offers insight into the practical application of moral virtues:

> Moral virtue is a state of character concerned with choice, and choice is deliberate desire, therefore both the reasoning must be true and the desire right, if the choice is to be good, and the latter must pursue just what the former asserts.

Volt (2003) offers a similar insight, suggesting that moral philosophy and/or ethics assists a systematic thinking about the relationship between reason and morality. Therefore, if the professional practitioner were to make a choice within the context of their occupation, their reasoning must be true. However, for the reasoning to be true and the choice right, both need to be informed by moral and intellectual virtue and a code of ethics. The choice and action made could be interpreted in the modern era as resulting from a sense of professional ethics informed by intellectual and moral virtue. On the other hand, what each professional practitioner deems to be the correct desire or choice could be different regardless of the use of a code of ethics; the decision would also depend on the individual practitioner's interpretation of the ethical guidelines/rules. Moreover, the right choice and the related reasoning in any situation are not always easy to determine. Acting morally and ethically to achieve an end does not necessarily mean that it is the right end. An end can be interpreted as either right or wrong by different professionals depending on their own understanding of the situation and individual virtues. However, at the beginning of his second book of *Nicomachean Ethics* (Ameriks and Clarke, 2000) Aristotle explains that intellectual virtue owes its birth and its growth to teaching, as it requires experience and time to develop. In agreement with Aristotle, McKeon (1941) suggests that moral and character virtues are formed as a result of habituation and discipline. Therefore, to develop such virtues, I suggest that aspiring professionals should have access to education and experience that focus specifically on their continued professional development in ethical and moral decision-making within their chosen occupations. This notion is supported by Stonehouse *et al.*, (2011) who explain that virtue is obtained through knowledge. For all occupations, I would argue that experience and education are vital ingredients of professionalism, and the acquisition of professional knowledge is the means by which an individual achieves professional standards. However, after developing such virtues and professional knowledge, ‘Does this mean that there is a moral obligation not to make certain intellectual mistakes?’ (Anscombe, 1958:1).

1.3.<u>Duty and Obligation:</u>

Anscombe (1958) explains that ordinary terms such as ‘should’, ‘need’, ‘ought’, and ‘must’ are terms of obligation. In the context of professional ethics, these terms portray a sense of duty to a practitioner’s occupation. Angle and Slote (2013:56) describe virtues as the ‘moral strength of the human being in obeying his duty’. If a professional practitioner acts morally, but against the special obligations bestowed upon them by their occupation, are they acting unprofessionally? Liu (2007:173) explains how a Confucian moral philosophy provides a moral structure for society; ‘everyone has his or her proper social roles that define his or her moral properties’. The Confucian ideal of society supports Hammer’s (2000) structural component of professionalism: ‘(7) Vital service to society’ and other similar notions such as public service. I argue that if an educational expedition leader’s societal role or duty is to educate and lead, demonstrate strong moral virtues, and adhere to a code of ethics, they clearly exemplify the key structural components for professional status.

<u>Reflexive Account: Bestowed Professionalism</u>

With this mindset, establishing a definition of professionalism is inherently difficult. The notion of reciprocity plays a role between the ‘lay’ person and the professional. The professional is rewarded experientially, economically and by association, an improved client list, all in exchange for superior services. However, the terminology used thus far, ‘given’, ‘lay person’, ‘achievement’ etc. all implies professional status must be earned, and thus it is bestowed upon those who have earned it. Reciprocity in this sense suggests the professional must commit to earning such status to be provided with such rewards. Yet paradoxically the power to bestow professional status is predominantly held by the lay person, not other professionals. In the same way a client trusts the professional for superior service, the professional trusts the client for the rewards. Is reciprocity key to defining professionalism? Refer to the literature for ‘Defining Professionalism’.

This notion of societal obligation in the context of professional practice also illustrates an unwritten contract between society and the professions. Frederickson (2002) suggests the word ‘contract’ should not be used, however, as reciprocity is the key to Confucianism. This does not mean to suggest that we live in a Confucian society, but does highlight a level of trust required by both the professional and the lay person (Frederickson, 2002). Evetts (2003) explains that lay people must place their trust in professional workers. Not discriminating between occupations, Evetts (2003) places the status of professional on occupations such as electrician and plumber, as well as lawyer and doctor. This suggests that any occupation requiring and/or receiving an element of reciprocity and trust between the public and the practitioner can be given the status of a profession, see Reflexive Account ‘Bestowed Professionalism’. The level of reciprocity can differ. Evetts (2003) suggests that professionals are rewarded with authority, privileged rewards, and higher status. I argue that an expedition leader exercises authority over others in their role, and therefore an unwritten contract between the participants and their leader exists. However, privileged rewards and higher status between participant and leader would be hard to illustrate and quantify. I suggest both are bestowed by the organisation or company the leader works for. Evetts (2003) explains higher rewards can be considered to be a result of occupational power rather than that of professionalism. Evetts further suggests that this is the result of a ‘rather peculiar focus on law and medicine as the archetypal professions’ (Evetts, 2003:400) and thus as the prime examples of traditional professional standards. In this discussion of professional ethics, moral virtues, and public service, how does a professional practitioner receive reciprocity? Is this awarded for their experience and professional knowledge, or is it their association with an occupational power that gives the individual professional legitimacy? Reciprocity suggests a mutual exchange for the mutual benefit of both parties. I question how a price can be placed on effective education and leadership.

Discussing then the relationship between client and professional, Bass and Steidlmeier (1999:182) suggest that the ethics of leadership are represented by three pillars: (1) ‘the leader’s moral character; (2) the ethical legitimacy of the leader’s vision, articulation, and program which the public either embrace or reject; (3) the morality of the processes of social ethical choice and action that leaders and followers engage in and collectively pursue’. The use of ‘embrace or reject’ coupled with ‘collectively pursue’ imply a clear position of power. Also, the three pillars do not address organisational power and the potential lack of professional leadership autonomy, as the leader may be required to adhere to the organisation's interpretation of professional ethics and its code of ethics, not the leader's own. Martimianakis *et al.,* (2009) note that the existence of professions in general contributes to social stratification. I suggest that the social stratification of the professions stems from the level of disseminated knowledge and higher/extended education required to join the archetypal traditional professions. This interpretation is supported by Evetts (2003:397), who suggests an operational definition of a profession:

> The intellectual field includes the study of occupations which are service- and knowledge-based which can be achieved through years of higher further education and specified years of vocational training and experience.

One result of acquiring this education or professional knowledge is the trust placed in the professional. Evetts (2010) further explains that another result of this knowledge is the relaxation of externally imposed rules governing work. These are replaced by the exercise of discretion and good judgment, often in highly complex situations and circumstances, because of the professional's recognised competence. Although these interpretations might offer justification for professional stratification and provide evidence of organisational power, it is clear the acquisition of knowledge is important to obtain professional status. This supports Hammer's (2000) interpretation of structural attributes: '(1) Specialised body of knowledge and skills'.

I suggest then that to be recognised as professionals, educational expedition leaders require higher education. This would go a long way towards legitimising their claim to be professionals. However, this would conform to the traditional requirements for professional status, and educational expedition leaders are obliged to demonstrate professional attributes whether or not they have undergone higher education. Evetts (2003:397) proposes that professionals 'are extensively engaged in dealing with risk, risk assessment and using expert knowledge, enabling customers and clients to deal with uncertainty'. It is possible that the specialised body of professional knowledge and skills could be obtained through experience and vocational training rather than through higher education. Educational expedition leaders are extensively engaged with risk and risk assessment due to the nature of their occupation, and their special obligations are essentially no different from those found in other professions. However, advocating such a principle (experience and vocational training in comparison to the obtainment of higher education qualifications) may undermine the efforts of those in higher education trying to enter the traditional professions, thus entrenching further professional stratification. It may undermine the efforts of others as the status of some occupations are deemed to hold lesser importance than others. Thus, the increasing number of occupations claiming professional status dilutes the status of those which have already claimed it. Therefore, how we reform and modernise methods of entry into the professions whilst ensuring that public respect for the professions is not undermined is a crucial consideration for professional recognition.

Noordegraaf and Schinkel (2011) argue that professionalism exists when workers are part of an occupational association that institutionalises a technical base (knowledge and skills) in addition to a service ethic and a calling or higher purpose. This perception supports both an individualistic approach to professionalism and the existence of Hammer's (2000) '(4) Professional Associations'. However, the socialisation of aspiring professionals into these associations could further demonstrate the organisational power of the professions. Evetts (2003) explains how accountability and performance indicators are a part of professionalism, allowing the organisations/associations to measure and compare individual members. This is a double-edged sword for the profession. On the one hand members may feel that they must conform to the requirements of the profession and may feel that they have to curb their virtues and talents in order to do so. On the other hand, the profession can ensure adherence to ethical codes and continued professional development. One method by which the socialisation of professionals into an association is achieved is the taking of an oath to serve. Though arguably an archaic practice, taking the Hippocratic Oath remains a requirement for the completion of medical education in the United Kingdom. Universities often administer oaths, for instance a modernised 'Hippocratic Oath', or the 'Prayer of Maimonides'. Some use the 'Declaration of Geneva' (Fabre, 1997:1672). I consider taking an oath to also be a rite of passage, the gateway into a professional community, and therefore I question the extent to which this can be considered a voluntary practice (Fabre,1997; Elkins 1984). See Reflexive Account 'Obligation, Rite of Passage and Professional Identity'.

Reflexive Account: Obligation, Rite of Passage and Professional Identity

Those aspiring to become a professional or a member of a professional association in any occupation often have their own motivations for doing so. However, the individual may feel obliged to conform to the association's expectations, and this sense of obligation could be representative of dissociated peer pressure. Rites of passage are often an example of traditionalised, archaic forms of association which one may feel obliged to complete. The notion of tradition holds a weight which seems immovable: "you should do this as it has been done for generations; it is a rite of passage, your birthright". All of the issues described here could be extremely influential to an aspiring professional learning about their own professional identity. Refer to the literature review for 'Professional Identity'.

1.4. Public Service Ethos and its Importance:

It is often argued that one aspect of professionalism is the desire to provide a public service. However, the reasons for entering into professional associations/communities and the motivation for becoming a professional vary between individuals. Evetts (2010) paraphrasing Saks (2005) explains how professionalisation of an occupation or of the practitioner promotes individual self-interests regarding salary, status, and power, as well as protection from competition. Noordegraaf and Schinkel (2011) propose a similar analysis. They suggest the traditional notion of professionalism involves some aspects of autonomy: a service ethic, an element of association, and a secure technical knowledge base. Thus, in addition to public service, a code of ethics/conduct, and a specialised body of knowledge, educational expedition leaders are socialised into professional associations. An example of such a professional association is the British Exploring Society (BES). Alexandra and Miller (2009) support this view. They suggest that the term 'profession' in its first instance is an occupational grouping, the members of this grouping have a common defining end. Equally, Hafferty and Castellani (2010) propose professionalism as a shared occupational identity which is rooted in a strong class consciousness. In their view, though professions are elitist in form, within themselves they are highly democratic. This suggests a micro-level professional stratification of practitioners within their professional association, as well as a macro-level external stratification in wider society encompassing all professions. The notion of professional hierarchy amongst the occupations is therefore unfounded, as each individual professional association has their own defining end, and one is not comparing like with like. However, to what extent do the individual practitioners agree on a defining end? In BES, leaders volunteer to lead educational expeditions that appeal to them but in which the defining end is explicitly governed by the organisation. The leaders opt for or buy into the experience. How they achieve the defined end is individualised by the nature of their role. The defined end set by BES is achieved by the leader on behalf of BES, but professional autonomy in achieving the defined end in line with their code of ethics is encouraged by BES in expedition leaders.

Nonetheless, both the theories of Alexandra and Miller (2009) and those of Hafferty and Castellani (2010) offer potential prerequisites for socialisation into a professional association. On reflection I agree with Holland and Kilpatrick (1991) and McKeon (1941) who argue that such socialisation will influence the individual's moral and ethical judgements. Therefore, the professional association/community is at least partly responsible for the professional views and values held by individuals within a particular occupation. Similarly, the individual practitioner is responsible for upholding the professional association/community's standards and thus for maintaining the profession's public reputation. In BES, allowing leaders professional autonomy during educational expeditions enables the leaders to exercise their own moral and ethical virtues/judgements. In return, the leaders are expected to uphold the organisation's standards. Therefore, professional associations are democratic to the extent that the organisation's standards are determined by the members themselves and to the extent that allowance is made for the exercise of individual judgement by the members.

Professions and professional associations gain monopolistic control over their areas of expertise due to the nature of the specialised knowledge required within their defined jurisdiction (Edgar, 2009). Furthermore, the professions control entry by controlling the standards aspiring members have to meet. Fabre (1997) poses a similar interpretation, suggesting every profession has legally sanctioned control over a specialised body of knowledge. The control of this knowledge enables the professions to dictate what practitioners learn and how they learn it. Similar control could be exerted by the outdoor industry. In doing so the outdoor industry could draft a syllabus and a curriculum based on an established and mutually agreed model for professional education. It would enable the next generation of outdoor practitioners to begin to claim professional status. This would mean the outdoor industry had adopted the traditionalised notion of a profession. I would argue that it is possible already for the outdoor industry to devise such a syllabus. Professional control can be implemented at different levels; Evetts (2003:399) proposes three: macro, ('societal, state and market'); meso, (organisations, institutions, and by extension, professional associations), and micro, ('groups and actors'). Control at macro level could manifest in the form of licensing and certification to practice. Elkins (1984) suggests that certification can only be obtained once the individual has completed the training and education required to master the body of knowledge and skills associated with the discipline. However, continued professional development is considered necessary, demonstrating that it is impossible to master the entire body of knowledge. The practitioner should aspire for excellence in key areas but not perhaps be expected to have mastered the entire body of knowledge to achieve certification. The issue here is the assessment which governs access to certified practice. Having already highlighted the multifaceted, multidimensional nature of ethical/moral and intellectual virtues, expecting aspiring professionals to master an enormous body of knowledge in addition to those virtues is perhaps unrealistic. Nonetheless, obtaining a certificate to practice enables policing and sanctioning and prevents unauthorised practice of a specific profession's skills. Though this approach could lead to monopolisation of a particular market in the educational expedition context, it may help prevent unnecessary tragedies due to unlicensed practice. See Reflexive Account 'Assessing the Assessors'.

Reflexive Account: Assessing the Assessors:

The terms surrounding professional associations, such as 'control', 'entry', 'regulation' etc., all hold connotations of social stratification. No matter which way you look at professionalisation, how the individual is assessed holds the key to their success. Professional organisations assess an individual's ability to uphold their perception of professionalism via their own assessment methods. The public assess an individual's professionalism ultimately by association, reputation, and the level of service they have provided, all of which are inherent with personal and social biases. So, what gives any one person the power to deem what is or is not professional? The assessors will have their own interpretation of professionalism. Similarly, creating a mutually agreed rubric among the head(s) of any occupation will undoubtably depict their interpretation of professionalism. Becoming recognised as a professional seems to be how your professional identity is perceived by others. Can we fairly assess professionalism? Refer to the literature review for 'Assessing Professionalism'.

1.5. *Legislation and Regulation:*

Certification is one form of occupational or professional regulation. Regulating practice involves a variety of institutional structures (Humphries *et al.,* 2010). In the U.K. regulation can be statutory, meaning the requirement for a license is set down in law, or it can be voluntary (Humphries *et al.,* 2010). In the former case, professions are granted such status through an Act of Parliament, thus regulation is at a national level. However, the regulation can vary depending on what is being licensed. Humphries *et al.,* (2010) explains two types of licensing: licensing to protect title and licensing to protect function. The former indicates that an individual with a specific job title can provide all services and products outlined by that occupation. The latter indicates that the job title only enables the individual to undertake specific activities or services. In addition, the nature of the licensing authority can differ. It might be issued by an occupational body, the government, or the local authority. The requirements for receiving a license or becoming registered with a professional body or association can include passing an industry specific examination, the demonstration of work practice and experience, and/or passing a medical or criminal record check (Humphries *et al.,* 2010).

Professional/occupational regulation can take various forms in the U.K. Certification and/or accreditation requires an assessment of the practitioner's competence and knowledge in a specific area. In some fields certification is not mandatory; therefore, non-certified practitioners can still provide the same service (Humphries *et al.,* 2010). Registration, however, can be both. Practitioners must meet the requirements to register, which can include the attainment of educational qualifications and passing exams, but they are not required to register. Registration with the relevant body can afford the practitioner protection of title, meaning only members of that body can call themselves by that title. Using a protected title without being registered is sometimes an offence that carries a criminal penalty. Finally, with licensing and registration, the practitioner is required to meet set standards, usually the attainment of specific qualifications and evidence of competence. Licensing is the mandatory requirement to hold a legal permit to practice. It means an absolute prohibition on practice in that profession without holding a license; for example, you cannot practice as a doctor or a lawyer without a license.

Humphries *et al.,* (2010) illustrate regulatory systems within the U.K. and support Hammer's (2000) structural component of professionalism, '(8) Licensure/certification'. If the educational expedition sector became a governmentally regulated occupation, thus taking a step towards becoming a recognised profession, it would have to decide upon a mutually agreed process of regulation. I would advocate the use of registration, requiring all educational expedition leaders to be registered with a professional association. To practice as a Chartered Surveyor, one must be a registered member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, thus demonstrating protection of title. One is not required to be registered with any association or body to call oneself an educational expedition leader. However, if BES were to stipulate that their expedition leaders had to be registered with BES as expedition leaders and were to require certain qualifications or experience for this registration, then individual practitioners would be required to register and thus be regulated to enable the use of that title. BES could still allow individual practitioners the autonomy to exercise their professional judgement when on expedition. I argue that being registered as a professional within a professional association, enabling the expedition leader to be called a professional, would be desirable. However, this is not to say that those who do not wish to be registered and regulated do not demonstrate professionalism. Regulation does however have a number of positive and negative expected effects. Positives include: (1) a statutory regulation of title; (2) a level of prestige recognised by the government and the public; (3) the attainment of educational qualifications, thus demonstrating continued professional development; (4) enhanced consumer confidence in a potentially superior service, thus allowing for higher charging rates and economic growth for the sector; and (5) government and occupational/profession regulation of entry to the professional association, eliminating unregistered, unregulated practitioners using that title.

The possible negatives of regulation can be identified as (1) mass-reformation and mass-conformity to a centralised body and ideal; (2) the possibility that not all leaders currently practising may meet the criteria to be registered; (3) an added government responsibility to help the transition to universal registration as the public does not have the capacity to evaluate the competence of the professional. In addition, (4) the public may have access to the register, which may contain information about individual practitioners and so a certain amount of privacy and independence is lost; (5) performance standards are monitored; thus, any deviations can result in disciplinary action. Finally, (6) it could result in the monopolisation of the educational expedition market by a few organisations and individuals.

1.6.Sociological implications:

In opposing the development of professionalisation, Noordegraaf and Schinkel (2011) point out that often there is no functional necessity for an occupation to designate itself a profession. They suggest that increased professionalisation is an outcome born from a struggle over control, linked to more encompassing and changing occupational contexts. Utilising the term clearly classifies a body of practitioners, and as such highlights a power-centred approach to obtain an occupational and economic monopoly. However, sociologically speaking, social groupings are often defined by force and power (Noordegraaf and Schinkel, 2011) and will therefore exist regardless of an occupational context. This notion of power relates to one of the three major sociological paradigms: the social-conflict paradigm, or conflict theory (Manza *et al.,* 2010 and Little *et al.,* 2014). Little *et al.,* (2014) argue that conflict theorists believe there is a strained relationship between employer and employee. They emphasise that capitalists own the means of production within a political system, making business owners rich while systematically keeping workers poor. This paradigm is utilised by sociologists to investigate how ‘social class, race, ethnicity, gender and age are linked to the unequal distribution of money, power, education, and social prestige’ (Manza *et al.*, 2010:281). In the context of professionalism, Muzio *et al.,* (2010) discuss the impact of occupational/professional stratification derived from this conflict or power framework. They explain how this perspective illuminates occupational dominance within professionalism, noting how professions use their superior technical, political, and organisational resources to gain control over their occupational markets. Therefore, the monopolisation of the educational expedition market would enable the professional associations to maintain skill scarcity and maximise rewards by limiting access to certain privileges to a restricted number of leaders. On the other hand, those who do not become professionalised or socialised into these associations will therefore lack access to these rewards, which would inevitably endorse or heighten the social and professional stratification within the educational expedition sector. Here I consider Hammer’s (2000) professional structural component ‘(5) Equivalence of members’ to be currently unachievable and to conflict with another of his components, ‘(9) Governance by peers’.

Doda (2005) notes that the social-conflict paradigm suggests dominance as the most important aspect of social order. This is not to suggest that educational expedition leaders would or should dominate the expedition market, but it does highlight the ripple effect the introduction of professional status would have throughout the outdoor industry. It would not bestow equal benefits on all those currently working as expedition leaders. Consequently, if professionalisation of the educational expedition sector were initiated, and the number of leaders in support of this change outweighed those in opposition, those leaders joining the association may have to forfeit certain ideals (autonomy and independence) to gain access to the monopoly, status, rewards, and other privileges afforded to them. However, I argue this would only occur in the initial stages of professionalisation, until its membership of the association became universal.

Doda (2005) illustrates different types of socialisation. Anticipatory socialisation refers to a process of adaptation, a process whereby individual practitioners begin to learn the roles, values, attitudes, and skills of a social status or occupation to which they aspire to belong. They do this in preparation and anticipation of socialisation. Therefore, once the initial transition to professionalisation has become the norm, those who are new to the educational expedition sector will not know anything different and will conform to the new requirements. This includes the attainment of: (1) higher education qualifications; (2) sufficient technical and practical experience; (3) an in-depth understanding of the moral and intellectual virtues relevant to the profession; (4) the active participation in regulated continued professional development; and (5) an adherence to the association's code of ethics and professional conduct. Achieving this socialisation would demonstrate professionalism in the educational expedition sector, achieving another of Hammer's (2000) professional structural components, '(2) Unique socialisation of student members'.

Having already highlighted the multi-faceted nature of professionalism, the variety of ways in which professionalism can manifest itself and the diversity of different professional systems suggests that professionalism is much too diverse a phenomenon to define (Nolin, 2008). Whitty (2006) illustrates recent sociological perspectives see professionalism as a malleable phenomenon; it is 'whatever people think it is at any particular time'. Regardless of its diversity, utilising sociological paradigms like conflict theory does assist a systematic analysis of professionalism. Noordegraaf and Schinkel (2011) and DiMaggio and Powell (1983) perceive professionalism as a way for groups to imitate and move towards similar practices and structures. This contradicts conflict theory, which highlights the need for hierarchy. Conflict theory is historically used at a macro-societal level (Van den Berg and Janoski, 2005) to discuss the impact of social stratification. In contrast, structural-functionalism or the functional perspective, another major sociological paradigm, is also typically used at a macro-societal level, but does not focus on societal stratification. The functionalist paradigm views 'society as a complex system of interrelated parts working together to maintain stability' (Stolley, 2005:23). According to this perspective, a social system's parts are interdependent, and it has a normal state of equilibrium; when disturbed, the interdependent parts reorganise to establish a new equilibrium. By analogy, professionalisation of the educational expedition sector could be viewed as disturbing the equilibrium of the outdoor industry, which would eventually reorganise and find a new equilibrium. Therefore, this paradigm supports a notion discussed earlier; professionalisation of the educational expedition sector would eventually become the new normal, or in this case, the new equilibrium.

Viewed through the functionalist lens, social stratification is important in the purpose it serves at a macro-societal level, how it functions in society and influences society. Social stratification in this sense has a purpose, and within professionalism, its purpose can be as simple as the protection of status, higher salaries, and greater rewards (Little *et al.,* 2014). The functionalist paradigm emphasises social stratification. Each occupation has a function, but not all occupations are equal. In the context of the outdoor industry, the professionalisation of the educational expedition sector may therefore suggest that it is of greater importance than other sectors within the industry, that it serves a higher function than other sectors. But how does society decide whether one occupation is more important than another? Celebrities often receive higher social status and financial reward than perhaps teachers, or police officers, yet their functions in society are completely different. Inequality serves to reward individual merit and motivation within professional associations, which indicates a stratified meritocratic social system. I would argue in agreement with Stolley (2005) that the functionalist paradigm does not explain the causes of societal change but only highlights the potential impact of that change at a macro-societal level. What function does the professionalisation of the educational expedition sector serve? Do rewards of professionalism function as a motivator? Nolin (2008) argues that it is not good for society if there are no rewards involved in acquiring professional expertise. Study of the traditional professions suggests that professionalisation would enable educational expedition leaders to receive greater rewards for their professional expertise.

The third overarching sociological paradigm is symbolic interactionism, or the interactionalist paradigm. This is based on a micro-level perspective (Stolley, 2005) and is used to examine individual interactions within a society or within a professional association. This approach analyses how individuals make sense of their social worlds (Little *et al.,* 2014). It considers that people are actively engaged in shaping their own worlds and are not just acted upon by society. Little *et al.,* (2014:27) describe three basic premises associated with this paradigm:

> (1) Humans act toward things on the basis of the meanings they ascribe to those things;
>
> (2) The meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction one has with others and the society;
>
> (3) These meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he or she encounters.

Central to this paradigm is the study of how individuals interact with each other and with wider society, how they interpret symbols and language and make sense of these interactions, inevitably shaping their view of the world (Carter and Fuller, 2015). Given its focus on the individual, symbolic interactionism analyses how people interact by interpreting the meaning of each interaction. These interactions are interpretive stimuli and can manifest in different forms: gestures, words, body language, and facial expressions among many. The sum of these interactions defines the situation (Little *et al.,* 2014), which then allows joint action and reaction to take place. Therefore, sociologists using symbolic interactionism look for patterns of interaction between people by analysing their intercommunication. This method will be referred to again later within the methodological chapter. Functionalists would focus on the overall sum of these interactions and their impact on society. Conflict theorists would analyse the situation to determine inequalities within the social system. In relation to the study of professionalism, I believe that the sociological perspective of most use is symbolic interactionism. It is interpretive, it focuses on interactions at a micro-societal level, and it is applicable within the context of educational expeditions where leaders demonstrate their own individual interpretation of professionalism. I will also examine later how these interactions function within larger groups of people in the outdoor industry and the potential for conflict caused by individual perceptions of what professionalism means.

1.7. Symbolic Prestige:

Based on Noordegraaf and Schinkel (2011) professionalism can be regarded as a form of symbolic capital. Professionalisation has to be seen in a wider social context, and within that context it is affected by sociological forces and powers. However, as well as those in power, there are those in a position of struggling to acquire this form of capital. The notion that professionalism is a form of capital is supported by the numbers of those seeking to obtain professional status. Consequently, its status and value results in social struggle from those who desire to claim professional status within an occupational field, and this is one of the ways professionalism is a force acting on society. Yet those who have attained professional status and are dominant within the profession have also had to undergo struggle or search for recognition (Steinmetz, 2006). All those in an occupational field are independently searching for mutual recognition from each other and from the hierarchy within the profession which Steinmetz calls the ‘Symbolic Order’ (Steinmetz, 2006:454).

It is inherent in the initial premise that professional status is a form of symbolic capital that there will be competition to acquire that capital. In any social field or professional association, individual practitioners hoping to obtain symbolic capital will compete for economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital in order to gain dominant positions in their occupational fields (Pret *et al.,* 2016). In this way, professionalism as symbolic capital acts as a mechanism for acquiring and retaining powerful positions. However, different occupations have their own forms of capital. The struggle to obtain it is mainly a subconscious process governed by habitus. Habitus can be defined as the rules of engagement, subconsciously assisting practitioners with their decision-making process (Pret *et al.,* 2016). I believe that habitus is informed by ethical and moral virtues and enables practitioners to apply an individualised interpretation of professional ethics. This individualised interpretation leads to the development of an individual professional identity, which will be discussed later.

Although professionalism has been identified as a form of symbolic capital, the process by which it is attained has not been discussed in detail. Governmental regulation and certification have been mentioned. However, the sociological process of attainment of professional status as symbolic capital has not. If achieving the status of professional as symbolic capital is the goal, what is the sociological process by which it can be achieved?

The search for symbolic capital and mutual recognition could also be interpreted as a search for social capital. Schuller (1999:5) defines social capital as 'networks, norms and trust that enable participants to act together more effectively to pursue shared objectives'. I argue that if symbolic capital is accompanied by a mutual desire for its attainment, then the theory of social capital recognises that practitioners could pursue it as a shared objective. In the same way, Schuller (1999:6) describes social capital as 'made up of social obligations ("connections"), which are convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the form of a title of mobility'. If social capital is built on obligations, supported by the desire for economic gain and an exclusive title, then it is closely linked to the struggle for symbolic capital, or professional status. Equally, though professional status is identified here as symbolic capital, Pret *et al.*, (2016) propose that all forms of economic capital can generate a form of social capital. However, symbolic capital in the form of professional status supports the notion (Pret *et al.*, 2016) that it is usually associated with the possession of prestige, status, and a positive reputation. Therefore, symbolic capital cannot be attained without also attaining social capital within an occupational professional association existing in the educational expedition sector. The lack of symbolic capital can restrict organisational processes and have a negative long-term effect on an occupation's reputation and performance (Fischer and Reuber, 2007). It follows that to professionalise the educational expedition sector, imposing governmental regulation and licensing would not suffice. Professionalisation would also require outdoor expedition leaders to acquire, perhaps through higher education, social capital, moral and intellectual virtues, and commitment to continued professional development.

1.8. Modernisation founded in traditionalism:

Members of the traditional professions see governmental regulation as a key criterion for professional status, and the modern perception has yet to move away from this traditional view. Bonnin and Ruggunan (2016) propose that occupations which require higher skill levels but do not necessarily enjoy high status attempt to professionalise by increasing social and symbolic capital. They suggest further that this is achieved by the occupation attempting to control access to the occupational or professional associations. This is directly applicable to the educational expedition sector and demonstrates the importance of occupational and professional regulation at a macro-societal level. If the educational expedition sector were to professionalise through governmental regulation, professionalism as symbolic capital would be an important motivator in the process of opening up new markets (Fuller and Tian, 2006). Therefore, the modern view of professional structure should include a modern understanding of social and symbolic capital, taught as a prerequisite for access to the occupation or profession. A modern view of professionalism should be taught as part of higher professional education and include all structural elements discussed so far, which would instil a new professional habitus that may appeal to a new generation of educational expedition leaders.

During the earlier discussion of governmental regulation, the importance of and requirement for higher education qualifications and/or equivalent experience was identified. Focusing on the socialisation of higher educational students into occupational/professional fields will also require a revised, modern model of how professional standards should be taught; see Reflexive Account ‘Modelling the Model’. The strong focus on student learning and institutionalised improvement leads to more sophisticated models and practices of professional development (Hargreaves, 1994). The call for a modernised perception is not an abstract ideology. The traditionalised prerequisites for professional status include continued professional development and continued training in relation to the practical application of professional knowledge. Professional practitioners are expected to remain informed on the latest developments in the field and be engaged in continuous learning (Despotidou and Prastacos, 2012). Therefore, based on a modern approach, a revised view of professionalism is achievable and can be based on continued professional development at a macro-societal level. This is not to suggest that traditionalised notions of professionalism should be forgotten. The accepted qualities of professionalism have their roots in ancient thought (Despotidou and Prastacos, 2012) and thus should be used as the foundation for modernised progression.

<u>Reflexive Account: Modelling the model</u>

Personally, I am unaware of any model to teach or assess professionalism. I am however a product of effective teaching practises and continued professional development and thus in the position to offer my thoughts on the processes I have experienced. Noting the differences between traditionalised perceptions of professionalism inherent in the education system as well as analysing modern approaches to professionalism may allow for a modern re-conceptualisation of professionalism. However, recognising the scale and scope of this PhD thesis, a plan for mass reformation is too much to ask for. On the other hand, developing a model of a reconceptualised interpretation of professionalism to assist in the formation of a student's professional identity is achievable.

Rehm *et al.,* (2010:284) argue that the 'past few decades' have been notable for a philosophy that embraces a critique of existing social structures and traditionally accepted values. The revised views of professionalism throughout the decades not only demonstrate changing social philosophies but the existence of differing professional standards over time (Edgar, 2009). These waves of professionalisation are defined by the knowledge each era uses; the body of knowledge an occupation uses determines the boundaries of the profession (Edgar, 2009). If waves of professionalisation are determined by the body of knowledge an occupation uses, then the progression of that body of knowledge should cause a new wave of professionalism. Professional standards will have to expand and adapt as the body of professional knowledge increases. However, the way in which society views this progression will be dependent on the current sociological climate. This would require the educational expedition sector to regularly re-evaluate its parameters and the parameters of each role within the sector.

Reviewing professionalism through analysis of past professional doctrines is not new. Terrel and Wildman (1992) propose that re-evaluation of professionalism requires an examination of the profession's past and its present while recognising the changing demands society has placed on it. They propose further that a society's sense of tradition is a useful social force. It enables professionals to appreciate the cultural past and connect to the present to improve their understanding of both. In this way, occupations can recognise the basic moral principles underpinning their roles in society, which helps shape their social function (Terrel and Wildman, 1992) and in turn forms a foundation for a new concept of professionalism. However, professional heritage can be misunderstood over time if one does not also educate oneself in the theoretical principles of its practice. Much like the traditional professions such as medicine and law, educational expedition leaders will encounter uncertainty and situations new to them regardless of their formal education and experience. Walker (2001) suggests that emergent professionalism involves a commitment to living with that uncertainty and learning to live with it. I agree that uncertainty is inevitable in many occupations, but I suggest that formal education and experience as well as the synergy between theory and practice would allow the professional practitioner to develop a heightened level of understanding. This understanding should enable them to confront most situations in a manner deemed professional both by themselves and by those who are regulating their practice. However, there is a moral dilemma associated with regulating practice; what moral philosophy will promote professionalism? Who decides which moral code is required in an occupation? Are all moral codes and concepts equally important in the context of professionalism? How can morality be taught and regulated?

Deontological ethics or duty-based ethics (Nowakowski, 2010) have been referred to throughout this chapter. Deontology imposes a practical requirement to do something or not to do something (Velleman, 2006). Though this statement readily represents deontic ideals, if the word “requirement” is replaced by the word “duty” it becomes more readily applicable to occupational/professional fields. According to Graziano (2012), professional associations are based on two fundamental premises: deontology and the social role of the profession. However, the difficulty with deontology is its focus on an action, as opposed to the consequence. The morality of an action is judged right or wrong, good, or bad, based only on whether someone complies with or disobeys a series of rules. Simply put, deontological theory looks at inputs rather than outcomes (Hall, 2020). The moral principle inherent in this approach is similar to Immanuel Kant’s categorical imperative, which focuses on good will: ‘Always act in such a way that the maxim of your action can be willed as a universal law of humanity’ (Dodig-Crnkovic, 2011:59). However, the action can be morally right but produce results which negatively affect overall happiness (Velleman, 2006). In this way, regardless of the negative consequences, if the action is morally just and fulfils one’s duty, to Kant it is ethically sound, as the action was founded in good will. However, though the action may be morally justifiable and undertaken with good will, if a professional practitioner were to act in a way that produces negative consequences, they could be in breach of their professional standards and found to be at fault. Therefore, a professional's action must be morally just, and the consequences must also benefit their clients. Thus, the moral dilemma here requires the use of both a utilitarian and a deontological moral approach in professional practice. Utilitarianism, in contrast to deontology, is a consequentialist theory. It suggests that:

> We are morally obliged in all our actions to try and produce the best consequences on the whole, by which is understood the greatest possible good for all persons indifferently or disinterestedly considered (McNamee *et al.*, 2000:199).

Utilitarianism is therefore a moral philosophy based on outcome. (McNamee *et al.,* 2000). Utilitarians weigh the potential outcomes of each choice based on the premise that what ought to be done is that which will produce the most utility or good. The difficulty in synergising these two different theories lies in the outcome. Medical practitioners have a moral duty to their patients and act in accordance with their duty by making a diagnosis (deontology). However, the outcome of the treatment based on that diagnosis will not always produce the most utility or good for the patient (utilitarianism). Thus, seeking the outcome that produces the most utility or good is possible in all contexts regardless of the morality of the action. However, if the medical practitioner acted only in the way that produces the most utility or good out of all the options they had at their disposal, then it could be said that they still achieved an outcome that was sound in terms of both deontology and utilitarianism. This is not to say that all morally sound solutions can satisfy both deontology and utilitarianism. Moral absolutes in this sense are unachievable.

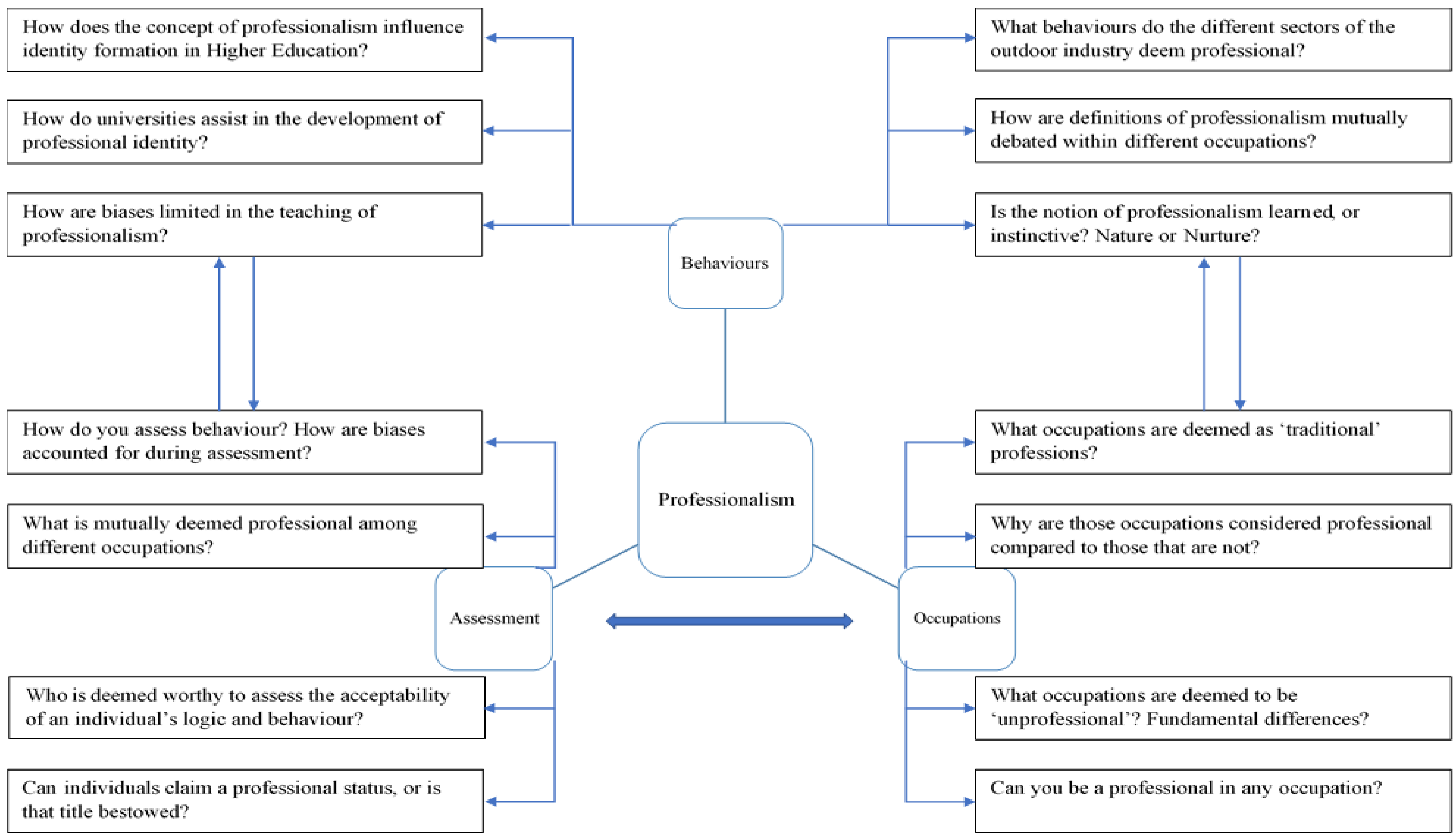
In stark contrast to these two theories, moral particularism asserts that there are no overriding principles that are applicable in every case (Tsu, 2013). Rigid moral principles are only equipped to deal with simple situations and are unable to assist in complex moral situations (Tsu, 2013). Following this understanding, I would advocate a morality in professional ethics that synergises elements taken from deontology and utilitarianism and includes practical and flexible qualities that enable its application in simple and complex moral decisions. That is, a moral code that advocates the importance of compliance with duty (deontology), in the service of an outcome that produces the most good or utility (utilitarianism), and which is dynamic in its applicability (moral particularism) is the most desirable. A moral conception encompassing elements from each of these theories would produce a moral code applicable to professional education and professional ethics. It need not be confined to a single occupation but could be applied in many occupations.

1.9.*Conclusion:*

This introductory chapter presents various philosophical perspectives, sociological paradigms, traditionally accepted prerequisites for professionalisation, and many unanswered questions. Some of these questions are beyond the scope of this thesis but still serve to demonstrate the phenomenological nature of professionalism. At the beginning of this chapter, I highlighted Hammer's (2000) interpretation of structural components for a recognised profession. Throughout this introduction I have discussed, analysed, and questioned theories, with the aim of removing any objections to leaders in the educational expedition sector acquiring professional status. To assist in this process, I have tried to identify any of Hammer's (2000) structural components that can be found in the educational expedition sector. Doing so has identified mutually inconsistent perceptions of professionalism in many occupational contexts. Because of the dynamic nature of professionalism, I viewed the phenomenon from the perspectives of Aristotle, Socrates, and Confucius. Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* provided an historical account of ethical practice, views on the practical application of ethics, and theories about the development of moral and ethical virtues through habituation. This led to a philosophical analysis of moral and ethical decision-making and its applicability to professional practice. I moved on to Confucius' societal obligation theory, demonstrating how a modern society still relies on an unwritten contract of public service and reciprocity among established professions which is an important part of traditional perception of professionalism. Additionally, by using the Confucian model of society, I highlighted the hierarchal and professional stratification between different occupations and within them. This existence of this professional stratification was further explained by the three major sociological paradigms and by the application of a symbolic interactionalist approach. Finally, I proposed the use of elements from three moral theories to inform the reflexive development of a learning model for professionalism. I will discuss this further later in this thesis.

This introduction illustrates that professionalism is a varied and multifaceted concept. In the following pages I will call for a revised view of professionalism based on a modern approach and context. This chapter sets out the basic premises for a discussion of professional identity, professional association, professional characteristics and attributes, assessment of professionalism, and definition of professionalism. These premises are further rooted in the documents referred to in the literature review. My initial investigation of the literature discussed above raised certain key questions which are in my view relevant to this thesis; these are summarised in figure 2.

Figure Two: Professionalism. What? How? Why? When?



2. Literature Review

2.1.Introduction:

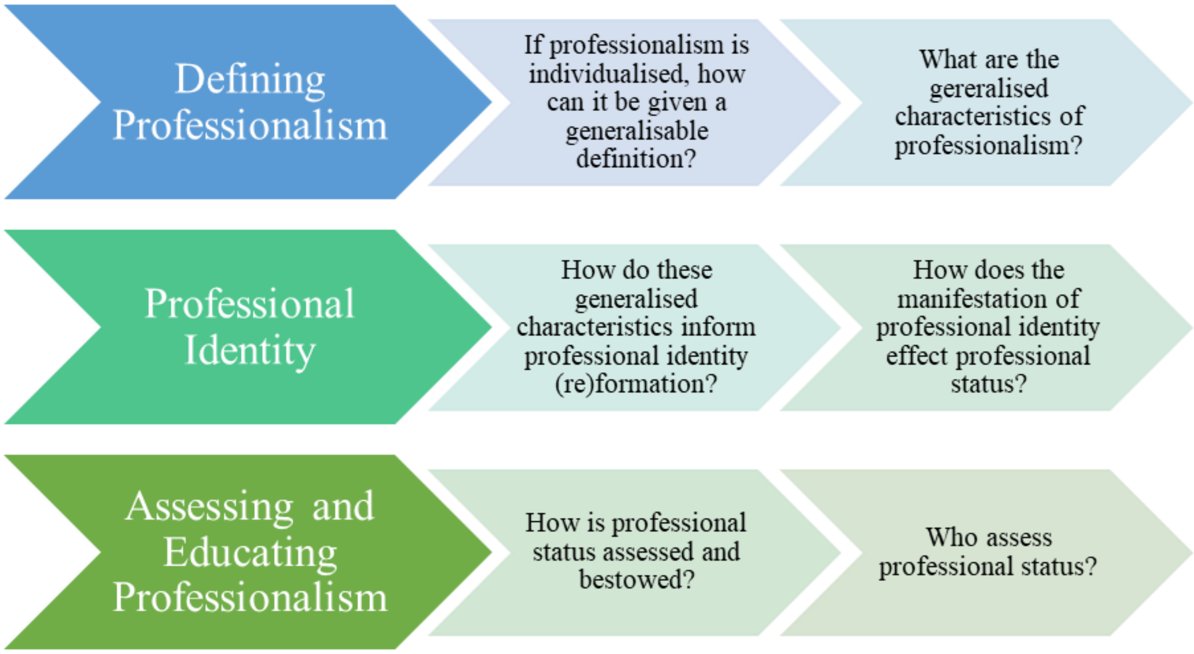
As a pre-doctorate student researching notion of professionalism, I examined behaviours that I considered to be professional. However, what I or any other individual would consider to be professional behaviour is highly subjective. As shown in my introduction, issues of deontology, morality, philosophy, and sociology show what a complex phenomenon professionalism is. The application and interpretation of these concepts affect the professional practices displayed by practitioners in various occupational fields. Given these subjective understandings, how can we assess professional behaviour in an objective and impartial manner? Lesser *et al.,* (2010) suggest that a definition of professionalism based on behaviour as opposed to principles governed by the occupation will make the process of professionalisation more effective in the workplace. Knowing what behaviours are expected of a professional allows an individual to strive to demonstrate those behaviours. On the other hand, knowing what behaviours are required in an occupational role without developing the ethics to underpin them may lead to the individual becoming a professional actor, not an acting professional! Similarly, compiling a list of professional behaviours that are common to multiple sectors within the outdoor industry may lead to an excessive desire to conform and may quell individual initiative. Furthermore, who should decide which behaviours are considered to be professional? How might a list of professional behaviours be recognised/framed?

Conformity to a list of behaviours and the normalisation of these behaviours would be difficult to oversee. The introduction of such a list would inevitably influence the individual professional identity of each practitioner. Professional Identity has been viewed as an ongoing process of interpretation and re-interpretation of experience by Beijaard *et al.,* (2004) and Kerby (1991). If professional identity is a product of an ongoing process of re-interpretation of experience, the introduction of regulated behaviour will also be re-interpreted over time. This process could inadvertently erode professionalism if regulation and assessment fail to evolve as society changes. Similarly, requiring conformity to regulated behaviours that differ from an already established professional identity may create internal conflict with existing moral and ethical virtues.

Clearly, each practitioner's individual professional identity influences the behaviour of that practitioner. Therefore, the decision-making process for each professional practitioner is subjective and hidden from the observer and involves consideration and re-interpretation of the theoretical premises discussed: morality, deontology, functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism. Each subconsciously affects the formation and reformation of professional identity. To determine the influence of these concepts, we need to ask: what criteria do professionals consider before they act? Is there a taught or learned professional decision-making process? Hodges *et al.,* (2011) introduced a process of assessment to analyse the problem-solving processes of students, the impact of the learning environment, and the effect of the teacher–student relationship. This process highlighted the criteria that influence decision-making and investigated how resulting behaviours may sometimes be considered unprofessional. The assessment uses a constructivist approach. It focuses on the development of professionalism through interpersonal interactions, or symbolic interactionism, seemingly based on the sociological paradigm. The development of this assessment process is an example of the application of professional assessment within education before the student becomes a fully qualified member of a profession. This process of professional assessment arguably constrains students just as they begin to develop and understand their own professional identities.

The application of professional assessment and regulation influence an occupation at the level of the individual practitioner and of the general sector. Walsh and Abelson (2008) suggest attention to and assessment of professional values is necessary to ensure medicine does not become merely a trade. This implies that professional assessment is one factor that distinguishes a professional occupation from a trade. On the other hand, they do not explain how professionalism should be assessed. To assess professional values and behaviours and therefore professional identities requires an accepted understanding of what constitutes professional behaviour within an occupation. How each occupation defines professional behaviour would impact how that behaviour is assessed. It was shown earlier that there are difficulties in applying Hammer's (2000) structural components for professionalism when seeking to define professionalism in any particular occupation. What each component actually is and whether it exists can be interpreted differently and debated in each occupation or profession. These are some of the issues that have shaped the structure of this literature review as illustrated below in Figure Three, 'Professionalism and Ambiguity'.

Figure Three: Professionalism and Ambiguity



2.2.<u>Defining Professionalism:</u>

A phenomenological approach to investigating professionalism includes studying the way ordinary members of an occupation invoke the term in everyday usage (Beam, 1988). Some scholars promote this phenomenological study of professionalism, moving away from its definition and focuses on its everyday application. Other scholars attempt to define professionalism 'by exhaustively cataloguing the traits or attributes shared by occupations commonly identified as professions' (Beam, 1988; Becker and Carper, 1956). Others, like Beam (1988), advocate the exploration of professionalism at a meso-societal and organisational level (Evetts, 2003). Beam (1988:4) highlights the benefits of the organisational approach as:

> 'a useful way in which to view the professionalisation of an occupation; it suggests another strategy for understanding the forces that influence how information is created in news media organisations; and it takes the analysis of professionalism beyond the individual level of analysis, thereby providing a way to link the concept of professionalism with organisational performance…'

Atkins and Tummons (2017:36), in contrast to Beam (1988), suggest it is unnecessary for professional standards to be explicitly defined. They point out that 'professional standards do lots of things, but they do not provide glossaries nor expected to'. Evans (2008) and Freidson (1994) argue much of the debate about professionalism is clouded by unstated assumptions and inconsistent and incomplete usages. Similarly, Evans (2008) and Fox (1992) highlight that professionalism means different things to different people, noting further that it is unlikely that the term 'professionalism' will be used in one universal way in all occupations. The phenomenological nature of professionalism as demonstrated by these differing approaches is what prompted me to adopt an interpretivist, qualitative approach in this study. I argue that professionalism should not be defined as an all-encompassing concept but should be defined and applied differently in specific organisational and occupational contexts. Although identifying commonly accepted behaviours, attitudes, traits, and characteristics of professionalism is a daunting task, it does assist in its analysis at a micro-societal level. Evans (2008) argues that professionalism consists of the attitudes and behaviours one demonstrates towards one's profession. For Evans it is an attitudinal and behavioural orientation of individuals towards their occupation. This interpretation supports the notion that professionalism is a form of symbolic capital. The nature of an individual occupation directly influences how each practitioner perceives that occupation. The status of the occupation will therefore impact its public image. Hence, professional status is bestowed on an occupation if that occupation is deemed worthy of that status by those engaged in it and by society generally. This suggests the influence of a value system imposed by society and by social pressures, a form of power held over occupations striving to become a recognised profession. I therefore need to ask, how can professionalism be defined within the educational expedition sector in a way that is acceptable to society? See below Reflexive Account, 'Phenomenal Definition'.

To try to compile a universal definition of professionalism applicable to all occupations would be naïve because it would not take account of any individualised internal and/or external factors relating to a particular profession (Hodges *et al.,* 2011). Based on this consideration, every occupation is founded on a different set of principles and practices, all derived from the different experiences of practitioners and the wider social dimension.

<u>*Reflexive Account: Phenomenal Definition*</u>

Though it is noted above that the term "professionalism" is not used consistently, I would still argue that we can each recognise someone acting professionally regardless of the context. However, what this means to us collectively is what we find difficult to analyse and to define. A phenomenon which is continually changing and evolving, and which is continually re-interpreted at a macro, meso, and micro-societal level will, in my opinion, never have a universal definition, that is, one which is applicable to all occupations, and which remains constant through time. I believe that such a definition would require investigation at a meso and micro-societal level in order to find commonly accepted principles which are also valid at a macro-societal level. However, the fact is that professionalism is an interpretive phenomenon, and no matter how extensive the research, it will always be interpreted differently by different observers considering different occupations. Please refer to the methodological chapter for the phenomenological approaches considered for this thesis.

To define professionalism Hodges *et al.*, (2011) consider three perspectives:

> (1) professionalism as an individual characteristic, trait, behaviour, or cognitive process;
> (2) professionalism as an interpersonal process or effect;
> (3) professionalism as a societal/institutional phenomenon: a socially constructed way of being associated with power.

In medicine a practice-based, public service approach to professionalism is preferred:

> '(1) compassionate, respectful, and collaborative orientation with a focus of being "in service" to the patient; (2) integrity and accountability; (3) pursuit of excellence; (4) the fair and ethical stewardship of healthcare resources…' (Lesser *et al.*, 2010)

In contrast to the above, Hoyle and John (1995), and Furlong *et al.*, (2000) suggest that professionalism in education revolves around knowledge, autonomy, and responsibility. These definitions are based on criteria typically associated with professionalism. However, the interpretation of Hodges *et al*. (2011) uses generalised terminology which does not make explicit the necessary professional criteria encompassed by each point. This contrasts with the approach of Lesser *et al.*, (2010) who identifies specific types of behaviour expected of aspiring medical professionals. Lesser *et al*. (2010) give an interpretation focused on service, on duty to the patient, or more generally to the public. This is a quality associated with traditional definitions of professionalism. Further, Hodges *et al*. (2011) identify professionalism as a macro-societal phenomenon associated with power and dominance. Though Lesser *et al*. (2010) interpret public service as the dominant requirement for professional status, there is still an element of power in the relationship between the profession and the public. The public is reliant on professional associations and services provided by occupations such as law, medicine, accountancy, and education. The need for each service means that there is an unwritten contract between the public and the professions. The public grant status and prestige in return for necessary services, a symbiotic relationship. Evetts *et al*. (2009) explain how a capitalist economy, rational-legal social order, and modern professions are mutually dependent on each other. They maintain the stability of social order and embody and reinforce society's values.

Analysing definitions taken from two different medical journals (Hodges *et al.*, 2011 and Lesser *et al.,* 2010) illustrate the lack of consistency surrounding the meaning of professionalism. Furlong *et al.,* (2000) suggest a key component of professionalism is the possession and use of a body of technical or specialised knowledge that is beyond the reach of lay people. Based on this idea, mastery of any trade, like joinery for example, requires knowledge which is beyond the reach of the lay person, demonstrating once again how difficult it is to define professionalism.

The Universities U.K. *et al*. (2004) definition of professionalism is based on different criteria from those of Hodges *et al*. (2011) and specifies a code of conduct. On the other hand, the definition given by Lesser *et al*. (2010) is based on functional criteria on which a code of conduct is based: providing a service to the public, the pursuit of excellence, and ethical stewardship of healthcare resources. In my view the definition of professionalism used by Universities U.K. *et al*. (2004) is too vague. Their perception of professionalism, a collection of qualities that characterise accepted practice, does not define those specific qualities they consider to be accepted practice. Even though professionalism is not commonly understood, occupations still claim professional status. Medicine, law, and higher education involve the possession and practice of a specialised body of knowledge, and these are all occupations that are traditionally acknowledged to be professions (Furlong *et al.,* 2000).

Beam (1988:6) suggests that one of the main limitations of the phenomenological approach is the difficulties involved in cross-occupational comparison. Professionalism becomes difficult to define because occupations differ and cannot be compared using a common standard. If such a common standard existed, it would be much easier to define professionalism. Another difficulty with the term ‘professionalism’ is the traditional connotations of prestige associated with it, which make it difficult to consider a vocational occupation as a profession, even though often such vocational occupations strive to achieve professional status like medicine and law. When comparing occupations, one looks for common features in practice, in the attributes of the practitioners, and in the function and the expertise required to work in the field. In this sense, it would be difficult to compare educational expedition leadership to surgical residency or legal practice. Therefore, the modern conception of professionalism should not be defined solely by reference to the traditional archetypal professions or archaic principles. New, independent definitions are required, individually tailored to each different occupation. If it is not possible to arrive at a universally accepted definition of professionalism at a macro-societal level, then the focus should be on a meso-societal definition occurring at the level of the sector, field, or industry.

Developing a specialised body of knowledge requires a union of theory and practice. Lucey and Souba (2010) and Lesser *et al.* (2010) suggest that professionalism requires first-hand learning by experience, which develops over time. This is also supported by Furlong *et al.*, (2000) who believe that professionals need to develop a specialised body of knowledge-based skills and that this requires long periods of training, a significant proportion of which should take the form of higher education. Millerson (1964) and Freidson (1988) recognise that common hallmarks of professionalism include skills based on theoretical knowledge obtained through extended and standardised education. Therefore, an effective definition of professionalism in any occupation needs to include the following five elements:

(1) established behaviours, traits, and characteristics commonly accepted among peers, colleagues, and others found within their occupational/professional association;

(2) a code of conduct/ethics and professional ethics that best illustrates the expected level of competency in theory and practice;

(3) extended periods of training that include first-hand experience, which help to instil moral and ethical virtues;

(4) provisions of a service to the public;

(5) access to a specialised body of knowledge which develops and increases with experience and through engaging in continual professional development.

These elements could be introduced and developed through academic study and higher education. However, to establish this protocol would require a move away from the traditions of each profession, to form and make accessible professional learning communities within higher education. This would mean focussing on extended learning, learned behaviour, and observing professional behaviour based on modern perceptions of what professional behaviour is. Thus, would it be possible to create such a learning model to develop professionalism in the outdoor industry?

Although I have identified elements and criteria that assist in defining professionalism, they are merely theoretical until placed in an occupational context. Observation and recognition of professional behaviour is not one of Hammer's (2000) professional structural components. On the other hand, Hammer (2000) does identify the attitudes expected of professionals and provides a separate list highlighting behaviour considered professional:

(1) Using professional colleagues as the major source of professional ideas and judgements in practice;

(2) Belief in service to the public, i.e. one's professional practice is indispensable to society and benefits the public;

(3) A belief in self-regulation;

(4) Dedication to the profession regardless of extrinsic rewards and

(5) Autonomy, i.e. one can make professional decisions without external pressures from clients, non-professionals and employers.

As a result of the two lists, Hammer (2000) gives a definition incorporating each:

> The possession and/or demonstration of structural, attitudinal, and behavioural attributes of a profession and its members. Specific definitions of these categories of attributes can then be defined for various professions.

Lucey and Souba (2010) and Lesser et al. (2010) suggest that viewing professionalism through the lens of observable behaviour supports the idea that professionalism is a multidimensional competency developed over time. This is consistent with the notion of extended learning put forward by Furlong *et al.*, (2000); Millerson (1964) and Freidson (1988). Lucey and Souba, (2010) go further, defining professionalism as a list of behaviours supported by a specific set of skills, skills which challenge the traditional perception of professionalism. The traditional perception asserts that professionalism is about attitude and technical competency based on character traits.

Building on the theme of observable behaviour, I draw on a psychological theory called Reasoned Action. This is a functional theoretical premise stating that one's behaviour is a result of social circumstance, to which belief and attitude are directed (Fishbien and Azjen, 1975; Hammer, 2000). Simply put, behaviour is the result of social circumstance and the personal attitude of the individual toward that circumstance. Reasoned action suggests that an individual's behaviour is determined by their intention to enact the behaviour. The individual's intention is therefore a product of their attitude to the social circumstance. I argue that this theory could assist in understanding the current sociological climate within an occupation or profession and its effect on newly socialised members. Analysing the attitudes of professional practitioners, their motivations, and the resulting behaviour would help inform an understanding of their moral and ethical virtues, as well as their intentions within their work. This would be a step towards a modern perception of professional behaviour, as it would involve a holistic perception of professionalism in its societal context. This perception would be consistent with Hammer (2000:456), who also applies reasoned action as a theoretical premise to assist in defining professionalism by reference to behaviour.

Again, from a behavioural perspective, Purkeson (1999) suggests professionalism is behaving in a manner likely to achieve the best outcome in professional tasks and interactions. However, calling on the practitioner to try to achieve the best outcome does not guarantee the practitioner has the capacity or emotional intelligence to determine the best outcome or what behaviour to demonstrate, nor does it suggest that they understand the moral and ethical virtues associated with their profession. Stern (1996) argues that professional behaviours are highly dependent on context. Therefore, a definition of professionalism in the outdoor industry should not rely on the definition of professionalism in other occupations. It would clearly be wrong to assume that a definition of professionalism in medicine would suffice to define professionalism in law, education, or accountancy. Each work on a separate set of principle-based practices which are informed by duty-based ethics (deontology). This argument is supported by Servage

(2009) and Evetts (2003) who, when considering the notion of professionalism, recognised an unusual emphasis on occupations such as medicine and law regardless of whether that was appropriate.

Cohen (2006) and Swick (2000) define professionalism as a way of acting which is comprised of a set of observable behaviours. However, Trede (2012) proposes that it would be difficult to define professionalism and that any attempt to define what a good professional is would also be difficult, as this varies between occupations and is influenced by individual workplace cultures and policies. If observable behaviours are influenced by workplace cultures and policies then different behaviours would be observed in different workplaces, not least because individuals perceive cultures and policies differently. On the other hand, other research suggests that professional learning communities have the capability to explicitly define professional norms (Kerscher and Caufman, 1995; McClure, 1999; Hargreaves, 2003 and Taylor *et al.,* 2006). Furthermore, if professional behaviours are normalised, individuals aspiring to become professional practitioners would conform to the normalised interpretation of professionalism in their own occupational/professional field. Once again this illustrates the diverse nature of professionalism; all professional learning communities are different. Lesser *et al.,* (2010) emphasise the importance of a professional learning community and suggest that striving to create an environment that teaches professionalism in practice is the ultimate expression of professionalism. Wendell and Hill (2000) recognise a need for professionalisation at the earliest stages of professional education, a notion that supports the teaching of professionalism within higher education, as discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

Additionally, if professional learning communities are equipped to explicitly define the parameters of professionalism, then understanding how the members internalise, and manifest their own interpretations of these parameters could be pertinent to the appearance of the outdoor professional. To recognise the nature of the decision-making process in professional behaviour, the dynamic nature of emotional intelligence, and the inability to guarantee an individual's correct response to social circumstance illustrates the complexity of professionalism in differing learning communities. If professional practitioners demonstrate behaviour deemed unacceptable by a professional learning community, it will negatively influence newly socialised members. Sherlock and Morris (1967) and Yang and Fjortoft (1997) note that professional socialisation literature suggests that the greatest influence on students' attitudes and behaviours are:

> The values and behaviours that students bring into the professional programs, role models in the professional and academic environments and the environments themselves.

This statement raises further questions. Are aspiring professionals and students being socialised by absorbing the profession's original ideals? Or by absorbing the current principles of practice within the professional learning community? Can professional learning communities negatively affect aspiring educational expedition leaders?

If novice professionals mimic behaviour exhibited by more experienced colleagues which is deemed unacceptable by the wider professional community, resulting in disciplinary action, it could be argued that they should not be considered at fault given that they were following the example set by those in a position of hierarchical superiority. Although it is a weak argument for novices to simply say 'he or she did it too', if their role models do not adhere to the profession's standards of professionalism, then the novice's actions should be considered a professionalism lapse (Ginsburg *et al.,* 2000) rather than a complete lack of professionalism. On the other hand, Schuck *et al.,* (2008) suggests that professionalism includes the ability to take responsibility for one's actions and to demonstrate the ability to make sound judgements based on reflection and knowledge of the context in which one is practicing. Occasional lapses in professionalism should be expected of aspiring professionals as they begin to establish their own professional identity. Alternatively, it could be argued that professionals are expected to possess common sense and an ability to distinguish between right and wrong while in a position of responsibility and service. Pursuing this line of reasoning, developing an understanding of right and wrong, good and bad, requires each professional practitioner to understand their own moral and ethical views in relation to their occupation. They also need to experience navigating morally and ethically challenging issues and circumstances within their profession.

It would also be naïve of any professional association to assume that every professional practitioner will always demonstrate the correct behaviour throughout their entire career. Additionally, what society expects from professionals is likely to change and develop over time. It is highly likely therefore that a lapse in professional judgement will occur at some point during every career. This lapse, if not challenged, would serve as a poor example to and a negative influence on new members. I have already argued that it is not possible to devise a definition of professionalism that is applicable to all occupations and that therefore each professional learning community requires its own individual definition. Each definition needs to recognise the individuality of professional behaviour and the likelihood of professional lapses by new members. In my view, a definition that accepts this reality is likely to gain acceptance within an occupation.

Evans (2008) and Hoyle and Wallace (2005) consider professional cultures, or in this context, professional learning communities, to be bodies that share ideologies, values, and attitudes to working. They share similar beliefs, relationships, language, and symbols distinctive of their social unit. This interpretation presents professional learning communities as social groups with an understanding of a consensus for the norms of professional behaviour. They can be described as examples of symbolic interactionism. Additionally, in accordance with the changeable nature of professional communities, the broader influences on their development include the wider socio-political climate (Evans, 2008). The external influence exerted by societal circumstance is a form of power acting on the profession, but a different form of power from that of professional stratification enforced by the institutionalised hierarchy within the profession. Recognition of the effect of social power on the professions constitutes a shift in the modern perception of professionalism. Beam (1988:13) suggests that 'most organisational models assume the social control of workers is crucial'. Beam (1988) argues further that there are three ways to understand control: the strategies used to channel the effects of social interaction; the achievement of conformity with expectations of behaviour and standards of work performance within an organisation; and the outcome of a relationship in which the social actions of one person are mediated by another. Each of these forms of control expects conformity to one mentality, which is the same kind of control exerted over practitioners within a professional association. The power exerted by these associations arguably conflicts with Hammer's (2000) structural component '(11) Autonomy'. Evans (2008) suggests that parameters of behaviour imposed by professional associations define the boundaries of the profession's authority, power, and influence. Evans (2008) further explains that these external agencies appear to have the ability to design a profession and to determine its structure. At a meso-societal level I question whether newly qualified professionals conform to the association's definition of professionalism or to an externally imposed definition. Either would contradict the notion of autonomous development of a professional identity. Please see

Reflexive Account 'Methodological Decisions' for an introduction to methodological considerations here.

Reflexive Account: Methodological Decisions:

Given the demonstrated influence of a professional learning community, its shared ideology, and the notion of power it is associated with, it would clearly require significant research to fully understand the impact of that influence. To identify the norms of behaviour accepted within a professional learning community and by the individual practitioners within that community, and to understand the internal and external interactions which impact the community, would be very difficult to understand through only one method of analysis. Staying true to qualitative and interpretive research design, I believe three methods of investigation are best suited to explore the task: semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and field observations. I believe these would allow better exploration of the phenomenon and prove more informative than questionnaires, surveys, and ethnographies. Please refer to the methodological chapter for further explanation.

Evetts (2012) considers that organisations and associations exhibit specific features. To consider something to be an organisation means to consider that it has an identity, a degree of autonomy, boundaries, and collective resources. To attempt to reform a professional organisation or an association is to attempt to install or reinforce these features of identity so that it better serves the public. This reaffirms the commitment of the professions to duty and to public service. The professional organisation's role is to impose control over its members to ensure adherence to an interpretation of professional service to the public mutually accepted by its members. However, it is perhaps not solely the professional association's interpretation of service but both the association and the practitioner's interpretation of service which entice an individual into a profession. This in turn leads to monopolisation of a specific market. The greater the association, the more notoriety it receives. If a larger association holds prominence for its service, it can hold a larger portion of the market. Furthermore, the focus on providing professional service by enforcing conformity to an association's ideology entrenches professional stratification. Is there room within a profession for an individual professional identity, or is the idea of an individual professional identity an illusion when the reality is conformity to the organisation's standard?

Evetts (2012) considers the medical profession to be highly stratified and powerful in the sense that it is able to determine professional standards from within, as opposed to having those standards imposed by external influences. In contrast, Evetts (2012) also considers that other occupational groups such as teachers, engineers, social workers, and relatively new occupational groups such as human resource professionals and career councillors are unable to define their own professional standards from within. This clearly demonstrates the dominance of the traditionalised professions and the power they hold within their occupational fields. Newer occupations aspiring for professional status do not enjoy internal autonomy in the same way. Though medicine is governmentally regulated, it still enjoys a significant degree of autonomy. In contrast, new occupations striving to become professions are stratified by external forces, bureaucracy, and imposed regulations that exert control over their ideologies and professional identities. This view of professionalism illustrates differing forms of social inequality between the professions, inequality which is not explained by the prerequisites for attaining professional status that I have discussed. Educational expedition leadership is a relatively new occupation, and as such is externally influenced rather than internally regulated.

Comparatively, preceding educational expeditions is the Scouting movement founded by the late Lord Robert Baden-Powell (1857-1941) in 1908. Although the Scouts were not explicitly developing expeditions as an educational tool, Baden-Powell sought to establish characteristics which can be seen in both forms of outdoor education:

> The aim of scouting was to develop leadership skills and to improve the character and health of future citizens through outdoor activities, handicrafts, and service to others, while developing ingenuity, intelligence, skill, and stamina. Baden-Powell defined character as ''moral courage'' that should be accompanied by the judgement to identify right from wrong and to stand up for the right. The training of boys would complement their ordinary education through such activities as tracking and map reading, and learning knots, signalling, and first aid, as well as all the skills that would arise from an outdoor life: fire-lighting, cooking, swimming, sailing, climbing, canoeing, caving, etc. Baden-Powell also laid stress on training in observation (Fox, 2013:258).

Noting here the similarities between modern day BES and Baden-Powell's original conception. Baden-Powell appealed to adolescent boys romanticised perception of soldiering by utilising the term Scout. Whereas BES refer to their participants as Young Explorers perhaps in reference to their founder the late Surgeon Commander George Murray Levick. Baden-Powell also divided the participants into Troops which were then further divided into smaller

Patrols of six or seven. These smaller groups were under the guidance of a Patrol Leader (Fox, 2013:258). Similarly, BES organise their participants into expedition teams, and then further into Fires. These groups are then guided by volunteer leaders, and above them is the Chief Leader.

Evidently, varying aspects of outdoor education are founded on traditionalised conceptions of youth development. Developing a modern approach to professional practice which does not require subconscious conformity to an implicit ideology, but rather conscious conformity to an explicit ideology which improves educational expeditions, should be the ideal. Such an approach would appeal to a newer generation of aspiring leaders by presenting the occupation as a progressive one, one which is not institutionalising social stratification through prejudice towards occupations, as opposed to professions.

2.3. Professional Identity:

One influence on the development of professional learning communities is the identity of individual members. Professional identities as described by Trede (2012) are interdependent entities within the wider structural context of the whole profession. A professional identity, like the professional self, evolves over time and according to Kelchtermans' (1993) consists of five connected elements: (1) self-image, (2) self-esteem, (3) job motivation, (4) task perception and (5) future perspective. Although Kelchtermans (1993) created this list in the context of the teaching profession, each element can be viewed as one that impacts all professional identities. They can be observed in many different occupations, such as law, medicine, accountancy, and psychology. Though Kelchtermans' (1993) list provides a useful tool for analysing the idea of the professional self, there is no need to confine this discussion by only using one such tool.

Contrary to Kelchtermans (1993), Sachs (2003) describes two types of professional identity: (1) 'Entrepreneurial', which is defined as individualistic, controlling, and regulative, externally led and standards led, and (2) 'Activist', which acts to mobilise the professional in the best interests of the student by creating and employing specific standards, policies, and processes in the service of the student. Though both were developed within education, if the term 'student' is replaced by 'client', they can both be seen to apply to various occupations.

Coulehan (2005) considers there to be three types of professional identity within medicine. The first is 'technical', which emphasises technical skill and ability, which suggests that young physicians are cynical about duty, fidelity, confidentiality, and integrity. Furthermore, it suggests that the physician's motivation is mastery of technical skills and knowledge and that they consider their only responsibility is to acquire and properly exercise those skills. The second 'non-reflective' identity considers that young physicians appear to consciously adhere to medical values, while subconsciously their actual behaviour is based on opposing values. The third identity, 'compassionate and respectful', represents a type of professional identity attained by young physicians who have overcome the conflict between these conflicting views.

The differences between these theories can perhaps be explained by the fact that they are written from different perspectives. Sachs (2003) identifies two types of professional identity, but both are focused on the student–teacher relationship. Sachs (2003) conceived both types as an illustration of public service, focussing on the teacher's professional identity rather than on the student's identity. In contrast, Coulehan (2005) analyses the development of the student physician's professional identity and their socialisation into the medical profession. The former focuses on the established professional and their professional identity, while the latter focuses on the student professional who has not yet developed a fully formed professional identity. Both are consistent with Hammer's (2000) list.

Like professionalism, professional identity is a poorly defined concept (Cooper *et al.*, 1996) and one that is difficult to understand when it is the subject of many mutually contested concepts (Gallie, 1963). To suggest that all members of a professional body have a professional identity determined by only five elements may be too limited a view. Nyström (2009) argues that it is impossible to imagine a professional without a professional identity. However, professional identity is in part an internal phenomenon, an aspect of personality, and is thus difficult to observe and define. Furthermore, multiple professional identities can be observed. Professionals may demonstrate characteristics in one situation, in the context of one occupation, at a given time, but their identity may differ moments later when faced with a different situation. Beijaard *et al.*, (2000) consider that teachers derive their professional identities from a combination of the different ways in which they see themselves, such as subject matter expert, pedagogical expert, and didactical expert, which indicates how a practitioner's professional identity may change depending on the situation. A similar view was expressed by Evans (2008:28), who states that 'the basic components and constituent elements of professionalism are essentially singular since they reflect the individuality representing the individuals who are the constituency of the profession delineated'. Though professional identity varies between individuals, Rodger and Scott (2008) believe that professional identity is determined by the contexts in which we immerse ourselves. Therefore, the formation of professional identity, though remaining subjective, is influenced by the external. Having identified already the influence of external agencies and the power they hold over the professions, it can be assumed that the same external agencies will inevitably influence professional identity. Rodger and Scott (2008) argue further that contextual forces are normative and determined by those in authority, specifically those in authority who have an interest in the compliance of those under their authority. Thus, it can be further argued that in each professional context there are a set of pre-existing norms, and it is expected by those in authority that those norms will be upheld and adhered to. Therefore, the assimilation of and adherence to these norms by newly socialised, newly formed professional identities would be 'robbing them of agency, creativity and voice' (Rodger and Scott, 2008:734). The question of professional autonomy is raised again: How can anyone become an autonomous professional in a highly influenced professional role? Please see Reflexive Account 'Professional Identity and BES' for an explanation of why BES was chosen as a sample group in order to examine this issue.

Reflexive Account: Professional Identity and BES:

Having considered above the fluid and implicit nature of professional identity, I believed it was important to identify practitioners who exercise their professional skills in multiple contexts. Leaders of BES volunteer to lead expeditions in many varied locations and circumstances and are therefore used to adapting their professional identity to the context in which they find themselves. Analysing how and what influenced these changes, and why, was important to this study. Are there pre-existing norms which BES volunteer leaders buy into? Or are they subconsciously imposed upon the leaders? Please refer to the Methodological Chapter for an overview of the sample group.

Slay and Smith (2011) noted that a successful career is often associated with the development of a successful professional identity. What is a successful professional identity?

I believe it is an identity that conforms to the pre-existing norms enforced by those in authority. Slay and Smith (2011:87) further discuss three aspects of professional identity:

> First, professional identity is the result of the socialization process and rhetoric's where one is provided with information regarding the meanings associated with a profession… Second, researchers suggest individuals adjust and adapt their professional identity during periods of career transition… Finally, life as well as work experiences influence professional identity by clarifying one's priorities and self-understanding.

Even with that assistance from Slay and Smith (2011), professional identity remains difficult to define because what constitutes professionalism is disputed. Nevertheless, Slay and Smith (2011) do identify the voice of the less well-established professions, professions that face unnecessary hardship as a result of institutionalised stigma and discrimination. Those hardships recognised by Slay and Smith (2011) may be one factor hampering the definition of professional identity. Analysing the structure of professional identity requires consideration of social stratification. Social inequalities remain in place partly because the dominant wish to remain in authority, a view consistent with the conflict theory discussed earlier. The reality is that social stratification arguably dictates who can or cannot enter certain occupations and professions, which has a detrimental impact on aspiring professionals and their professional identities if not addressed.

The sociological approach to the formation of professional identity assumes the existence of a reciprocal relationship between the self and society. As mentioned earlier, symbolic interactionism is a sociological theory that focuses on interpersonal relationships at a micro-societal level. Having discussed external influences on professional identity, and the impact professional identity has on those external influences in turn, 'we must also understand the society in which the self is acting' (Stets and Burke, 2003:128). The self is always acting in a social context, one in which other individuals exist. Similarly, in agreeing with Rodger and Scott (2008), Stets and Burke (2003) argue that individual social actors identify for themselves factors that need to be considered. They react to the factors that they have identified and attempt to align their actions with others in the same situation. This again brings in to question the existence of autonomy within professionalism. The notion that autonomy exists within the professions acts as a bait-and-switch notion. Aspiring professionals may believe autonomy equates to self-governance, which appeals to new members. However, in reality their autonomy seems to be externally controlled and curtailed by the organisation in which they work. Their professional identities form and re-form to suit the occupation which they aspire to enter. Stets and Burke (2003) argue further that most interaction is between persons who occupy positions (or statuses) within groups or organisations in society. If we accept that an individual can have multiple professional identities during a career, it follows that interactions within occupations are between social actors demonstrating one identity then switching to another. It is assumed here that one identity is always related to a counter-identity (Stets and Burke, 2003). Aquino and Reed (2002:1424) explain multiple identities:

> The many social identities that people possess constitute their social self-schema, defined as an organised and unique knowledge structure in memory that links social identities to the self.

This statement suggests that there is a distinction between the self and one's multiple professional identities. Jenkins (2000:8) notes that social identity is not unilateral. Individuals have an element of control on how they are perceived by others, but how they are categorised is out of their control. Clarified further, the interaction of self-definition and external definition by others (categorisation) is understood as a process of internalisation, and this may only occur if one is authoritatively categorised within an institutional setting (Jenkins, 2000:9). Therefore, the formation of professional identity is inevitably disconnected from the self. The individual must acknowledge the existence of both, and the resulting disconnect, in order to understand the formation of their social and professional identities. However, labelling identities may evoke resistance (Jenkins, 2000; Jenkins, 2014). Hogg and Terry (2000) consider that one's professional identity may be more pervasive and important than other aspects of identity, e.g. as a son or daughter, a young person, or an old person. Similarly, Jenkins (2000:10) explains society can be perceived to be made up of individuals, the interaction between individuals, and of institutions, it cannot be perceived to be any one of these in isolation. I suggest that the importance of professional identity is derived from status, the esteem in which certain occupations and professions are held. Perhaps the importance of professional identity is explained by personal motivations and by social stratification and hierarchy, which causes individuals to compete for symbolic and social capital. However, it could be argued that both the importance of and the pervasive nature of professional identity varies between individuals depending on the individual self and other aspects of one's identity. My hope is that this thesis will help professionals to acknowledge the existence of and understand the influence of both professional identity and the self.

Trede (2012) describes the formation of professional identity as a process that shapes and is shaped by work integrated learning experiences. Trede (2012) also states however that the development of professional identity should not be based solely on learning through experience. Brookfield (2012) agrees with Trede (2012) and suggests that if students are left to learn from experience only, they may adopt undesirable practices without realising it. Therefore, if the need for professional learning communities is accepted, based on Trede (2012) and Brookfield (2012), professional learning communities should not just impart the behaviours associated with a particular definition of professionalism but should also accept responsibility for assisting aspiring professionals in developing a positive professional identity. Similarly, Jenkins (1994; 2014) notes social groups define themselves, their name(s), their nature(s), and their boundary(s), social categories are recognised, defined, and delineated by others. Social identity is the outcome of these processes of internal and external definitions (Jenkins, 1994:201). Therefore, professional learning communities which take responsibility for identity (re)formation would reflect required professional behaviours as outlined in a definition of professionalism accepted within a specific occupation. This could promote conformity to a definition of professionalism accepted throughout the educational expedition sector as well as conformity to associated professional behaviours. It would also initiate acceptance of specific professional behaviours within a given occupation.

Beijaard *et al.,* (2000) highlight the complex and ever-evolving nature of identity, explaining further that the self and identity contribute to one's self-image. Trede (2012) explains that identity can be perceived as a social construct. Social interactions influence the self, as do personal relationships founded in social capacities and one's identity outside of an occupational context. Ball and Goodson (1985) recognise that events and experiences in the personal lives of professionals are inevitably linked to their performance as professionals. Beijaard *et al.,* (2004) suggest that identity is formed by a process of knowledge acquisition and by the effect of the knowledge acquired, as well as by human interactions. Gee *et al.,* (1996) argue that this acquired knowledge and experience results in the social self also developing in new ways. Professionals should acknowledge that external influences and experiences will affect the development of the self as well as the development of their professional identity, and that this will impact their professional behaviour. Separating the personal self and the professional self is difficult. Recognising the external influences acting on one and generating one's own bias is crucial in navigating social, moral, and ethical circumstances, as are one's moral characteristics and one's moral identity, defined as 'a commitment of oneself to lines of action that promote or protect the welfare of others' (Hart *et al.*, 1998:515). This concept of moral identity directly relates to service to the public. In this sense, having a moral compass or a moral identity, that places others' needs above one's own is a key attribute of the professional. In my view, moral codes vary between individuals, and therefore individual commitment to public service is likely to vary. The concepts of moral identity and professional identity are not interchangeable. They are separate facets of the self, each informing the other. Given that a professional can have multiple identities and given that each occupation and profession has multiple members, the complexity of the professions as societal phenomena at macro and meso-societal levels is clear. Please see Reflexive Account 'Symbolic Framework' for an introduction to one analytical process used to investigate professionalism and its complexities.

Reflexive Account; Symbolic Framework:

The sheer complexity of professionalism demands an effective process for its analysis. Professionalism as a phenomenon functions at a multidimensional level and can be interpreted and defined in many ways. For the researcher, analysing the concepts, interactions, body language, emotions, context, and meaning behind each was daunting. I needed an approach which mirrored the research design, its phenomenological nature, and its relationship with sociological paradigms. At the same time, it needed to be accessible to both myself and the reader. I used a framework analysis approach to achieve these goals. Please refer to the Methodological Chapter for an explanation of this approach.

Moral identity and professional identity are aspects of the self, and the complexity of both rivals that of professionalism. Abrams, (1994); Giles and Johnson, (1987); Hinkle and Brown, (1990); Hogg, (1992); and Turner *et al.*, (1987) suggest that people possess multiple social and moral identities which manifest more or less prominently in different contexts. They can assume greater or lesser importance over time as a function of socio-emotional maturity and life experience (Aquino and Reed, 2002). Having the capacity to recognise and use different social identities requires emotional intelligence which can be defined as:

> An ability to recognize the meanings of emotion and their relationships, and to reason and problem-solve on the basis of them. Emotional intelligence is involved in the capacity to perceive emotions, assimilate emotion-related feelings, understand the information of those emotions, and manage them (Mayer *et al.*, 1999:267).

The ability to assess circumstance, to calculate the appropriate response, all while following a code of ethics requires a strong sense of self, morality, and emotional intelligence. However, like identity and the self, any responses will remain circumstantial and an individualised interpretation of the context. Trede (2012) suggests that the conscious self is fluid and constantly transforming based on the events experienced. Does the subconscious self remain fixed until a critical incident is experienced? (Brookfield, 1998). Or is a period of reflection required to create a link between the conscious and subconscious self? Erikson (1968) argues that the concept of identity is often associated with the self, or one's conception of oneself. This suggests a degree of self-reflection, of analysing one's character to determine who one is as a person. Wah Tan (1997) develops this further, identifying that the self can be established and maintained through social negotiations or through acquiring social roles. Knapp *et al.,* (2017) argues that professionalism requires an accurate awareness of one's skills and that a self-reflective attitude is therefore an essential component of competent professional practice. Understanding reflective practice has been identified as an essential attribute for a professional (Moon, 2013). Reflective practice can be defined as:

> An intentional and skilled process in which an individual describes and analyses their thoughts, feelings, behaviours, actions and develops judgements which illustrate their effectiveness (Hampson, 2017:11).

The ability to use reflective practice does not guarantee that a professional understands the difference between social and professional identity. Employing moral reasoning does not guarantee that a professional has a fully formed moral identity (Aquino and Reed, 2002). Moral reasoning and emotional intelligence can impact identity at any time, as can other internal and external factors that affect one's ability to navigate social circumstance. The personal can affect the professional and vice-versa. I argue that a professional learning community can help define moral identity. An aspiring professional may develop a moral identity based in part on what they learn and experience in their occupation. Cheryan and Bodenhausen (2000) pose that, like other aspects of identity, moral identity can be affected by different beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours. If professionals based their moral codes on their professional codes of ethics, this would assist in the development of a definition of professionalism accepted by all members of the profession. The code of ethics would be standardised and habituated in the social structure of the profession.

Although I have considered the existence of multiple identities, I have yet to discuss social identity in detail. One of the key concepts of social identity theory is depersonalisation (Stets and Burke, 2000). The process of depersonalisation as explained by Hogg *et al.*, (1995) shifts the perception of the self from that of uniqueness to that of perception of self as a member of a social category. Depersonalisation does not necessarily mean a loss of personal identity, but it does highlight a change of focus from individual to group identity. Stets and Burke (2003) suggest that becoming part of an in-group requires one to compare oneself with others, and those that relate most to yourself are then considered members of the in-group. Consequently, those that do not relate to oneself in any way at all are then considered members of the out-group. Stets and Burke (2000) believe that once a person becomes part of the in-group, self-identification with the in-group increases, and so does commitment to the in-group, even if the status of the group is perceived to be lower than other such groups. Will an aspiring professional have to depersonalise in this way to become part of a professional learning community? This would require a willingness to become part of an in-group; if a professional refuses to become part of such a group, the process is ineffective. Thus, a professional learning community would require an individual to accept its characteristics, behaviours, and morals. If an individual does not accept the ideals of the community, then that individual will be reluctant to join and will remain an out-group member. Similarly, from the learning community's perspective, if its values are such that potential new members cannot relate to them, then the motivation of others to join and the numbers of those doing so will both decline. If established professionals within the learning community (or in-group) recognise this, then they can tailor their values accordingly to increase the number of applicants and improve the quality of them. This would also strengthen the relationship between existing members. I argue that educational expedition leaders could be seen as members of an in-group connected through a professional learning community. I argue further that a strong in-group relationship exists in niche sectors of the outdoor industry such as educational expedition leadership. Thus, if individual outdoor sectors analysed what values are deemed desirable by members of their in-groups and then promoted and publicised those values, the number and quality of aspiring members would increase. I would suggest however that some account would also have to be taken of values deemed acceptable by society as a whole.

2.4. Assessing and Teaching Professionalism:

Boyask *et al.,* (2004) state that education in professional development is seen as an increasingly important curriculum issue in medical schools. Boyask *et al.,* (2004) continue to argue that the medical profession is becoming more concerned with how social and political factors are impacting the professional life for which undergraduates are being prepared. Clearly, wider social issues play a key role in the delivery of professional practice. DeRosa (2006:29) noted that the word ‘profession’ derives from the word ‘profess’, which means ‘to declare aloud, to proclaim something publicly’. Thus, professionals in a sense have a duty to profess their activity and their conduct. The essence of a profession, then, is the act of professing. This notion of professing differs from the definition presented by Boyask *et al.,* (2004) who call for a new version of professionalism that addresses power imbalance, insufficient accountability, and lack of responsiveness to the community. This suggests that the traditional form and structure of the professions is no longer appropriate or viable. Simply professing practice, publicly exhibiting skills and professional ethics in relation to the exercise of those skills, is the minimum expected of a professional. Please see Reflexive Account ‘To profess, or not to profess?’ for an introduction into the considerations for discourse analysis.

Reflexive Account; To profess, or not to profess?

To profess connotes interaction. Professing the essential nature of your work and offering an insight into the principles and practices associated with your role could be deemed professional behaviour, but analysing such a concept is not straightforward. If analysis of each participant’s role illustrated similar characteristics, I could analyse the common terminology used by all participants. This would provide insight into the group’s social dynamic associated norms and history. Please refer to the Methodological Chapter for a discussion of discourse analysis.

Professionalism can be viewed holistically as a construct, a competency which can be continually strengthened and improved. Lesser *et al.,* (2010) argues that viewing professionalism holistically allows for a new approach to education and assessment within the professions. Hodges *et al.,* (2011) explore what professionalism is, how it is articulated within an occupation, and how it should be assessed. They suggest different levels of assessment, at the individual, interpersonal, institutional, and societal level. This mirrors the macro, meso and micro-societal levels at which professionalism can be explored. Professionalism as a concept has common features across multiple occupational, societal, and economic platforms. Thus, professionalism, like any other subject, can seemingly be taught and consequently tested, which would obviously improve understanding of professionalism. Hafferty and Castellani (2009) consider professionalism to be a complex system, and note that its assessment should include analysis of motivations and behaviours at individual, societal, and institutional levels. Rees and Knight (2007) discuss social and contextual factors that could trigger behaviours that may or may not reflect an individual's character. On the other hand, there is an argument that professionalism is a group phenomenon and should be assessed in the context of functioning professional environments and institutions (Martimianakis *et al.,* 2009) which accords with the sociological theory of functionalism. A professional learning community is one such environment in which professionalism could be assessed.

Professional practice at individual, interpersonal, institutional, and societal levels are considered here to be four separate areas for professional assessment. However, although compartmentalisation assists in its articulation, it is important to note that the four categories interrelate, and overlap. Would it be possible to conduct assessments in each area with industrywide acceptance? The level of information required to conduct such assessments, and the effort required to obtain industry wide acceptance of this, would require a comprehensive and long-term approach. If professionalism is also to take account of modern social values, which are ever evolving, then the expectations that society has will impact how professionalism will be defined at the individual, interpersonal, and institutional levels. It would be unrealistic to assume that society continues to advance while everyday social structures such as the professions remain unchanged. Ginsburg *et al.,* (2000) considers one of the main difficulties in assessing professionalism to be the frequent use of abstract, idealised definitions. Ginsburg goes on to say that the assessment of professionalism should include qualitative approaches which analyse how the professional environment supports assessment. Van der Vleuten and Schuwirth (2005) outline qualitative competencies, attitudes, and behaviours, which indicate that qualitative professional judgement would be an important part of the assessment process. Thus, there is a need for qualitative assessment that recognises the diverse nature of professionalism and allows for its progression. Formative assessments feature more prominently in the literature than summative assessments. Self *et al.,* (1992) and Goldie *et al.,*

(2002) explain that focussed and formative teaching will improve moral reasoning and suggest that feedback generated by regular assessment will also improve professional behaviours.

Lowe *et al.,* (2001) and Van Luijk *et al.,* (2000) posit that formative assessment should begin early in a professional career and should be frequently conducted, sustained over the long term, and provide continuing professional development. The interpretive and subjective nature of professionalism requires balanced and unbiased assessment. However, unconscious bias can adversely affect qualitative assessment. Ensuring assessors allow for unconscious bias will require a strong understanding of moral and ethical values. Perhaps multiple assessors will be required to eliminate the potential for bias and to offer different perspectives and a higher quality of feedback (Wooliscroft *et al.,* 1994). Once the assessment process becomes standardised, the curriculum should include multiple assessments of a range of activities in different settings. Multiple assessments whilst the professional is facing varying challenges would improve understanding of an individual's professional ability. Assessment of the professional in different environments would give a broader picture of the individual's ability and would allow the assessors to identify any particular environments in which improvement was required. Establishing such a comprehensive system of assessment would require introduction at an early stage in professional training. I propose that some form of initial assessment be introduced as part of higher education. This would ensure professional behaviours are absorbed and standardised at an early stage in one's career. This is consistent with Lynch *et al.,* (2004) who considers that the long-term approach helps set professional standards early, both for the student and for the faculty, who must commit to improving the student's professional behaviour. This also supports the socialisation of aspiring professionals into professional learning communities. Furthermore, a formative assessment requires the assessed practitioner or trainee to demonstrate professional behaviour for the duration of the assessment, so that the assessor can be sure that professional behaviour has been instilled and not just briefly mimicked.

Quantitative forms of assessment should also be considered, but how can positive and negative professional behaviours be quantified? How can professional identities compare to a numerical scale? Can an individual be a little honest or a little organised and score 5 out of 10 on a scale? Arnold (2002) outlined a method to quantify behaviour. If behaviour were quantified on a scale, it could help identify professionalism lapses and allow corrective training or even disciplinary action. On the other hand, it could mean too great a focus on avoiding poor behaviour rather than on demonstrating good behaviour. I propose a mixed method approach. Typically, mixed method is a research method combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches but would be repurposed here for assessment. This could involve the use of a numerical scale as well as other tools such as qualitative questioning of the individual's performance. This form of assessment would provide for a holistic approach while allowing the severity of negative behaviours and professional lapses to be gauged. Consequently, the assessors would be able to discuss both the positive and the negative aspects of professional performance with the assessed.

Peer assessment or peer evaluation (Ginsburg, 2000) can provide professionals with an opportunity to evaluate each other's professional behaviour through frequent, close, and varied contact (Ginsburg, 2000). This form of assessment provides insight into interpersonal skills, techniques, and behaviours. One benefit of this assessment method is the absence of an authority figure allowing students to be themselves without external pressures. On the other hand, its reliability could be open to question. A mutual understanding among professional practitioners and the absence of an authority figure could produce biased and partial results. However, peer assessments do allow professionals to observe the practices of others and to thereby develop their own, an implicit form of peer tuition. Bostock (2000) explains the advantages of peer tuition as the development of skills, improving evaluation techniques, and the practice of utilising disciplined knowledge. Brookfield (2012) highlights other advantages:

(1) A sense of ownership within the assessment process;

(2) Encouraging students to take ownership of elements within their learning, developing their autonomy;

(3) Treating assessments as a learning opportunity as opposed to a tool that is designed for failure;

(4) Enables the development, and practice of transferable skills;

(5) Utilising external assessment of others to provide a model for an internal self-assessment;

(6) Encourages deeper learning and information retention as opposed to surface learning.

One disadvantage of peer assessment is that the assessor could develop notions of their own supposed superior status in relation to the student, which could affect the outcome of the assessment. Additionally, if peer assessment is conducted by students as opposed to qualified professionals, then the reliability and validity of the assessment could be questioned.

Another form of assessment is self-evaluation, which is closely linked to reflective practice. Hanrahan and Issacs (2001) suggest that this form of assessment allows an individual to set their own goals, and thus promotes autonomy in professional life. On the other hand, one's interpretation of one's own professionalism may be too subjective and therefore unreliable. To combat this unreliability, training could be introduced to establish effective self-assessment. However, no amount of training can eliminate personal unconscious bias; it can only warn of its presence. Another disadvantage of self-assessment is the time taken to complete it. The assessment may not be seen as important, so that the motivation to complete the assessment is diminished and insufficient effort is invested in it. This could reflect professional identities and illustrate how one may deem themselves to be performing at a higher standard without the support of assessment. Self-assessment is also limited by the ability of the person conducting it, for example whether it is being conducted by an established professional or a student. To combat this limitation, self-assessments could be peer-reviewed by a colleague. This would be time consuming, but the benefit would be an element of external critical analysis. This approach could introduce a system of peer or group autonomy within the professional learning community at the higher education stage. On the other hand, the requirement for assessed professionalism is externally imposed and would therefore conflict with this type of autonomous assessment.

These forms of assessment focus on what is deemed to be professional behaviour and how that can be assessed. Therefore, to assess what is professional would require agreement on a range of unacceptable behaviours (Parker, 2006:402). During the earlier discussion about professional lapses, the definition of unacceptable or unprofessional behaviour was not explored because in my view unacceptable or unprofessional behaviours are easier to recognise than acceptable ones. Yet these behaviours could appear initially to be unprofessional, but when seen in context the behaviour may have been necessary, justifiable, and therefore professional. Where should the line be drawn between professional and unprofessional behaviour? In teaching professionalism, are unprofessional behaviours to be defined or recognised intuitively?

Discussing assessment of professionalism does not determine how it should be taught. Boyask *et al.,* (2004) suggest that education which fosters the development of professional identity will require an understanding of other disciplines. Boyask *et al.,* (2004) explains further that such education will need to recognise the impact of wider social factors on practice and policy and to understand the need to instil commitment to a professional community. Murphy and Calway (2008) suggest that the current status of professional development requires a focus on developing and assessing competency. They also add that to develop professional training beyond a minimum level will require the adoption of an appropriate learning model or theory. All these factors indicate that a professional learning model needs to allow for the development of professional identity, competency, practice, and policy. Additionally, it should include commitments to the professional learning community and to instilling an awareness both of the wider social context in which the profession operates and of social duty. It will need to develop professional and personal, moral and ethical virtues. Murphy and Calway (2008:427) have identified six educational imperatives:

> Workforce readiness, a professional development culture (both individual and workforce related), international relevance, lifelong learning, knowledge transference, human and social potential.

How can professionalism, and these six educational imperatives be taught? Noting here the importance of lifelong learning, and its association with continued professional development. Harden (1999:141) defines a curriculum design founded on a subject's continued revisitation; a spiral curriculum features an 'integrative revisiting of topics, subjects or themes throughout the course'. Harden explains further that this does not mean repeating the same topic once taught, but it does mean increasing the level of understanding with each successive encounter with that topic. In contrast, other scholars like Schafheutle *et al.,* (2013) argue that professionalism ought to be instilled consistently and continuously throughout the degree programme. This contrasts with Harden's (1999) spiral curriculum, as it calls for the integration of professionalism as an aspect of each area taught instead of teaching professionalism as a distinct subject. In any event it would be naïve to suggest any amount of education and training will prepare an aspiring professional for any and every situation. Murphy and Calway (2008) point out that professionals face intricate problems which differ from case to case. Resolving these problems requires more than memorised professional knowledge. Spiro *et al.,* (1991) argue that professionals should build knowledge through effective learning in contrast to committing information to memory. In contrast, professional knowledge could be considered rooted in an academic knowledge base (Shulman, 1998:517). Therefore, an element of memorised theoretical knowledge is required, and it is the practical application of this knowledge (phronesis) which should be covered in the professional curriculum. This argument mirrors that of Shulman (1998), who considers that the professional's responsibility is not to simply apply what they have learnt, but to transform, adapt, merge, and synthesize, criticise, and invent. This is to move away from the theoretical and to focus on the practical knowledge required to engage as a working professional, mirroring further Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Shulman (1998) discusses further the implications of practical application, suggesting that it serves as a major vehicle for testing the validity and efficacy of theory. I am not merely suggesting a professional learning model or a curriculum requiring practical application of theory, like those many undergraduate/postgraduate degrees already employ. I am suggesting that the teaching of professionalism should include experiential learning assisted by the application of relevant theories from sociology and philosophy and should not be solely based on theoretical professional knowledge. Shulman (1998:525) believes that this method could lead to a 'new era for professional education'. This new era would encompass 'moral vision, theoretical understanding, practical skills, the centrality of judgement, learning from experience, and the development of responsible professional communities'. This call for a new era of professionalism is fundamental to this thesis.

Professionalism is clearly a multi-faceted concept and a phenomenon which can be analysed in many ways. Couhlan (2005:893) suggests that to 'learn professionalism is to enter into a certain kind of narrative and make it one's own'. Couhlan (2005) also considered the implications of both a tacit or hidden curriculum and an explicit curriculum for teaching professional standards to medical students. The explicit components of professional education include courses, classes, rounds, advice, or other teaching contexts designed to instil professionalism. The tacit or hidden curriculum is a socialisation process that instils professional values and identity. The explicit curriculum focuses on empathy, communication, relief of suffering, trust, fidelity, and pursuing the patient's best interests. The tacit curriculum is based on objectivity, detachment, and a willingness to question. The hidden curriculum remains tacit and is not explicitly discussed with the students. I would argue that in a new era of professionalism, the elements of the tacit curriculum should be openly discussed with students. This would allow them to develop their own holistic understandings of their profession. Brainard and Brislen (2007) note that students accept and trust the professional training process and overwhelmingly desire to behave professionally. However, Brainard and Brislen (2007) note further that students struggle to understand the disconnect between the explicit professional values they are taught and the implicit values of the hidden curriculum. Therefore, why should the hidden curriculum remain hidden? What are the components of the hidden curriculum within the context of the training of educational expedition leadership? Please see Reflexive Account 'Assessing Ethics' for an insight into the ethical implications of the hidden curriculum in this area.

Reflexive Account; Assessing Ethics:

The existence of the hidden curriculum requires ethical consideration. Assessing professionalism and analysing professional identity by reference to tacit or hidden criteria seems unfair, so I suggest making the tacit explicit and providing a clear explanation of the issues. How can we account for the subconscious and allow for unconscious bias if assessment criteria are hidden? How can we limit the potential for harm in that situation? For further discussion of this project's ethical considerations, please refer to the Methodological Chapter.

Discussing the notions of practical experience, learning/curriculum models, and the hidden curriculum brings into play the use of experiential learning, which can be defined as:

> The change in an individual that results from reflection on a direct experience and results in new abstractions and applications. Experiential learning rests within the student and does not necessarily require a teacher (Itin, 1999:92).

Whilst calling for the inclusion of experiential learning in the teaching of professionalism, and in view of the aims and objectives of this thesis, I believe that an appropriate learning model would include a spiral curriculum that incorporates experiential education. Experiential education can be defined as:

> A holistic philosophy, where carefully chosen experiences supported by reflection, critical analysis, and synthesis, are structured to require the learner to take initiative, make decisions, and be accountable for the results, through actively posing questions, investigating, experimenting, being curious, solving problems, assuming responsibility, being creative, constructing meaning, and integrating previously developed knowledge (Itin, 1999:93).

Deciding what subjects and modules should be included in the learning model that I propose would require a great deal more consideration; however, I have illustrated the overall form and functional method of the learning model that will best incubate a new era of professionalism.

2.5. Conclusion:

Despite the widespread use of the term ‘professional’, what the term actually means remains hotly debated in wider society (Furlong *et al.,* 2000). Much of the literature from professional practice that I have referred to discusses and analyses the lack of clarity of the meaning of professionalism and the difficulties encountered when trying to define it. The literature reviewed initially related to more traditional professions such as law, medicine, education, and accountancy. However, some claim that leaders within the outdoor industry are pursuing a vocational trade and tacitly imply that educational expedition leadership cannot be recognised as a profession. Yet educational expedition leadership requires many of the qualities found in definitions of the traditional professions. The distinction between the traditional professions and modern, emerging professions is perhaps breaking down. Much of the literature I refer to demonstrates that defining criteria normally associated with the traditional professions can be found in and applied to modern emerging professions (including educational expedition leadership) despite traditional professional stratification and hierarchy.

Rees and Knight (2007) draw attention to societal-contextual behaviours which have the potential to impact the attitudes and values of individuals or groups. If the public were to recognise the benefits of educational expeditions, this recognition would raise the job’s prestige and increase the numbers seeking entry into the industry. I have considered the influences and implications of societal norms and the effect of individual responsibility, autonomy, and morality. I argue that professionalism, and any future method of evaluating professionalism, should focus on behaviours rather than individual personality traits or ‘vague concepts of character’ (Ginsburg *et al.,* 2000). This view demonstrates a clear need for discourse between the public and key stakeholders within the outdoor industry, necessitating direct contact between the outdoor industry as a professional learning community and the public. The dialogue would increase the social prestige of the occupation and allow the public to influence how the industry should be regulated as a service provider as well as what behaviours and standards should be expected, as with any other recognised profession. Evetts (2012) demonstrates that the meaning of professionalism is not fixed and that there will be changes in its interpretation and function over time. For Evetts (2012), a different understanding of professionalism is needed in order to understand the appeal of professional status in both old and new occupations, along with how that appeal can be used to promote occupational change, leading ultimately to a new era of professionalism.

This literature review has established three main areas to consider holistically when analysing the concept of professionalism: defining professionalism, professional identity, and assessing professionalism. This review illustrates the theoretical underpinning for the research that follows in this thesis. The literature I refer to has been carefully selected to demonstrate areas of research that are relevant to an analysis of professionalism. The literature has also been selected to assist in the interpretation of the data collected in pursuit of the theoretical premises set out in the introductory chapter. I believe that each of the three main areas I have identified merit further research in their own right.

3. Methodology

3.1.Introduction

This study explores interpretations of professionalism found within the educational expedition sector. Specifically, it investigates what outdoor leaders understand about the notion of professionalism and how it impacts the appearance of the outdoor industry. In addition, due to the social nature of professionalism, an interpretive qualitative research methodology has been adopted, drawing on a combination of methods pertaining to a phenomenological case study. In order to first discuss the application of phenomenology within this thesis, the qualitative pathway will be explained. Figure Four, ‘Qualitative Pathway’, illustrates this project’s methodological steps.

Figure Four: Qualitative Pathway

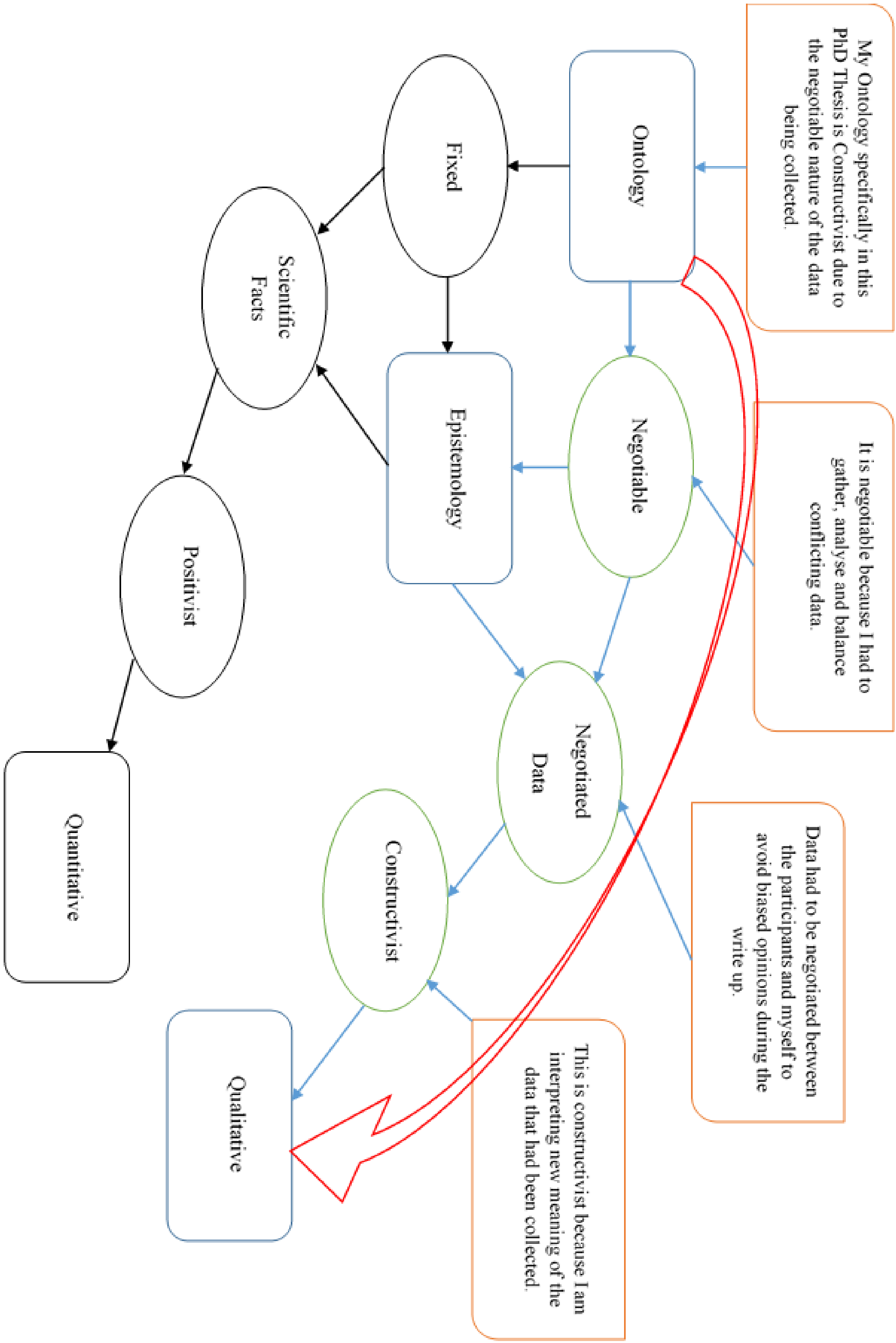


Diagram adapted from: Hampson., T. (2017) ‘The changing perceptions of the value of reflective practice utilised as a tool for continued professional development in vocational outdoor undergraduates – A case study’. *Undergraduate Dissertation*. University of Central Lancashire, 1–55.

The ontological perspective adopted for this research project is negotiable. Simply, a negotiable ontology suggests the researcher believes in the existence of multiple realities which are constructed and altered by the individual. Realities are not more or less true; they are simply constructed (Laverty, 2003). Hiller (2016) explains that ontological beliefs or assumptions shape the methodological approaches to data collection. He recognises that a negotiable ontological approach understands that humans construct experiences of reality in our minds, that reality is open to any interpretation, and that there are no fixed laws in how reality may be experienced. In opposition to a negotiable ontology, a fixed ontology assumes the world is structured by law-like generalities which can be predicted, manipulated, and/or controlled to produce universal statements of scientific theory (Laverty, 2003), like the law of gravity (Hiller, 2016). Therefore, the researcher's ontological perspective is not indefinite. It is negotiable, as the notion of professionalism has many perceived interpretations: It is a mutually contested concept. Establishing an ontology dictates what can be known; epistemology discusses how phenomena can come to be known (Hiller, 2016). Simply, epistemology addresses how we come to know that which we believe we may know. Thus, the ontology a researcher holds will affect their epistemology, in turn influencing the research design of a study. My ontological reasoning is discussed in the Reflexive Account 'Ontological Journey'.

Reflexive Account: Ontological Journey

Until I developed an interest in research, I never considered why I preferred qualitative information over quantitative. In their simplest form they contrasted the literary and the numerical, as such my dislike of numeracy had dictated my ontology from an early age. I never truly grasped mathematics, and I was never able to make sense of numbers, which is why I always preferred literature. However, realising this during my undergraduate dissertation allowed me to reflect further. The preference is not because I dislike numbers, it is because I prefer to interpret literature, reflect, and reinterpret. I enjoy making sense of other people's perceptions, and until I reached higher education, I did not realise my passions revolved around the exploration of social realities. This thesis investigates perceptions of professionalism in the educational expedition sector while utilising a qualitative approach, and to me it remains the most interesting, exciting, and challenging task I have ever worked on. I wonder if I can find the same passion for numbers in the future.

Therefore, the researcher's epistemology is interpretivist, as it handles negotiable data. Consequently, the methodological approaches are those of a qualitative phenomenological case study, including semi-structured interviews and focus groups, which will be discussed later in this methodological chapter.

A key component of qualitative research is to explore and contribute to a better understanding of social realities, to draw attention to processes, meaning, and structural features in the context of the individual (Flick *et al.*, 2004). Jackson *et al.*, (2007) explain that the focus of a qualitative/interpretive research paradigm is to develop an understanding of human beings, their experiences, and their reflections about those experiences. Williams (2007) posits that one of the main identifiers of qualitative research is the social phenomenon being investigated. Qualitative research is a holistic approach that involves discovery, description, explanation, and interpretation of collected data. Williams (2007) alleges there are five areas of qualitative research: case study, ethnography, grounded theory, content analysis, and phenomenology, the last of which is where this thesis makes a significant contribution.

Similarly, Leedy and Omrod (2001:157) define the purpose of a phenomenological study as 'to understand an experience from the participants' point of view'. Its focus is on the participants' perceptions of a situation or circumstance and phenomenology tries to answer the questions of those experiences. Comparatively, Creswell and Poth (2016) suggest the essence of a phenomenological study is the search for the central, underlying meaning of an experience. In the same way, the adopted interpretivist research paradigm endeavours to understand the world of human experience (Thanh and Thanh, 2015), to view the world through the interpretations and experiences of the participants. Hence, having established the multi-faceted nature of professionalism, an interpretive, qualitative approach to analyse data surrounding the lived experiences, as well as perceptions of professionalism, seems most reasonable. The interpretivist approach strives to understand specific contexts with the belief that reality is socially constructed. Consequently, interpretivist researchers use methods which enable them to understand the relationship of human beings to their environment (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). As a novice researcher, I want to understand the world of my participants through gaining insight into their beliefs and experiences. Thus, the interpretivist approach has been applied throughout to further an understanding of professionalism within a familiar occupational context.

Before illustrating this project's credibility, the design and its applicability to other contexts along with the preconceived types of phenomenological approaches will be discussed. Establishing the interpretive nature of phenomenology, discussing the different approaches to phenomenological research, and explaining these topics' applicability to this study reinforces a reflexive approach. To make any potential bias explicit, the researcher's axiological stance within this project will openly discuss personal values that have the potential to shape the narrative through reflexive accounts. This project embraces reflexivity to acknowledge personal changes brought about by the research process and how they affect the research process (Palanganas *et al.*, 2017).

3.2. A Phenomenological Point of View:

Within phenomenology, there are two broad phenomenological categories, descriptive/transcendental and hermeneutic (Tuffour, 2017). The descriptive phenomenological approach seeks to examine the structure or essence of experiences in the way it occurs to the conscious mind; therefore, descriptions of the experiences are anchored to the data without the influence of external theory (Tuffour, 2017).

Simply put, the descriptive phenomenological approach requires the researcher to bracket their past knowledge and presuppositions. Bracketing, or phenomenological reduction, indicates a researcher must discount 'the outer world as well as individual biases to suspend one's judgement about the phenomena in question in order to see it clearly' (Laverty, 2003:23). See the below Reflexive Account ('Forget what you know?') discussing my choice of explicit reflexivity over bracketing.

__Reflexive Account: Forget what you know?__

My position as a novice researcher means I have less experience utilising certain approaches, 'bracketing' among them. However, to simply set aside all the information, knowledge, and perceptions I have read, experienced, or observed seems impossible to me. One may recognise one's own presuppositions and attempt to put them aside, but this does not mean it is done successfully. I use reflexive accounts to make my thoughts, opinions, and experiences explicit in an attempt for complete transparency and to show my reasoning. Attempting to acknowledge potential biases and ignore them seems paradoxical in qualitative research, which is built upon personal interpretations of the data, theory, and lived experience. As a developing academic I find it hard to understand how a researcher can simply ignore anything which has the potential to influence their work. Everything I know has influenced my decision making throughout my academic career, so why ignore that? Clearly, I found this concept difficult to grasp; as such, instead of wrestling with my preconceptions, I embraced them to evidence what, how, and why I have made decisions and judgments within this thesis, instead of trying to forget what I know.

On the other hand, hermeneutic phenomenology suggests it is impossible to suppress opinion, and the research findings are analysed through multiple lenses, and perspectives. This enables the analysis of human experience to remain unrestricted by imagination and provide metaphorical sensibility (Thanh and Thanh, 2015). Therefore, the nature of this study's design, the lack of phenomenological reduction, and its focus would suggest it to be a hermeneutic phenomenological study. However, though phenomenology and hermeneutic phenomenology are different approaches, they are 'often referred to interchangeably' (Laverty, 2003:22). Moreover, Laverty (2003) and Annells (1996) suggests hermeneutics is an interpretive process which seeks to understand a phenomenon through language. Though referred to interchangeably, hermeneutics is the study and 'interpretation of text' (Tuffour, 2017:4); thus, its only connection to this thesis remains to be the analysis of human experience. This is exemplified through the application of interpretivism and the use of reflexivity, in contrast to the typical application of bracketing. On the other hand, Williams (2007) claims that the researcher usually has some connection, experience, or stake in the situation, so bracketing (setting aside all prejudgments) is required. Bracketing is also a reflexive process, a journey that entails preparation, action, evaluation, and systematic feedback (Ahern, 1999). Having established the need for an element of reflexivity within this qualitative research, the reflexive accounts demonstrate the researcher's thought processes and potential biases. In contrast to bracketing, the advantage of this reflexive approach is the time spent on understanding the effects of one's experiences rather than engaging in futile attempts to eliminate them (Ahern, 1999). Paradoxically, Chan *et al.,* (2013) suggest there is no single set of methods for undertaking bracketing, and thus the researcher's reflexive accounts may also be interpreted as an approach to bracketing.

Another phenomenological approach is Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which endeavours to 'explore, describe, interpret, and situate the participants' sense making of their experiences' (Tuffour, 2017:3). Like interpretivism, IPA seeks to understand the lived experience; it examines the phenomenon and focuses on the examination of experience as it may occur to the participants. IPA researchers traditionally immerse themselves in the world of the participants through the lens of cultural and sociological meanings (Tuffour, 2017). Smith and Osborn (2015) explain that IPA produces an account of participants' lived experience, as opposed to experiences with pre-existing theoretical preconceptions. They explain further that IPA is a useful methodology for analysing phenomena which are complex, ambiguous, and emotionally laden. In this way, IPA is more applicable to this project than any other phenomenological approach discussed. Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014:8) explain that IPA 'synthesizes ideas from phenomenology and hermeneutics'. Thus, IPA is a method which is descriptive, as it explores how things appear, as well as interpretive, because it recognises that there is no such thing as an uninterpreted phenomenon. Due to its interpretive nature, IPA researchers 'usually keep a reflexive diary that records details of the nature and origin of any emergent interpretations' (Biggerstff and Thompson, 2008:224). However, each phenomenological approach features aspects which have influenced this project, as explained in Reflexive Account 'Phenomenological Confusion'. As such, there is a clear link and justified use of interpretivism, phenomenology, and by association, sociology in the form of symbolic interactionism (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). Each approach explores the lived experience, interprets collected data, and formulates new understandings through qualitative approaches. Therefore, this research project is a qualitative phenomenological case study.

Reflexive Account: Phenomenological Confusion

When I first began developing the research design for this study, I knew it would be phenomenological. What I did not know is how many phenomenological approaches there were, and deciding which one my thesis was most applicable to was difficult. As discussed above, after much deliberation IPA seems to be the most suitable interpretation of phenomenology in the context of this thesis. It is clearly highly relatable to the interpretivist paradigm and has a clear relationship with sociology. However, coming to this conclusion was no easy feat. Descriptive phenomenology examines the structure or essence of experiences but requires bracketing. Hermeneutic phenomenology recognises the existence of bias and seeks to understand/interpret phenomena through language, but this approach is typological in nature. Existential phenomenology interprets human experiences reflecting emotions, values, and ideals, yet focuses on the individual experiences rather than conformity and behaviour of a group. As you can see, for a novice researcher, making sense of which was most applicable had been a difficult task requiring extensive research into each possible approach.

3.3. *Theoretical Assumptions and Credibility:*

Many if not all research paradigms contain inherent theoretical assumptions. Cutcliffe and McKenna (1999) suggest the credibility of the findings is increased if researchers make explicit their presuppositions, and by association their theoretical assumptions. Therefore, some qualitative theoretical assumptions have already been explicitly associated with this research: (1) reality is socially constructed (Aspers, 2009); (2) multiple realities/truths exist and are constantly changing (Khan, 2014); and (3) the collected data is viewed through multiple lenses, from multiple perspectives (Donalek, 2004). Other theoretical assumptions associated with this research project should be noted, and doing so will adhere to the axiological stance taken within this study. Thus, (4) Walters (2001) acknowledges inductive reasoning as the epitome of qualitative research design. Inductive reasoning looks for the meaning of experiences from within the participants. Soiferman (2010) recognises induction as a process which moves from the specific to the general, producing arguments based on experience or observation which are best expressed inductively. In contrast, deduction produces arguments based on natural law, rules, or widely accepted principles, much like the law of gravity. Furthermore, inductive researchers are typically known to work from the bottom up, using participants' views to help generate theory, build broader themes relating to the phenomena being studied, and analyse how they interconnect (Soiferman, 2010). Therefore, typically for a qualitative research paradigm, this project clearly adheres to inductivity as a process to view the phenomenon of professionalism. In addition to observing participant interpretations, (5) Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014) suggest that people are self-interpreting beings, meaning they actively interpret events, objects, and others in their own lives. Moreover, (6) a qualitative inquiry is typically conducted in a naturalistic setting, meaning the research context is also considered part of the phenomenon (Chamberlain, 2009). Similarly, Wigren (2007:383) explains that a qualitative methodology involves a naturalistic approach to the subject matter. A qualitative methodology is 'a study that focuses on understanding the naturalistic setting, or everyday life, of a certain phenomenon or person'. However, though this study makes explicit the theoretical assumptions the researcher holds and practices reflexivity as an approach to highlight presuppositions, the credibility of a research project is enhanced by providing professional information about the author. Additionally, this would explain who the researcher is in terms of their academic accomplishments and track record, which would have the potential to influence how the research is received in the field (Wigren, 2007). This information can be seen in Reflexive Account 'Who am I?'. Finally, (7) according to Oliver-Hoyo and Allen (2006), determining accuracy within a qualitative study requires some form of verification. This project utilises Method Triangulation, as it provides an accurate and valid estimate of a result when each method converges on the same answer.

Method triangulation is used to increase the trustworthiness and credibility of this research project. Triangulation is defined holistically as an approach which 'compares information to determine corroboration; in other words, it is a process of qualitative cross-validation' (Oliver-Hoyo and Allen, 2006:42). Although there are many forms of triangulation, the approach most applicable to this project is method triangulation, which is defined as an approach which gathers information pertaining to the same phenomenon using more than one method. It provides an efficient way of assessing the degree of convergence while discussing the divergences between the results obtained (Bauwens, 2010). Thurmond (2001) argues that triangulation is one way to increase the validity, strength, and interpretive potential of a study, helping decrease researcher bias and providing multiple perspectives of the phenomena. Further benefits include the increase of confidence in the research data; it creates innovative ways to help understand the studied phenomenon, in turn unveiling unique findings, all while challenging or integrating established theories (Thurmond, 2001). However, Thurmond (2001) also notes that methodological triangulation addressed in the literature can be confusing because it could imply triangulation through data collection methods or through research design. To be clear, the methodological triangulation in this research project refers to the methods of data collection, semi-structured interviews and focus groups.

Reflexive Account: who am I?

Here I offer an overview/insight into my academic accomplishments thus far. I was never considered academically bright in primary or secondary school. In secondary school I achieved final grades of B's and C's with the occasional A in more practical curriculum subjects (2007-2012). During secondary school I had never put 100% of my effort into studying until I completed work experience at Reaseheth College in the Adventure Sports department. This quickly became one of the most influential experiences of my academic career. I realised here how much I enjoyed this subject, and once I achieved my GCSE's, I attended Reaseheath, studying for a Level 3 Extended Diploma in Sport and Outdoor Adventure. Here I achieved the grade Triple Distinction (*) and a certificate/acknowledgment for 'The Best Student of The Year' (2012-2014). From here I attended The University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), completing my undergraduate with a high 'First Class Honours' (2014-2017). After my undergraduate I remained with UCLan and obtained a place studying for a Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) in the further and higher education sectors. I graduated here as a 'Good – Outstanding' teacher (2017-2018). I then moved to this postgraduate study, 'MPhil Transfer to PhD' (2018-2021). Having completed my transfer report and passing the 'MPhil Viva' with a singular publication to my name, I have been able to concentrate solely on this thesis. Throughout my postgraduate studies I have worked various jobs, some educational and some in other fields. As you can see, my academic career has been non-stop, with a clear aspiration to become a researcher and lecturer.

Although there are many benefits of using methodological triangulation, there are many limitations too. Triangulation is sometimes accused of advocating a 'naïve realism' that implies 'a single definitive account of the social world' (Bryman, 2004:4). Additionally, triangulation assumes that the data taken from different methods can definitively be compared in the same capacity regarding the research question. However, I posit that each method is influenced by the specific context in which they are conducted. To assume they will provide equal data is naïve. In contrast, having the capacity to view the same phenomena from multiple perspectives can be used to corroborate the research, which helps limit personal bias and enhance the study's generalisability (Decrop, 1999). On the other hand, having the availability to view the phenomena from multiple perspectives could lead to accusations of extreme eclecticism (Flick, 2004). However, in spite of these limitations, Flick (2004) notes that the triangulation of different methodological approaches can provide concrete examples of professional activity and knowledge of one's own modes of action and routines. Arguably, this approach to data collection assists with the application of reflexivity and provides a unique perspective of professionalism pertinent to this research project. The application of both methodological triangulation and reflexivity supports Cutcliffe and McKenna's (1999) argument. They argue that triangulation used in conjunction with other methods to establish credibility demonstrates the researcher's thorough attempt to address issues of representativeness and credibility of their qualitative research findings. This is supported further by Korstjens and Moser (2018), who explain the importance of self-awareness and reflexivity of the researcher's role in the process of collecting, analysing, and interpreting the data.

Another way to assess the trustworthiness of qualitative research is the degree of transferability of the findings. Transferability is defined as the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts with other respondents; it is the interpretive equivalent of the generalisability used in quantitative studies (Anney, 2014). Similarly, Curtin and Fossey (2007) explain that the readers of qualitative research articles should, from the detail provided, be able to determine if the findings can be applied in different contexts. For Anney (2014), the transferability of a qualitative inquiry is determined by the amount of thick descriptive data collected, allowing comparison of its context to other possible research contexts. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the researcher to provide rich, descriptive data, which should assist the readers' understanding of the context, the phenomena, and the participants. In turn, this would enable the degree of transferability to be interpreted by the author and the reader, though I suggest here the possibility of internal validation through the author's interpretation of the degree of transferability. Transferability is typically measured through external validity, which illustrates the range and limitations of the findings beyond the context in which they were originally studied (Malterud, 2001). Internal validity 'asks whether the study investigates what is meant to'; in contrast, external validity asks, 'in what contexts the findings can be applied' (Malterud, 2001:484). Therefore, this study will ensure discussion of how the results/findings of this research help advance theoretical understandings that are relevant to multiple situations (Kuper *et al.*, 2008). One of the limitations of qualitative research in relation to its transferability can be the uniqueness of the context in which the phenomena are originally studied (Krefting, 1991). The context or the participants may not relate to others, so the conclusions may not be transferable. Therefore, the degree of transferability is not only interpretive but also relies on the degree of similarity between research contexts and participants (Rodon and Sesé, 2008). Similarly, this requires the data collected to be analysed in relation to its applicability in other contexts. Due to the nature of this study, the transferability of professionalism is easily argued, as it is already established to be a mutually contested concept across multiple occupational fields. However, though the transferability could be argued, the decision ultimately lies with the reader, illustrating another potential limitation. If the reader is unfamiliar with the original research context, they may feel overwhelmed by the quantity and depth of details (Rodon and Sesé, 2008). Therefore, this research study and its accessibility to multiple readers is supported by the reflexive accounts included within.

3.4. Paradigms, Planning, and Sampling:

Qualitative research encompasses a variety of approaches that share similar ideals, such as a holistic approach, a focus on human experience, and sustained contact with people in their natural setting (Rolfe, 2006). This perspective is shared with Astalin (2013), who explains the importance of observing variables in the natural setting in which they are found. Astalin (2013) also notes that qualitative research is a broad term for investigative and explorative methodologies which highlight the use of a natural setting for data collection. Similarly, Reiners (2012) presents the naturalistic paradigm as the countermovement to the positivist paradigm, highlighting that reality is not fixed but grounded in subjective realities. Thus, phenomenology is closely related to a naturalistic approach to data collection. As such, investigating emerging themes of professionalism from the perspectives and interpretations of educational expedition leaders within the context of educational expeditions is justified. In this way, to explore and analyse professionalism as a social phenomenon justifies educational expeditions as the natural setting, the context for this study. Below is a Reflexive Account ('The Professional Setting') which illustrates my fascination with and justification for this research setting.

Reflexive Account: The Professional Setting:

Noting in other reflexive accounts my previous experiences, academic and otherwise; it is safe to say my interests lie in the outdoors. I wholeheartedly believe most of the principles and practices of the outdoors seem highly transferable to some other occupational fields. After extensively researching literature relating to other occupations for this thesis, I understood the similarities of professionalism beyond the realm of outdoor education. Yet, my experience within the outdoors grounded my interests in its practices and varied sectors. As such, researching perceptions of professionalism within an outdoor sector that I found the most interesting, and using it as the research context in which I could investigate phenomena contested in various fields, remained enticing. This subject and occupation has dominated my academic career. Given my interest in educational expeditions, professionalism, and research, I wanted to explore the outdoor education industry further and develop a greater understanding of each aspect of it.

Though recognising the phenomenological nature of this research, the research design/strategy for this project is an example of a descriptive/explanatory case study. It demonstrates elements of the descriptive approach because it is used:

> To describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-life context in which it occurred'. It uses elements of the explanatory approach because it 'is used if you were seeking to answer a question that sought to explain the presumed causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies (Baxter and Jack, 2008: 547).

Toloie-Eshlaghy *et al.*, (2011) suggest that the purpose of a case study is to bridge the gap between theoretical principles and real-life experiences. Similarly, Baldry and Amaratunga (2001) define case study as a research strategy which investigates contemporary phenomena operating in a real-life context, or arguably their natural setting. The benefits of utilising the case study research strategy have been described further by Toloie-Eshlaghy *et al.*, (2011): to describe causal relationships in specific scenarios and to explore real-life conditions, and how case studies focus on one case of a specific phenomenon. Studying a specific phenomenon helps to provide rich, detailed qualitative data, and provide insight for its further research. Investigating one phenomenon diminishes the possibility of diluting the data with too many, or other phenomena. In an effort to remain concise, having a focal point in this project helps provide clarity for the reader, as well as the researcher. On the other hand, Baldry and

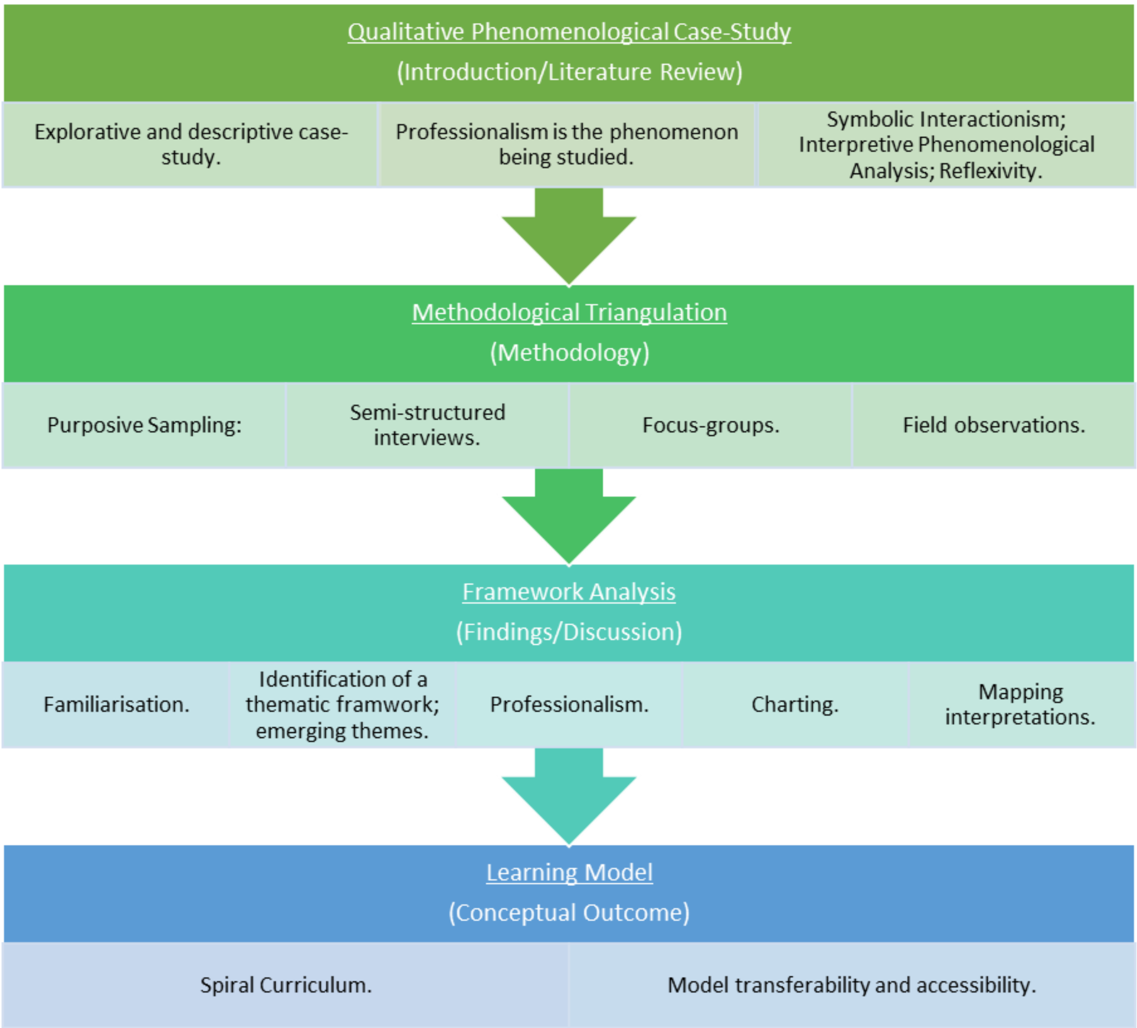
Amaratunga (2001) note the limitations of case studies: potential lack of rigour, an excess of researcher bias, and external validity that is difficult to measure. Finally, case studies provide a limited basis for the traditional scientific generalisation. However, although the research strategy implemented exemplifies a case study approach, each stage of this research process has multiple strategies/approaches/methods in place, as can be seen below in Figure Five 'Research strategy and structure'. This conceptual diagram highlights a linear perception of this research process in contrast to Morse *et al.*, (2002), who claim qualitative research is iterative rather than linear.

On the other hand, Morse *et al.,* (2002:18) use a sequential interpretation of the verification strategies applied in qualitative research, which are demonstrated within this study:

Methodological coherence;
Appropriate sampling;
Concurrent analysis;
Theoretical thinking and theory development.

These verification strategies are used to ensure both reliability and validity of the data collected. The first terms on the list by Morse *et al.*, (2002) require the researcher to ensure congruence between the research question and the methods used. As such, the sample group must include participants who best represent or have knowledge of the research topic. This would ensure congruence between both strategies and lay the foundations for reliable data collection. Each step must be coherent; one component verifies the other to support the research design.

Figure Five: Research Strategy and Structure



The sample group, BES, were chosen specifically for their knowledge and experience within educational expeditions. Coyne (1997) explains that the overall criticisms researchers receive often refer to their descriptions of their sample strategies and insufficient presentation of detail, thus making the interpretation and recreation of the study difficult. Therefore, this study best relates to Mays and Pope's (1995) perception of sampling. They note that the purpose of the sampling often utilised in qualitative research is to identify specific groups of people who either possess characteristics or live in circumstances relevant to the social phenomenon being studied. This approach enables the researcher to critically select willing participants who have access to important sources of knowledge relating to the phenomena in question. The participants chosen all have extensive experience working with BES and leading educational expeditions with other organisations. To ensure a diverse range of interpretations, data was collected from volunteer and paid seasoned/experienced expedition leaders. Due to the nature of BES, many of the participants work full-time in their own occupational fields; for example, expedition medics may have experience working for the NHS (National Health Service). Therefore, some interpretations gleaned from the data are inevitably influenced by the participants and how they perceive themselves within their own occupational field. As such, multiple professional identities analysed have been influenced by occupations outside of the educational expedition sector. As such, this ensures a holistic approach to exploring professionalism as a societal phenomenon, making BES the best conduit, as each volunteer/paid leader has their own wealth of experience beyond educational expeditions. Additionally, the opportunity to hand-pick participants allows the researcher to respond favourably to new or unexpected factors emerging in the research (Moriarty, 2011).

Initial contact with BES was established via email at the very beginning of this research project, mid-year 2018. As a novice researcher I found it difficult to propose the anticipated trajectory of this study, so at the time I was only able to explain the initial aims and objectives. Thankfully, BES was intrigued and in turn opted to be a part of this research project. However, in order to fully obtain access to BES and their leaders I had to apply for and volunteer as a social leader for their canoeing expedition in Finland. After obtaining such a role, like all leaders, I attended an induction weekend. This weekend is used as an opportunity to meet the expeditions team you will be working with, and it allows you to ask any questions about the expeditions or the procedures after/during BES's presentations. These presentations are used to establish what is expected of you and your team, as well as what you should expect from BES. During this induction I had the opportunity to observe and meet educational expedition leaders, all with a variety of experience working with BES as well as other expedition organisations. Toward the end of the weekend I had the opportunity to ask the Finland expedition team if they would like to participate in this research project. Having explained the aims and objectives, the potential impact, and the stage of data collection they would be participating in (field observations), the team accepted my offer. Consequently, I sent the information sheet, and consent forms to each member for their perusal. However, due to the recent pandemic, the stage of data collection they would be participating in was changed to participation in a focus group with the rest of the team, which was conducted via 'Zoom'. Thankfully, the team accepted this change, and I was able to conduct focus group (1). During this time, I had contacted BES with the hope of continuing my data collection with paid leaders compared to the volunteer leaders in focus group (1). After BES agreed to an additional focus group, I was able to collect data and analyse professionalism from two opposing perspectives, paid and unpaid.

Typically, the type of sampling predominantly used in qualitative research is non-probability, meaning the researchers seek out specific populations to investigate a specific topic (Lopez and Whitehead, 2013). Identifying the sample group requires a set of inclusion criteria or exclusion criteria (Robinson, 2014). Inclusion criteria specify attributes, characteristics, and/or experiences which all the participants possess; exclusion criteria define participants by traits they do not possess. Establishing these criteria enabled the researcher to ensure the eligibility of all the participants highlighted within this study. The original sample size was established during the initial design stage, and as such the provisional number of participants had been ascertained. Robinson (2014:29) claims that failing to do so would make 'planning all but impossible'. Having chosen BES specifically for their experience offering educational expeditions, I argue that their leaders exemplified the inclusion criteria pertinent to this project.

The type of non-probability sampling used is purposive or judgement sampling. This can be defined as a method 'to obtain a sample that appears to [the researcher] representative of the population' (Elmusharaf, 2012). This type of non-probability sampling is designed to provide information-rich cases (Lopez and Whitehead, 2013) for in-depth analysis. As the participants are selected, the inclusion criteria supported by their status, experience and special knowledge in the research topic should assist the researcher in gathering information-rich data (Lopez and Whitehead, 2013). Similarly, the rationale behind this approach is the researcher's assumption that specific individuals meet criteria which are deemed exemplary of a specific population. The assumption here suggests that all participants 'have a unique, different or important perspective on the phenomenon in question' (Robinson, 2014:31). On the other hand, as the researcher selects the inclusion/exclusion criteria as well as the sample group, the opportunity for researcher bias is increased (Etikan *et al.,* 2016). To combat this limitation, refer to Reflexive Account 'The Selected', which makes explicit the justifications for the selection process. Although this study utilises a purposive/judgement sampling approach, Etikan *et al.,* (2016:3) highlight seven different purposive sampling methods. I suggest these seven methods are merely sample selection criteria, and as such I propose that the selection criteria best relates to expert sampling. Expert sampling is defined as an approach used to 'glean knowledge from individuals that have particular expertise'; it is used when there is 'a lack of empirical evidence in an area and high levels of uncertainty' (Rai and Thapa, 2015:9). I argue that this definition is completely applicable to this study. The sample group is comprised of participants which are experts within their own right, supported by their wealth of experience in the outdoors and their own occupational fields. Additionally, as professionalism is a phenomenon with no definite definition, its application within the outdoor industry is arguably already laced with high levels of uncertainty. Examining interpretations taken from BES participants offers a holistic insight into the contemporary perceptions of professionalism within the educational expedition sector.

Reflexive Account: The Selected

The participants chosen for this study all meet the criteria for this research. The entire sample group has experience working with BES, each has experience within varied occupational fields, and all have a passion for educational expeditions. With their extensive experience working in the outdoors, leading/experiencing educational expeditions, and having worked in other occupations, these participants offer a unique and holistic insight of professionalism. This is not to suggest mine should be the only research conducted on professionalism in this sector, but it does highlight the disparate interpretations of educational expeditions. I recognise that BES is not the only organisation which offers educational expeditions; however, this sample group offers the initial insight into the broader population of educational expedition leaders.

In contrast, however, it could be argued that this study is an example of convenience or opportunity sampling, defined as an approach which ‘selects subjects that are more readily accessible’ (Etikan *et al.,* 2016:4). This non-probability sampling method selects participants who meet practical criteria, such as geographical proximity, availability, accessibility, and/or willingness to volunteer (Farrokhi and Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012). Etikan *et al.,* (2016) refer to convenience sampling as accidental samples, chosen simply because participants just happen to be situated near the researcher. In this research project, initial contact with BES could be interpreted as convenient, as it was established with the assistance of the thesis supervisor Doctor Clive Palmer. On the other hand, obtaining a place as a leader with BES via a job application, establishing contact with potential participants unknown to my supervisor, and conducting data collection were completed autonomously. Therefore, although initial contact was made with assistance, I consider the use of purposive sampling more prominent within this study, as BES were not chosen accidentally, nor were they situated conveniently. Leaders with experience working with BES were chosen solely because of the inclusion criteria, which can are illustrated below in Figure Six, 'Inclusion Criteria'.

Figure Six: Inclusion Criteria

Moriarty (2011) notes that the qualitative sampling process is often iterative, which mirrors (2002) interpretation by Morse *et al.*, of the research design in its entirety. This iterative aspect supports the axiological approach of reflexivity, exemplifying Srivastava and Hopwood's (2009:77) definition of iteration as:

> Key to sparking insight and developing meaning. Reflexive iteration is at the heart of visiting and revisiting the data and connecting them with emerging insights, progressively leading to refined focus and understanding.

Utilising an iterative sampling framework ensures the continuing exploration of the data by revisiting emerging themes in the outlined sample. In turn, sample saturation can be achieved when the researcher reaches a point in which no new information is obtained from further data, thus indicating that adequate data has been collected for analysis (Elmusharaf, 2012). As this thesis demonstrates a qualitative interpretive approach, the sample saturation is determined by the researcher, which does present a potential avenue for researcher bias. On the other hand, professionalism, as a contested concept, will likely still have varying definitions across occupations. Without a strict definition in many fields, saturation would be difficult to achieve while researching professionalism. Additionally, this is not a longitudinal study, and due to the parameters of this study, saturation has been determined at the discretion of the researcher.

Qualitative data can contain both explicit and tacit perceptions of the studied phenomena and demonstrates the interpretive nature of this study. This methodological flexibility ensures that the trajectory of this study is influenced by the data collected (Palmer and Griggs, 2010). The data collection methods utilised within this project were semi-structured interviews, focus groups and field observations. However, as mentioned previously, opportunities for observation were cancelled due to the pandemic. Nevertheless, the use of observations as a data collection method had been originally embedded within the research design and will therefore be discussed.

3.5. Data Collection Methods

Observations:

Observation as a data collection method is described by Baker (2006:171) as the 'bedrock source of human knowledge about the social and natural world'. This type of data collection can be complex and often requires the researcher to assume several different social roles and utilise different techniques to record data. The primary focus of the researcher is to remain detached enough to collect sufficient data (Baker, 2006). The different roles the researcher assumes will inevitably influence the collected data; potential roles have been defined as complete observer, complete participant, observer-as-participant, and participant-as-observer.

The complete observer is an unobtrusive observer (Gorman *et al.*, 2005). Meaning, the researcher is present at the scene but does not participate or interact with the participants, simply listening and observing (Baker, 2006). One advantage of this role is its complete detachment from the sample group to ensure an objective analysis of the phenomena studied; however, in practice it can be a disadvantage. The researcher may not hear conversations or grasp the full significance of a situation. To observe and assume the importance of a conversation via the environment, body language, and facial expressions may lead to misinterpreted data. To clarify, this study is founded on qualitative principles, and iterative data collection, meaning all data has been interpreted by the researcher. In this context, misinterpretation can stem from minimal proximity to the sample group. Simply, the researcher may observe phenomena whilst remaining detached from the sample group, but the phenomena may not reflect that interpretation. On the other hand, Morgan *et al.,* (2017) explain how observing people in their natural environment can reveal insights not accessible from other data collection methods, such as structures, processes, and behaviours. Therefore, observing educational expedition leaders in their natural environment may suggest emerging themes of professionalism not yet discovered via other methods of data collection.

In contrast to a complete observer, a complete participant operates at 'the ultimate level of involvement' as the researcher 'goes native and studies a group in which she/he is already a member' (Baker, 2006:177). This requires the researcher to blend in, to act as a group member in order to refrain from altering the flow of the interactions among members. If the researcher is exploring professionalism via social interactions, would the researcher have to adopt the group's interpretation of professionalism in order to become/act as a member? This too would have ethical implications. Would the researcher reveal their true intentions, or would that ultimately affect the outcomes of their research? It could be argued that my academic/personal background defines me as a member of the outdoor industry and by association a complete participant. However, this research focuses on BES and their leaders, not the outdoor industry in its entirety. On the other hand, becoming a social leader for BES placed me at the epicentre of the sample group. The defining characteristic of this role ultimately requires the researcher to act as though they belong, but in turn they may feel self-conscious and thus become handicapped when trying to perform convincingly (Baker, 2006). Therefore, I did not assume this role, as each participant was fully aware of my observation and the reason for it.

The observer-as-participant role is perhaps most relevant to this study. Gold (1957:221) describes it as a role which includes more observation than participation: 'it entails less risk of going native than either the complete participant role or the participant-as-observer role'. This role requires the researcher to advance their involvement with the participants. Though their main role is to observe, the researcher may conduct short, one-off individualised interviews based on the data collected by that point. The participant-as-observer role requires the researcher to become involved with the insider's central activities but not to fully commit to member values and goals (Baker, 2006). Through participant-as-observer roles, the researcher can immerse themselves in social settings to gain insight into the sample group's social interactions and identify subtle changes in context (Reeves *et al.*, 2008). In contrast to a complete participant, the observer-as-participant role enables the researcher to minimise interaction with the participants, thus lessening the impact on the observed phenomena, though the researcher's presence will have an effect. Lessening the interaction and minimising external influence will help improve this project's trustworthiness and credibility.

Regarding this project, the complete observer role was never adopted. Due to the dynamic nature of educational expeditions, the requirements for data collection, and BES's involvement, I adopted the observer-as-participant role in the beginning. During the application to become a social leader with BES, I had the opportunity to observe and participate in their recruitment process. This enabled me to experience first-hand what BES look for regarding their interpretation of professionalism, how BES members conducted themselves, and how other participants demonstrated their own professional identities. The benefits of this approach meant other leaders may have been more willing to talk to an attentive stranger; as such, there is less temptation for the observer to go native (Baker, 2006) as they still receive the desired outcome. However, as my study evolved, so did my participation (Meyer, 2001). My observational role changed from observer-as-participant to participant-observer. The application to become a social leader inevitably came with demands to fulfil that role, and I was required to fully immerse myself in the expedition leaders' social setting, adopting their habits and adhering to their processes and procedures all while my intentions were known. The difficulty here is remaining objective (Gold, 1957) as I identify with the occupation, the participants, and the study; failing to do so could have jeopardised my role as the researcher. In contrast, remaining an observer-as-participant may have provided brief and inadequately understood perceptions of professionalism. Evolving from one role into the other shows a natural progression for this research project. However, due to Covid-19 observational data had not been collected, refer to Reflexive Account 'Covid-19 Restrictions'.

One of the key threats to observational validity, as described by Baker (2006:186):

> Is researcher bias that may result from selective observation, selective recording of information, or the subjective interpretation of situations.

To address observational/researcher bias, the researcher has actively engaged in critical self-reflection (Johnson, 1997) or reflexivity, which has been clearly demonstrated throughout the project. Reflexivity has been explained above, but now I clarify its association with the data collection methods. Typically, field observations and the roles associated with them are undertaken in an ethnographic study (Adler and Adler, 1994; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Knoblauch, 2005). Hammersley and Atkinson (1994:248) define ethnography as a form of 'social research' which usually includes 'a strong emphasis on exploring the nature of particular social phenomena', requiring the analysis of 'explicit interpretation of the meaning and functions of human interactions'. However, though some principles are common to both ethnography and a phenomenological case study, auto-ethnography in association with reflexivity has been applied here. Auto-ethnography as described by Jackson *et al.,* (2007) combines the principles of ethnography and autobiography. Reeves *et al.,* (2008) explain auto-ethnography as a method which enables the researcher to illustrate and evidence their own interpretations and perspectives reflexively during the observed social interactions, thus helping to provide a context for the study. Although this is not an ethnographic study, the practices of auto-ethnography and reflexivity used in conjunction was a method purposely included within the research design. This was done to further evidence the study's credibility and trustworthiness by presenting the researcher's reflections on the lived experience of the phenomena being studied.

Autoethnography is described by McIlveen (2008:13) as a:

> Reflexive means by which the researcher-practitioner consciously embeds himself or herself amidst theory and practice, and by way of intimate autobiographic account, explicates a phenomenon under investigation or intervention. Autoethnography is presented as a vehicle to operationalise social constructionist research and practice that aims to establish trustworthiness and authenticity. Furthermore, the method is presented as a means to operationalise the notion of critical consciousness within researchers and practitioners.

The autobiographical aspect of this method coupled with reflexivity enables the researcher to explore their own deeply sedimented cultural memories (Taylor, 2007) in association with the collected data and the emerging themes. Due to my academic/personal relationship with the research context, this method was deemed applicable to assist in the production of cultural knowledge (Swadener and Mutua, 2007). It does so as I have already been emersed in its culture from an early age. Refer back to the reflexive account: who am I?

The very nature of auto-ethnographic writing can include highly personal accounts which draw upon the experiences of the researcher for the sole purpose of extending sociological understanding (Denshire, 2014). I argue then, as reflexivity acknowledges personal changes brought about by the research process and how it affects the research process (Palanganas *et al.,* 2017), its inclusion along with autoethnography is valid. As reflexivity is a highly subjective (Jaya, 2011) method of self-reflection, its use should help illustrate and explain the decisions made within this project. Additionally, as the research design for this project utilises methodological triangulation, the field observations are used to consolidate and contextualise the emerging themes collected from the other two methods of data collection, focus groups and semi-structured interviews.

Semi-Structured Interviews:

Semi-structured interviews and focus groups can be used as ‘stand-alone methods as a supplement to other methods or as a means for triangulation’ (Longhurst, 2003:147). Semi-structured interviews exist as a middle ground between two polar opposites: structured interviews and unstructured interviews. The key distinction between all three is based on the extent of formality/structure imposed on the interaction between the researcher and the participant (Luo and Wildemuth, 2009). A structured interview consists of a strict list of questions, ‘they asked verbatim to the respondent’ (Segal *et al.,* 2006:122), and the interviewers tend not to deviate from the specific format. Unstructured interviews are ‘more or less equivalent to guided conversations’ (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006:315) with no strict line of questioning. In the middle of this continuum, semi-structured interviews have predetermined questions (Luo and Wildemuth, 2009), but the order of those questions can be modified based upon the interviewer’s perception of what seems appropriate to the conversation. Following the nature of a qualitative/interpretive research paradigm, semi-structured interviews have been used as individuals understand the world in varying ways (Luo and Wildemuth, 2009). This allows the interview to be tailored to the participant. Similarly, Taylor (2005) notes that the aim of semi-structured interviews is to understand the world from the participant’s perspective, which is appropriate for the research design of this project. Therefore, four semi-structured interviews were conducted. Each interview lasted for approximately 60 minutes. Refer to appendix ten through thirteen for examples of the interview transcripts. This interviewing approach enabled me to explore the perceptions and opinions of the participants; the occupational, educational, and personal histories of the sample group precluded the use of a specific interview schedule (Barriball and While, 1994). The lack of a strict schedule allowed for an open platform of discussion, and as the participants were keen to respond, a schedule would have disrupted the flow of conversation, and restricted the data collected. However, semi-structured interviews give the researcher choices in the posing of each question and the use of probes. Probing in particular can be an invaluable tool for ensuring reliability of the data (Barriball and While, 1994). Probing clarifies potential themes raised by the participants, providing the opportunity to explore issues related to the research context, as well as organising inconsistencies within respondents' accounts (Barriball and While, 1994). Although semi-structured interviews can be useful in a system of methodological triangulation, it is important to note their limitations and the influences they have on this project. Semi-structured interviews can be time-consuming, especially during transcription and analysis (Taylor, 2005; Newcomer *et al.*, 2015) stage. Similarly, the interview format usually varies between participants, and reflexive and open interviewing requires practice (Taylor, 2005; Newcomer *et al.*, 2015). For a novice researcher, these two limitations were the most difficult to overcome; see Reflexive Account 'Predetermined Professional'. Additionally, Taylor (2005:53) outlines other limitations, such as:

> Interviews can only capture reconstructions of events rather than how people might actually behave. Interviewers must be able to reflect on the impact their class, gender and position might have on the interview process.

Reflexive Account: Predetermined Professional

As I reviewed the interview format along with the focus group transcripts, I realised that the participants could lie during either one. Part of my responsibility as the researcher is to analyse the collected data regardless of any suspicion of deceit. Conducting interviews prior to focus groups allow the participants to consider their initial responses, and so they could either retract their initial thoughts or clarify their meaning. On the other hand, some participants may not want to revisit their initial comments in the presence of others and/or might become defensive if the other participants disagree. Ensuring diplomacy throughout these discussions is another key responsibility for the researcher, though ensuring the freedom to discuss emerging themes may take precedence over format. All of these issues must be managed during the interviews/focus groups, and without practice could remain a key limitation of this project.

In contrast however, Barriball and While (1994), in agreement with Luo and Wildemuth (2009), highlight the increased validity associated with this method of interviewing, stating that it is the most useful data collection method for studying a wide range of information behaviours (how individuals search for and use information in different contexts). Information is a term used here to refer to the actions and reactions of individuals within the research context. In this project, the opportunity to explore the varying behaviours of educational expedition leaders helped to determine what they deemed professional. I argue here that semi-structured interviews increased the study's validity, as this method of data collection offers a greater chance of understanding the phenomena. Each interview is unique (Taylor, 2005) and given the importance of professional identity and its individualised nature, this approach allowed me to further explore participants' perceptions on a one-to-one basis, uncovering 'how people view and explain their own behaviour and experience their environments' (Taylor, 2005:41).

Though the reliability and validity of semi-structured interviews support this project's research design, the ethical implications of this approach were assessed with reference to a risk/benefit analysis (Lincoln and Tierney, 2004). Clearly there are benefits and limitations to any data collection method, and all include potential ethical implications. Longhurst (2003) identified two key ethical issues associated with each data collection method used in this study: confidentiality and anonymity. Additionally, however, the ethical requirements of semi-structured interviews were outlined by DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006:319):

(1) Reducing the risk of unanticipated harm;
(2) Protecting the interviewee's information;
(3) Effectively informing interviewees about the nature of the study;
(4) Reducing the risk of exploitation.

To combat the ethical issues associated with semi-structured interviews, informed consent was adhered to during all stages of data collection. However, reaffirming consent requires judgement from the researcher (Koskei and Simiyu, 2015) via inquiries like "is it alright with you if we talk more about this?" The limitation here refers to the researcher's ability to recognise when a topic seems to be sensitive to the participant, and as a novice researcher I found it difficult to realise when best to ask this question. See Reflexive Account 'Emotive Misconnection?'.

Reflexive Account: Emotive Misconnection?

I have not had much experience guiding interview discussions, and as such the conversational format is unfamiliar to me. However, I can distinguish in the respondents' tone, body language, and responses the sense of emotion attached to each word and topic and any changes. This observation not only provides me the foundation for the next question but allows me to identify any topics which seemed sensitive to the participant. On the other hand, I also considered this a limitation, as the interviewer deems what is worth investigating further and what is not. Although these reflections enabled me to note when to ask the next question and/or to move onto the next topic, it still offers the chance to misinterpret these signals as much as a reader can misinterpret text.

Focus Groups:

The final data collection method applied within this project was focus groups. Two focus groups were conducted. The first involved six participants who actively volunteer(ed) for BES and continued for 54:52 minutes. The second involved five participants who are actively paid to work for BES and continued for 1:04:18 minutes. Much like semi-structured interviews, focus groups are conversational and informal in tone, and both provide a platform for open responses in the participants' own words (Longhurst, 2003). During focus groups, it is the researcher's role to keep the group on topic, but the format is otherwise non-directive, enabling the group to explore the subject from their own perspectives and from many angles. It is important to note here the definition of a focus group to distinguish it from a group interview (Kitzinger, 1995). In this project, the definition of focus groups mirrors that of Gibbs (1997:2): a data collection method which relies 'on interaction within the group based on topics that are supplied by the researcher'. In contrast, a group interview:

> Involves interviewing a number of people at the same time, the emphasis being on questions and responses between the researcher and participants (Gibbs, 1997:2).

Therefore, focus groups collect data through interactions between subjects on a topic determined by the researcher (Morgan, 1996:130).

Goss and Leinbach (1996) suggest that researchers often aim to construct a homogeneous group in an effort to simulate a group of friends or people who have things in common (Longhurst, 2003). This is done with a view to create a relaxed atmosphere, one which enables an open platform of discussion. For this thesis, the participants were a part of a homogenous sample group: they all had experience in the educational expedition sector, leading in different occupational capacities, and held similar interests, particularly expeditions. Calder (1977:362) stated that phenomenological groups require homogeneity, remarking further that the researcher should have previous experiences which are maximally compatible with those of the focus group participants. As such, utilising focus groups within a system of triangulation is an appropriate technique to explore complex terrain (Macnaghten and Myers, 2004).

Using focus groups allowed me to explore and begin to generate information on the phenomenon studied: professionalism. This data collection method can generate a rich understanding of participants' experiences and beliefs (Gill *et al.*, 2008). This method also allows participants to present their own views and experience and reflect upon others' interpretations. They can listen, reflect, and consider their own perspective in light of new information (Finch *et al.,* 2003). Therefore, in contrast to group interviews, the focus group approach within this project is synergistic, and the group interaction is explicitly used to generate data and insights (Finch *et al.,* 2003). Additionally, this approach allowed the researcher to observe the educational expedition leader's social context through the lens of symbolic interactionalism, which is rooted in phenomenological case studies. This interpretation is supported in Lambert and Loiselle's (2008:229) journal article:

> The primary goal of this method is to use interaction data resulting from discussion among participants (e.g. questioning one another, commenting on each other's experiences) to increase the depth of the inquiry and unveil aspects of the phenomenon assumed to be otherwise less accessible.

However, it is important to note that the application of this data collection method had been directly affected due to the recent pandemic (Covid-19). The focus groups were conducted online, which brings in a specific set of benefits and limitations. The online focus groups conducted involved synchronous discussion via Zoom. Although this method of conducting focus groups had not been planned, Sweet (2001:134) explains that 'the demand for online focus groups is expanding the research arena and adding a new tool to the qualitative toolbox'.

Regardless of its application, focus groups still hold many benefits, which can be recognised either online or in person. The online focus groups still enabled me to identify participants' attitudes, priorities, language, and frameworks of understanding; to encourage and assist participants to generate their own questions and develop their own analysis of common experiences. Finally, it enabled me to establish their group norms and cultural values (Kitzinger, 1995). In essence, the strength of focus groups is rooted in a compromise among the strengths found within other qualitative methods (Morgan, 1996), such as the participant-observer role and semi-structured interviews. Like the participant-observer role, it allows access 'to a process that qualitative researchers are often centrally interested in, interaction' (Morgan, 1996:260). Similarly, like semi-structured interviews, focus groups offer insight and allow access to the personal interpretations/perspectives of participants' attitudes and experiences (Morgan, 1999) on a one-to-one basis without any external influences. This is not to suggest that focus groups are more beneficial than either of the other methods, but I argue that they are the appropriate data collection method to investigate professionalism as a social phenomenon.

Focus groups also have limitations, with the added limitations associated with online facilitation. Morgan (1999) identifies the two key disadvantages of conducting focus groups which I deem most applicable here: the unnatural setting in which they are conducted and the researcher's lack of control over the discussions taking place. Due to the recent pandemic, focus groups were conducted remotely, and most participants were based at home. Though this was considered an unnatural setting in this context, the current circumstance offered no other option. Alternatively, due to the experience of the participants, their occupational histories, and group dynamics, I believe the change in setting would not have offered dissimilar results. Though this is presupposition, the participants were in their own natural surroundings, their own homes, which in most cases is a comfortable and familiar environment, which in this case held no external influences, as each participant was physically alone. This alleviated any dominant physical presence influencing those more susceptible to group dynamics. Regarding the lack of control, as a limitation for this project, and as a novice researcher, I do recognise the I am also susceptible to the influence of the participants; see Reflexive Account "Who are you…?", and Reflexive Account 'Intimidating Interviewees'. However, Gill *et al.,* (2008) suggest the researcher moderating a focus group must guide a discussion rather than join in.

Reflexive Account: "Who are you…?"

I have minimal experiences of educational expeditions. During the interview phase of my initial data collection, before the recording began, I asked the participants if they had any questions regarding my research. One of the participants asked, "Who are you to question my practice?" After reflecting on this question, my initial thought was: can I question a person's practice if I have minimal experience leading? After further reflection, the answer is simply yes. A detective does not need to commit a crime to be qualified to investigate one. As a novice researcher, I recognise that I have an idea of what is expected of a professional, but like any novice I have much to learn. The only aim is to investigate, not to judge.

Surprisingly, conducting a remote focus group addressed another common limitation, one described by Kitzinger (1995:300) as 'the articulation of group norms may silence individual voices of dissent'. Participants usually influenced by more dominant social pressures seemed to be more comfortable interjecting in the discussions. Contrarily, though external influences had been unintentionally restricted, some participants remained quieter than others. Gill *et al.,* (2008) argues that if participants are uneasy with each other and will therefore not discuss their feelings and opinions openly, then the focus group should be avoided. In this study, it is clear the participants are comfortable with the presence of their colleagues, yet there remained quieter participants. For examples of the focus group transcripts, refer to appendix fifteen and sixteen.

Anticipating the potential for quieter participants, semi-structured interviews were conducted first to ascertain perceptions free of external influences, such as other participants. These interviews also enabled the researcher to frontload information lifted from the literature and assess its application, relevance, and transferability to the experiences of the participants. Doing so tested the significance of the literature prior to a larger, in-depth discussion (Longhurst, 2003). This allowed for the exploration of individualised interpretations, the lived experience, and the comparison of emerging themes in an environment not restricted by unspoken social hierarchy. These comparisons acted as a springboard for further questioning during the following stage of data collection, focus groups. The difficulty of conducting data collection in this order lies with the participants. If a participant was not comfortable revisiting a topic within a focus group or had not been comfortable knowing a topic would be discussed without them present, the data collection would have been restricted. However, this was not the case in this instance, and with the participants' consent, the semi-structured interviews provided sufficient data to fuel in-depth discussion during the proceeding stages.

Reflexive Account: Intimidating Interviewee's

Each of the participants has extensive experience working in their own occupational fields and demonstrating their own professional identity. I felt an abnormal amount of pressure to ensure I was asking the right questions and making a good impression. As someone researching perceptions of professionalism, I wanted to demonstrate my own professional identity. This is not to suggest I know what that it is yet; perhaps the notion of professionalism is bestowed by others. Nevertheless, there were moments as a result of this pressure and being a novice researcher, I had begun to agree with some comments made, which may have influenced subjects' responses. I stated my agreement, though not asking questions in return of this mutual understanding, or discussing how/why I agreed, but I had realised I made a mistake. Whether this was because of a pressure to impress or if it was a lack of experience, I will not be making the same mistake again.

3.6. Framework Analysis and Discourse Analysis:

Each of the data collection methods discussed has been analysed using the Framework Analysis approach. This method of data analysis offers the researcher a systematic structure to manage, analyse and identify emerging themes (Hackett and Strickland, 2018). It is a process of analysis developed specifically for qualitative research required to meet set objectives of investigation within limited time periods (Kiernan and Hill, 2018). Additionally, the qualitative data which is nominally utilised in a framework analysis are 'usually gathered in the form of participant observation, focus groups or interviews' (Srivastava and Thomson, 2009:75), which is why this method was chosen.

There are five interconnected stages to this approach: 'familiarisation; identifying a thematic framework; indexing; charting; mapping and interpretation' (Rabiee, 2004:657).

Stage 1, Familiarisation:

This stage can be identified as a characteristic associated with many of the qualitative approaches: immersion (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994). This initial stage ensures the researcher begins by reviewing all the collected data, reading transcripts, reviewing field observations, listening to interviews, and noting emerging themes in the data (Parkinson *et al.,* 2016). However, it is not necessary to review all the collected data, only to begin to identify potential avenues of investigation. The full review will happen in the later stages (Srivastava and Thompson, 2009).

How did I familiarise myself with the data?

During and after the data collection phases I re-read all the transcripts and re-listened to the audio clips in order to assess the inflection placed upon the participant's words. It is important to note that the familiarisation stage was conducted systematically in conjunction with the data collection phases. Firstly, I began to immerse myself within the data taken from the first phase of data collection, semi-structured interviews. Listening to the audio files and writing the transcripts of the interviews offered me insight, a sense of the participant's interpretations and perceptions regarding professionalism, which allowed me to begin noting emerging themes. This gave me the opportunity to interpret and reinterpret meaning to participant responses in association with the literature I had read throughout this research process. Additionally, assessing the inflection placed upon specific terminology enabled a greater sense of understanding of their lived experiences. Noting the emotion displayed by the participants, the emphasis on terminology used, and experiences discussed helped me to assess the status of the participants' relationship with their reflections. Do they reflect with disdain for how their professionalism may have been perceived? Do they happily reflect on their experiences as an educational expedition leader? Did a lapse in their professionalism cloud a memory associated with an expedition? Similarly, this assessment offered the opportunity to assess my own ability to conduct the interviews as a novice researcher. Did I remain objective? Did I guide the discussion or dictate it? How would I do it differently? All these questions inevitably affect the analysis of the data collected. During the second phase of data collection (focus groups), at the first opportunity I listened to the audio recording and began transcribing. This was to ensure that I would not mishear any terminology, as the discussion was fresh in my mind. Similarly, I did not know the participants, and I wanted to ensure I remembered their names, which were later anonymised. The process of familiarisation for the focus groups was very similar to the first phase of data collection and included all the same approaches to identifying emerging themes.

Stage 2, Identifying a thematic framework:

Parkinson *et al.,* (2016) explain that the function of this stage is to organise data in a meaningful and manageable way for subsequent retrieval for the final mapping and interpretation stage. The process of developing a framework of categories is informed both by the emergent themes arising from the first stage and by a priori concerns (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994). However, the degree to which each is applied within the development of the framework is dependent on the study and is likely to involve trial and error (Parkinson *et al.,* 2016). The advantages of the application of both is the focus on the research question. Additionally, the researcher must allow the data to dictate the themes (Srivastava and Thompson, 2009). This ensures the framework includes the key interpretations and perceptions expressed by the participants.

How did I create a thematic framework?

The foundation and development of the thematic framework began with Raw Data. As I listened to the audio recordings and transcribed the first and second phases of data collection, I established who was speaking, what they had said, and at what time of the recording. Once all the audio recordings for the first two phases were transcribed, I re-read each of them and began to identify Lower Order Themes and Higher Order Themes. I did so by establishing singular and/or re-occurring concepts introduced by the participants during the discussion/interviews. After establishing the initial lower and higher order themes in each transcript, I revisited all the transcripts to see if they shared any themes. Doing so allowed me to refine the framework, interpret and reinterpret the data, and link the discovered themes to theory I had read during this research process. Additionally, to make clear the framework and organisation of data, I followed an approach similar to that presented in Rabiee (2004) and colour coordinated the emerging themes into respective categories to make the following stages of the framework analysis easier.

Stage 3, Indexing:

Srivastava and Thompson (2009) explain that this stage requires the researcher to identify sections of the collected data which relate to a specific theme. This process systematically applies the framework to each part of the data collection, such as transcripts, field observations, and additional notes (Parkinson *et al.*, 2016). Kiernan and Hill (2018) suggest this stage is not a routine exercise, as it can involve numerous judgements as to the significance of the data, which involves a process of critical selection and deselection. This process alone could demonstrate a series of researcher bias. On the other hand, Kiernan and Hill (2018:255) describe this stage as an opportunity to make 'judgements and assumptions of what the dataset means to the researcher', ensuring a level of transparency. At this point the researcher has an opportunity for reflexivity, to consider what, how, and why regarding their choice of indexing.

How did I assign data to the framework?

After noting the raw data and lower and higher ordered themes, I re-read the transcripts again to establish the relationship between the terminology, phrasing, and concepts introduced by the participants. Consequently, I linked these to the higher order themes and highlighted its relationship under the subheading Representative Data, providing a quote as evidence within that column. Additionally, following the process of the framework approach, I provided another category with the subheading Conceptual Value. This offered me the chance to give a brief explanation or questions on why/how the representative data and themes were connected. Finally, after advancing from the MPhil stages of this project, I included a Reflexive/Reflective Value subheading allowing me to categorise what the conceptual value meant to me as a novice researcher and how it affected this research project.

Stage 4, Charting:

Hackett and Strickland (2018) explain the function of this stage is to organise the data into a more manageable format, such as charts. Parkinson *et al.*, (2016) suggest this stage involves summarising the indexed data for each category and further organising the summaries within the chart. The organisation of the chart requires the data to be lifted from its original textual context (transcripts, recordings, field notes etc.), and in turn the headings and subheadings are drawn from the thematic framework (Srivastava and Thompson, 2009). In the more generic, broader sense of other qualitative approaches, this stage can be recognised as a 'secondary data reduction' (Kiernan and Hill, 2018:257).

How did I organise the indexed data into the charts?

Having clearly established categorical headings and subheadings within the previous stage, the charting was easier to manage. Though the function of this stage is to begin summarising the indexed data, I refrained from doing so and provided quotes to represent the themes instead. I did this to provide the reader with the same information I had while showing the consecutive development of the conversations/discussions. This is to make the transferability of this project easier to apply in other studies while offering complete transparency. On the other hand, while reviewing the charts I noted the large amount of data collected and realised it was impractical to include all the original data contexts. Therefore, though I have not summarised the data within the charts, I have provided key sections of the charts as examples within the appendices.

Stage 5, Mapping and interpretation:

Parkinson *et al.*, (2016) describe the core aim of this stage as moving away from the management of data and beginning to make sense of it. Ritchie and Spencer (1994) note this stage can include the description of the emerging themes, which represent the nature and depth of the phenomena within the data, as well as establish clear relationships between them. Srivastava and Thompson (2009:76) note this analysis will allow the researcher to create a 'schematic diagram of the event/phenomenon', consequently guiding the analysis of the data, which should remain reflective of the participants.

How did I make sense of the data?

Although I clearly anticipated this final stage throughout the process, I had only charted individual transcripts without mapping their connection with the researched literature and other phases of data collection. Noting their relationships without charting them made it difficult to visually assess their connections. However, it is important to note here the value of this analytical approach; following this process allowed me to begin mapping and interpreting key concepts for the discussion chapter. The value of this approach is immeasurable for novice researchers who find it difficult to sift through the data or their own interpretations, especially while analysing the large amounts of data typically expected within qualitative research. Similarly, my use and interpretation of the framework approach consisted of a colour coding scheme, working in association with categorical headings and assessing the concept frequency, which enabled me to map the data throughout. In doing so, I reached the final stage of this process fully prepared to present the final form of the collected data.

As framework analysis is conducted systematically, it enables the researcher to explore data in depth while maintaining an audit trail, therefore enhancing the rigour of the analytical processes as well as the credibility of the findings (Smith and Firth, 2011). Similarly, the processes are flexible and iterative, allowing the interpretation of data in adherence to the research design (Hackett and Strickland, 2018). As such, the process of coding and charting allows the researcher to identify/explore emerging themes to assist in the understanding of patterns. The flexibility enables the researcher to move back and forward across the emerging themes, which ensures greater familiarity with and immersion in the data. There are many benefits to using the framework analysis approach; Smith and Firth (2011) describe three applicable to this study. First, it enables the analysis of descriptive data, which explores different aspects of the phenomena being investigated. Secondly, the researcher's interpretation of participants' experiences remained transparent. Thirdly, for novice researchers moving from data management to data analysis, the interconnected stages within the framework explicitly describe the processes that guide the analysis from descriptive to explanatory accounts, thus making it easier for novice researchers to conduct. These benefits also support the descriptive/explanatory case study research design illustrated earlier in this methodology. Similarly, the clearly defined steps of this process allow others to follow the decisions made to produce the findings and conclusions of this study, which is key when planning how to defend the robustness and rigour of the research (Hackett and Strickland, 2018). Additionally, Hackett and Strickland (2018) note the framework analysis approach can be applied without the need for computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) such as N-Vivo, which is beneficial for novices who have not had the opportunity to learn how to use these tools. Similarly, CAQDAS could have been used to further analyse, and compare the data to see if it yielded the same findings. This would have further increased the validity, and reliability of this project.

The limitations of the framework analysis approach include its resource intensive and time-consuming nature (Hackett and Strickland, 2018), however, this could be true of all qualitative data analytical approaches. Common of a novice researcher, understanding the terminology associated with this method can be difficult. Ritchie *et al.,* (2013) imply a lack of clarity surrounding qualitative terminology such as codes, themes, index, and categories within the literature at large. However, Hackett and Strickland (2018) recognise the need to understand the basic steps of the analytical process and terminology, which will help provide the rigour a research study requires. Finally, as framework analysis is not bound by a particular epistemological position (Parkinson *et al.,* 2016) it has the manoeuvrability to suit a variety of research studies.

Explaining how the interview and focus group transcripts were organised requires a discussion on my interpretation and application of discourse analysis. Discourse analysis is described by Jorgenson and Phillips (2002:1) as 'not just one approach, but a series of interdisciplinary approaches that can be used to explore many different social domains in many different types of studies'. Similarly, Potter and Edwards (1996:616) explain 'there is no single recipe for discourse analysis', yet describe criteria they deem helpful to consider: 'variation, detail, rhetoric, orientation to context identity, accountability, stake and interest'. Additionally, Graham (2003:113) notes 'that analysis must deal with identifiable social units'. These social units can be characterised by the ways in which 'members of particular social systems comprehend, represent and reproduce their worlds'. Many of these factors I argue are identifiable features within the research design, data collection and analytical processes employed throughout. While analysing the transcripts for both semi-structured interviews and focus groups, I looked for key terminology which had been frequently used throughout, not by an individual, but by multiple participants. These recurring terms and phrases might be signifiers of the sample group's culture. I would then compare the contexts in which these phrases occurred across the different transcripts, which allowed me to identify if they remained signifiers of the group's culture, or if they had been used as one-off accepted terms in the context of the discussion. Once I established the signifying terms of the sample group, I then compared the contexts of discussion to analyse the meaning behind them. I used this process to identify the emerging themes.

3.7.Ethical Considerations:

Having discussed each phase of data collection and its subsequent analysis, it is important to note the ethical implications. From an interpretivist perspective, ethics can be recognised as subjective; individuals may have different perceptions on what they consider to be ethical (Houghton *et al.,* 2010). Therefore, to ensure transparency, the ethical considerations of this project are unanticipated harm, informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality, beneficence and reciprocity, and the researcher-participant relationship.

Unanticipated harm:

Researchers have an obligation to anticipate the potential outcomes of their data collection, weighing-up the risks and benefits typically associated with their methods.

However, it remains difficult to predict in advance the balance of both (Houghton *et al.*, 2010). For example, Shaw (2003) explains how participants may reveal more than they intend to, as they may assume within informal settings the researcher has stopped collecting data, which is not usually the case in qualitative research. Additionally, the data collection methods may incite topics for discussion that are sensitive to the participants, which could make interviews emotionally intense (Koskei and Simiyu, 2015) and harm both researcher and participants. Similarly, one of the tasks of the researcher, is to listen and reflect personal information back to the participants, and this process could also have unforeseen outcomes (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). Gibbs (1997) suggests the researcher is required to be honest about their expectations, and to refrain from pressuring participants is good practice. This approach requires the researcher to be observant, mindful, and attentive to their participants during this process. For example, missing subtle reactions to questions, statements, and topics could have negative effects on the participants, thus the researcher's attitude may also have an impact on the participants (Alsaawi, 2014). On the other hand, the participants may also express offensive views, and remaining non-judgmental may simply legitimise these views, which could be detrimental (Longhurst, 2003). (This is not to suggest this was the case within this project, but to highlight considerations made throughout.) To address such concerns, the potential for unanticipated harm was discussed in the informed consent forms.

Informed Consent:

To make explicit the potential harm of this research project and to remain transparent to the participants, informed consent paperwork was sent to each of the participants; these documents can be seen in appendix seventeen through twenty. These documents required a signature of acknowledgement; however, this does not guarantee the participants read the information or understood the information as it was intended. Therefore, before each phase of data collection, I reintroduced the aims and objectives of this project, the processes, and the option to opt out at any time, as well as noting that participants would have access to the transcripts for each phase once written. However, due to the nature of an iterative research design, informed consent was not considered a one-off procedure (Jelsma and Clow, 2005), but a process of reconfirming consent during the phases. This process of reconfirmation combats the limitations typically associated with informed consent: the assumption that the researcher knows prior to the event what will take place and its effects (Shaw, 2003). This does not eradicate all such limitations as the participants may feel obliged to continue with the research process even after reconfirming consent (Koskei and Simiyu, 2015). The process of informed consent exists in part to show the sample group has not been coerced into participation (Halai, 2006). For this research project, I was required to apply for and obtain ethical approval from the University of Central Lancashire. The application for ethical approval contained the informed consent forms showing no attempt at coercion, and therefore the project was supported by the University.

Anonymity and Confidentiality:

Highlighted throughout the informed consent forms is the process of anonymity and confidentiality, a process which was reiterated during each phase of data collection. The anonymity and confidentiality of the participants had been enforced via pseudonyms and password protected files. However, anonymity and confidentiality could not be guaranteed during the focus group phase of data collection. Participants can share information regarding this process with outsiders of this project (Shaw, 2003). Additionally, this process may also affect individuals outside of the research process if their practice or they themselves are discussed (Koskei and Simiyu, 2015). This also requires the researcher to be attentive to their investigation. For example, if a participant revealed information which may jeopardise their position in a system or an occupation, then revisiting this topic within a focus group is clearly unethical and potentially detrimental to all involved (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). Thus, it remains the researcher's responsibility to address such issues at the outset, noting that those involved in this process are required to respect each other's anonymity and confidentiality. Additionally, the researcher should highlight potential topics that may be readdressed later in the process (Gibbs, 1997). This highlighting was conducted as a debrief at the end of the semi-structured interviews, which is not to suggest other phases did not include a debrief (Qu and Dumay, 2011). However, not every occasion required the need for readdressing topics for later discussion. Similarly, these debriefing and clarifications are conducted via the discretion of the researcher and thus highlights another limitation. Which topics are deemed controversial, or potentially detrimental are decided by the researcher; however, the limitations are addressed by simply asking the participants, 'may I discuss this further at another time?' and asking again before addressing the topic.

Beneficence and Reciprocity:

Though researchers typically highlight the benefits of the study for the participants, and this could be argued as an essential attribute, it should not be the goal of the study (Jelsma and Clow, 2005). The overall benefits of participating in this study refer to a deeper understanding of a personal professional identity, what they deemed professional, and how they view education in professionalism in the educational expedition sector. Additionally, unrecognised benefits of this research project became clear during the framework analysis, all of which are difficult to recognise prior to the study (Halai, 2006). For example, the collective contribution from a community of professionals can be deemed empowering, and sharing insight into a mutual passion and offering knowledge can be freeing and offer the possibility of social change (Halai, 2006). Similarly, the data collection methods used within this study offer a unique opportunity to uncover the incommunicable social world of the participants, providing further insight into alternative perspectives on the phenomenon (Qu and Dumay, 2011). This is beneficial for both researcher and participant. Moreover, the participants have the opportunity to be involved in the decision-making processes of the research, to be noted as valued experts, and have the chance to work collaboratively with researchers investigating an occupational field they are passionate about (Gibbs, 1997). Specifically, focus groups provide a platform, a forum which may elicit change, socially, systematically, and/or individually (Gibbs, 1997). In the same way, providing a platform of discussion for participants allows them to network with others who work in various occupations, but share the same interests. Though illustrating here, the benefits of participating in this study, it is not indicative of the benefits the participants received; like this project's research design, the benefits can be subjective.

Researcher-Participant Relationship:

Developing a rapport with the participants is key to inducing 'emic insights' into the culture of the social group, allowing the phenomenon to be studied (Halai, 2006). In agreement, Alsaawi (2014:155) notes that the researcher 'intentionally or unintentionally, carries unseen baggage' which for a novice researcher could affect the relationship between them and the group studied. Additionally, Alsaawi (2014) notes further that the attitude of the researcher will inevitably have an impact on the participants and the data collected. Qu and Dumay (2011) suggest that positive relationships with participants can be maintained by not offering opinions about responses and avoiding non-verbal indications of surprise or shock. This was not achieved in some instances; refer to Reflexive Account 'Intimidating Interviewees'. Moreover, the researcher enters a relationship with the participants after initial contact, and though there may not be an explicit recognition of the relationship, there remains potential for a power differential between them (Qu and Dumay, 2011). This power differential or hierarchy between researcher and participant during the data collection phases, coupled with the open platform of discussion and approachability has the potential to 'become a quasi-therapeutic relationship'

(Alshenqeeti, 2014:44). This dual role of researcher and therapist may have detrimental effects if the researcher is not trained for such interactions (Alshenqeeti, 2014; Koskei and Simiyu, 2015). The researcher holds control over the direction of discussion, and so if the topic for discussion becomes uncomfortable for either party, then the researcher should move away from the topic and discuss another point to quell any unwanted therapeutic consequences. Emergence of this issue is highly dependent on the study, and as I am a novice researcher, eliciting any therapeutic or counselling advice would be unethical, but this did not happen during any data collection phase.

3.8. Conclusion:

This chapter recognises the application of an interpretive qualitative methodology, highlighting its research design as a phenomenological case study. The phenomenology of this study is best associated with the interpretive phenomenological analysis. It discusses the use of methodological triangulation, reflexivity, and auto-ethnography, evidencing how each supports the credibility, reliability, and validity of this thesis. The chapter demonstrates the use of non-probability purposive/judgement sampling and how it was used to establish initial contact with the participants. Similarly, it explores the use of field observations, focus groups and semi-structured interviews as data collection methods, noting benefits, limitations, and considerations applicable to this study. Subsequently, the chapter explains how this thesis utilised the framework analysis approach and how the emerging themes were lifted from the transcripts following my interpretation of discourse analysis. Finally, it discusses ethical considerations related to this study, how they were limited, and how they influenced this project.

The following discussion chapter examines the initial data collected during the MPhil research, as well as the data collected post PhD transfer. The data collection method used during the initial stage was semi-structured interviews. The post-transfer data collection method used was focus groups. Each semi-structured interview has a corresponding reflexive account to demonstrate potential bias during the time of the interview and can be seen in appendix one. The reflexive accounts provide a narrative that helps to illustrate the perspective and bias the researcher may have had at the time of data collection. Furthermore, a reflexive and reflective column was added to the transcripts to illustrate potential biases and highlight their influence on the interpretations made. The reflexive accounts were written to illustrate potential biases at the time of the interview, and the reflective and reflexive column had been added afterwards during the data analysis. This was to ensure time for reflection between the initial data collection and its subsequent analysis.

4. Initial findings and discussion

4.1.<u>Introduction - The semi-structured interviews and focus groups:</u>

Throughout this discussion the participants remained anonymous, and pseudonyms were used except for Bill, who wanted his contribution to be recognised. The data discussed from this point forth is representative of the data collected via semi-structured interviews and focus groups. It is important to note here that World Challenge (another educational expedition provider) was identified by the participants but was not identified as an organisation relevant to this research project. This was because it is a for-profit organisation with paid employees. It does not have a volunteer ethos like BES. Researching organisations that rely on a volunteer ethos would provide a clearer understanding of the expedition leaders' motives. The lack of financial reward decreases biases in the data collected. It does so as financial remuneration has been illustrated to be a reward associated with professional status (Evetts, 2003). The focus groups were conducted with leaders who also have experience working with and leading educational expeditions for BES, World Challenge, and other educational expedition providers. The first focus group involved participants who actively volunteer(ed) for BES. The second involved participants who are actively paid to work for BES. Although noting above the decreased biases regarding financial remuneration, a conscious decision was made to conduct focus groups with both paid and volunteer leaders within BES. This was to further explore the motivations of educational expedition leaders within the same organisation instead of investigating motivations from two separate populations (BES and World Challenge). This allowed a concise comparison between what paid BES leaders consider professional and what volunteer BES leaders consider professional. I argue that the existence of financial remuneration requires leaders to conform to a professional ideal, whereas volunteer leaders may not be obligated to do so. Examining the motivations of each sample may have unearthed professional criteria commonly accepted within BES and the educational expedition sector.

Professional criteria is noted here as the first higher ordered theme interpreted from the data collected. Below is a table introducing the participants and their roles in this project.

Table One: Introductions

Name of Participant (Pseudonym)	Data Collection Stage	Duration	Association with BES
Matt	Semi-Structured Interview	1:41:03 Minutes	Paid/Volunteer
Colin	Semi-Structured Interview	37:14 Minutes	Paid/Volunteer
John	Semi-Structured Interview	53:58 Minutes	Paid/Volunteer
Bill	Semi-Structured Interview	57:55 Minutes	Paid/Volunteer
Liam	Focus Group One	54:52 Minutes	Paid
Laura	Focus Group One		Volunteer
Lizzie	Focus Group One		Volunteer
Rachel	Focus Group One		Volunteer
Derek	Focus Group One		Volunteer
Andy	Focus Group One		Volunteer
Liam	Focus Group Two	1:04:18 Minutes	Paid
Jessica	Focus Group Two		Paid
Archie	Focus Group Two		Paid
Alex	Focus Group Two		Paid
Olivia	Focus Group Two		Paid

Illustrated in table one, Liam is a participant in both focus groups. This is because Liam's occupational capacity at the time of data collection was Chief Leader for the intended expedition as well as a paid employee of BES. Interestingly, Liam's position within both focus groups elicits benefits and limitations. The most pertinent benefit of Liam's dual contribution refers to the heightened understanding of the discussion topics. Meaning, during the second focus group Liam was able to draw on the previous discussion and raise points that had not been considered. This ensured multiple perspectives of a singular topic in both focus groups. However, this contribution acted as a double-edged sword. The time between focus group(s) one and two allowed Liam to reflect on the original discussion topics ensuring the possibility of preconceived answers. This is a limitation as it draws away from the spontaneity of the discussion, and ultimately leads the conversation based on prior knowledge of the questions. Nevertheless, both focus groups yielded a fascinating perception of professionalism within the educational expedition sector.

4.2.Professional (behaviour) criteria and ethics:

Before discussing professional criteria and ethics, it is important to note why they are being discussed prior to any other of the higher ordered themes. During the literature review stage of this project, I read Hammer's (2000:45) journal article discussing the socialisation and professionalisation of students. Hammer states:

> If the feeling is that students are socialized to the current state of practice in the profession, which may be less than ideal, it stands to reason that academic programs can develop programs and cultures to enhance students' professionalism.

Hammer (2000:45) also proposed that developing a programme defining and describing professional attitudes and behaviours is the first step, as it will help academic programs to develop and measure these attitudes and behaviours in their students. Per the aims and objectives of this thesis, a learning model will be developed using the data collected. However, following Hammer's (2000) interpretation, attitudes and behaviours must first be defined. Though a learning model is not an academic programme, its potential application at an undergraduate level justifies the exploration of professional criteria and ethics before any other higher ordered theme. Therefore, first analysing what the participants consider professional attitudes and behaviours will help inform an understanding of what is considered contemporary professional practice in the educational expedition sector. Hammer's (2000) work refers to pharmaceutical education, which would suggest it followed a traditionalised interpretation of professionalisation. However, I argue that a modernised perception should be built upon its traditionalised roots, as the traditionalised perception has already been accepted and conformed to by society. I am not reiterating or advocating traditionalism, merely using it as a conduit for change and for the development of a modernised interpretation.

In line with the literature review, I suggest here that the definition of professionalism should not be generalised as an all-encompassing concept but should be defined for and applied specifically within occupational/organisational contexts. Here I agree with Hammer (2000), who explains that the nature of professionalism is elusive but defined by the attitudes and behaviours specific to professions. However, during my interview with Bill, he opted for a move away from 'a behavioural, kind of humanistic, if you do all of these behaviours you are professional' (27.02) interpretation of professionalism. He noted further that the very implication of behaviours and attitudes are a 'completely useless set of, the old trademark, if you do these things you must be professional' (27.02). On the other hand, he later refers to currency (28.20) as a professional criterion. This seems contradictory, as the very nature of currency requires that an individual do specific things to be professional. Arguably not a behaviour but an attitude, currency had been noted by other participants as an integral part of being a professional expedition leader. During the first focus group, Liam considered professional criteria which he called the three C's, later defined as: 'competence, sometimes identified through certification and qualification; how current you are, currency; and therefore those two things lead to partly towards your, your credibility' (03.10). Following Bill's logic, this could suggest Liam's interpretation of professional criteria is also representative of the old trademark notions of professionalism. Comparatively, what Liam and Bill consider current may differ, and though Liam's list would suggest one informs the other, I suggest competency is not guaranteed by currency. This perception is supported by Matt (47.01), who notes: 'there are plenty of people who've got qualifications that aren't competent as well or they're outdated….' However, Bill (22.38) implied currency secures competency suggesting if leaders:

> Are up to date, they are where they needed to be, they have gone to outside bodies, insurers, first aiders, you know, other competency awarding bodies and have gone, 'right I have got these certifications to support my professional practice.

Bill's statement mirrors Lesser *et al.,* (2010) in its interpretation of professionalism, suggesting the concept should evolve from innate character traits or virtues to competencies that are taught and refined over a lifetime of practice. By interpretation, Liam and Bill's perception of currency requires an individual to obtain qualifications, taught and refined, in order to practice as an educational expedition leader. Similarly, during the interview with Matt (01.36.21), he noted what he:

> Would want to see is, is someone who takes an interest in their own professional development, who was motivated to go away and research things that they need to find out about more and more to be aware of.

Which by interpretation also refers to currency as an important professional criterion. If currency informs competency, then how do both inform professional ethics? To reiterate an element from the introductory chapter; professional ethics focuses on the conduct, the actions of those within the role of a professional practitioner (Banks, 2009). John's (02.05) interpretation of professional ethics notes: it's about conduct, it's about morals, it's about ethics, and it's also going to be about outcome. He goes on to explain, 'it's simply about the participants, it's about the individuals it's about, reflecting…' (14.30). This notion of morality and ethics mirrors the literature discussed throughout. Professional ethics and morality seek to work as a guide for practitioners within their occupation. However, like a code of ethics, an accepted standard of professional ethics and morality is expected within various occupational roles. A code of ethics, or standard practice remains subconsciously binding. The expectation to meet accepted standards ultimately governs the level of professional practice required to remain in those roles. Therefore, practitioners are bound by an unspoken duty to uphold the standard expected, bound by their duty to the employers, the clients, and their peers. This notion of duty directly relates to deontology and highlights its influence on educational expedition leaders' perceptions of professional ethics.

Like John, Matt (01.36.21) considers reflection as a criterion informing professional practice. Matt's statement highlights a professional standard, one which he expects aspiring leaders to adhere to:

> This notion of professional development, that the, these people would, would want to self-reflect and see, or be encouraged to see the areas they need to develop, in other words, their strengths and their weaknesses, and plug those gaps.

Reflexive Account: Peers, Pressure and Conflict

This statement by John led to self-reflection. Considering my peers, if I were to lead them on an educational expedition, my ability to enact accepted professional practice 100% of the time seemed unlikely. This thought led to an inner monologue in which I considered potential scenarios which might occur with some of my peers, and remaining professional in a manner deemed acceptable by the majority did not seem possible. I concluded that to ensure the safety of my peers in this imaginary scenario, I would require a different professional identity compared to an identity I would use with clients. This thought only highlighted further the multi-faceted nature of professionalism and demonstrated the subjective nature of professional practice. An alternative professional identity for my peers may seem unprofessional to the external viewer, but to myself and peers, it would be a completely different professional self. So, who can say what is or is not professional?

For Matt, contrary to the author's belief, currency informs competency, and both inform professional ethics once reflected upon. On the other hand, reflection does not guarantee the manifestation of desirable professional behaviour/attitudes. Arnold (2002) mentions conflicts of interest, abuse of power, lack of conscientiousness and destructive arrogance as challenges to professionalism. Similarly, John (35.49) recognises the potential challenges of professionalism:

> With peers, it can lead to a conflict of view, or perspective, or it could lead you into a situation where it would allow your normal professional perspectives to be compromised because they are your peers.

Analysing the terminology John used does not explicitly suggest unprofessional behaviour but recognises that a normal professional practice has the potential to change with external influences, specifically from those considered peers. Similarly, assuming all peers are adhering to professional ethics, assessing right from wrong is seemingly difficult. If professional ethics is governed by duty, and the conflicting viewpoints are governed by goodwill and moral intention, then all perspectives are ethical (Bowen, 2017). What governs the resolution of professional conflict? If there is no occupational hierarchy among the peers, I argue that an unspoken social hierarchy dictates resolution.

Additionally, John (35.49) explained that compromised professionalism is:

> About integrity isn't it? I think that's about the individual and their integrity and I guess the view by which your peers recognise your experience, your ability.

John's statement supports the notion of professional morality and ethics governed by appearance, experience, and ability in the educational expedition sector. Additionally, it supports the perception of social hierarchy dictating the resolution of professional conflict. In opposition to the external influences outlined by John, Colin (01.54) suggests professionalism: 'for me is very much an internal thing, in that it's how I present myself to client or customer, or anybody I'm working with…'. Though this statement is perhaps contradictory in regard to internal and external influence, it does however recognise the importance of appearance and practice and their effects on professional behaviour. Colin (01.54) identifies criteria similar to what Bill and Liam noted:

> It is about reputation. It's about the way you present yourself. And, you know, it's about giving yourself credibility and what will you do if you don't act professionally and be professional.

The phrase ‘act professionally’ implies the use of soft skills, and in the context of this thesis provide an umbrella term for many of the professional criteria outlined thus far. The term ‘soft skills’ will be identified throughout as interpersonal skills; hard skills will be identified as technical/practical skills.

Evans (2008) discusses an interpretation of professionalism or professional ethics as a consensus of the norms which apply to being and behaving as a professional within personal, organisational, and broader political conditions. Similarly, Doukas (2003:146) defined deontology as ‘principles of autonomy, beneficence, and justice to guide actions by highlighting duties to those around us’. Both definitions apply to the external control of professional ethics. These definitions contradict Colin, who considered professionalism as an internal process. Arguably, the external influences imposed by society ultimately require Colin to adhere to what is deemed as the professional norm. Furthermore, analysing Colin’s terminology, ‘present yourself’, suggests the practitioner is required to behave in a manner accepted by those to whom they are presenting themselves. In regard to presentation, Bill (22.38) explains that professionalism is not the way in which a practitioner is dressed, but: ‘the way that they relate to other people, things like that. So, there are certain things that are generic, as I said, making sure they are up to date, their thought process is not driven by folklore…’. To relate and present professionally is to convince clients of the practitioner’s suitability for their needs, which by association requires them to trust the professional, as well as the professional to be trustworthy. To consolidate this statement, Bill (33.08) stated: ‘that’s what professionals do isn’t it? Professionals make decisions on behalf of their clients…’. This statement clearly evidences the need for trust between both parties. In addition to trust, Bill’s statement also elicits connotations of responsibility and accountability. This statement is supported by Colin (20.12), who explains how the responsibility for safety ends with him, which may explain what Bill meant when discussing the decisions made on behalf of the client.

Conversely, the professional criteria mentioned thus far cannot ensure accepted professional practice. Laura (06.01) unknowingly agreed with John (02.05) during the first focus group. Alluding to this interpretation, Laura suggested professional practice or professionalism is: ‘your core ethics and morals, that if they’re in the wrong place, then there’s not a lot you can do about it, sort of, you’re not going to role model properly…’. I perceived the comment ‘role model properly’ referred to modelling accepted professional practice, though the term ‘role model’ in the context of professionalism can hold varied connotations.

When asked: ‘what do you think professionalism, professionalism is to you as educational expedition leaders?’ (Researcher, 0.00), the very first response from Derek (1.04) was ‘good role models?’. Noting the inflexion used, it seemed to have been a question rather than a statement; however, it does suggest role modelling in the typical sense and the generalised use of the term in contrast to the perception above. Derek (1.25) later defined his interpretation of a role model as:

> You’ve got role models as you as a person. What your values and standards, and ethos are. How you portray yourself, how you portray the environment, I mean there’s a whole host of strands there, that you could put under the same banner.

This illustrates the term ‘role model’ as a working standard and accepted professional practice within the educational expedition sector. Similarly, it demonstrates Derek’s individualised perception of professional ethics. Archie (56.47) during the second focus group advocated for the requirement of:

> A lot of soft skills, so good communication, good teamwork, empathy, you know, it think, you know, as well as all of the, you know, expedition experience, management experience, leadership experience, it’s, are they going to notice that somebody hasn’t, you know talked for a little while and encourage them?

Conversely, accepted professional ethics arguably depends on the context in which it is applied and who it is accepted by. Evetts (2013:781) distinguishes between the theoretical definition of professionalism and the operational definition, while also suggesting ‘it no longer seems important to draw a hard-definitional line between professions and other (expert) occupations’. Furthermore, the operational perception of professionalism can be highly pragmatic. Evetts (2013) states that the occupations that require formal study are predominantly in the service sector and knowledge based as opposed to skills-based, which may be achieved by years of higher/further education and years of vocational training and experience. Although highlighting ‘expert’, ‘service sector’, ‘knowledge based’, and ‘vocational’ as terms which can undoubtedly be applied to the educational expedition sector, the existence of a definitional line allows for a comparison between what is considered accepted professional practice by society, established professions, and occupations striving for professionalisation. On the other hand, defining how one individual behaves as an expert within their sector is arguably defining their professional practice, morality, and by association, their position in the social hierarchy. In this way, an educational expedition leader is not required to have extensive higher/further education but is expected to have vocational training and experience. Therefore, what professional practice does a leader demonstrate to be called professional? In addition to Bill's perception regarding decision making, and Colin's regarding safety, Lizzie (08.47) commented: 'we're talking about leadership and professionalism…'. This differentiates the two terms as separate entities. Lizzie (20.19) later identifies the difference in roles during an expedition, explaining:

> I know that I can do the medic bit, but I can't do any of the other jobs as well as other people. So yeah, it's having that sort of humility to say, I don't know as well. I think being professional is not just about proving what you can do is acknowledging what you can't do.

Therefore, interpreting Lizzie's comments, the differentiation between leadership and professional is determined via roles, and specifically how individuals conduct themselves within their roles. Although this statement may seem obvious, applied at a meso-societal level the existence of an occupational hierarchy within society does not serve to professionally stratify, but is determined by the roles/occupations needed the most. Traditionally, becoming a professional provided privileged rewards and high status. However, Evetts (2013) perceived high reward to be the result of occupational powers rather than professionalism, focusing on medicine and law as the archetypal professions. Therefore, it is conceivable that an occupational hierarchy is established via societal value, and that reputation and the occupational powers granted are determinant of that value. This statement is supported by Liam (40.11) during the second focus group, who explains: 'that's also one of the barriers in regard to diversity and inclusion within the sector because it may not be seen as being a proper job…'. Explaining further, Liam suggested: 'you know, it's never, maybe not given, that recognition as a profession…'.

Reflexive Account: Get a Proper Job!

Reflecting on Liam's comment, more specifically the term 'proper job', unearthed questions. What IS a proper job? Surely if an occupation has all of the common facets of any occupation, like earning and sustaining a healthy lifestyle, it should be considered a proper job? After further consideration, I concluded that the aspects associated with a 'proper job' refer to the value of that job: value in the form of symbolic capital like reputation, prestige, professional status, and in turn social hierarchy. This value is bestowed upon occupational roles/fields by the public, governmental recognition, and other established professions. So, why is the educational expedition sector not considered a proper job? Perhaps it is the value placed upon the occupational field or the value placed on the services provided? It could even refer to the value bestowed in relation to other occupational fields, and educational expeditions in comparison with medicine may seem unworthy of such bestowment. To improve the appearance of the educational expedition sector, must its perceived value first be reformed?

Although the participants identify professional criteria associated with educational expedition leadership, criteria which are transferable across multiple occupations. It is clear that the status of professionalism held by the outdoor industry could be governed by the potential lack of occupational power. This notion exemplifies conflict theory. Similarly, when discussing the development of professionalisation within the educational expedition sector, John (37.30) noted:

> It needs to have a similar recognition behind it, you know, to the medical, civil engineering professions, or whatever. The bottom line is, it's about expertise, it's about experience and expertise, it's about being able to then manage that experience, and use that expertise, and manage that expertise in order to actively manage a group or an individual situation.

Following John's perception of professionalisation, perhaps the value society places on occupations depends on the level of expertise they are required to hold. Analysing this perception further would suggest that professional ethics and morality are externally governed by a modern perception of duty to the profession. This line of investigation is pertinent because it informs an understanding of how professionalism is perceived and how it can affect the appearance of the outdoor professional. In contrast, expertise, like other professional criteria, does not guarantee accepted professional practice. Evers *et al.*, (2011) argue that though interpersonal skills are of the same importance as technical skills, the application of the former should not be misused in an effort to disguise a practitioner's lack of expertise. On the other hand, the professional criteria highlighted in addition to expertise arguably inform the practitioner's interpretation of professional ethics. Colin (23.35), discussing professional conduct, explains:

> Professionalism is about models and tools and how to make dynamic decisions on how to make those sorts of judgments, rather than getting a degree that says that you've studied for three years.

This statement illustrates how professional criteria inform professional ethics, in which interpersonal skills play a large part. To clarify, I am not suggesting that interpersonal skills are more important than technical skills, or any other, but I am noting the role they play within the educational expedition sector and the appearance of the outdoor professional. For example, Matt (20.13) discussed a situation which highlighted the need for both:

> I spent a day with this guy, just taking him for a walk up a valley, one to one, you know, completely to try and defuse the situation, take his mind off this situation, this group, dealt with it somehow.

Matt's statement demonstrates accepted professional practice within the educational expedition sector. However, a deeper analysis of professional conduct could suggest that, like professionalism, it is highly individualistic. Therefore, although informed by professional criteria, professional ethics revolve around the individual practitioner, their judgement, and their motivations. This statement is supported by Argyriades (2006), who argues that personal responsibility is at the hub of professional ethics. Matt (25.57) later disclosed motivations regarding his research during an expedition, noting how it negatively affected his professional ethics:

> The science work on the British Exploring, exploring expeditions, my enthusiasm carries me away, almost get carried away, enough to put off, to pull myself back and think, well, well, wait a minute, hang on this what, what are these students doing? I'm so so involved in getting the data and everything's going to be just right, which it has to be if you're going to write a paper, you got to have everything working, samples collected at the right time. And all that sort of stuff just becomes so difficult if it's erratic and it's not done properly. That I probably have been known to compromise. You know, my attention to the group, shall we say? Fortunately, nothing's ever gone on.

Though Matt (25.57) explained his lapse in professional judgement, he later referred to the modernisation of professional ethics within the educational expedition sector: ‘I think that’s partly how things have changed though. And these days, you know, there’s a lot more accountability…’. This notion of accountability introduces the moral obligation and enforcement of accepted professional ethics. Colin (23.35) refers to accountability and his professional ethics, suggesting:

> For me, and it was at the court judgement. Well, if one of these kids get severe dehydration, gets very ill, and dies. Could I justify not getting them to take off the item that was causing dehydration?

Colin’s statement explores the influences of moral obligation on professional conduct, which highlights their coexistence within professional ethics. This perception mirrors the discussion of deontology and its influence on professional ethics. Abbott (1983) further explains the impacts of moral obligation on professional ethics. Like John (35.49) above, Abbott identifies fellow professionals, or peers, specifically those who compete for the same clients, as influencers of professional ethics. However, Abbott (1983) also identifies the functionalist view regarding professionalism: that its status implies expert services, the quality of which cannot be judged by the client. On the other hand, I posit that if the service provided does not meet client expectations, credibility, which ensures trust between the professional and the client supporting professional status, will be tarnished. Similarly, there is no fundamental requirement for self-employed expedition leaders to practice in a manner considered accepted practice by the sector. Arguably, the only enforcement of accepted professional ethics is that of moral obligation to peers, clients, and the sector in which they work, all of which are highly individualised. Colin (28.44) explains that his interpretation of professionalism involves: ‘you know that balancing in negotiations and stuff like that, which does come from experience, but it also comes to sharing best practice…’. By interpretation, best practice, or professional ethics, is mutually enforced by peers and an unwritten consensus of what they consider accepted practice. In contrast, organisations explicitly outline what they deem accepted professional practice/ethics, and paid or volunteer leaders are expected to adhere to them. Matt (36.06) when comparing World Challenge to BES, explained: ‘The key thing is that there’s a there’s 150-page operation leader manual, right, and another 100-page medical manual as well…’. Comparatively, the paid members of BES in focus group two suggested that they do not use the terminology surrounding professionalism, and had replaced the term with ‘values’: ‘I don’t think we use the word, professionalism very much?' (Jessica, 11.21). Jessica (14.15) later referred to the BES training weekends, suggesting they are: 'our attempt to convey all of those values, skills, failures that we hoped would make up professionalism in our leaders…'. Though both approaches are different, both organisations expect their leaders to adhere to what they have deemed professional, which arguably influences the practitioner's professional identity.

List One: Professional Behaviour:

Currency, competence, credibility, qualifications, conduct, ethics, morals, reflection, deontology (duty), integrity, experience, appearance, reputation, trustworthiness, responsibility, accountability, communication, teamwork, empathy, management, leadership, and expertise.

The findings indicate a list representative of the behaviours, attributes, characteristics, and symbolic capital the participants deem essential for the educational expedition leader, the development of a conformed-to modernised definition is seemingly unlikely. This list reflects the views of the participants, and not the entirety of the outdoor industry or the educational expedition sector. However, it does provide a list of criteria deemed necessary by key stakeholders within the educational expedition sector. Therefore, it has the potential to be utilised as a reference point to prompt further research and discussions surrounding a modernised perception of professionalism within the outdoor industry. Each term is interrelated and ultimately informs the development and (re)formation of professional identities.

4.3.Professional (behaviour) identities and multiple professional identities:

Having discussed the perceptions of professional criteria and how they coexist with professional ethics, professional identity is arguably the manifestation of the two combined. However, a professional identity is informed and influenced by multiple interpretations of the self. Referring to the literature review, professional identity can be determined by the level of compliance with pre-existing norms established by the occupation. The formation of multiple selves may adhere to pre-existing norms while actively demonstrating the capability to navigate social circumstance. John (27.03) explained his professional identity as an expedition leader, an identity which adheres to the professional criteria recognised by the participants:

> I just need to understand the dynamics of what is going on, so I think that for my point of view, my ability to be professional, or remain professional requires me to be able to understand individuals, to understand people.

John (27.56) explained further: ‘It’s about having emotional intelligence; it’s about having the experience of how that might play out in real world terms…’. Colin (33.24) suggests: if we’re going to be professional in the outdoors, then we should be able to justify and show how we as individuals come across all those things…’. This statement referred to what Colin considered his professional ethics.

Reflexive Account: Do I Know You?

The importance of emotional intelligence, seemingly required to practice as an educational expedition leader, had. But can emotional intelligence be taught? The difficulty with emotional intelligence is its subjectivity. John explicitly describes his professional identity in direct accordance with his ability to understand people. So, by John’s logic, if I cannot understand a client’s reasoning, does that make me unprofessional? Or am I professional if I try to understand their reasoning? Is the status of professional bestowed upon the effort spent in trying to understand? Who then bestows that status: the client after feeling they have been understood, or is it a self-proclaimed status when you believe you have tried as much as you can? Like professionalism, the degree of emotional intelligence held is difficult to assess, and to understand people is arguably to assess their behaviour, character, and personal attributes. This is where symbolic interactionism can be utilised as a tool to better understand these questions.

Although John and Colin recognise the practical application of professional ethics, in contrast, Bill (37.02) argues:

> I think this is the conflict between individual notions of professionalism and professional practice and expectations, if you’re working for an organisation, it’s particularly stark in the outdoors. Going back to, because we don’t have a unified sector. We don’t have unified notions of what professionalism is.

This comment strongly relates to the literature discussed and the implied inconsistent use of the term ‘professional’ in the outdoor industry. I argue here that the inconsistency is supported by the multiple interpretations of the term ‘professional’ and the contexts in which it is applied. Similarly, Andy (15.21) in focus group one explained:

> It’s an individual kind of perception of the way that you behave. Having these kinds of credentials, and the three C’s that Liam talked about, is all really important. And it’s very specific to each individual role within expedition life.

Colin recognised a similar theme, noting: ‘professionalism can look very, very different, in different environments…’ (01.54). However, like professional ethics, professional identity requires acceptance from external parties for it to be rewarded with status. Hsieh (2010) discusses influences on teachers’ professional identity, illustrating how teachers responded to the external as a means of constituting their professional identity. In this context, the external parties may refer to peers, clients, organisations, regulatory bodies, society, or more specifically, the individualised roles on an expedition. Acknowledgement by and acceptance from external parties evidences the existence and influence of social-identity theory within educational expedition contexts, a theory discussed in the literature review in the passage highlighting the effects of in-group and out-group membership on professional identity (re)formation. Colin (05.05) explained further: ‘…there’s always an external party with some level of expectation…’. Conformity to these expectations arguably requires a level of depersonalisation, which involves a change from a perception from the self as an individual to the self as a group member (Hogg, 2004). This (re)formation of the self conceivably requires the reinterpretation of a moral identity and professional identity in the context of what is deemed acceptable by external parties. Though morality was noted as a professional criterion in the literature review, participants did not identify morality as a separate identity and assumed its existence as part of the professional self. By interpretation, their assumption is based on the requirement to be morally and ethically just as part of what educational expedition leaders consider as accepted professional identities. However, as each interpretation of the professional self is individualised, professional conflict can still arise, as Colin (26.56) noted:

> If you have two different people at different ends of the scale, it’s actually quite hard to be professional, especially as within professions, people are normally quite passionate.

Colin (26.56) suggested further:

> If you have that clash, and that disagreement, it can become quite difficult.

To highlight Colin's terminology here, 'passionate' elicits connotations of intensity, coupled with the use of the term 'clash', it arguably demonstrates the challenges associated with multiple professional identities. Likewise, Liam (23.02) during the first focus group recognised ego as a contributing factor within the educational expedition sector:

> We work in a sector where ego and performance are huge. And the way we're viewed is enormous. So, whether that is you're recognising that we all have big egos. And part of our part of our profession for me is about understanding that I have that ego, but also being vulnerable enough, I suppose vulnerable enough to, to ask for support and help when, when needed.

Therefore, it is feasible to suggest that self-regulation of professional identity is required in order to function in cooperation with other professional identities. However, this implies the acceptance of multiple professional identities by the in-group and the depersonalisation of those aspiring to join. Sachs (2001) describes professional identity as externally ascribed attributes that are used to differentiate one group from another. This definition illustrates how the acceptance of these attributes potentially dictates the professional identities demonstrated in different contexts, a perception which illustrates how the influence of the external has the capability to trigger depersonalisation. Similarly, identity formation resides in the (re)interpretation, negotiation, and (re)construction of these attributes. However, these attributes internalised and manifested is entirely dependent on the individual but influenced by the collective. Social identity, and identity formation is not unilateral (Jenkins, 2000:8). Additionally, Sachs' (2001) depiction of professional identity coincides with conflict theory and highlights the differentiation between professional spheres/identities. The use of the term 'differentiate' subsequently creates an occupational hierarchy. BES expeditions also adhere to an occupational hierarchy within their expedition groups. Many roles are assumed by volunteer leaders except the role of chief leader, which is financially remunerated. John (35.49) explains the responsibilities of a leader, noting:

> Leadership is many things, but it is very much about you listening to the views and experiences of other people and then using the opportunity of that conversation to then make an appropriate decision, the right decision.

This statement implies a democratic approach to leadership. However, in the context of an educational expedition, the chief leader is responsible for the decisions made regardless of a democratic process. This notion of responsibility and by association accountability highlights a hierarchy based on status and esteem awarded by the organisation. This process suggests the analysis of individual professional identities. Arguably, the identity which ascribes to the values and attributes of the organisation is the most desirable in the position of chief leader. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume the chief leader underwent another process of depersonalisation to become a member of a chief leader in-group. This perception illustrates another interpretation of professional and occupational hierarchies. On the other hand, if an individual were to refuse conformity and refuse to depersonalise for the role of chief leader, it could result in professional conflict. John (39.40) explained his reasons for no longer working with BES:

> One of the reasons why I don't anymore was because part of my requirements in order to be a chief leader for that organisation; I would determine or need to determine who my leaders were, and they wouldn't accept that because they have a different procedure, a different process.

John's example of professional conflict illustrates an individualised perspective, a difference in professional practice between one leader and the organisation. Similarly, Bill (37.02) explained a similar professional conflict between him, a group of leaders, and another educational expedition organisation:

> They had a particular practice which they said was part of their professional protocol which the leader and a number of people that have been around the block a few times, of which I have; we said we ain't doing it, we are not doing it, we are doing what we are doing. It, that caused some professional friction.

Bill explained further:

> But I supported the leader because I trust the person explicitly, and they sat down with me and went "these are my thoughts", and I went "I'm completely with you, you are completely right". So, we actually went against…', 'we actually went physically against it, we all sat down and went "no".

Finally, Bill concluded with:

> The decisions were made fairly, and quickly and historically, unfortunately, it had worked out to be exactly the right decision. One could argue that a year later…', 'and we can talk about this more after the conversation, probably. They reverted back to what their practice was, and it ended up in a fatality.

Although the details of the conflict were given off the record, it is important to highlight key themes within Bill's statements. Firstly, he refers to experience overriding protocol. This raises an interesting interpretation of the dutiful change of perspective; I use the term 'dutiful' as deontology would suggest a duty to peers, clients, and employers (McNaughton and Rawling, 1998). It also demonstrates the impact of multiple professional identities at a micro-societal level. However, the extent of mutual agreement and refusal of imposed professional ethics could be disputed. Individuals holding a position of authority within a social hierarchy have the capability to sway the perceptions of their peers (Wang *et al.,* 2014:1). Their peers, in subconscious recognition of this unspoken hierarchy, may have agreed in order to be recognised as equals. Nevertheless, the final decision was the responsibility of the chief leader whom Bill completely supported, arguably because of their decision-making processes. This perception mirrors Ball and Goodson's (1985) interpretation of professional identity formation, as discussed in the literature review. Acknowledging here the effect of the personal on the professional, the events in the personal lives of professionals are linked to their performance within an occupational capacity. Therefore, considering this perception, Bill's trust in the leader arguably overshadowed his loyalties to his role with the organisation. Through a deontological lens, it would be difficult to conclude undisputedly which party was correct. Both parties displayed moral and ethical judgements in regard to the accountability of client welfare in spite of a subconscious desire for symbolic capital. Similarly, this conflict clearly demonstrates the implications of multiple versions of the self, referring to the personal versus the professional, and how one identity informs the other, ultimately initiating identity (re)formation. However, to be clear, this does not suggest Bill had supported the leader for the obtainment of symbolic capital or a position of social hierarchy. This information merely illustrates that a potential desire to obtain symbolic capital within an expedition team has the capability to implicitly control professional identities and subconsciously influence the motivations of others.

In comparison, BES actively seek those who represent an interpretation of professional ethics strongly related to their own. During the second focus group, Jessica (03.03) discusses the process of hiring volunteer leaders:

> The things that we're looking for when we meet them is how they conduct themselves with us and how they conduct themselves with each other. It's a lot about tone setting.

Jessica (06.31) noted further:

> We, we use external qualifications to measure all of those technical bits and we spend those weekends talking to people about how are you going to work together.

Jessica (06.31) concluding that line of discussion:

> Because so much of it is... you can't make a rule for everything. You can't have a protocol for absolutely everything that's gonna come up because you don't know what's gonna come.

Unaware of Bill's disclosure, Jessica illustrated the requirement of adherence to BES's values as an unwritten term of employment. This ideal arguably exemplifies control of professional identities regardless of volunteer status. BES, though built on volunteerism, requires the voluntary adaptation of professional identities, possibly for the successful preservation of their organisational identity. Jessica confirms this perception when discussing applications from volunteer leaders who demonstrate motivations unaligned to BES's: and you can sort of coach in the love without wanting to sound like we're brainwashing people…. Similarly, Bill (41.10) explained:

> When I was working for BSES, they had this notion that you are representing yourself, your colleagues, and the organisation, and of course it's about being professional in your relationship to them, and also you relationship with the clients, your colleagues etc. etc.

Bill discussed further:

> So, that relationship just isn't the client, for BES, I am their client, and they're my client as well, does that make sense? It's just not single leading, it's about who I am leading, but who has entrusted leadership responsibilities or inferred to me that I have a responsibility to them. I've got to make sure they I represent their values to a certain degree.

Reflexive Account: Implicit Control

The notion of individuals using their position within a social hierarchy to further their position of authority is realistic. Upon reflection, though Bill asserted it was trust that fuelled his support of the chief leader, the implicit desire for recognition of that support may have influenced his decision. Can we disassociate ourselves from implicit (sub)conscious desires? Perhaps the recognition of support furthers the obtainment of symbolic/social capital as the mutual trust shared becomes more secure. By this logic, the (sub)conscious struggle for symbolic/social capital may not be the driving force behind implicit competition, but the recognition of the effort spent is. The desire for symbolic/social capital is seemingly self-supported, self-maintained by those seeking to obtain it regardless of their motivations. So, I ask here, what is the most valuable form of symbolic/social capital in the educational expedition sector?

To note Bill's terminology here, 'represent their values' suggests Bill has/had ascribed to or recognised BES's interpretation of professionalism. Bill also used the term 'entrusted', further suggesting the attainment of symbolic capital when an application is successful. Arguably, these connotations demonstrate a subconscious acceptance of symbolic capital as a form of remuneration and prestige (Doherty and Dickmann, 2009). The exchange is prestigious for the volunteer as they become associated with BES, and prestigious for BES as the organisation has the capability to bestow symbolic capital. The provision of symbolic capital implies their position at the top of a social and occupational hierarchy. The statements made by Jessica and Bill also evoke the impeachment of the privileges typically associated with professional status, such as autonomous practice. The requirement for professional identity (re)formation acts as a form of social control; however, the (re)formation of a professional identity can be interpreted as a benefit to those still developing their own. For example, (re)formation of professional identities suggests the creation of new versions of one's self-image. This is not to suggest other/previous versions of the self are forgotten, but the (re)formation is informed by multiple professional identities, and the social circumstance which they are being (re)formed in. Additionally, Derek (09.54) during the first focus group notes his interpretation of professional identity (re)formation for BES as a benefit:

> By having a new start, you're able to reinvent yourself as well. So those experiences you've learned in the, in the, in the previous or in your lifetime get better as you go along.

Furthermore, BES recognise the benefits of having multiple professional identities, as long as motivations are in accordance with their own. Liam (25.28) during the second focus group noted:

> I think we have to utilise all those different professional backgrounds to produce a leadership team that far outweighs any other expedition, educational expedition, commercial companies, leadership teams.

Comparatively, Bill's recollection of professional conflict was founded on the protection of the participants and peers in the field, as were BES's. This suggests their motivations had remained aligned, but that conflict had arisen regarding accepted practice. While discussing leaders with opposing motivations, Jessica (15.16) mentioned:

> I think the leaders that are most likely to pass the assessment, make it through training and participate in an expedition are the word-of-mouth leaders.

Jessica (15.16) discussed further:

> They're not the internet leaders. I think the internet leaders often turn up thinking about place rather than people. And the word-of-mouth leaders turn up thinking about people rather than place and I think that's what makes the difference to their journey with us and their commitment to us.

Firstly, highlighting Jessica's terminology, the phrase 'word-of-mouth leaders' in this context connotes a level of bias, as those deemed to wield a similar motivation to leaders already associated with BES have a greater chance of being hired. In this way, if an aspiring outdoor leader has not yet established themselves within the industry, how does word-of-mouth affect their professional identity (re)formation? How does it affect the likelihood of receiving a job offer? How accessible is the educational expedition sector? In addition to the potential internal barriers created, the outward appearance of the sector has the capability to increase its popularity. Given society's predisposition toward traditionalism and its influence on professionalism, the public arguably views any occupation with less prestige than the archetypal professions (law, medicine, accountancy, education) as unsuitable long-term forms of income. For example, Liam (40.01) discusses the influences of societal appearance on the sector:

> No, no, but there's a place, it's a question of how many people recognise it isn't it, so for example when you go home to your parents and say I want to be an outdoor instructor, they go, that's not a proper job.

Liam (40.11) explaining further:

> And that's also one of the barriers in regard to diversity and inclusion within the sector because it may not be seen as being a proper job, by certain cultures and certain subcultures of society to see it as a proper job, it's just something you do in your spare time. It's fun, it's, you know, you do it for a bit and then burn that one out and then go and become a lawyer or teacher or whatever.

It is important to note here that the comments Liam made evidence the implications of the external on the formation and development of professional identities. The latter part of Liam's discussion highlights the focus on traditionalised interpretations of professions as the superior occupations in terms of the influence of symbolic capital held by those occupations. However, the name 'educational expedition sector' brought questions to the fore. If the sector advertises education as one of its purposes, why is the sector not given the same recognition as the traditionalised interpretations of education? Upon reflection, I asked focus group one:

> Using the educational terminology, does that mislead the public into thinking that we are delivering some kind of curriculum-based expedition? Or do you think it is suggesting that we or that outdoor leaders have the ability to teach education as a whole during the expedition, or…' (Researcher, 46.22).

Derek (47.46), in response:

> It's education for life though, isn't it? It's preparing people outside of the standard classroom environment, and getting them to learn their own mistakes, learn from their mistakes, learn from other people and learning from the environment.

Liam (48.35) also explained:

> It's also about changing the perception about what is education, and what is learning, and what is development, you know. We have been through successive governments and politics, in the U.K. and elsewhere that says that going to school, getting a degree, passing exams, passing, you know learning by rote, and passing at the end of it, you know, is the only way to, to learn and provide evidence of your ability.

Reflexive Account: Appearance versus Acceptance:

Regarding the influences of societal pressures, the outward appearance of any occupational field clearly has the capability to influence the symbolic/social capital held. Although Liam highlights the traditionalised disposition of society, part of what he explains remains true. Referring to BES's volunteer ethos, the leaders hired all have other full-time occupations. This point highlights the existence of multiple professional identities, but \ also recognises the employed leaders may also implicitly believe educational expedition leadership to be no more than a summer job. On the other hand, perhaps the reason why BES remains a summer job/volunteer leadership opportunity to those with full-time occupations is due to the rewards and remuneration offered in return for their commitment. If the educational expedition sector were to have the same rewards and remuneration, the same level of symbolic/social capital held as education for example, then the desirability of entering the sector would arguably be increased.

In unknowing agreement, Bill (19.40) suggested:

> One of the reasons why the outdoors is poorly funded, is because it isn't a recognised outlet for educational, rehabilitation, leisure, enjoyment, mental wellness.

Referring back to Beijaard *et al.*, (2000) within the literature review, teachers inform their professional identity from the combinations of the different ways they see themselves. As such, it can be assumed the (re)formation of professional identities in other occupations also derive from the different perspectives of the self. Therefore, although society seemingly does not view educational expeditions as educational within the traditional sense, or an occupation worthy of pursuing, the employment of multiple professional identities within BES provide an unusual opportunity to be social with leaders from traditionalised professions and occupations holding reputable symbolic capital. Additionally, the recognition of multiple individualised professional identities, the (re)formation and (re)conceptualisations of the self, presents the opportunity to best develop or modernise the appearance of the sector to participants, clients, peers, and BES as an organisation. This perception arguably supports the requirement to adhere to BES's interpretation of professional ethics and motivations as they strive to preserve their reputation, like any other occupations/organisations. Similarly, Bill (22.38) noted:

> Because I think being professional is about being open about who you are, 'yeah please come and view me, please come and judge me, come and ascertain who I am. So, there needs to be some transparency within a sector, and invite other people coming into the sector.

Bill (22.38) further claimed:

> So, there are commonalities between say, leadership in medical decision making, expedition planning and teaching.

The consistent reference to educational expeditions as an alternative form of education justifies the application of educational theory. As defined in the literature review, professional learning communities are typically used when referring to traditional educational settings. However, the definition, 'a group of committed educators working collaboratively in an ongoing process' (Brown *et al.,* 2018:54) remains highly applicable within the context of educational expeditions. Therefore, multiple professional identities representing a shared ideology, enacting similar perceptions of duty, morals, and ethics, arguably form a professional learning community. This community, when compared to the typical and traditionalised interpretation of education, forms a new modernised perception.

This section utilised 'List One: Professional Behaviour' as the basis for discussion on the concepts of professional identity (re)formation, and multiple professional identities. It enabled the analysis of the desired criteria as highlighted by the participants and how the criteria manifested and informed the development of professional identities within aspiring educational expedition leaders. The (re)formation of professional identities was then discussed in context of educational expeditions, organisational adherence, and professional learning communities. The data suggest that the external pressures enforced by traditionalised conceptions of professionalism, established practitioners, and BES have the capability to stratify (multiple) professional identities within the sector. This unwritten, unspoken form of control and dominance illustrates that leaders adhere to criteria that others deem desirable in an effort to improve their own professional appearance. Understanding what leaders deem professional and identifying the desire to appear as professional practitioners may help inform the modernised and professional appearance of the educational expedition sector.

This section describes the influences affecting the manifestation of professional identities within the educational expedition sector. However, though constrained by the parameters and context of this thesis, the influences could be utilised as a prompt for further research, discussion, and comparison with other occupational fields. By investigating the sociological barriers confronting aspiring and established leaders, the educational expedition sector can begin to address its appearance on behalf of its working professionals. Additionally, the influences illustrated within this section were used as the foundation of discussion of the following topic.

4.4.Professional (Association) Learning Communities and the hidden curriculum:

Although the formation and application of professional learning communities are typically associated with traditionalised education, Stoll *et al.,* (2006) explain that there is no universal definition of a professional learning community. Stoll *et al.,* (2006:222) also present an international consensus: 'a professional learning community refers to a "group of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning-orientated, growth-promoting way"'. Comparatively, the constant (re)formation of individual professional identities would also contradict the notion of traditionalism unless doing so is inherent within the community's ideology and internally governed by its social hierarchy. This (re)formation process contradicts the notion of traditionalism, as professional learning communities as social groups are arguably influenced by externally imposed societal values. Society as a concept, much like identity, is (re)formed over time. Therefore, to develop a modernised perception of the professional within the educational expedition sector, the analysis of social values at a micro/macro-societal level may be required, which also shows the implications of control at a micro/macro-societal level. This control can either hinder or support conformity to a new modernised perception of educational expedition leaders. However, socialisation into professional learning communities requires individuals to meet the expectations of already established practitioners. John (39.40) discussed aspiring leaders and the deliverance of BES motives/values:

> In order to achieve that, don't send me away with a spotty 18-year-old kid, who was on last years' trip, because they're not going to get that, they're not going to understand that, they're not going to be able to deliver that.

Reflexive Account; Professional Stratification:

John’s comment above clearly elicits connotations of disapproval in its suggestion that an 18-year-old would be unable to assist in a manner he deemed acceptable. However, as with learning to drive a car, all beginners need to start somewhere. Showing a disinterest in allowing an aspiring leader the opportunities to learn under his tutelage may seemingly be a personal prerogative, yet if this is a perception shared by other established leaders, the decrease in desirability and aspiring leaders is not too surprising. This reflection justifies a more modernised approach to professional recognition and regulation. Additionally, it raises an age-old discussion: how can you hire someone with experience if no one will provide them the experience?

Johns statement demonstrates implicit selection criteria socially governed within a professional learning community. However, the term ‘profession’ was defined as a learned vocation during the mid-fifteenth century (Rutty, 1998). As such, learning how to become a recognised professional within a professional learning community in a chosen sector would not be surprising. Though John expresses uncertainty regarding the capabilities of an 18-year-old kid, he does recognise: ‘So, I’ve been working in the industry since I was 18’… (12.02), which contradicts his (39.40) statement illustrating the opportunity for professional socialisation at an undergraduate level. Discussing the professionalisation of the humanitarian sector, Alex (05.31) illustrated its approach:

> And it was like mentoring programmes and training programmes all around how you interact with people, and to bring up that standard, so they knew there was a working standards of individuals in their capacity, and then you would have technical things you could try and benchmark alongside them.

Analysing the terminology used here, Alex identifies interaction as one of the key characteristics the humanitarian sector had sought to develop. Interestingly, many of the professional criteria highlighted throughout this discussion arguably relate to interaction, and all relate to the umbrella concept of interpersonal skills. Additionally, interpersonal skills are arguably key to socialisation into professional learning communities. Specifically, in the context of BES, multiple professional identities form the professional learning community. Liam (26.03) explained:

> The camaraderie from the team and because everyone's got those, those diverse experiences that. You're not, they're not just a teacher and they're not just an expedition, outdoor instructor. They come with all sorts of stuff from their lives and their professions and you then create a team.

Furthermore, without interpersonal skills socialisation into professional learning communities would be difficult. For example, Jessica (01.00.48) described her continued professional development:

> I try to stay on top of what is going on in the industry, and network with other professionals, organisations, like go to conferences and stuff, but also just chat to, luckily because we have got so many volunteer leaders and lots of people who work in outdoor ed.

Therefore, to compare Liam's and Jessica's comments, without interpersonal skills, the ability to network, to connect and form professional relationships, the likelihood of socialisation into a professional learning community could be diminished. In support of this perception, during the first focus group Lizzie (07.05) discussed continued professional development in the context of professional learning communities:

> I think, and you learn from your peer group is the amount, the amount we're still learning. I think every day on expedition when we come across new people with new ideas and ways of looking at things, I think that that learning process doesn't stop just because you're in a leader role versus a participant role.

Her statement clearly exemplifies the benefits of multiple professional identities working as a professional learning community. What process does an aspiring outdoor leader have to undergo to be socialised into the professional learning community? The limitations of professional learning communities could be interpreted as the governance of peers and professional ethics, and this limitation may implicitly deter socialisation into specific professional learning communities. Liam (11.32) highlights an implicit control of professional learning communities:

> It made me question my own position around how I viewed that professional approach. So, not because I don't consider myself professional by thought, I take off the word professional from my LinkedIn thing and just say, expedition leader, mainly so because I felt that I didn't want to be associated with just, the idea there had to be financial.

This point further explains the influence of external social pressures on the appearance of developing and established professionals. Another comment made by Liam (20.38) supporting this perception:

> And that underpins how I might perform professionally. And how I want to be perceived. And that means doing what I say I want to do time and time again.

Beyond the implicit control within professional learning communities, there is an explicit form of socialisation into BES's professional learning community. Laura (24.45) mentioned:

> BES is about training its teams leading up to expedition, it's not just a case of chucking together a random group of strangers. There's an element of that at the beginning, but actually there's a, there's a lead-in time to expedition that actually gives us time as a team to get to know each other and learn where those strengths and, and things lie within the team.

As noted in the introduction and literature review, professional socialisation can be defined as a process of knowledge and skill acquisition representative of characteristics of a member of a particular profession. Additionally, it involves the internalisation of the values and norms of the professional group into the person's own identity (Cornelissen and Van Wyk, 2007). However, this definition illustrates an interpretation of what professional socialisation is, not the process. Cornelissen and Van Wyk (2007) discuss multiple processes of professional socialisation; the one most applicable to Laura's (24.45) statement can be seen as formal professional socialisation. This form of socialisation is recognised as a process succeeding the anticipatory socialisation discussed in the introductory chapter. This formal socialisation process refers specifically to individuals with formed professional identities, who have experience relevant to the profession, and who shifted from out-group members to in-group members. Comparatively, Laura's statement in the context of formal professional socialisation demonstrates implicit levels of control. Though the process is explicit via application process, training weekends, regular updates, etc., the social and occupational hierarchy still exists. This perception explained by Cornelissen and Van Wyk, (2007) who note that those already socialised and established within the professional learning community enforce social control by means of reward or punishment. However, as BES is built on a foundation of volunteerism, I argue here that the implicit rewards are the obtainment of symbolic capital, elevation in the social hierarchy, and experience.

Like Laura, Lizzie (25.44) also discussed BES's explicit socialisation process:

> A lot of other organisations you just get chucked into an expedition, whereas BES are adamant, and quite rightly so, that you should do those training weekends as a team before you meet the young people. So again, it all adds to the professional credibility. Right, the organisation and the leaders to want to invest that time to make sure that they are sort of a professional group.

This statement is further supported by Cornelissen and Van Wyk, (2007) who posit that the core elements leading to established professionalisation within the community are knowledge acquisition, investment, and involvement. Contrary to the name 'formal socialisation', Jessica (03.03) described the application process and BES's selection criteria:

> There needs to be a degree of informality within that. I think toeing that line is quite a difficult thing. So, I think that is possibly one of the biggest things that I think of when I think of a professional in the outdoors, is their ability to tread that line.

The informality referred to the social dynamics of an educational expedition, being able to switch the identity from formal to informal to develop professional relationships. However, regardless of formality, the enforcement of desired and accepted professional identities within professional learning communities is not always sought after. Colin (11.22), discussing professionalisation, explained:

> And then you've got the enforcement of that, who then enforces that and who gets to come along and really come and tell me how I should behave in the outdoors, I don't know if I like that.

However, this statement is arguably predictable; earlier in this chapter Colin (01.54) had described professionalism: 'for me is very much an internal thing…'. On the other hand, in formal socialisation, the internalisation of external professional values is expected of individuals within a professional learning community; how internalised are professional identities? How much of socialisation, professional identity (re)formation, and professional ethics/criteria remain implicit? This question directly refers to the notion of a hidden curriculum as discussed within the literature review. The hidden curriculum was discussed in the context of professional identity (re)formation of medical students. This discussion highlighted the possibility of a hidden curriculum within the educational expedition sector. Reiterating its definition, a hidden curriculum can be recognised as an implicit curriculum which expresses and represents attitudes, knowledge and behaviours conveyed without awareness or intent. It can be conveyed indirectly by words and actions that are parts of the life of everyone in a society (Alsubaie, 2015). The hidden curriculum, like the notion of professionalism, is impacted and shaped by the external (Cornbleth, 1984). This implies the existence of the hidden curriculum within the educational expedition sector, the lack of recognition of that curriculum, and its impact on aspiring educational expedition leaders. The hidden curriculum refers to the socialisation and internalisation of interpersonal skills, which have the capability to develop or instil professional values and identity. The participants unknowingly referred to a hidden curriculum throughout each discussion, as Colin (11.22) noted: 'but then how do you measure those softer skills?' Colin (19.30) also indicated: 'I think there's, there's more to a degree and smarts and the ability to achieve it. There's lots of other things going on…'. Similarly, Jessica (23.18) alluded to a hidden curriculum when discussing BES's values:

> Like when you sit down and have those conversations with people about behaviours and mission and vision and why they're all here, some of them might go, "No, you're alright, right".

In addition, Bill (27.02) highlighted a perception of professionalism implying the existence of a hidden curriculum: 'we are probably moving towards a position where professionalism is inferred…'. Likewise, John (44.32) discussed his perception of professionalisation, suggesting:

> Never be aloof, it's about getting the balance of being one of the team, and not sitting there and not be approachable as a leader.

All these comments explicitly refer to the requirement of interpersonal skills, and all seemingly refer to the existence, impact, and adherence to the hidden curriculum in order to be socialised within a professional learning community. Suchman *et al.,* (2004) posit that the social environment, the organisation, and the hidden curriculum have the greatest influence on identity formation. Although this interpretation refers to medical students, it illustrates the capability of the hidden curriculum in multiple occupations already established as professions. Therefore, in recognition of the hidden curriculum, and its influence in professionalisation and/or socialisation of aspiring professionals, I argue that the educational expedition sector should begin to make its tacit nature more explicit within the sector. I argue further that the data collected here could be used as a springboard into modernising the approaches for professionalisation and/or socialisation of aspiring leaders into the sector. This argument advocates for making the tacit interpretations and requirements of an influential professional learning community, like BES, more explicit. Doing so provides the opportunity to develop the hidden curriculum and use it as a tool to help shape a more accessible sector. This perception is seemingly supported by Matt (01.22.53) who discussed professionalism in the context of National Governing Body awards (NGBs):

> That's important, you know, understanding how workplaces operate, and see you know that as well. But then practical assessments which, which, unfortunately, the NGBs still tend to focus on the hard. The harder the technical skills, you know, rather than the soft skills, soft skills with which, you know, it's slowly changing, but I think it's still a long, long way to go. Yeah, ready for that, from my experience anyway, having gone through the, it's 90%, hard skills, really.

However, though I call for a hidden curriculum to become explicit, many of the implicit messages delivered via the hidden curriculum may directly conflict with other perceptions of professionalism and the desired ideologies for socialisation. Therefore, to be clear, it is not the purpose of this discussion to suggest that BES's interpretation of interpersonal skills and the potential references to the hidden curriculum are representative of the entire sector. I do aim to illustrate the influence and responsibility large educational expedition organisations have in regard to the professionalisation of the sector, the impact on professional identity (re)formation, and the socialisation of aspiring leaders. Similarly, the hidden curriculum within the educational expedition sector does not simply address interpersonal skills. Formalisation should however aim to make explicit, in addition to its importance, the existence and implications of meritocracy, social hierarchy, and professional stratification in a sector which appears to deem interpersonal skills one of the most desirable professional characteristics. In the next chapter of this thesis, a learning model will be created to help inform professional identity (re)formation. Additionally, it will reflect a perception of what are deemed to be professional criteria expected of aspiring professionals. However, perceiving what are or are not desired professional criteria implies connotations of control over the bestowment of social capital.

Reflexive Account: 'Hidden Curriculum', The Hidden Agenda

After reflecting on the hidden curriculum, much like emotional intelligence, it seemingly relies on the implicit, subjective recognition and application of soft skills. Identifying the underlying existence of the hidden curriculum within the educational expedition sector arguably requires its analysis. For example, in an earlier reflection, I questioned, 'can emotional intelligence be taught?' Regardless of a right or wrong answer, perhaps the hidden curriculum teaches the soft skills required to be an educational expedition leader. Therefore, I question, can the hidden curriculum become explicit?

In conclusion, this section discussed the manifestation of professional identities within the context of professional learning communities, BES, and the university. It is important to note here each university will likely possess and implement individualised interpretations of the topics discussed throughout this section. Additionally, this section intentionally focussed on the hidden curriculum and the effects of the expectations and requirements for the socialisation of aspiring/established educational expedition leaders. The findings illustrated the implications of social hierarchies, societal values, implicit control, and the stratifications they may enforce. Therefore, this section records participant perceptions, underlying theories, and the contemporary factors affecting professional and/or social socialisation. It identifies influential social circumstances dictated and enforced by the educational expedition sector, or more specifically the participants representative of the sector. It identifies the implicit and explicit social parameters conformed to by both aspiring and established practitioners. Therefore, further research into the educational expedition sector focussing on the sociological ramifications elicited at a micro/meso/macro-societal level could assist in the development of a modernised form of socialisation.

4.5. Professional (Association) Bestowment and Social Capital:

The potential desire for symbolic capital and the connotations of dominance and status have been discussed in regard to Bill's (37.02) disclosure of professional conflict, as well as in relation to the adherence to BES's interpretation of professionalism by other leaders. However, symbolic capital pertains to the competition between social actors (or expedition leaders).

Individuals will compete for symbolic capital in order to obtain dominant positions (Pret *et al.*, 2016). Social capital was discussed interchangeably with symbolic capital. The former derives from the latter, as the term 'symbolic' was replaced with 'social' in an effort to illustrate the sociological struggle between leaders within the occupation field. Additionally, to obtain symbolic capital is to obtain status and prestige. Professionalism or professional status is recognised as a form of symbolic capital. Comparatively, social capital refers to the functioning of social groups with shared objectives (Schuller, 1999) or ideologies. Therefore, it is presumed for the purpose of this thesis that seeking to obtain professional status or recognition as working professionals is a shared objective. According to Bill (27.02): 'if you ask people, are you professional? They go, well of course I am. Very few people go well no, I'm completely unprofessional'.

Although symbolic capital is sought, the bestowment of prestige, status, and ultimately professionalism appears to be externally controlled. The terminology surrounding symbolic capital elicit a sense of bestowment and dominance. The term 'capital' suggests wealth or a valuable resource. Bill (19.40) explained:

> I mean, professionalism is very difficult to bestow upon yourself, professionalism to a certain degree is bestowed upon you.

This point mirrors the earlier perception regarding the socialisation into the professional learning community. Additionally, Bill's comment further evidences the existence and influence of meritocracy within the educational expedition sector, which is supported by the existence of selection criteria BES employ ensuring the adherence to their professional ethics. Olivia (11.27) discussed BES's use of the term professionalism:

> Probably on the occasion, when you go, they didn't seem like they'd be very professional or didn't act appropriately.

Another example surrounding the notion of bestowment; Jessica (11.35) explained:

> We have a lot of narrative between the team about candidates through the selection process from their application, then after we do assessments, because we have multiple eyes on every candidate, we will confirm as a team about what we thought about different candidates.

What enables BES to bestow professional status or symbolic capital? References to the age and history of the organisation, given by Jessica, Liam, and Matt, may seemingly demonstrate its prestige and justify BES's capability to bestow professionalism. While discussing the popularity of BES, Jessica (15.16) noted: 'I think we are, it's a couple of things that we are a heritage organisation. We are very long standing…', referring to the organisation's established existence within the educational expedition sector. Similarly, Liam (17.45) discussed the professional motivations of some educational expedition leaders:

> People who think they're professional because they lead one world challenge expedition a year and think they should get paid and think that the industry should always pay them when they don't recognise the history of the values of what British Exploring has always done.

Matt (36.06) in the same way explained:

> And so, I guess BES has got the sort of long pedigree, it's been going, it's the first ever, you know, 1932, Murray Levick from Scott's expedition, set it all up, and all that kind of thing.

Matt refers to George Murray Levick, who founded the Public Schools Exploring Society, which is now known as BES. The above statements illustrate the perceptions of prestige associated with the age and founding of the organisation. Comparatively, it could be that the founding of the organisation and the relationship with George Murray Levick ensure the symbolic capital. The renown originally associated with Levick could have been bestowed upon the BES brand. I speculate that, like professional status, deciphering the authority of bestowment is individualised. If BES were not considered prestigious, their bestowment of status would not be held in high regard. Therefore, I consider the bestowment of symbolic capital is mutually assured; it is a symbiotic relationship. BES could not claim to be prestigious without those who agree, and those who agree could not obtain recognised bestowment of capital from BES unless BES had already obtained status and hierarchy. They are mutually sustained. Comparatively, the bestowment of status and symbolic capital could also be linked with the title bestowed upon the individual within an occupational role. While discussing interest in educational expeditions, Matt (12.27) in interpreting the thoughts of his participants referred to a title: 'Matt is a professor in physical geography. Wow you know, it'd be great to work with him…'. This perception suggests that other forms of symbolic capital must be obtained by practitioners prior to their being socialised into professional learning communities. Arguably, terms associated with professional criteria discussed by the participants, such as trustworthy, reputable, respect and experienced are all forms of symbolic capital. This perception was endorsed by Bill (33.08) during a discussion on professional status:

> When you walk in, and you sit down, and you see all those certificates on the wall, you go, "oh blimey, this bloke is professional, this woman is professional". You automatically go, I would give them responsibility to make decisions for me.

Four key interpretations can be gleaned from Bill's statement. The first suggests Bill perceives that a level of professional status is bestowed once an individual has attended and received a higher education qualification. Secondly, it evidences how the bestowment of symbolic capital is linked to the achievements of an individual (meritocracy). The third demonstrates how the public, or more generally the external, influences the bestowment of symbolic capital. Finally, it illustrates that a traditionalised process of professionalisation is still regarded as the preferred approach to recognising symbolic capital. Similarly, John (49.52) discussed the potential for qualifications and experience:

> When I was 18, I had been out there quite a bit, and had drifted into an outdoor centre environment because I had, I was perceived, not saying I had, but to have been perceived that I had the experience that was required, not qualifications, but the experience that was required.

Analysing the inflexion and repetition of the term 'perceived' suggests that appearance dictated the bestowment of symbolic capital. Regarding Bill's comment, the presentation of qualifications could reassure external parties of the practitioner's perceived/bestowed status. Analysing the influence of perception further, Laura (40.26) explained during the first focus group:

> I think everybody has got it in their heads now, the magic word degree, if you got a degree then you're an expert in your field, that's, that's not true.

In contrast to Laura's statement, the idealisation of a degree or HE qualifications mirrors the ingrained notion of traditionalism and meritocracy in society. The traditionalised notion of professionalism has been clearly defined throughout, and one of its criteria is HE. Therefore, if society has already conformed to the established, traditionalised process of professionalisation, the prominence of degree qualifications is not surprising. Additionally, though Laura does not agree with degree programmes as the only form of professionalisation, the practical qualifications endorsed by the outdoor industry reflect a meritocratic society.

Symbolic capital, like any other form of commodity, can be lost. For example, Jessica (08.04) explained:

> Who might be rusty in their tech qualifications, but they take it, they take the feedback on board, they go away and have a practice and they come back and reassess. And there's no ego or bullshitter out there, that they're the professionals, even if at the time that we see them.

Furthermore, Jessica (08.54) noted:

> We've had loads of people like that, and it's often like. The veterans it's the older dudes like, how dare you pretend that you know more about this shit than me? I've been doing this for years, and then they can't read a map and it's like.

If a modernised perception of professionalism were to be introduced and conformed to, it would arguably require a modernised interpretation of bestowment, as perceptions of professionalism may evolve. Similarly, the retraction of bestowment may become more prominent if the modernised perception of professionalism is conformed to by a majority, and traditionalised practitioners refuse to adapt to the change. Likewise, having evidenced currency as a key professional characteristic by established leaders, adapting to change would only be considered continued professional development, which concept is supported by Matt (01.29.01):

> So, if you're an instructor, and you don't want to gain, get engaged in this new professional element and that's okay. Yeah. But basically, you're going to look a bit out of date and old fashioned in five years' time, because all these new people are coming.

Another essential point to recognise is the concept of bestowment versus bias. BES have advocated word-of-mouth advertisement as their key source for volunteers. Jessica (15.16) explained:

> They come back year after year after year after year. They love us and care about us immensely. And by far, the greatest source of new leaders into our community are word of mouth, they are people who know people who are diehards and have their ears bent about the amazing things we did in the Yukon this year and the amazing journey we saw young people go on.

Reflexive Account: Meritocracy and Expeditions:

Having reflected on this notion of meritocracy, and researched its presence in the literature, I note that it is typically associated with political, governmental, and bureaucratic powers. However, as illustrated in this chapter thus far, the obtainment of symbolic/social capital, the requirement of experience, and some form of qualification all refers to a meritocratic system. This system, in line with the self-maintaining, self-imposed competition for symbolic/social capital, only reinforces its existence. The difficulty associated with meritocracy in the educational expedition sector is the implicit struggle for reward in any form, which results in the enforcement of professional and social stratification of those seeking to obtain merit. Those requiring reward and/or merit for gratification will compete for it. The educational expedition sector is arguably influenced by appearance; as such, the more merit an individual holds, then the more symbolic/social capital they will hold, and vice versa. This trend illustrates a clear (sub)conscious struggle for power and dominance. I question here, how does this affect the desire to enter the educational expedition sector? How does meritocracy affect the professional motivations of educational expedition leaders?

Hence, I argue that a word-of-mouth process of volunteerism relies on the established in-group members of BES's professional learning community. Each member who advertises BES as an employment opportunity is subconsciously bestowing symbolic capital onto practitioners deemed professional. Like an invitation to the in-group, word-of-mouth has the capability to ensure a constant stream of volunteers willing to conform and adhere to BES's interpretation of professionalism. Therefore, perhaps the prestige of BES relates to the in-group members of their professional learning community, the qualifications they hold, and the experience they have obtained. This is meritocratic in nature, but still an established, well-practiced form of status bestowment. This idea is justified by Alex (29.55), who discusses a form of professional recognition introduced within the humanitarian sector:

> But also that you would be benchmarked against competencies, that when you did really well in our environment, you went on response somewhere, and you work for someone, and you would be kind of benchmarked against those competencies and you would take that with you. And it was an attempt to stop the recycling of terrible people around the industry. Because you would be, you would have this record that would be passed, that you could take with you to prove a certain level of professionalism in the absence of a qualification for it.

Although Alex's comment clearly illustrates the widespread use of meritocracy and its relationship with the bestowment of professionalism, it also clarifies that multiple occupations are calling for an accessible process of professionalisation. The use of meritocracy within the professions suggests that entrance and acceptance is achievable through merit; this implies accessibility, a freedom to join (Roiphe, 2016). However, it is evident with any process of professionalisation that the bestowment of professional status is directly associated with how the practitioner is viewed. Bill (22.38) clarified at a multi-occupational level how the effect of appearance influences the bestowment of symbolic capital: 'but I can look at them and go, they're running a tight ship, this is professional…'. However, the influence of appearance affecting bestowment is enforced by a notion of transparency. Bill and Colin claim that transparency is a signifier of professional status. Bill (22.38) noted:

> Because I think being professional is about being open about who you are, 'yeah please come and view me, please come and judge me, come and ascertain who I am. So, there needs to be some transparency within a sector, and invite other people coming into the sector.

In the same way, Colin (31.11) also mentioned: 'transparency, and I think we're starting to see this come into other professions now…'. What grants other sectors the authority to identify, or bestow professional status? Furthermore, when does acceptable bestowment become bias? Transparency utilised as a tool for professional recognition evidences the benefits of a multi-occupational professional learning community. This tool again places BES in an unusual yet beneficial position to inform a more accessible and modernised perception of the educational expedition sector. The notion of transparency used as a tool to collaborate with other sectors and other occupations may begin to dilute the inconsistencies surrounding the term 'professionalism'. On the other hand, conforming to the notion of transparency could be as difficult as the conformation to a modernised perception of professionalism. Equally importantly, the notion of transparency has been highlighted as a professional characteristic by a sample of a larger population and is a limited representation of what is deemed an acceptable process of professional recognition. Arguing for some transferability, Bill (22.38) discussed further:

> So, there are commonalities between say, leadership in medical decision making, expedition planning and teaching. There are certain commonalities which I would argue that we could. So, going back to your question about surely aren't they judging… Yes, but I think there is enough commonalities between these sectors that I could go into a medical setting and go, "yeah, I'm quite happy this person is treating me as a professional".

Similarly, Jessica (45.25) discussed the existence and differences between a code of ethics, their professional ethics, and the application of both within BES's professional learning community:

> We believe that they should all be subject to the same rules. So, I think the thing that is more definitive or defining in terms of professionalism is actually the core values, the big, overarching, this is the basis on which we make our decisions and work together as a team.

Bill's comment elicits four important concepts. Firstly, perhaps the commonalities between the sectors or occupations provide the opportunity for mutual bestowal of professional status. Secondly, analysing the term 'judging' clearly recognises the application of bestowal. 'Judging', though Bill explicitly suggested I use it to describe bestowal, was in fact used only by Bill. This could imply a subconscious recognition of bestowment and how Bill perceives its uses. The third point refers back to Liam's (23.02) comment suggesting ego as a potential negative influence on professional practice. The mutual recognition between different sectors/occupations would require practitioners to accept judgement or criticisms from individuals who may not have experience in that field. Finally, analysing Bill's terminology further, treating me as a professional suggests the acceptance of symbolic capital by both parties. The acceptance of symbolic capital would rely on the individuals holding similar interpretations of professionalism. This concept currently seems unlikely, as the term 'professionalism' has been rife with inconsistency throughout. Comparatively, the likelihood of the acceptance of external professional judgement and mutual bestowment is not entirely unachievable. As identified by Jessica in her statement, all members of BES's professional learning community are subject to the same rules and expectations, which includes members originating from different occupational fields. Interestingly, Jessica's comment also identifies a disconnect between a code of ethics and BES's core values, earlier identified as their professional ethics. Discussing both statements at a macro-societal level, developing a mutual multi-occupational agreed-upon definition of modern professionalism is unlikely. However, if the traditionalised notions of professionalism have been normalised into society, then developing a modernised perception with elements of occupational transferability, does not seem so inconceivable. An approach which could help to achieve this is to identify core characteristics of the term 'professionalism' within already established professions. For example, Bill (28.20) noted:

> So, one of the ones that is probably generic is, am I current? Okay, and on, so, but that's a minimum build, that's a minimum requirement you need just to keep your ticket, yeah but I have done this as well, and I can evidence it this way, and I'm a member of this organisation, and I make sure that I engage in conversations with peers and colleagues and by the nature of those conversations, it is both reflective and reflexive.

The idealisation of transparency and transferability, like many concepts, may appear different in practice than in theory. Colin (01.54), referring to contextualised professionalism, noted: 'However, that professionalism can look very, very different, in different environments…', a statement which applies itself to Bill's (28.20) comment and acknowledges the existence of different charters, associations, and regulatory bodies which all reinforce their own interpretation of professionalism at a macro-societal level. Additionally, at a meso-societal level, organisations, companies, and educational institutions interpret the macro-societal expectations of professionalism to fit their own ideologies. Finally, at a micro-societal level, interpretations at the meso-societal level inform the (re)formation of professional identities. A simple breakdown of one societal level interpreting the other evidences the unlikelihood of mutually-agreed commonalities across multiple occupations. Following this line of inquiry, are the archetypal professions deemed as professional as the other? How do they perceive and mutually recognise professionalism at a macro-societal level? Although I have highlighted earlier the value systems which have been externally enforced by the public, the discussion of a cross-occupational value system has not been introduced. I suggest here that the mutual bestowment of professionalism and symbolic capital received and enforced by the archetypal professions ensures an ingrained professional stratification of modern occupations.

Although generalisabilities of professionalism remain in question, one characteristic of professional status seems applicable across occupational fields: accountability. This characteristic was identified by Colin (23.35), whose professional identity refers to accountability: 'And then that comes to what I would what I like to call the "what would I say in court?"'.

Reflexive Account: Generic Professionalism:

Throughout this thesis, the notion of traditionalism informing a modernised perception of professionalism has been discussed. After originally reflecting on the processes needed to develop a modernised professionalism, I realised conformity may be the most difficult aspect of its application. After considering it further, I believe the only way to initiate a level of conformity is to implement a new and modernised perception. It will need to be built upon the most widely accepted principle(s) of the traditionalised processes of professionalisation, which I find to be higher education. However, before its implementation, a modernised perception of professionalism must be developed. Conformity to a new, modern ideal would arguably require a list of the most generalised interpretations of professional practice. In the context of the educational expedition sector, the most accepted principle of professional practice seems to be currency.

Continuing from professional learning communities and the hidden curriculum, this section discussed the bestowment of symbolic/social capital, its influence on the (re)formation of professional identities and professional learning communities, and its desirability. The findings demonstrate the (sub)conscious competition for symbolic/social capital in the form of prestige, reputation, credibility, and experience. BES is seemingly in a mutually beneficial engagement, preserving its occupational/organisational identity while systematically receiving and bestowing symbolic capital on their volunteer(s). This organisation is potentially used as a (sub)conscious conduit for the obtainment of capital. Though highlighting the influence of this unspoken agreement, its effect at a meso/macro-societal level could be explored further in an effort to reveal the implications volunteerism has on socialisation and professionalisation within the sector.

4.6. Professional Regulation and Professional/Social Stratification:

Traditionalised notions of professionalism have been explained and illustrated with examples throughout this thesis. One requirement of the traditionalised processes of professionalism is its regulation, which is typically endorsed by the obtainment of HE qualifications and subsequent entry into an association, union, and/or charter. However, the meritocratic nature of obtainment, entrance, and recognition can endorse highly stratified, highly competitive interpretations of professionalism (Easterbrook *et al.*, 2019). For example, Colin (16.19) identified:

> But we've got masters degrees in outdoors. Should you have that? Is that a requirement? Are you saying if you don't have a masters degree you can't be a professional or [are there] tiers of professionalism?

Colin (11.22) also noted: 'those tickets only show a snapshot of the capability of what that person that can do?' This perception can be interpreted to suggest that traditionalised processes of professionalism are not entirely applicable across multiple occupations. It also indicates the existence of the hidden curriculum and its effect on professional status. Colin (11.22) recognised a similar interpretation:

> I think the problem is, is a legacy around this term, professionalism and professional, and we have this legacy of traditionalism, that this is what it should look like.

Therefore, the requirement of HE qualifications in some circumstances, or perhaps in the context of Colin's interpretation, may appear to be more of a hindrance to the (re)formation of professional identities. Colin (17.28) further explained: 'But a soldier can be a professional soldier without a degree…', which relates to the notion of specialised expertise as a professional characteristic supporting professional status. Colin (17.28) further recognised:

> And that actually there are people out there who do not; A not interested in getting a degree; B may not work in that way? That's academic rigour, but they will… I know, people that were that way, and far superior to me in the outdoors.

Comparatively, if the educational expedition sector were to conform to the traditionalised processes of professionalisation, it would arguably become a degree-only occupation. This perception would stratify those already established in the sector who have already obtained symbolic capital in the form of professional status, reputation, and experience. Additionally, becoming a degree-only occupation would require practitioners, new and established, to attend university. This would have a rippling effect on accessibility across the entire industry. In the context of BES, Jessica (50.47) highlighted the impact it would have on their volunteer ethos: 'point about barriers, like think of all the badass entomologists, and meteorologists and doctors…'. She refers to the obtainment of outdoor-specific degree qualifications by volunteers and how requiring it would prohibit their access to the educational expedition sector. Traditionally, regulated professionalism would require a centralised body, ultimately enforcing a mutually agreed-upon interpretation of professionalism. Bill (07.09) considered this point: 'because one of the weaknesses of the outdoors in its desire to professionalise what it does is it's not a unified body'.

In an occupational comparison, Bill (07.09) discussed further:

> One of the things that, say. the medical sector has over us is, there is some kind of organisation or central body, a central identity of what they do, and we haven't got that in the outdoors.

Bill's comments neither confirm nor deny the desirability of a centralised body. However, John (33.12) explains:

> So, I think potentially, I mean, you could probably gather that my hesitation suggests I would want not to centralise it, but I think if we actually wanted to apply professionalism in that sense we would need to centralise it in some way, much like a doctor or an architect, or an accountant gains a an appropriately recognised qualification in order to be recognised as such.

Therefore, the call for a centralised body of professionalism is not entirely undesirable. However, it implies the need for a modernised process of its application: perhaps a qualification which works in association with HE. A qualification which is given the same recognition as HE academic rigour that could be mapped in tandem with degree programmes and could bestow professional status. This type of program would require a mutual recognition of its status but is highly applicable to vocational occupations. Arguably, it would provide the accessibility and opportunity to grant professional status to practitioners unable to attend HE while still being governed and regulated by a union in association with governmental recognition. I would advocate for such regulation, as it would ensure the professionalised qualification is founded on traditional, already conformed-to professional ideals: a concept and form of regulation which would not be newly introduced. Liam (37.31) discussed similar undertakings in the outdoor industry:

> But the Institute for Outdoor Learning is looking to become a Chartered Institute in terms of professional recognition, and in the last two weeks, they just launched a scheme around professional recognition and part of that again, that is about holding a, an academic qualification.

However, although the Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL) scheme is perceived by Liam to require an academic qualification. Liam (37.31) also advocates for alternative forms of academic and professional recognition:

> I think that there is there is space to do that, and it will help become, I feel it will help you to become more, more credible as an industry as a sector and having had a conversation last night as part of my role as chair of a region within the Institute of outdoor learning.

Advocating for alternative forms of recognition appears to be widely acceptable. In comparison, imitating established regulatory processes would:

> Lose as a, as a profession, you would lose a lot of people who are exceptional leaders and exceptionally good at their job, but who don't feel that they're able to undertake an academic qualification (Andy, 34.33).

Similar to Liam, an alternative form of regulation and professionalisation had also been endorsed by Matt (01.16.02):

> We can perhaps have a framework that all the individual degree, and I guess people who want to become involved would need to, you know, perhaps it is a way of getting to that stage without necessarily going to a university higher education programme.

Matt (01.16.02) discussed further the occupational comparison regarding regulatory processes:

> And that's where we need to look at the, the other, the other organisations and how they do it, and I know, well, through happening to know people who've gone through chartered accountancy, they do a lot of exams.

These statements also suggest the new processes of regulation to be founded on already accepted and established forms of regulation. Matt (01.26.24) clarified a requirement of regulation, referring to the submission of some form of evidence proving the practitioner's continued professional development:

> Having that professional body to anchor you as, as a sort of a, you know, where you would, you would be logging on your experience every year like I was the charter geographer, someone's keeping a record, a database of you.

This comment promotes the requirement of a centralised body. Matt (01.29.01) further expresses his acceptance of regulation while acknowledging the inconsistencies in the industry: 'I think it would… guide me much better. Because at the moment, it's a right higgledy piggledy mess…'. Finally, ending his line of discussion, Matt (01.29.01) explained:

> But if I was starting over again, I would welcome that. I would, it would feel good. Oh, yes, of course, profession, I'm a professional peer, you know, I'm going to work into that into that thing. Definitely. And the more I think about it, the more it needs doing.

Though calls for an alternative form of professional recognition are evident, its application is rife with uncertainty. Mapping other forms of professional recognition with degree programmes would require a consensus on what the educational expedition sector deems professional practice, and this consensus would have to synergise with HE qualifications. Lizzie (39.46), discussing this synergy, explained:

> And the mapping means that it's all accredited kind of equivalent. So, people know what that means, as opposed to just like, yeah, okay, I've got a degree. But what does that actually mean? That means you've been to university and can, can study that doesn't mean that you've got all the rest of the credibility and knowledge to do the job.

Reflexive Account: Centralised Body, a Unified Voice:

Upon reflection, though many of the comments made by the participants are for an alternative form of professional recognition and regulation, they were not necessarily for the development and implementation of a centralised body, or union. Though potentially highlighting a sense of researcher bias advocating for a union of some form, Matt's comments above were made in response to and acceptance of that ideal. However, the allure of a centralised body for professionalism undoubtedly influenced the trajectory of some of the discussions. Nevertheless, the comments made by the participants in response to the notion of a unified industry remain arguably unaffected by my inclinations. I merely asked the question and did not confirm or deny my interest in the benefits of creating a centralised body for professionalisation.

Lizzie's statement suggests that acquiring a degree, like other qualifications, does not guarantee competence. Interpreted further, it implies that degree programmes lack the capability to bestow credibility onto their graduates. On the other hand, this only reflects an individualised perception of degree programmes and illustrates Lizzie's uncertainty regarding post-graduates. This uncertainty negatively informs her perception of post-graduates. It implies a lack of practical knowledge (phronesis) and preparedness instilled by university, and arguably contrasts with the university's function as an educational institution. A perception which stratifies graduates by comparing their capabilities with established practitioners or individuals who have had access to opportunities which others may not. However, if an alternative form of regulation were to be developed, conformity to its processes would arguably provide clarity and synergy of professional status for practitioners with or without a degree. Similarly, Liam (41.23) explained:

> Plenty of guys and girls out there with years of experience and not wanting to do a degree for a whole range of reasons, you know? Whether it's academic, you know, because it seems too academic, if we could, if we could create clarity, or recognition of experience.

In contrast, however, though the desirability of an alternative form of recognition is evident throughout these statements, the suitability of a union, association or charter is still in question. Bill (09.16) noted: 'You know every time we invent another organisation that is supposed to represent people in the outdoors, we dilute that notion that we are a single entity…'. Additionally, a union, association, or charter would require governmental recognition. Bill (11.28) discussed further:

> So, that kind of movement of particular occupations into the professional field is usually done with the support of government. I know it's a horrible thing to say, the only way I can see the outdoors having that kind of drive is if we had a multiple fatality in the outdoors. If you say we lost 12 kids, and people went, "was this person qualified?", "mmm yeah but they're not very good".

This statement exemplifies the need for regulation, specifically a form of regulation which enables professional recognition and status, while also governing practice and continued professional development. Moreover, Bill (11.28) explained:

> Both you and I, as you well know, can set up our "Tom and Bill's Leadership", nothing could stop us, it's not illegal, we don't have to have insurance, we are not legally obliged to have insurance, we're not legally obliged to have any certification, as long as we convinced the parents to send us their kids, we could do what we friggin like. So, this idea that we then, it's desirable, you know, it's almost like we can sprint before we can even crawl.

Bill (28.20) explained further:

> One of things that probably, probably that we need in the outdoors is; unless you are a member of this organisation, who kind of the guardians of the professional thinkers. Here we go, if you were to go and kill three kids on the Roaches tomorrow, no one could take your tickets off of you, they could go, well it was an accident. Now your professionals may be in a better position to judge you and go, well actually you made some big mistakes, you made some serious big mistakes here, and they couldn't take your ticket off of you, we can't do that.

Two statements here explicitly justify the potential need for and desirability of a form of governed professional regulation. Bill highlights the deduction of symbolic capital in the form of reputation, professional status, credibility, and trustworthiness within a professional learning community. However, the loss of symbolic capital is arguably the only accountability highlighted by his interpretation. Bill does not mention any repercussions in the form of governmental procedures such as trials, inquiries, and the requirement for proof of competence and credibility. Bill (28.20) discussed further:

> I've got tickets in a dozen different sports in the outdoors, and no one has ever, ever said, "Billy, are you sailing anymore?". I have got my day boat certificate; I haven't been in a sailing craft in about seven years. I wouldn't let myself anywhere near something with a sail, you must be joking, I don't trust myself, let alone, I wouldn't trust kids with me in a sailing boat. But, no one said, well actually Bill, because you have not kept it up, the RYA could remove, taken, it doesn't matter, I could still take kids sailing. Why? Because I can.

To relate this statement back to BES, regulating admission of volunteer participants allow them to decide who is and is not current, competent, and credible. Therefore, although professional stratification has been interpreted as a negative regulatory response enforced by professional learning communities, it could be determined as a necessary response without the existence of a centralised body for regulation within the outdoor industry. It appears evident that the participants are split between establishing a centralised body of professionalism and developing an alternative form of professional recognition. In comparison to participants who wish to establish neither because the traditionalised interpretation requires HE qualifications and a conformed-to ideal of professionalism. As well as the perceived effects conformity would have on accessibility, autonomy, and the additional repercussions it could inflict on their professional identity/professional ethics. Moreover, though the notion of fatality becoming the trigger for governmental recognition and professionalisation debatably appears drastic, Matt had a similar perception: 'We reacted to Lyme Bay, we reacted to it. And, you know, things changed AALA came on board and, and all that sort of thing, and so on. So, I think yeah, it's just a matter of time…'. To be clear, I am not advocating for fatalities in order to become governmentally recognised. However, I am highlighting a consensus between Matt and Bill, who feel as though an impending fatality will be the only way to receive more governmental regulation/recognition.

At the risk of sprinting before we can crawl (Bill, 11.28), developing a centralised body for professional regulation would yield many benefits. Having discussed regulation in the introductory chapter, I again advocate here for the implementation of a registry/registration. Bill (17.24) highlighted his perception of professionalisation, its regulation, and the discussions required for its implementation:

> What professional standards would be, what professional regulations are imposed, what it means to be a professional, what professional responsibilities that you and I might have to maintain our claim to be professional, like continuous development, to make sure we're up to date with current movements, reading, offer ourselves up for external review; all those things that professional organisations suggest.

Similarly, Matt (51.49) discusses, and advocates for external review, continuous development, and revalidation in regard to practical qualifications associated with the outdoor industry:

> I think the MLTA has started something like that, like a voluntary five-year review, you know, where you say what you've done in the last five years so that you know, you're keeping up to date with, with, with your activity and still fit and you're still able to operate which, of course the BCU the British Canoe Union did for many years. You always had to do under ski that Scottish Snowsports, you have to do it every year, three years of revalidation. Never had that with the mountaineering side. So… there's not consistency across them. The other one is first aid; you have to over three years. Sure. So, how is it that the climbing and mountaineering have slipped? slip that one? I love it…. Like, I like the idea that, you know, you're a bit free and easy, but on the other hand really, it should be the same, shouldn't it? Yeah. So, a body which perhaps even just over viewed people's currency would be. Be good.

Bill's interpretations and statements thus far had been interpreted as traditionalised perceptions of professionalism. By association, though Matt advocates for a modernised perception and regulation of professionalisation in the sector, Matt's references to external review and submission of evidence for continued professional development and currency also reflect a traditionalised interpretation. However, I argue, in order for the educational expedition sector to be governmentally regulated, the development of a centralised body for professionalism would require conformity to already established processes. Once the body is established, the implementation of a modernised professional recognition, regulation, and development can be applied. Although this is speculation, Bill (19.12): 'Yes, in an ideal world I would like that to happen…' and some leaders remain optimistic.

The development and application of a union, association or charter will also yield limitations in the sector. The stratification linked to the requirement of HE qualifications as a regulatory process has already been highlighted. Additionally, however, the development of a centralised body will also have a rippling effect on the rest of the industry and/or sector. Bill (13.44) explained his perception of the negative ramifications linked to the development of a centralised body and the implementation of regulation processes:

> We are based, the outdoors have been based on notions of volunteer service. The vast majority of what happens in the outdoors is volunteers, and as soon as you start saying right, you need to certificate, you need to go and get insurance, you need to make sure that everybody has got first aid award, as opposed to the bloke sitting in the van running around looking after the kids as a first aid award. As soon as you start doing that, there will be an uproar. There is always uproar every time you start setting, because "you're going to rip the heart out of this sport", you won't get any people volunteering.

Though it is clear any mass conformity to a new ideal would inevitably meet some form of opposition, I argue that the outdoor industry, or more specifically sectors utilising the term 'educational', require some form of centralised voice. A unified presence is needed if an educational service is being provided, one which would benefit participant and practitioner. Matt (53.47) calls for a centralised presence:

> I'm a member of the teachers, higher education, what's it called, UCU, University Colleges Union, who campaign for issues, often it's paid, but not always, working conditions, it's teaching hours and we need something like that in the outdoors that stops unscrupulous employers taking advantage of freelance.

Reflexive Account: Governmental Regulation

The term ‘educational’ is consistently used by the participants and by myself. I began to compare traditionalised forms of education with the educational expedition sector. Educational expeditions leaders arguably have the same, if not more time with young adults, placing them in a unique position of influence in regard to both the remoteness of the expeditions and the length of time spent in those environments. This position of influence is comparable to the influence a traditional teacher holds. The notion that the educational expedition sector is self-regulated and perceived as un-restrained in regard to governmental regulation seems unexpected. Doctors are regulated for the position of influence they hold in regard to the public; lawyers, accountants, teachers, etc. are all regulated, arguably for the same reason. They are all regulated because of the position of influence they hold. But potentially dangerous expeditions, spending several weeks away, offering some level of education to young adults, remain to be self-regulated by an unwritten, unspoken consensus of what should be professional practice and working standards. Though a personal reflection, many of the comments illustrated throughout reflect the same consideration.

A balance is required which allows for volunteerism and regulation of educational expedition leaders without stratifying the industry/sector further. Perhaps a modernised perception of regulation would endorse such a balance. In the same way, perhaps registration would be required of educational expedition leaders seeking to obtain financial remuneration instead of volunteers. Similarly, to limit inconsistency surrounding the perceptions and appearance of the outdoor professional, perhaps a centralised body to regulate volunteerism is also required. However, implementing arguably restrictive processes will ultimately result in opposition. Therefore, the benefits of such regulation will have to outweigh the (actual or perceived) limitations. This perspective does not highlight explicitly the inconsistency surrounding the term professionalism embedded within the outdoor industry but does however necessitate the requirement of consistent, accepted professional practice, regardless of forms of remuneration. Although the notion of a centralised body, a union in some form, has been endorsed and opposed by the participants, the overall implementation arguably falls to governmental recognition. Bill (51.36) suggests:

> So, I can’t see the present government, or any other government, in the near future making that very brave step of doing it, and the only way to they’d do it, as I said, is to be forced to do it

> because of, if we have a big fatality, and basically, they'd have to go; there would be such a populace, "what do you mean these kids died, and no one had a certificate?".

This section discusses and suggests multiple forms of professional regulation and recognition. It illustrates participant perceptions regarding current processes, desirability of regulation, and how regulation could be enforced. It evidences the requirement for governmental regulation, a centralised body, and alternative forms of professional recognition for practitioners unable to attend university. It is evident from the findings illustrated within this section that the educational expedition sector is self-regulating. However, this process of self-regulation clearly demonstrates fractured perceptions of accepted professional practice in the form of occupational entry. Though leaders call for alternative forms of professional recognition to be assessed in tandem with universities, their perception of university and post-graduates undermine the necessity for other forms of recognition. Nevertheless, this understanding recognises the current unrest and dissatisfaction with the current processes of regulation and professional recognition. Additionally, this section presented a new form of professional regulation founded on the participant interpretations. Though a mere suggestion made by the researcher, it collated participant perceptions into an idealised form of modernised regulation within the sector. Ultimately, it illustrates how the research into educational expedition leaders can assist in the progression of the sector.

4.7.<u>Professional (Regulation) Remuneration and Volunteers:</u>

In the context of BES, Matt, John, Liam, and Bill all highlighted financial remuneration as a stratifying constraint. For example, Matt (08.12) noted:

> The other problem with BES, you don't get paid, right. In fact, for most of the roles you have to pay. I managed the first year I think I did have to pay back 700 quid to go as a, as a, as a science leader of a fire…'.

Clarifying further, Matt (08.12) explained:

> Majority of my students, I'd love them to go, yeah, but they can't afford it. Because not only having to pay to go as, as an assistant leader, or a leader, you're not earning anything, whilst you are, away are you?

Similarly, John (39.40) mentioned:

> You could then talk about reward and remuneration, and they are not into reward and remuneration, and if you want the right people, you have to be prepared to pay the right price.

In comparison with World Challenge, Matt (08.12) also noted:

> World Challenge, a lot of my students have done World Challenge, because 60 pounds a day. Yeah. And it's not that, you know, you don't even have to have an ML really to work for them.

As an additional comparison, Liam (11.32) explained:

> But ultimately, his first initial response was around the fact that he, he thought that being professional meant you had to be paid, and I pointed out to him, that if he thought being professional meant earning 60 pounds a day with World Challenge, great, maybe you should be complaining to them and starting a union.

Bill (51.36) suggests also:

> Now, government have gone, "oooh volunteers are so important"; is it more important to do it for the love of it, or because you've got a commitment to it? You know, I could love the outdoors, but I could be f*****g dangerous in it. They do that not because they value volunteerism but because it is cheap. The thing is, if we go, 'right, if you take money from other people you need certification, otherwise what you are doing, it is illegal'. Then it needs regulation, government legislation to support it, it needs bringing in, it needs to be upsetting people.

These statements clearly evidence financial remuneration as one of the key motivators and a key reward of professional practice for some participants and some leaders in the industry. Matt discusses financial remuneration from the perspective of a caring university lecturer. Matt's comments recognise the financial stratifications associated with volunteer practice, illustrating financial restrictions by which people pay to go, do not receive payment for service, and may be unable to afford the time. John discussed financial remuneration on behalf of leaders with large amounts of symbolic capital in the form of professional status, respect, and experience. Liam reflected on an incident regarding the perceptions of other external educational expedition leaders and what they deemed professional. Bill reflected on volunteerism, its relationship to financial remuneration, and how/why it influences the potential for governmental regulation. Clearly each leader interprets the need for financial remuneration from different perspectives, which arguably elicit four different examples of deontology in the educational expedition sector. Matt referred to or implied a duty to his students and aspiring leaders with his desire for more accessible opportunities with BES. John advocated for pay for leaders already established within the industry; his duty perceivably refers to his interpretation of the self, and on behalf of other leaders he deems the right people. Liam's recollection of an incident elicits a sense of duty to BES, his professional learning community. Liam is a paid member of BES, so his perception or sense of duty in this context could be interpreted as bias. Finally, Bill's statement appears to elicit a sense of duty in regard to the public, the clients, and the participants who receive services rendered. This perception of duty is shared by Lizzie (13.30):

> And actually, part of the reason I still continue to work, if that's the right word, work for BES is because they don't pay us, and I think that brings a different type of leader to the, to the expeditions that, that you aren't just there for financial gain, that you're actually very invested in developing young people through your own professional skills.

Regardless of perspective, these statements provide an insight into educational expedition leaders' perceptions of duty, motivations, and morals. Therefore, if each sense of duty were to be accommodated, would the educational expedition sector's perception of professionalism be unified?

Bill (51.36) discussed his interpretation of governmental motivations surrounding volunteerism and regulation:

> So, I think certain elements of the outdoors are more professional than they have ever been before. But government, by default, have always tacitly supported the voice that says, "don't intellectualise, don't ask for additional certification, don't ask leaders to be more engaged in training and updating and input, because you'll kill the volunteerism, and without volunteers, we will be finished".

However, in contrast to Bill's perception, and in reference to the dutiful statements above, the volunteer ethos within the outdoors will arguably remain if each sense of duty is unified, regulated, and remunerated. On the other hand, unifying and centralising the voice of four out of many deontological perceptions is unlikely, further highlighting the complexities and difficulties of inconsistency within the sectors. Paradoxically, a unified voice is arguably one possible way to decrease the inconsistency within the sectors. However, Bill (28.20) also noted:

> The French, if you take money for skiing, you need the tickets, don't you? Otherwise its illegal in France, but if you do it as a volunteer, and I'm just with a load of mates of which I happen to be better than them, and I'm just going well why don't you try this edge, and not that edge, well, that's fine, because I'm a volunteer. So, we could go down the road that if you're going to take money, Tom, you need the tickets, if you're not going to take money and you're just taking a neighbour's kid out in a boat because they wanted to have an experience on a local canal, and it's just Tom, that's fine. That is one way we could go down.

This statement appears to contradict the notion of unity and a centralised body for regulation, as it compartmentalises financial remuneration and volunteerism. However, it supports an earlier consideration regarding two unified bodies, one regulating educational expedition leaders receiving financial remuneration and another regulating volunteer(s)ism. I advocate further that the financially remunerated body should regulate via registration, requiring HE qualifications and regular submission of evidence for continued professional development. The voluntary body would not require registration or HE qualifications, or regular submission, but all would be optional. The development of these two bodies would lessen the subconscious, tacit implications of stratification and allow for a more accessible, potentially desirable sector for newer generations of educational expedition leaders. This perception mirrors the views of most of the participants, as they call for an alternative form of regulation and professionalisation.

Furthermore, the above proposal would enable established educational leaders, and those aspiring to that status, to be regulated regardless of paid or volunteer status. It would arguably allow them access to symbolic capital and tangible professionalised rewards typically reserved for those in archetypal professions. This concept is supported by Liam (44.12), who explains the regulatory processes currently in place:

> The current process is a bit of back-filling I think, in terms of you know, trying to set some bars and everything else will fit in, around it. So, it's a bit of retro-fitting to fit this criteria to become chartered, so it's more about recognising people who are already there as opposed to retro-fitting, or building people coming up.

On the other hand, like many of the perceptions discussed in this chapter, the current theme dictating its development and application is conformity to a new modern ideal. When asked how to improve the appearance and perception of outdoor leaders or expedition leaders to the public (Researcher, 40.52), Liam (41.10) responded with: 'Build it into the national curriculum.' Which raises two questions, why are educational expeditions unregulated if they already claim to be a form of education? Similarly, if educational expedition leaders arguably have the same level of influence as governmentally regulated teachers, why do they remain unregulated? These two lines of inquiry are supported by Jessica (58.39) who discusses educational expeditions and the professional criteria/ethics BES require:

> Can I add in consistent, measured, and self-aware? Just because of the environments we work in, working 24 hours per day for six weeks with young people with behavioural difficulties is exhausting, and it is more exhausting than lots of other environments.

Furthermore, the questions illustrated above do not mean to suggest that the educational expedition sector is entirely unregulated; they do however aim to highlight the lack of governmental regulation, an interpretation which is supported by many of the comments made throughout this discussion. I argue here that the outdoor industry is self-regulating in the form of vocational practical qualifications enforced by mutually accepted industrywide standards. Colin (01.54) who interprets professionalism:

> So, it's holding yourself to a set of standards. The standards can be kind of formalised in the way of industry standards, or in a way of certain qualifications or achievements.

Reflexive Account: Traditionalised Standards:

After considering the lack of governmental regulation, the impact of self-regulation became more prominent. Having already established the difficulties associated with meritocracy and the educational expedition sector, the notion of self-regulation appears to be sustained by traditionalised perceptions of professional practice. For example, referring back to John's unwillingness to work with an aspiring leader, John as an established leader within the industry arguably has the influence to impact the perceptions of others. If all established leaders hold similar traditionalised perspectives, then the self-regulatory process currently used will arguably remain. Aspiring leaders entering the sector will arguably hold a modernised conception of professional practice. So, which should be conformed to: traditionalised, or modernised?

Though the outdoor industry as a whole seems to be built on self-regulated, self-enforced policies and accepted practice, the influences of self-regulation may also be the crux of its appearance. For example, Bill (19.40) noted:

> Right, one of the reasons why the outdoors is poorly funded, is because it isn't a recognised outlet for educational, rehabilitation, leisure, enjoyment, mental wellness; is because it seems to be something outside of, something that is not important, it's not regulated, it's not organised.

A statement highlighting a number of different outdoor sectors, which potentially evidences another cause of inconsistency in the outdoors. On the other hand, in regard to both Bill and Liam, recognition for the outdoor industry as an educational platform is perceivably gaining momentum. Rachel (50.21) explained:

> Interestingly, Wales are re-writing their curriculum, they've already done it, and in 2022 it's going to be put out there, and it fits, so if you have a look at, on the Welsh government website at the new Welsh curriculum, it fits in with a lot more of what we do. It's more about learning the life skills basically, so I think it's amazing, and I think Wales have managed to, sort of, get ahead a little bit in what their education curriculum is actually saying.

Liam (51.12) agrees:

> Scotland have already done it with their curriculum for change, you know already had it embedded as well.

A call for change is becoming more explicit, and more governmental recognition is beginning to emerge. However, governmental recognition does not guarantee more funding. This stratifies the industry and reinforces the basis of volunteerism. Similarly, the reinforcement and conformed-to processes of volunteerism decrease accessibility in the industry, as they do not provide adequate reward and remuneration for new aspiring leaders looking to obtain a life-long career. This notion of financial stratification as a form of implicit control is discussed by Matt (01.06.58):

> And of course, the university would like it all to be inside. And that's where it is going unfortunately, and because it is less risk, and it doesn't cost a lot of money. Yeah. But the students want it all outside, they don't like, don't like sitting in lectures very much, or, or no, maybe not quite that. And, of course, the employers would like everybody to have all the governing body awards when they come out, as well as the degree.

Matt (01.06.58) explained further:

> And I think that is what's happened. Certainly here, if we've seen this, this gradual decline in the numbers applying, which is why the course is closing and it happened to MMU before us is that, you know, the 10 grand, nine grand tuition fee is just too much for the most part, I don't know whether this is the students or the parents, probably both, you know, the parents will be saying, well do you really want to, you know, have a 50 grand debt, you can get a job in an outdoor centre, just go and do your ML, or even get a voluntary instructor scheme, you get, get a couple of qualifications, and you're in the game, I know, you might not rise to the same height at the end.

In a similar way, Jessica (41.36) discusses the appearance of outdoor leaders, how the work is perceived, and the influences affecting its recognition as a valuable educational platform:

> And I think, what might be jeopardising that perception of professionalism is that the industry encompasses so many different types of professionals from like, super high-level Gucci guides who take billionaires up first ascents somewhere, to people who work with us for a summer, and then go back into a formal education environment for the rest of the year and then come back the next summer, to people who work in outdoor ed. centres day in and day out for years and years and years. To people who run like, stag and hen do's half-baked coasteering, people getting tanked up and charging around. And, I don't think there is a lot of expectation that those people are learning anything, and I think that gearing all those people together means lots of different things in terms of the word professionalism, possibly.

Matt and Jessica's statements evidence a number of themes. The decline in funding at a university level is creating an unnecessary barrier to the education of new aspiring outdoor leaders. Considering the notion of traditionalised professionalisation, acquiring HE qualifications has been a recognised criterion for professional status, but if the decline of funding, recognition, and value of the outdoor industry is tacitly ignored, the decrease in accessibility and opportunity in HE will be solidified. This would stratify the industry, decrease the likelihood of professionalisation, and arguably constrain the outdoor industry to the traditionalised, self-regulatory processes currently employed, a notion the participants find undesirable. Similarly, Matt distinguishes the requirement of national governing body awards, which supports this notion of constraint, but evidences the necessity for synergy of theory and practice. However, the synergy of theory and practice may become more unlikely if the desirability of the outdoor industry is not modernised and the decline of the student populace rectified. The closure of university courses is arguably caused by the appearance of the outdoor industry and the reward and remunerations associated with the occupational roles. If the outdoor industry is not seen as a viable, long-term, and professional source of employment the desire to work and study has the potential to diminish. I speculate that if there is an increase in symbolic capital in the form of professional status, financial remuneration, and governmental regulation, as well as an applied modernised approach to alternate forms of professional recognition, an increase of desirability would ensue. Speculating further, such a notion is only possible if inconsistencies surrounding the term 'professionalism' in the outdoor industry are unified and mutually agreed upon. On the other hand, Jessica highlights the explicit difficulties with consolidating one notion, one interpretation of professional practice within the outdoor industry. The outdoor industry encompasses a diverse variety of occupational roles, which may self-promote as professional practice. Conversely, if the outdoor industry is already being stratified into a hierarchal list based on symbolic capital, perhaps the development of unions, associations, and charters could be introduced to represent those individualised sectors. In contrast, this perception would arguably solidify the inconsistencies dividing the outdoor industry. In comparison, having individualised, governmentally regulated sectors would reform inconsistencies, and the interpretations would be confined to individualised sectors and the occupational roles within them.

Throughout this thesis, the inconsistent use and application of the term 'professionalism' within the outdoors has been recognised as a limitation. However, the discussion above recognises the inconsistencies and presents them as an opportunity to move forward, instead of being confined to and restrained by the idealisation of unifying multiple interpretations of a mutually contested concept. This perception supports the previously identified notion of individualised definitions of professionalism specific to individualised organisations and occupational contexts illustrated at the beginning of this chapter.

The findings within this section indicate how deontology, financial remuneration, and volunteerism coexist within the educational expedition sector. The key dissention between each is (re)enforced by symbiosis; volunteerism founded in the lack of financial remuneration, which paradoxically ensures a lack of remuneration is founded in the reliance on volunteerism. Both are dictated by a deontological perception of the educational expedition sector. Additionally, it refers to the potential motivations elicited by practitioners and their reasons for volunteering or not. Furthermore, the participants' perceptions illustrated the stratifying constraints enforced by a volunteer ethos and lack of financial remuneration. This constraint, in comparison with governmental regulation, led to the possibility of regulating financially remunerated practitioners and volunteer practitioners separately. This notion highlighted the possible benefits and limitations of accepting inconsistencies regarding professional regulation and recognition instead of rectifying the inconsistencies by developing a centralised body and a unified voice. Similarly, the data demonstrates the complexities surrounding the conformity to newer, more modernised processes of professional recognition/regulation and explicitly highlights the perceived decline of outdoor undergraduate degree courses. The analysis of this data arguably confirms the decline in desirability of the outdoor undergraduate courses and illustrates the necessity for a modernised reformation of the industry/sector to rectify this decline.

4.8.<u>Professional (Parameters) Experience vs Qualifications/Traditional vs Modern:</u>

The call for a new and modernised perception of professionalism and the appearance of outdoor leaders has been frequently referred to throughout this work. The participants highlight the desire for new and alternate forms of professional recognition and refer to or imply the inadequacies of the current regulatory processes still idealised within the industry as a whole, and specifically the educational expedition sector. However, what form a modernised perception of professionalism will take in the educational expedition sector has yet to be determined. To be clear, I do not aim to determine what a modernised perception of professionalism will be, but merely provide interpretations of what the participants desire in a modernised perception. Similarly, although a modernised perception is requested, it has been illustrated throughout that the modern perception could be built upon the traditional one, as these processes have already been accepted by society. Introducing a modern perspective may only provide further inconsistency. While this is the case, barriers to determining what is or is not the correct process for bestowing professional status remains highly contested within the educational expedition sector. Demands for experience over qualification and vice versa are ultimately one of the key inconsistencies hindering a unified voice. For example, Rachel (35.15) discussed:

> And twice we've brought in instructors who have degrees in outdoor education or outdoor leadership or whatever the heading is, and those, those instructors had the qualifications, but they did not have any experience in looking after young people teaching. Actually, in the field.

They had literally just learned how to write risk assessment and done their own personal qualification without actually going to a centre or going out with groups.

Rachel (35.15) explained further

So, they were far less competent than our second-year trainees. And it caused a bit of problems in the centre because we'd have, you know, the paid instructors, were doing less than the second-year trainees who were amazing at that point. So, the pathway in, the practical pathway in definitely has been more useful here. Not to say that those who've done the degree route, are, like they just need to add to it, it isn't enough on its own.

In a similar way, Lizzie (36.45) discussed experience versus qualifications in the context of her occupational field, paramedicine:

We've certainly seen this in the paramedic profession over the last couple of years. And that as of September 21, is going to be a graduate-only employment opportunity. And I think that we're going to lose some very good people because they A. can't, or B. more importantly probably don't want to go to university for three years and have huge amounts of experience of working in a hostile environment and then be sidestepped to the three young guys and girls that go to university at 18 and come out at 21 with a degree but no practical experience of actually doing the job. And I think I think it's going to lead to a lot of disconnect and a lot of unhappy people who are very capable of doing the job just don't want to get that academic qualification for whatever reason, personal or professional.

These three statements highlight a number of important themes. They suggest a disconnect between HE qualifications and the experience required to function in a given occupational role. A synergy of theory and practice has been advocated for throughout, but in what format this synergy would be applied has yet to be determined. Perhaps the perception of university degrees specialising in the outdoors also needs reinventing in an effort to improve the appearance of aspiring outdoor practitioners. Additionally, the statements also elicit a sense of disregard toward the traditionalised process of professionalisation, obtaining a degree. On the other hand, after further discussion surrounding the notion of alternate forms of professionalisation, and in response to the idea of the outdoors becoming a degree-only outdoor sector, industry (Researcher, 33.32), Rachel (42.20) explained:

So, I think both are really good. I think it's really good to have that academic abilities and be able to pull information together and be able to reflect and write about, you know, what you've

> done. It helps you improve, and I think to actually say, aw no I'm in a practical world, I don't do writing or reading, or you know creating information gathering… I don't do any of that because I'm working in the outdoors. I don't think that works anymore or at all, I think there is a link between the two. But, to say it's an only degree entry industry doesn't work because there are, what Liam is saying, there are so many ways of getting those skills.

In the same way, Liam (53.26) discussed HE qualifications:

> There's a, you know a young person that comes out of a three-year outdoor leadership, adventure leadership course and then comes to British Exploring, you know, has a lot of theory and be able to critically analyse outdoor theory, but has no practice. They are less likely to be employed by an expedition organisation in any capacity other than a trainee or as a, even an assistant if they have some.

Liam (54.07) explained further:

> But now there's an awful lot of people leaving university after three years with lots of knowledge, lots of theory which is brilliant. It means they come into the industry at a really great academic, theoretical, critically and analytical level, which is awesome. But they need to go and build the experience.

Thus, who is responsible for the obtainment of those experiences at university? This question may seem to have an obvious answer: the students. However, it is evident that the undergraduate courses associated with the outdoor industry have an unwritten, yet clear stigma surrounding their completion, a stigma which has clearly impacted the expectations and appearances of aspiring outdoor practitioners. Noting here the impact appearances have in the outdoor industry, the stigma arguably discredits the efforts of those aspiring leaders at university. In turn, it negatively influences the socialisation and demand for admission into the professional learning communities once these students have graduated. The besmirched reputations of aspiring outdoor practitioners prior to obtaining a degree are presumably enforced by established outdoor practitioners already socialised into professional learning communities. Thus, the symbolic capital post-graduate students hold in the form of professional status, reputation, and credibility is adversely affected because of the stigma associated with the lack of experiences obtained during an undergraduate degree. In turn, this decrease in symbolic capital associated with university perceivably set preconceptions against the outdoor industry at a greater societal level. The perceived lack of experiences provided by university diminishes the status higher education qualifications once held. Therefore, those seeking professional status via higher education within the outdoors may hold less symbolic capital. Especially if established educational expedition leaders perceive experience to be more valuable than academic qualifications. University courses are traditionally perceived and expected to ensure an acceptable level of readiness and functionality prior to graduates obtaining an occupational role within a specific field. To be clear I am not blaming the inexperience or inadequacies of outdoor undergraduates on established leaders, the participants in this thesis, or the universities. I am however demonstrating the participant's perceptions of outdoor undergraduate degrees, the potential impact/influence this perception has on aspiring practitioners, and the appearance of the outdoor industry at a meso/macro-societal level. Though I advocate in defence of aspiring outdoor leaders, students do not avoid responsibility. Matt (01.02.14) questioned the potential lack of motivation, or prioritisation of undergraduates:

> In this course here at John Moores, we've always, we've always. Well, first of all, when I first came here, I expected all the students to do their ML assessment by the third year, and more laterally encouraged them. So, we offer ML training in the first year for those who got 20 quality days. If you haven't made it the first year, so you get another chance in the second year. And then we offer an assessment in the third year, at a subsidised rate, 200 pounds for, for a full five-day assessment, which is quite good, but we still don't get perhaps half or a third, actually take that up. So, we have this issue… and then we would like them to do, RCI or a SPA in the third year as well, and probably a level one or level two paddle sport coach. So, they've got three bits of ticket as well as degree when they come out. Not many do that.

Matt (01.02.14) noted further:

> And it's about time management, basically, and not wasting your time. So you can, you can do it. We used to get asked all the time, in validation events, well you're expecting these students to do a Mountain Leader Award, canoeing award, and the climbing award, as well as do the degree, surely it's going to impact on their academic time that they can work with a degree. That proved not actually, they proved that they can do it all, you know.

Matt (01.06.58), concluding this line of discussion:

> And not making the most of the opportunities, not coming out with the governing body awards and the degree and you know, the classic 2:1, you nowadays, otherwise you failed, you know? Which is wrong. But that's, that's unfortunate, yeah.

The outdoor undergraduate programmes, aspiring practitioners and the professional learning communities are responsible for the expectations, requirements, and accepted standards within the industry. The achievement and obtainment of those expectations are perceived to be further influenced by bureaucratic procedures and inconsistency. Matt (01.22.12) explained:

> But then that's very difficult because we send students out of work experience and they can't, they can't work effectively, because they're not covered by the employer's insurance, they can't do this, do that.

Matt (01.22.53) discussed this further:

> They can only shadow or watch and get involved a little bit here and there, whether the other, but that could be some credit for, for doing that. That's important, you know, understanding how workplaces operate and see you know that as well.

<u>Reflexive Account: Restricted Experience:</u>

The varied perceptions regarding professionalism have been evident throughout this thesis. As I re-read transcripts, literature, and this chapter the multi-faceted nature of professionalism and how it influences all aspects of an occupational field becomes even more prominent: an occupation deemed more professional than the other, an individual deemed more professional the other, the (restricted) access to greater rewards, remuneration, and experiences, and the regulation dictating all of the above. Professional status seemingly influences the practices and processes of a sector and the identities of those working within. How does this influence the developing professional identities of aspiring leaders?

This interpretation was supported by John (49.52):

> I think the mismatch we have at the moment, it's not a criticism, but it is a mismatch between NGB provision, and college or university provision.

Considering the procedures regulating the opportunities and experiences provided by the universities raised questions. Why are undergraduate experiences and opportunities regulated, but the post-graduate practice and occupational work are not? Furthermore, if undergraduate experiences are seemingly restricted, how can undergraduates be expected to have an abundance of experience in the field? Finally, are undergraduates expected to have a plethora of experiences as a result of projected expectations from established outdoor practitioners? This notion was arguably supported by Liam (54.07), who suggested:

> Because in the end, maybe, by the time they've done twenty years in the industry, they might, they'll be more badass than some of us that have been in it for a while, not that I'm badass anyway, but you know what I mean.

This statement is seemingly supported by John (49.52), who discusses degree programmes:

> So, they could go through a three or four-year programme, only gaining the kind of experiences that they could get inside the programme, which are fairly minimal, and are engineered for a particular reason, and have made no reflection on what they are going to do potentially afterwards.

John (52.04) explained his apprehensions further:

> But, there is a wide differential there, and certainly this context, this expedition context, such is the nature of the role that you need that experience, and I think that's one of the things that concerns me, a little bit about some of the organisations that we've mentioned, is that the experiential, maturity of experience shall we call it, of their leaders, maybe not their chief leaders but others are questionable. They try to do two jobs in one. If I was a gap year student, and then they were talking to me, and they would try to be encouraging me to sign up to one of their trips, their experiences, potentially. If I was a university student on a degree level programme, they might be saying, well come along as a leader, and we will give you experience and training as a leader, but,they don't, because they put you into a situation that you're not ready to manage or deal with on the premise that what you have done at university provides that experience, and I think that a lot of people find themselves over challenged, or potentially overly challenged. Mostly, it all works out, but sometimes it goes wrong, and when it goes wrong, it can go wrong spectacularly.

It is clear that there are varying perceptions regarding the benefits and limitations of obtaining HE qualifications. Likewise, there are varying perceptions of accepted practical qualifications and experience, perhaps in regard to the implicit motivations of aspiring and established practitioners. Liam (09.33) noted:

> So, we've also got to remember is most outdoor qualifications aren't actually qualifications. So, they're actually just certificates of competence on the day that you were assessed so therefore you, you have to keep up your, as Jessica said, keep up your, your currency.

Similarly, Colin (35.38) noted:

> But, most of all, get as many different experiences and different types of people, different situations that you can, because that database of experience is what's going to give you the knowledge to fall back on because when you are in the mountains and it's chucking it down with rain, you've got one with a little hypothermia. That's what you know to draw upon to actually make your decisions and come across, so don't get used to canoeing down the same river, in the same canoes, with the same school, go out and do different things.

Colin (35.38) mentioned further:

> It would be that you're starting a journey of learning that isn't ever going to end. And when you think you finished the end, you're probably not professional, it's constantly ongoing.

Bill (04.15), in the same way. discussed professionalism, practical qualifications, and experience:

> To have one set curricula I think is probably a falsehood. If you're suggesting that, should we teach elements of professionalism in things like the syllabus in British Canoeing, then, yes. But, of course, British Canoeing, MLTB, whoever, the governing organisations of the outdoors, they don't teach leadership. Well, I don't think that they do, and having been involved in designing, I have consumed their courses, and designed and delivered their courses; they don't teach leadership, nobody teaches leadership in the outdoors apart from the universities.

Colin's statements, like Liam's, may refer to the implicit motivations of aspiring and established practitioners. Bill's statement instead highlights a sheer lack of professionalisation or teaching of professionalism within NGB's and speaks to the inadequacies of the current processes within the industry and demonstrates a clear need for degree courses, or at the very least a complete reform of the NGB's working in association with universities and the degree programmes offered. The participant statements, comments, and discussions show a significant disconnect among experiences, practical qualifications (NGBs) and HE qualifications. How can a modernised perception interweave these disconnections?

While discussing BES's code of ethics and the influences it has on their leaders, Jessica (47.35) mentioned, though in jest: 'An outdoor education Hippocratic oath', referring to the traditionalised processes the outdoor industry already adheres to. The inflection used suggests a mocking tone regarding the traditionalised processes of professionalisation. Jessica's change in tone illustrates the displacement of traditionalised processes within the outdoor industry, a notion already displayed by the nuances demonstrated by the participants within this discussion. Therefore, if traditionalised professionalisation is not the ideal process within the industry, then what are the ideal processes? What is and is not traditional regarding professionalism has been discussed throughout this chapter, and the ideal modernised processes can be gleaned from those discussions. However, in an effort to make the implicit interpretations and suggestions for modernisation more explicit, I refer to Liam (49.20), who explains his perception of modernised processes:

> Courses that you can go and do or buy into and they give credit towards ultimately a masters, or you know in practice. And I think things like that, innovative ways to look at professional, you know making, to recognising people's achievements, beyond whatever.

This perception was mirrored by Olivia (50.55), who also considers alternative, modernised routes to professionalisation: 'if you can maybe get credits towards a qualification through doing, like through experience of…'. Similarly, after discussing the topic further, Liam (51.06) suggested during the second focus group:

> They can write up a reflective diary, and that reflective diary becomes a piece of work which can be then marked by a university, that then gives them sixty credits towards an undergrad degree, or whatever, whether it's for open university or it's through another university, you know, there are so many ways you could do it now. I agree that we should be doing things like that, it's a bit like with the trainee course, trying to bolt in bits that also lead to qualifications so that they leave with a smorgasbord of entry-level qualifications that allow them to build on it if they so wish.

Liam (41.23) also discussed a similar approach during the first focus group: 'or recognition of experience through more of a way of Viva's and discussion and, you know, you'd be able to demonstrate understanding and learning at a degree level…'. Liam's point refers to alternative, modernised processes of professionalisation, which are perceived to be better suited to the outdoor industry. Colin (17.28), in unknowing agreement with Olivia and Liam, said:

> I think academic degree is a very small way of expressing knowledge and ability, which I know from someone who works in HE, but I also think the outdoors and HE is a forward-thinking subject.

Discussing traditionalised processes regarding degree entry occupations, Colin (17.28) mentioned:

> Whilst I can understand it for law, doctoring, there are some professions out there that don't do that, like soldiering. Okay. So, no, I don't want to see that route. I don't think so.

Concluding his line of inquiry, Colin (17.28) explained:

> There's lots of people teaching, especially trades, who don't have degrees. They have 35 years of working the brick industry. And they have a lot of experience. Are they not professionals? Because they don't have a degree?

A proposed alternative form of professionalisation would involve synergy between NGBs, HE qualifications, experiential learning, and continued professional development in the form of reflective practice. This complete reform would be assessed by universities to ensure the required academic rigour established professions adhere to, ultimately rooting the reform in the foundations of traditionalised processes. Moreover, the university would mark the work against a mutually agreed rubric. Mutually agreed between the outdoor industry, the government, universities, and established professions. Upon completion, the students or participants would be awarded credits reflective of the work submitted. These credits could then be used for entry into an undergraduate degree, or perhaps a form of subsidised NGBs. Regardless of the form and/or application of this alternative process conceiving such a notion would require agreement between the industry, the government, universities, and established professions. However, the outdoor industry would arguably need a unified voice to control its development and implementation. Additionally, the agreement would require acceptance or recognition from established professions, as this would ensure a level of symbolic capital in the form of reputation, professional status, and credibility.

John (21.16) discussed the implementation of the current processes of professionalisation and professional recognition, which highlights inconsistencies between HE qualifications and NGBs:

> I mean, what are the other factors I think really in terms of professionalism, which I'm sure you have read about, is that there can be varied degrees of academic rigour around what you consider to be professional, but one of the key tenets of a profession or professional is that they have a degree of expertise. The question is how do you measure that expertise? Possibly one of the issues we have within the outdoors is that there aren't many ways currently that we can recognise that experience. Yes, I can go and do my ML or I can do my Level One or Level Two, or whatever, and I can do a number of those things to get a collective of recognition that I have experience; but, it's a little bit fragmented.

John (21.16) explained further:

> So yes, you could say, potentially, that in order for outdoor provision, and particularly in this instance educational expeditions, to be more professionally recognised, you could say, right, there needs to be some kind of recognition for the wider professionalism that sits around that, and how do we achieve that? I guess one way that I would consider is happening at the moment, perhaps over the last 10 years, it has become more common to some extent that for people who wish to work in the outdoors to do so by going onto a degree level outdoor course and trying to bring some academic rigour to what they achieve. However, the dilemma there to some extent, as I see it is, that there is often a mismatch between the academic rigour that sits behind it and the experiential, practical opportunities that are brought to play.

These two statements by John explicitly justify the development and implementation of alternative, modernised processes of professionalisation and/or professional recognition. I am not suggesting the enactment of the alternative process discussed above, merely highlighting its desirability and the justifications for such a development. The creation of an alternative process would require conformity, a prominent notion throughout. Jessica referred to the Hippocratic Oath, though in jest, which acts as a rite of passage into the medical field. A rite of passage is a sign of conformity. Addressing this line of inquiry, does the outdoor industry have an unwritten, unspoken rite of passage? Furthermore, how does a (perceived) rite of passage affect professional morality?

The findings from the previous section (Professional (Regulation) Remuneration and Volunteers) led to the above discussion regarding experience versus qualifications and traditional versus modern perceptions of professionalisation. The data suggest a disconnect between individuals entering the occupational field via experience compared to those who attend university. This perception illustrates a lack of synergy between theory and practice within the outdoor industry. Furthermore, the analysis of the data indicates how appearances affect socialisation at an undergraduate level. The expectations imposed by established leaders are likely due to the experience they hold. Simply, established leaders seemingly project self-expectations, which result in stratifying undergraduates prior to obtaining a degree. This is demonstrated through the perceived lack of synergy between theory and practice, what established leaders deem important prior to obtaining an occupational role within the industry, and the lack of symbolic capital bestowed upon new post-graduates. In addition, the data further discusses the disconnect between NGBs, HE qualifications and experiences within the sector. This disconnect clearly necessitates reform and/or rectification of the current processes of self-regulation. Researching the implications of self-regulation and the current processes of professionalisation within the sector may provide further insight into the desirability of governmental regulation, development of a union, and the benefits/limitations associated with these steps.

Reflexive Account: Alternative Processes

Reflecting on John's comments highlighted a number of things to me. The inconsistency between perceived experiences provided at university and those obtained by gaining experience in the industry is fuelling the divide and disconnect between what is widely considered professional practice in the industry. It would be reasonable to assume, if the perception of experiences provided at university were improved, that this traditionalised process of professionalisation would be accepted. How can this be achieved?

4.9. Professional (Parameters) Rite of Passage and Morality:

Analysing the collected data illustrated similarities between the participants and their entrances into the outdoor industry. When referring to his entrance into the industry, John (12.02) explained:

> And I have been involved in the outdoors, if you go right back to my first experiences in the outdoors, I was 10.

John (12.25) noted further:

> My interest, I guess, stemmed from the fact that by the time I was 18 I had quite a lot of experience under my belt, both in terms of a range of outdoor activities and/or doing my own thing. So, I guess the motivation was to work in an environment that I wanted to work in and enjoyed, and I guess it was driven by the fact that I didn't see myself particularly academic at the time and certainly didn't want to sit in a stuffy office behind a desk. So, that was my initial motivation.

Similarly, Matt mentioned (0.11):

> Right. Well, I, I'm now 57, I got interested in the outdoors at a young age through scouts, really through, through scouts. I was not really a Cub Scout, but I was, I was a scout and a patrol leader from 11 to 16 and adventure scout for a couple more years.

In the same way, Colin explained (0.29):

> It's really weird, isn't it, because part of the outdoors is a weird concept. I think, as a kid I was, always part of the outdoors, I enjoyed walking, climbing, canoeing, kayaking and mountain biking.

On the other hand, in stark contrast, Bill (02.37) referred to the start of his career in the outdoor industry:

> I don't think there ever was a particular point, it was just the same I guess with lots of peoples' experience in the outdoors. Just evolved, it just happened. There was a degree of serendipitous about it, in as much as, I had no interest in working in the outdoors, until I realised the reason, I became the teacher of the outdoors was because I could have a 12-week summer holiday.

These statements from John, Matt, and Colin all describe a sense of belonging, and refer to their childhood experiences pertaining to the outdoors. Bill's statement refers to the subconscious development and evolution of interest in working in the outdoor industry, which could implicitly refer to childhood experiences. However, unlike John, Matt, and Colin, Bill consciously decided to enter the outdoor industry to become a teacher. The earned title of teacher enables Bill to tap into the rewards and resources typically associated with and/or reserved for those with professional status. Arguably, the educational expedition sector, though educational by nature, does not have access to the very same rewards and resources as the acclaimed teaching profession. As such, Bill with the title teacher is enabled access to the rewards associated with it, such as symbolic capital in the form of professional status, reputation, and credibility, as well as financial remuneration and access to a union. On the other hand, Matt and Colin are also teachers/lecturers/educators, but their entry into the outdoor industry is explicitly based on a fondness of childhood memories. In an effort to decipher this notion of a rite of passage, perhaps there is no such initiation within the outdoor industry, or at least not specifically within the educational expedition sector. Bell (2003:41) defines a rite of passage as a rite associated with any change in 'social state, age, place, or life cycle stage, such as birth, puberty, marriage or death'. Perhaps the rite of passage in the educational expedition sector is the experiences obtained during an expedition: the same mountains climbed, the same rivers run, experiences which can be related to by colleagues, peers, and the wider professional learning community. Evidently there are two different focuses illustrated here: John, Matt, and Colin describe their lifelong journey entering and working within the outdoor industry, whereas Bill refers to the holidays he receives as a result of his teaching status. Two explicit focuses arguably determine individualised morality. This perception could be interpreted as an abrupt assumption of participant moral reasoning and motivations for working in the outdoor industry. However, through a deontological lens, a judgement of their moral reasoning, motivations, and moral compass in regard to their occupational role would be difficult to determine. Each participant mentioned here has explicitly demonstrated a sense of duty to students, clients, peers, colleagues, professional learning communities, and/or an organisation or institution they have/had worked for. Reiterating the introductory chapter, deontology is a law (Korkonosenko, 2013); it exists as a force, not of state, but a force supported by society. As such, the term 'law' elicits connotations of jurisdiction and a (sub)conscious adherence to a sense of duty. Therefore, if each participant adheres to a sense of duty, regardless of their perspective and moral reasoning for working in their chosen occupation, it is difficult to judge their entrance into the outdoor industry as right or wrong, good or bad. Additionally, regarding the appearance of the educational expedition leader, or sector, perhaps a judgment of character or morality takes place during the effort to identify aspiring leaders who share similar ideals and consequently become socialised into professional learning communities. This perception was demonstrated and enforced by Liam (11.32), who recalls a conversation with an external leader: 'But it made me think, made me question, it made me question some of the morals of some people in the industry…'.

Andy (15.21) in support of Liam's moral questioning had explained:

> So being your job, it's what you get paid for. It's what you do day in and day out. As opposed to being professionals, consider professional manner, whether that be your particular set of morals, ethos, and the way that you kind of buy into it. Or a company's ethos, based on that profession. And it's an individual kind of perception of the way that you behave.

After discussing further, Liam (20.38) referred to morality again, in the context of professional characteristics and appearance:

> The credibility is saying what you, doing what you say you do, time and time again. So that links to its integrity and moral compass and the way that you view your role, whether it's your occupation, or whether you're… it's your profession, whatever terminology, role expertise, you know, for me, that you have, if I want to do a good job.

Similarly, Jessica (48.06) referred to a distinct clarification between a code of ethics, and the professional characteristics, or 'values' BES adhere to:

> But it is more the morals and values, we don't, because we have these/our values at the top and our granular rules at the bottom, I don't think we have a charter that fits in the place that you're describing.

In the same manner, Liam (04.08) explained:

> I think that is broader than just the three C's, I think there's underpinning values and morality, morals and things like that that underpin. So, in some ways, it's personal behaviours and professional behaviours linking together to make you into an outdoor professional.

Andy's statement highlights a sense of duty to the occupational role prior to the enactment of professional behaviours. Andy perceivably illustrates the sense of duty as a re-occurring commitment to the occupational role (day in and day out), whereas the professional behaviours may not be. This perception was mirrored by Liam, who noted a commitment or sense of duty to an occupational role (doing what you say you do, time and time again). Interestingly however, unlike Andy, Liam linked this commitment to duty with an individualised morality or moral compass. Therefore, this link would suggest deontology; a sense of duty to an occupational role reflects an individualised morality. This notion was supported by Jessica, who refers to the required adherence to BES's morals and values over their code of ethics. Jessica may deem a shared sense of morality and accepted professional ethics/criteria to be more important than a traditionalised interpretation of professional standards, such as a code of ethics. Liam's final statement above echoes Jessica's interpretation, as it justifies the application and adherence of morality in association with professional ethics/criteria. This reinforces a sense of duty to the role as an outdoor professional. Although this analysis could be interpreted as complete speculation, the notion of duty enforced by individualised morality relates entirely to a force of society (Korkonosenko, 2013).

Another interesting perspective arose while analysing the collected data. It is clear BES expect, and require a level of conformity by their leaders. However, John explicitly noted earlier his reluctance to work for BES again. Despite this, John's (44.32) view of morality remains comparable to BES's:

> 'Having a good moral compass is clearly important, again not only to steer your, your own individual approach with others, and the approach of the participants, and to steer and guide the individuals, because somebody at a leadership perspective needs to be somebody who can be someone to look up to, to some extent, to make appropriate decisions at appropriate moments at appropriate times, and to have conviction, to stand by those…'.

This perception also relates to Bill, who discussed the decision-making process on behalf of the client or participant. Notwithstanding this comparison, John's interpretation of morality informing professional ethics/criteria demonstrates a commitment, a duty to the occupational role, which is arguably identical to BES's expectations. Interestingly however, John's reluctance to work for BES seemingly revolves around the processes and application of their interpretation of professionalism, instead of their theoretical definition of professionalism. Therefore, the hired BES volunteers might also have to conform to their processes and application of morality, professional ethics/criteria, and sense of duty, as well as BES's definition of each. Although employees conforming and adhering to company policies and expectations may not be a revolutionary concept, it does however highlight the allure of BES. Volunteers conform to and (re)form professional identities, demonstrating BES's accepted practice without the traditionalised rewards and remuneration associated with paying jobs. This notion demonstrates further the sheer impact conformity has on the professional self; leaders volunteer to (re)form their interpretation of morality, sense of duty, professional ethics/criteria, and traditional forms of remuneration. This perception is explicitly discussed by Bill (13.44):

> In Western Europe we have a particular view of volunteerism, it's a kind of moral fortitude and high ground that professionalism doesn't have. We base everything off of it, most of the

> outdoors is based off of notions of the intrinsic moral worth of volunteerism, and that's a very difficult thing to turn around, and to move that towards a professionalism stance, because the vast majority of people think that professionalism is the antithesis of volunteerism. Which I would argue it's not, because some of the most professional people I have ever met are volunteers.

Bill's comment relates entirely to the Kantian theory of moral worth in the context of volunteerism. Kant's theory of moral worth, defined by Stratton-Lake (2005:11), explains that an 'action can have moral worth if and only if it is done from duty'. Interestingly, Matt (01.29.01) suggests: 'there's no right or wrong answer', referring to interpretations of professionalism. Comparing Bill, Matt, and Stratton-Lake (2005) regarding volunteerism, moral worth can only be applied if the act of volunteering is seen as a duty, yet the motivation to adhere to and enact duty can neither be right or wrong. The latter part of this perception mirrors one of the criticisms for moral worth introduced by David Hume. The Humean criticism of moral worth suggests that one cannot act solely from duty, noting further that one cannot act independently from any desire 'because a desire for X is a necessary condition of being motivated to do X' (Stratton-Lake, 2005:11). Therefore, the desire to volunteer for BES potentially negates moral worth, as the desire is arguably not representative of duty, but of the obtainment of symbolic capital and other intrinsic forms of remuneration. This notion explicitly opposes Bill's claim that the outdoor industry based on the intrinsic moral worth of volunteerism. Moreover, it illustrates that volunteerism is intrinsically enforced by individualised motivations competing for symbolic capital and social hierarchy in the form of professional status, reputation, credibility, and experience. This perception is implicitly supported by BES as they receive numerous applications from volunteers without being required to offer any financial remuneration. However, BES claim to hire individuals demonstrating a sole duty to the participants. Jessica (17.34), discussing leaders morality and motivation, explained:

> I think we're quite upfront about it from the beginning. I don't think people get to us they're going to get paid like, they know they're not going to get paid. So, if they started the conversation, so if they've started that conversation, they're in it for something else, usually.

Thus, if the outdoor industry, or specifically the educational expedition sector, was to become professionalised, would the desire to volunteer decrease? Furthermore, once the field was professionalised, would the competition for symbolic capital decrease? Finally, how would leaders' perceptions of duty change if professionalisation were to be achieved?

Reflexive Account: Dutiful Exchange:

This notion of duty, morality, and volunteerism raises many questions. The perspective of duty throughout this chapter has remained focused on participant/client, peers/colleagues, and organisational/occupational relationships. However, an individual can arguably feel a sense of duty to anything and any situation. If the sense of duty was to volunteerism, then how could morality be questioned? How could professional status be questioned? Surely if an individual deems volunteerism their duty and they desire to fulfil that duty, then the question of moral worth in this context would be moot? On the other hand, if an individual were to feel compelled to volunteer, to feel they 'ought' to volunteer, then their duty would no longer be representative of moral worth, as their desire to act would no longer be based on a sense of duty, but a compulsion. A sense of morality, like symbolic/social capital, is seemingly influenced more by the external than the internal. Regarding professionalisation, how would this influence a sense of duty to public service?

Following the discussion of entry into the outdoor industry, specifically the educational expedition sector, this section analysed morality, deontology, and the participant motivations for entry into the occupational field. The findings here indicated how deontology, morality, and occupational entry affect the motivations of the participants. It illustrated how educational expedition leaders perceive volunteerism and how they weigh the benefits of obtaining symbolic capital against the lack of financial remuneration. However, the implications of reducing BES's symbolic capital and their ability to bestow it have yet to be discussed. Nevertheless, this section indicates how morality, deontology, volunteerism, and entrance into the educational expedition sector affect the professional motivations of the leaders. Further research into symbolic capital and its influence on occupational entry may provide a deeper understanding of the motivations of aspiring/established leaders, which may provide a greater opportunity to improve the desirability and appearance of the educational expedition sector, resulting in the increased entrance and socialisation of new aspiring educational expedition leaders.

4.10. *Professional considerations – Providing a Service:*

One of the most widely accepted principles of professional status is the notion of public service. The idealisation of public service is embedded within the traditionalised processes of professionalism. Although the educational expedition sector arguably provides a service, its status remains that of a vocational occupation, not an established profession. Following this line of inquiry, what services count toward professionalisation? Education, or more specifically teaching, has been awarded the status of profession, yet outdoor education has not been awarded the same recognition. Laura (49.25) explained:

> I think it's about how you sell the expedition side of things as to what you're actually offering. There are different forms of outdoor education, there are certain things within outdoor education where you are teaching a skill. So, you can call up the old classic PowerPoint at the beginning of the session saying that by the end of this you will be able to… There's that element of it where you're teaching an actual skill, but there is also the wider bit of it, which we will give you experiences which will then enable you to, it will help you in terms of how you see life and the way you are with it. It's not sitting there going, we're going to, you're going to come out of this with a certain set of skills. It's a broader brush than that.

Perhaps the apprehension of bestowing professional status unto the outdoor industry, or more specifically the educational expedition sector is its perception of an educational environment. Jessica (03.03) supported this conception:

> And I think tone setting in the environment in which we work is really difficult because it's not a formal educational environment. We're not expecting people to be quite authoritative and structured and, and, but we do need people who can maintain boundaries, both with their colleagues and with the young people that they support on expeditions.

In a similar way, John (09.29) analysed the notion of public service in the context of educational expeditions:

> The bit that I guess is in question is the outdoor engagement, the bit that we need to understand a little bit more is how that professional approach reflects the objective and the outcome from a learning perspective. So, I could provide a professional service, but it might not be an educational service.

Jessica identified a formal educational environment which suggests a traditionalised form of teaching and curriculum, yet Jessica also recognised boundaries which presumably all professionals or practitioners in any occupational field must adhere to. John used the term 'engagement', seemingly in regard to interactions between client/participant, colleague, and practitioner. Perhaps the term 'engagement' utilised here refers to the extent to which a client/participant accepts the service provided as adequate and reflective of what was originally advertised. In this context, the service advertised is educational expeditions. Additionally, John distinguishes between professional service and an educational service. The former suggests a service provided could be professional by nature in regard to what is perceived as professional practice, but differs from the latter, as the service provided may not be educational. Though the two terms identify a provided service, an advertised educational expedition encompassing the terms above would arguably be required to personify both interpretations of service. Furthermore, John (17.52), discussing the notion of public service, explained:

> I think to a large degree, if you want to label it, you could say we're providing a service, I'm not sure that I think about it that way all the time, as a service. I might come back to you on that point with an alternative descriptor as the way I think about it, and I guess that's one of the challenges; in some ways, if you take medicine, or civil engineering, or architecture, or whatever, and you look at those from a professionalism standpoint, you can put a clear service label against that, because there is a whole range of academic support, material surrounding the subject areas they operate in, and over a long period of time, you know, "I'm a doctor and I provide a service to the public".

John's perception of professional service revolves around the notion of academic rigour, which further represents his traditionalised perception of professionalisation. Regardless of his traditionalised inclinations, it is important to note here that John's discussion assumes the outdoor industry, or more specifically the educational expedition sector, lacks academic rigour. Though this assumption may ring true when compared with archetypal, established professions, it does not determine unequivocally that the outdoor industry and/or the educational expedition sector lacks academic rigour or dissemination of knowledge. On the other hand, John's assumption highlights a potential perspective, which may be shared by a generalised population within the outdoor industry/educational expedition sector. If this statement is true, I would therefore again advocate for the improved appearance of the outdoor profession by increasing its accessibility and desirability at an academic level. Nevertheless, John (17.52) noted further:

> It's not something that, within the outdoor industry, that we necessarily focus on, I mean clearly there is more research going on these days than there has been in the past, and more thought going into this, though I don't think we necessarily contribute, to have done enough yet to reach

> this idea that we are providing a service, and again because of the way people may subscribe to that service they don't always see it as a service. If I go to a doctor then I'm going to a doctor for a particular purpose for a function, and I'm very clear. If I sign up to do an outdoor course, or an expedition or trip, I'm possibly not 100% sure as to why I'm doing it.

Although John recognised a small degree of knowledge dissemination, he continued to compare the outdoor industry and/or the educational expedition sector with traditionalised, established professions. The latter part of this statement referred to an inaccurate representation of a service offered/provided by the educational expedition sector to the public. The misrepresentation may have led to some confusion as to what service is being provided. In the same way, one could suggest that if an accurate depiction of the service had been provided by the educational expedition sector, then the title of 'service' could be accurate. On the other hand, defining what may or may not be provided during an educational expedition is arguably difficult, as the interpretations of the lived experiences by the participants and the leaders are individualised. However, the desired outcome in receipt of any service cannot be guaranteed. John (21.16), ending his line of discussion, suggested:

> I think there perhaps is a danger here, again this is the way I'm thinking about this right now, conflicting views between what we consider is professionalism and what is a service.

John's final comment highlights implicit discrepancies between what he considers professional practice in comparison to the service being provided within the outdoor industry. Moreover, it suggests a disparity between the two terms despite the fact that service is used as a criterion, a tool for the bestowment of professional status.

In comparison, Bill (28.20) identifies public service through governmental regulation and financial remuneration:

> So, we've got to have, eventually, it kind of goes back to this, we can only do it with government support in the end. The government can only go, right, if you're going to take kids out, and there are different ways they can do it; you could go right, if you're going to take money for taking kids out, or other people out in the outdoors, you need to have the tickets, you need to belong to an organisation, you need to be accountable.

Bill's statement suggests that if you are being remunerated for your experience, then you enter into an unwritten contract, and are now accountable for the services you provide. In comparison with John's final comment, the practitioner would remain accountable regardless of how professional that service had been. But how do educational expedition leaders assess what is or is not professional service?

This area of discussion was based on the notion of public service as a key indicator of professional status. Analysing the data enabled a comparison between education, educational expeditions, what is deemed a service, and how they interconnect to form professional practice. In addition, the findings suggest that the traditionalised processes of professionalisation remain a steadfast representation of what is deemed professionalism, and that occupation fields are continually compared. The data in this section provides insight into what experienced educational expedition leaders consider to be a professional service within the sector. Further research into services provided and the perception of those services could help the progression and appearance of the educational expedition sector. Investigating how the services provided are perceived by the public, if they are accurately advertised, and how the services rendered represent the sector could provide a greater understanding of what educational expedition leaders deem professional service compared to the public understanding.

4.11. Professional Considerations – Assessing Professionalism:

This section reveals the types of characteristics, experiences, and symbolic capital educational expedition leaders look for in themselves and each other. The professional identities adopted and accepted in the educational expedition sector arguably dictate entrance into professional learning communities. The communities are founded upon individuals who share the same ideals and the same interpretation of professionalism within the sector. However, how professionalism looks, through actions, behaviours and/or practice may still differ. A practitioner from a professional learning community may take an action, and other leaders from different professional learning communities from the same sector may condemn the action as unprofessional. Thus, how can similarities in professionalism be found and generalised within the sector to create a unified definition? Additionally, how do educational expedition leaders assess professionalism in others from different learning communities within the same sector?

Jessica (03.03), discussing BES's form of assessment, explains:

> What we have historically done, in-person assessment, designed to be group assessment, right. And because they give us a means to see how people interact, not just with us, but with other candidates or their peers as they are in in that context. And we're not, because our leaders are multidisciplinary, we're not looking at super technical skills. We're not looking at whether our doctors can do doctoring or whether all climbers can do climbing because they're all there together, and we assess each of those skill sets slightly differently, usually through qualifications and stuff like that.

Jessica (08.04), discussing assessment further:

> So what we're looking for is currency in the award that they already held, which isn't the capacity for us to go back to the beginning and do a whole ML course from the beginning. But you can. You can run, run people through some exercises and see who's rusty, and it's pretty easy to see who's rusty fairly early on in that process, and usually the candidate knows instantly.

It is important to note here that the assessment method Jessica discusses is only representative of BES's processes and not necessarily of the participants. This is important, as the participants may have individualised implicit processes of recognising professionalism. However, Jessica's interpretation of BES's assessments highlights requirements of theory, practice, and currency in both. Additionally, this assessment requires a level of trust between the volunteers and BES; to judge currency, the paid leaders must also be current. However, what if volunteer leaders have the capability to act current, to act as if they share the same ideals as BES, without actually being up to date and in agreement?

Alex (20.44) stated:

> It is quite hard in those assessment type scenarios to wing and fake that stuff. If you've got a certain attitude, in all likelihood, it will come out and that's really a value in that as a method.

The possibility of acting in an effort to gain entrance into BES's professional learning community is not completely eradicated by their assessment methods. The participants have been explicit throughout this discussion when highlighting the desired characteristics, experience, and symbolic capital they require as educational expedition leaders. However, there is no reference to or explicit example of a qualification or assessment which awards/bestows professional status. Jessica (28.05), discussing the desirability and application of such assessment, explains:

> In principle yes, I mean, I started this conversation by being like, if we could objectively assess all of these things that would make my life significantly easier.

The explicit use of the term 'objectively' illustrates the difficulties of assessing professionalism, and arguably any other form of symbolic capital. Meaning, those utilising terms such as 'objective' may find reducing subconscious bias problematic. However, other occupations and/or established professions utilise their own processes for assessing professionalism. In addition, the participants have compared the outdoor industry with other occupational fields in various contexts throughout this discussion, so perhaps similar approaches, processes and/or procedures should be adopted. Having already discussed alternative forms of professional recognition and regulation, I refer to Alex (29.55), who introduced an alternative form:

> So the solution they came up with was a competency-based humanitarian passport. Where in effect, you could store your, your physical qualifications in whatever technical specialisms as well, so that… would go around.

Reflexive Account: Professional Comparison:

Many of the established leaders within this thesis assume the notion of traditionalised professionalisation as the preferred method of professional recognition. However, though advocating for traditionalism in many perceptions illustrated, participants oppose or disagree with many of the traditional processes currently utilised by other established professions: degree versus experience, code of ethics over professional ethics, and professional service versus standard service. There is also uncertainty associated with the current traditionalised processes in place within the sector. The difficulty here seemingly lies with the continual comparison and assessment of the educational expedition sector and the established professions. So, if inconsistency is abundant within the traditionalised processes, and there is a clear desire for alternative processes, then why would a modernised conception be difficult to conform to?

The passport discussed would benchmark technical and practical qualifications while systematically providing an ongoing assessment of the interpersonal skills used in the context of professional practice. This alternative form could be a measure used to regulate and ensure continued professional development and currency in the outdoor industry. This would be separate to the proposed modernised form of regulation discussed at the end of section 4.8 (Professional (Parameters) Experience vs Qualifications/Traditional vs Modern), as it would be completed and used by established professionals, whereas the modernised form of regulation discussed in 4.8 would be completed by students prior to socialisation into a professional learning community. In any case, regardless of a newly developed process for student socialisation and professional regulation, the question still stands: How do you know if someone has been professional or not (Colin, 11.22)? Paradoxically, the inherent judgement required of an assessment would determine if a practitioner is adhering to professional standards within the outdoor industry. Matt (36.06) explained:

> And let's not, let's not lie, I mean, there are deaths on both, I think, don't think BES, they had that one death with the polar bear attack, there might have been some more in the, back in the 50s, and so on. But so, do World Challenge, you get deaths, you know, so the these, these, just part of the business we're in and that, that's it, what they're trying to do is minimise it.

This notion of harm minimisation via the 'professional passport' may arguably be introduced at an undergraduate level, perhaps within the modernised form of regulation and socialisation discussed at the end of section 4.8, which Matt (01.25.14) advocates for:

> That is very exciting. Yeah. So I mean, the idea that the whole lot is all interwoven, instant, you know, and you would have, you would have choices within it, of course you would, you know, if I'm going to do the work, the work experience module, then I'm going to have to do X number of weeks, I'm going to do this after certain exams, or, yeah, just like any degree programme.

There is no indefinite, unconditional, unequivocal process of assessing what is and is not professional. There are, however, interpretations of accepted working standards, deontology, and moral compasses that require an individual to practice in a manner deemed acceptable by the majority. The majority refers to professional learning communities, the public, and the other occupational fields. Therefore, the aim of professional assessment should not be to provide status, reward, and remuneration, but to further minimise the potential for incompetent, inefficient, and negligent practice. The development of a learning model may help minimise undesired practice and begin moving the sector toward modern tactics which aim to prevent incompetent, and unregulated employment.

The findings in this area of discussion clearly illustrate how BES assess desired professional practice in their volunteers. Additionally, it discusses how the desired professional practices affect the individualised professional identities of leaders from multiple professional learning communities within the sector. The analysis found that there is no definite and arguably correct form of professional assessment. As the educational expedition sector is seemingly self-regulating, the forms and processes of assessment are individualised. Therefore, like the definition of professionalism, assessing what is or is not professional is individualised. For example, volunteers deemed professional by BES could be deemed unprofessional by World Challenge. The assessments in place seemingly judge the ideals demonstrated by the volunteers and analyse if those ideals match the organisation's perception of professionalism. This form of assessment is likely in place to ensure the preservation of the organisation's appearance and symbolic capital. Although this describes a form of assessment at a meso-societal level, individual practitioners may also assess professionalism based on what they intrinsically consider professional practice. Therefore, assessing professionalism is arguably rife with biased perceptions of professional practice. However, if the majority have conformed to an established professional practice, then it would be justifiable to assume those practices are a generalised representation of professionalism within the sector. Researching the consensus of professional practice in the educational expedition sector could assist in the development of a modernised definition of professionalism which best represents the occupational field.

Reflexive Account: Covid-19 Restrictions:

Unfortunately, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the observation stage of this thesis was prohibited. Therefore, one of the key sociological paradigms discussed earlier and throughout this thesis (symbolic interactionism) has also been restricted to the analysis of the participant perceptions offered. This theory is typically applied to the analysis of micro-societal interactions investigating relationships among individuals within a society or community. It focuses on the communication of those individuals via language and symbols. This analysis would have been conducted while observing the participants via a lived experience on an educational expedition. This would have provided the opportunity to observe in context the what, how, and why regarding the participant interpretations of professionalism and how it manifested as their professional identities. Although the observations did not take place, observing the lived experiences, professionalism in context, and professional identities within the educational expedition sector still remains pertinent. The discussion below is based on key sociological paradigms, their implications, and the interpretations of the data in context of those paradigms. This discussion is arguably limited, and I would advocate for further research to be conducted through the lens of each paradigm illustrated below.

4.12. *Professional Considerations – Sociological Paradigms:*

Regardless of the purpose of assessment, professionalism in this sector is judged with or without bureaucratic procedures. In the context of BES, the requirement to conform to their organisational professional identity relates to a sociological perception, a traditionalised notion of conflict theory. BES enforces this process by using their own forms of assessment. Schuerkens (2009:113), discussing conflict theory, suggests that changes in social systems are 'explained by contradictions or elements that generate tensions'. Schuerkens goes on to note that the triggers of such conflict arise from a social structure which determines or sanctions norms, as well as a structure controlling and awarding resources such as income, wealth, prestige, and influence. Although this is a meso/macro sociological paradigm, if used in context of an organisational power, it offers an interesting perspective. Liam (12.52):

> And in fact… I remember a few years ago, we were interviewing interns for the office, and we interviewed a girl who was technically brilliant, would have been outstanding. But when we discussed about her application within the office team, she just would not have gone with anybody in the office, and she would have literally caused chaos. She's since gone on to become

> an Operations Director at another expeditions company. But anyway, we did recognise her talent, but we just felt that she couldn't she just would cause chaos in the office. So, there's a value piece there as well. Yeah.

Clearly Liam's recollection of this process shows the controversies associated with the assessment and prerequisites for (re)formation of professional identities. However, the controversy arguably reinforces of BES's prestige. Status and prestige is enforced and reinforced by those seeking to obtain it. All those who seek to obtain symbolic capital in the form of professional status, reputation, or credibility (to name a few of many) may not be successful. The competition for symbolic capital is the very thing which secures its existence. However, some perceive the traditionalised processes of professionalisation, such as obtaining a degree, as a way of unfairly receiving symbolic capital. Derek (54.24) explains:

> I think what we have been seeing with those that have got degree learning before… the police are doing the same at the moment where they want you to do a degree before they go through, and the police officers that we are seeing coming through on the streets at the moment want to be at a higher level, they don't want to start at the bottom, they don't want to start making the tea, sweeping the van, you know. They want to, because they've got that degree, they think they've got that step up, and that's, that's the problem you've got.

Derek's perception is perhaps a consequence of the conflict enforced by the competition between individualised practitioners who have been forced to seek gratification through the obtainment of symbolic capital and social hierarchy as a result of meritocracy. However, symbolic capital also affect organisations at a meso/macro-societal level. For example, Bill (09.16) interpreted the struggle for dominance between associations and organisations in the outdoor industry:

> Right, for years and years the outdoor sectors have had a number of organisations that have tried to bring some continuity and some clarity… You know, every time we invent another organisation that is supposed to represent people in the outdoors we dilute that notion that we are a single entity.

Bill (33.08) highlighted further a relational change at an organisational level:

> Right as soon as we enter the market, I think you're right in what you're inferring, the relationship changes.

Bill (51.36) noted further:

> I think we need to have a discussion, and I think this is very difficult because there are so many different sectors who are saying, we can lead in the outdoors, we are the leading body… No, you're not.

These three statements reiterate the consequences of dominance on social/symbolic order highlighted throughout. However, although the conflict paradigm focuses on the professional/social stratification, the functionalist lens illustrates the purpose and function of stratification, but it does not seek to explain it. In the competition for symbolic capital, the dominance of others functions as a confirmation of social hierarchy. This confirmation acts as an incentive for the continual struggle for symbolic capital. At a meso/macro-societal level, BES with its prestige appears to hold the capability of bestowing symbolic capital, arguably more than other educational expedition providers. It would stand to reason that their continual flow of volunteers relates to this competition. Moreover, the continual flow of volunteers sustains and promotes BES's prestige and other forms of symbolic capital. Consequently, the more symbolic capital an organisation holds, the more dominant it can be within the given market. The competition for symbolic capital at a meso/macro-societal level inevitably influences the interactions at a micro-societal level. Throughout this discussion chapter participants have explicitly discussed their perceptions of professionalism in its entirety, yet most prevalent is the focus on or requirement for interpersonal skills, which sociologically refers to symbolic interactionism.

To reemphasise; Lizzie (07.05):

> I think, and you learn from your peer group is the amount, the amount we're still learning.

Laura (19.37):

> It's having that authority in your sphere of influence and your sphere of expertise.

Jessica (03.03):

> They give us a means to see how people interact, not just with us, but with other candidates or their peers as they are in in that context.

Liam (25.28):

> I think we have to utilise all those different professional backgrounds to produce a leadership team that far outweighs any other expedition, educational expedition, commercial companies, leadership teams.

Bill (19.40):

> So, I mean, professionalism is very difficult to bestow upon yourself, professionalism to a certain degree is bestowed upon you.

Colin (11.22):

> If you want to be a canoe instructor, you're gonna have more tickets than you can, those tickets only show a snapshot of the capability of what that person that can do? Professionalism might help to fill that gap, where it'll show how they can interact on the softer skills.

John (27.03):

> I just need to understand the dynamics of what is going on, so I think that for my point of view, my ability to be professional, or remain professional, requires me to be able to understand individuals, to understand people.

Matt (01.36.21):

> Starting from the really obvious basic, basic things like good time keeping, good communication skills.

The above quotes are drawn from each stage of data collection and display a consensus for the requirement of interpersonal skills and a basic level of emotional intelligence within the educational expedition sector. The interpretation of interactions at a micro-societal level, though clearly influenced by the external, remain the most influential concept within the sector. The inability to eradicate or unify inconsistencies within the educational expedition sector in an effort to create a centralised voice and/or body is arguably a consequence of the contradictory, ever-changing perception of professionalism. Therefore, it is justifiable to assume a generalised consensus of a definition of professionalism in the educational expedition sector, or more generally the outdoor industry, is unachievable. However, a clear and generalised consensus does exist for the requirement for interpersonal skills. Investigating which interpersonal skills are generalised, transferable, and widely accepted could be the key to developing a modernised conception of professionalism. Researching the types of symbolic capital deemed pertinent and most desirable to the educational expedition sector or the outdoor industry in general could shed light on the more influential interpersonal skills. In turn, this would allow for further investigation of professional identity (re)formation. The further examination of those influences may also help refine the teaching of accepted practices and working standards, which could improve the appearance of the outdoor professional. I advocate here that the development and implementation of modernised regulated forms of socialisation and professionalism should be governed by a union. I argue for a union because its sole purpose is to advance the interests of its workers, to quell any stratification or discrimination, and to promote equal opportunities within the occupational field. A union mirrors most perceptions of the participants who support the development of a newer, more systematic process for regulation, and access to professional status. In comparison, associations, unlike unions, are non-profit organisations and are comprised of individuals who have similar occupations. Arguably, they do not hold the necessary prestige, legality, or status to strongly advocate for greater rewards from the government or employers on behalf of their members. Associations, unlike unions, do not hold a legal right to engage in collective bargaining with an employer, but the employer is legally obligated to engage with the union. On the other hand, though charters hold prestige, status, and legislation supported by the government, the standards set by a charter cannot be changed without government permission (Harvey *et al.*,1995). This restriction does not affect a union. Additionally, access to the same rewards associated with chartered status would be unavailable to those without accreditation, while a union which seemingly supports the equality of its members allows open access to its rewards. This directly correlates with Hammer's (2000) list of structural components for a profession ((5) Equivalence of members). Additionally, charters require their members to re-validate their accreditation via systematic examination and the obtainment of a higher education qualification, which may take several years. Though suggesting a union, which requires the legality of registration, it does not compare to the restrictions which are imposed by chartered status, and the prerequisites of a registry can be internally governed. This modernised take on a union would consolidate generalisabilities of professionalism from the varied sectors within the outdoor industry. Moreover, professions such as education, medicine, law, and accountancy all have unions in the U.K., which are readily accessible via a search engine, most prominently the Legal Sectors Union (Law); Unison (Medicine (NHS)); the Financial Services Union (Accountancy); NASUWT (Education (National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers). Consequently, the union, no doubt facing opposition from those opposing regulated unity, would provide solidarity on behalf of the industry perceivably mitigating the majority of inconsistencies. This perception remains conjecture and undoubtedly requires further research.

In conclusion, analysis of the data discussed in this section applies the sociological paradigms illustrated throughout. The explanation and comparison of the data in the context of the paradigms offers insight into the external sociological pressures influencing the practice and development of educational expedition leaders. The data provided highlighted how sociological theories could be used to investigate professionalism and the justification of the application of these theories in this thesis. The implications of sociology, though not explicitly mentioned throughout this discussion, still apply to much of the data presented in each section. The application of symbolic interactionism would have been predominantly used during the observation stage of data collection, but due to the implications of Covid-19, observations could not be conducted. Therefore, symbolic interactionism as a key sociological paradigm has not been fully represented within this discussion. Due to the lack of observation within this thesis, further research into the professional practice of educational expedition leaders through the lens of symbolic interactionism should/could still be conducted for future research.

Reflexive Account: Novicehood at its finest

The following section had been explicitly designed to discuss the influences of the researcher on the participants, the data, and its subsequent analysis. Its design made me think. Reflecting for the sake of reflecting will potentially yield no result, but reflecting with an objective in mind seems to be more productive. Therefore, while considering the content for discussion in this section, my objective was to make explicit the potential biases I may have held during my PhD experience. Doing so is consistent with the axiological stance taken for this thesis. However, it also enabled me to reflect on the limitations of my practice as a researcher; consequently, determining how to combat those limitations during future research has remained a benefit of such a process. The question is, how different would the data be if those limitations had already been addressed?

4.13. *Professional Considerations – Researcher Influence:*

Throughout this thesis, the novice status of the researcher has been explicitly discussed. However, it is imperative to recognise the influences of novicehood on the collected data, its subsequent analysis, and this discussion chapter. During the development of the data transcripts and the subsequent analysis, I identified comments I made which may have led to implicit biases and dictated the trajectory of the conversations. The comments I believe affected the following responses from participants have been labelled 'Researcher Influence' in the transcripts. However, though some comments remain tacit and influential, others are explicit and demonstrate active listening. One of the most common responses I often gave was 'I agree'; numerous quotes and examples could be added here. On the other hand, the comments could be defended as active listening. In other cases, the 'I agree' responses were used as connectives to the next question(s). Regardless, I can assume the agreement(s) remained influential in the following responses and trajectory of the discussions. Similarly, there were opportunities presented by the participant(s) which would have enabled the researcher to conduct the discussions more usefully. For example, Jessica noted (15.02): I feel like I'm talking a lot, I can tell you my opinion, if you would like my opinion? The researcher (15.12) responded with: anyone, that's fine. Analysis of the second focus group shows it was dominated by the opinions of Jessica, Liam, and Alex to a lesser degree. However, the ten-second time delay between question and answer (15.02 – 15.12) was purposeful, as the researcher wanted to allow time for other participants to respond. Conversely, though Jessica's comment provided the researcher an opportunity to change tack, the more implicit voices of Alex, Archie, and Olivia could have been a consequence of the symbolic capital and social status Jessica and Liam held within their professional learning community. The social position of the more dominant participants may have affected others' willingness to respond. Another contributing and potentially detrimental response(s) revolved around the researcher's preparedness. For example, while conversing with Bill, the researcher (44.10) mentioned:

> I'm trying my hardest to avoid repeating the answer, but, it's not in an expedition setting, not in the context of an expedition, but, perhaps in the context of training, or receiving training from your colleagues.

The researcher had been concerned about the repetition of the question and highlighted its difference in context. The main concern was the diminishing list of questions designed prior to the discussion. Recognising that a desirable length for a semi-structured interview(s) and focus group(s) is arguably sixty minutes, the researcher had discussed most of the predesigned questions. Asking impromptu questions had not been considered, yet the conversations may have benefited more from questions based on participant responses. In addition, there were moments prior to the beginning of the recording whereby the participant and researcher began to discuss the topics which may have been beneficial to this discussion chapter. However, those initial conversations prior to the recordings remain inadmissible. The researcher had recognised this limitation from one of the earlier data collection phases; consequently, if it happened again the researcher revisited the topic during the recording. For example, during the interview with Matt, the researcher (01.13.17) explained:

> I mentioned before the recording, before we are, you know, before we spoke is that I realised I took myself out of academia. Yeah. And the generation… Yeah, and realised that actually, I've lost it, you know, another sort of lost the motivation to take part even though I wanted some experience.

Though no question is evident in this quote, it stood as a connective response to the following questions and highlighted the topic's initial introduction prior to the recording. Moreover, the questions originally designed for the data collection stages were not discussed or reviewed with anyone but the researcher. Consequently, when some of the questions were posed, they were not received as originally intended. For example, when the researcher (44.18) asked:

> I mean, it is a difficult question, it's almost a loaded question. Mainly, because the code of ethics is seen as a standard of which by you work, you know. And something that you would adhere to especially if you are working for an organisation or an occupation, that you don't necessarily… It's not like you ignore it, you have to abide by that, that standard, and I'm just wondering whether BES, even though you discuss the hires, if its rooted within the code of ethics you guys abide by?

The question received a response from Jessica (44.55): 'I'm not sure I understand the question, I'm really sorry!' The question asked was not clear and remained confusing. In addition to the confusing delivery of some questions, the original questions designed for each stage of data collection had also received little review. Consequently, during the second focus group, the researcher (00.57) realised the nature of some of the questions and felt obliged to address them with the participants:

> Some of the questions are a little bit broad, broader than I than I originally anticipated, but I think we, it sort of gives a nice discussion point.

Furthermore, due to the broader nature of some questions, the researcher (42.49) also became disoriented: ‘Do you think that, I know we touched on it before, sorry I was just double checking what we’d already covered…’. Consequently, to reaffirm the perception of an experienced researcher, and potentially overshadow the apparent inexperience in some questions, the researcher (46.27) also responded zealously to provide a deeper level of discussion: ‘then I would argue'. This response demonstrates both benefits and limitations.

There are limitations to the ability of a novice researcher. On the other hand, some responses made by the researcher, though novice in delivery, may have held implicit benefits. For example, during the first focus group, the researcher (16.37) stated:

> Yeah, I agree. I think if we’re going off of Liam and Lizzie again… I think it’s going off of what you’ve just said, and it’s about personal identity and professional, your own professional identity compared to that of the profession that you buy into, or the occupation that you’re trying to buy into.

Explicitly responding to the participants demonstrates active listening and assisted me in building a rapport. Similarly, mentioning participants by name also implicitly highlighted participants who had not yet spoken or had remained withdrawn from the discussion. Likewise, mentioning participants by name enabled the researcher (26.17) to draw the focus of the discussion back to a specific topic:

> Okay. So, if we refer back to yourself again, John, if we… When do you, on expeditions or during activities, leading a group or individuals, when do you feel that it is most difficult to remain professional using your own notion of professionalism?

Due to the nature of the discussions, topics varied dependent on the perspectives they were viewed from. For example, Bill (51.36) had suggested:

> The idea that we sit down and ask what is good now, what’s, where do we want to be, is very difficult for a disparate, fragmented sector; it’s not an industry, don’t keep calling it an industry.

This comment was made in reference to the researcher's use of the terms 'sector' and 'industry' made prior to the recording. Unsure if Bill's preference between the two terms were representative of the wider population, the researcher (35.18) asked focus group two:

> I used to say industry all the time, but apparently, we don't produce anything as an industry, unless you start looking at things that we produce, like physically produce like carabiners and ropes and stuff.

This comment does not serve as an indication for the redevelopment of questions but does however provide an example of topics which were raised in one discussion and posed as a question in another. This enabled the researcher to delve deeper into the topic and analyse any correlation between the participants' answers.

The researcher's involvement may have governed the tone and trajectory of some topics discussed during the data collection stages. However, the design of the data collection stages was based on an open platform of discussion. Therefore, though some questions asked, comments made, and answers given by the researcher could have influenced the participant responses, some of the researcher involvement is defensible. This final section analysed the influences the researcher may have had on the participants and the data during the data collection stages. Though predominantly a reflective discussion, it illustrates the novicehood of some approaches taken and the growth of the researcher during the data collection and its subsequent analysis. Similarly, it illustrates the trajectory of the discussions, questions, responses, and the reasoning behind them.

4.14. Conclusion:

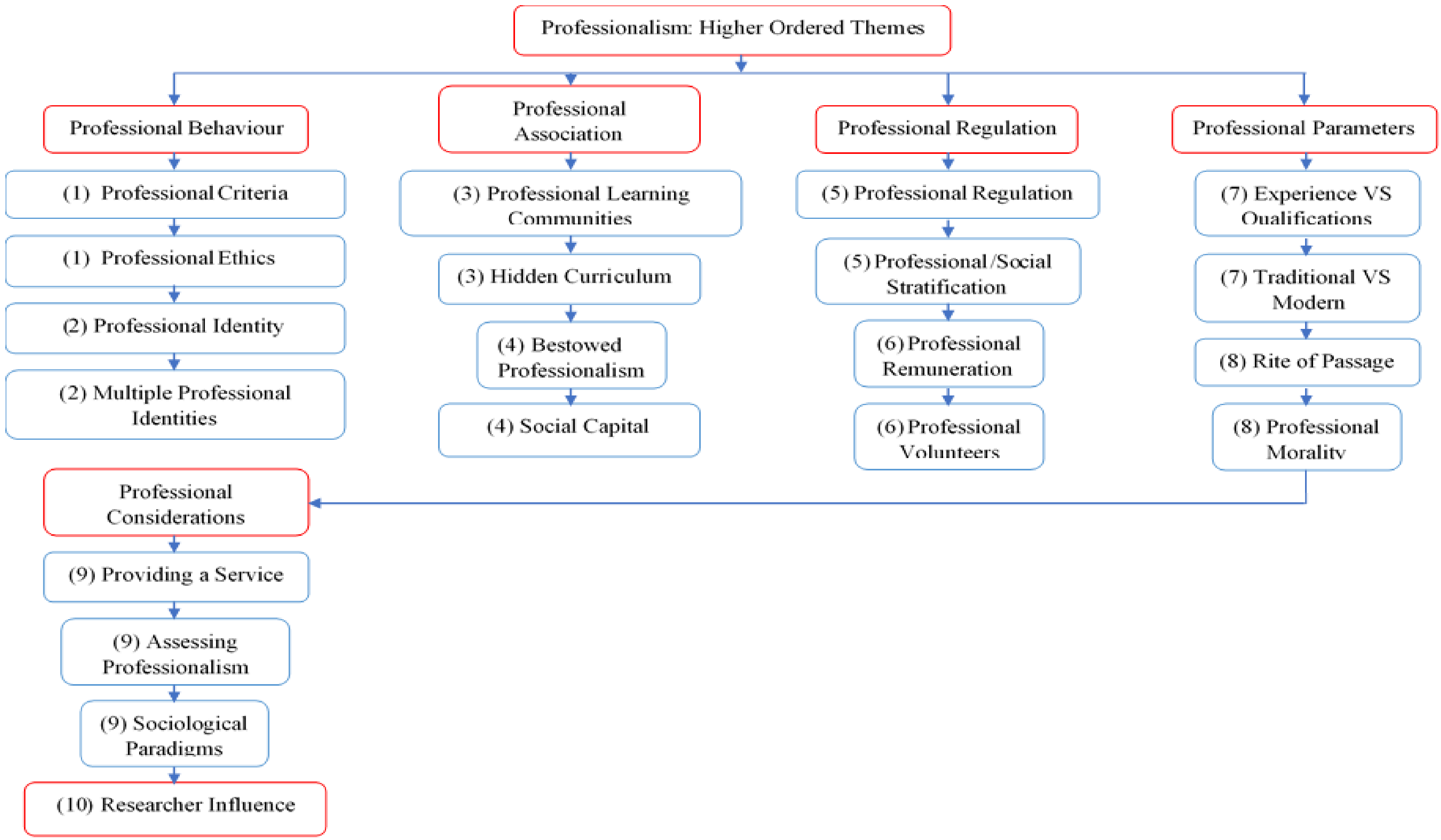
Throughout this chapter the participant voice remained at the centre. The chapter was designed to present the findings while discussing the participant interpretations and perceptions and comparing them with theories underpinning each of the higher-order themes. Figure Seven illustrates the higher-order themes and the order in which they were discussed, providing a structure for this chapter.

Although each numbered point was considered a higher-order theme, they have been categorised further in an effort to organise the selected data. I was unsure if twenty higher-order themes were too many or too few. Therefore, the themes with the same number were considered to correlate with each other, and as such they were discussed together in numerical order. The numerical order does not illustrate which theme I deem most important, but it is important to note here many of the themes highlighted above have been discussed within the literature review. On the other hand, the literature review was not informed or led by the newly collected data. Finally, I recognise that each theme identified can be considered an area of investigation within its own right, as such they have been discussed solely based on and led by the data collected. This is to ensure that the discussion remained concise.

Reflexive Account: Too Many Themes?

One of the more strenuous tasks I had faced as a novice researcher was deciphering what is and is not a higher-order theme. As you can see below in Figure Seven, a lot of the data collected and analysed seemed highly relevant. At first, I did not understand how each theme could be considered higher, or lower ordered, and then I noticed a pattern. Each of these themes interconnect and inform an understanding of what educational expedition leaders perceive to be professionalism within the educational expedition sector.

Figure Seven: Professionalism, Higher-Order Themes



This chapter explicitly discussed much of the theory illustrated throughout. It was led by and utilised participant perceptions in consideration of those theories. In adherence with the aims and objectives of this thesis, the data collected and analysed will be used in the following chapter, 'Learning Model: The Outdoor Professional', to assist and inform the development of a learning model.

Reflexive Account: The Next Step:

One of the main difficulties faced during the analysis and discussion of the collected data was identifying how it will help inform a learning model. Interpreting, analysing, and discussing participant perceptions is arguably the easiest part; identifying how the data informs a coherent model seemed daunting. Designing the discussion chapter allowed me to prepare to write the following chapter. Analysing each discussion sector provides the opportunity to identify the key contributing factors among the higher-order themes discussed. This process allows for the further and final categorisation of the data, ultimately making the development of the learning model more concise.

5. Learning Model: The Outdoor Professional

5.1. *Introduction:*

This chapter will examine the most prominent theories and discussions illustrated throughout the thesis. In adherence to the axiology, a learning model will be developed based on that examination. A generalised, all-encompassing definition of professionalism will be avoided. Additionally, though the model will convey its desirability, a modernised definition of professionalism specific to the educational expedition sector will also be avoided. This decision is based on the premise that though the data collected illustrates participant interpretations of professionalism, the sample size is arguably too small to represent an entire sector's perception of a contested concept. Additionally, the inconsistencies and multi-faceted nature of professionalism remains indisputable regardless of the context. Therefore, the learning model will cover key criteria identified by a participant consensus. Although it will not define professionalism, it will apply relevant criteria to an accessible learning model design. This learning model can be used as a tool to assist in the (re)formation of professional identities for aspiring educational expedition leaders.

Reflexive Account: Generalisability:

The conscious decision not to develop a definition derives from the limitations of this research project. Due to the nature of the project and the sample size, it would be naïve to assume the perceptions outlined by the participants are representative of the entire sector. Though the project advocates for a modernised definition and processes for professional recognition, this desire may only be felt by the participants within this study. Therefore, though a definition could be gleaned from the data collected, I believed the best course of action is to use attributes of participant perceptions as the foundation for the learning model.

This learning model refers to the requirements and expectations enforced by the educational expedition sector as illustrated within the previous chapter. As per the discussion, the data highlight a perception by the participants that universities inadequately equip aspiring leaders with the experiences necessary for expedition leader deployment. Assuming this is a generalised consensus of the outdoor undergraduate courses, the learning model may begin to improve this consensus by assisting aspiring educational expedition leaders at university. It will illustrate the criteria expected by established leaders represented in this study and make explicit the desired attributes of an educational expedition leader. However, this is not to suggest the learning model can only be utilised by outdoor undergraduate students working to become educational expedition leaders; its design remains accessible and transferable to other prospective leaders.

Although identified as a learning model, its fundamental design will be founded on an established curriculum model. This illustrates the application of the researcher's knowledge and experiences derivative of being a lecturer, and the achievement of a higher education post-graduate certificate of education (PGCE), an approach which further highlights the adherence to the aims and objectives of this study. Finally, the application of this learning model may begin to modernise the perception of professionalism in the educational expedition sector. It will reflect the contemporary interpretations of professionalism taken from key stakeholders within the sector. It will therefore serve as the first step toward improving the sector's desirability to newer generations of aspiring educational expedition leaders at university.

5.2. The Design:

The development of the learning model is inspired by the spiral curriculum design. The spiral curriculum design refers to a process of sequential learning created by Jerome Bruner. Its fundamental premise is its increase in complexity after each consecutive completion of a topic (Clark, 2010). Defined, the spiral curriculum requires students to revisit a topic, theme, or subject several times throughout their schooling. The complexity of the topic is increased with each visit to ensure the new learning is connected to the old (Gibbs, 2014:42). Simply, the design is cyclical compared to other linear or nonlinear approaches. The application of this design does not endeavour to increase in complexity in the same manner associated with the typical curriculum subjects, but to revisit themes for the continued professional development of the individual. However, one of the limitations associated with the spiral curriculum design refers to its continual revisitation; where does a learner stop learning? (Coelho and Moles, 2016). In contrast, its application to the continual development of professional identities exemplifies the notion of extended learning encountered within the literature review (Furlong *et al.*, 2000; Millerson, 1964; Freidson, 1988). Reiterating Beijaard *et al.*, (2004) and Kerby (1991) who suggest that professional identities undergo an ongoing process of interpretation and re-interpretation of experiences. Therefore, though its cyclical design illustrates inherent limitations in regard to traditional curriculum subjects, its application in the context of professionalism remains justified.

Reflexive Account: Increase in Complexity

The spiral curriculum design had been chosen instead of any other curriculum model due to its increasing complexity and opportunities for deeper learning. As the learning model is aimed at undergraduate students, the increase in complexity was considered to work alongside the autonomous learning sought after at university. Usually, this model is utilised by teachers, educators, lecturers, etc., to help formulate constructive alignment for their student's education. However, the application here relies upon the motivations of the students to take responsibility for their own professional identity (re)formation.

Similarly, Ireland and Mouthaan (2020) discuss a number of limitations regarding the traditionalised, typical uses of the spiral curriculum. These limitations refer to the unfair repetition of subjects imposed on students who have already mastered the concepts. Meaning, continued repetition of subjects could be unneeded if the principles have already been grasped, and it would be unnecessary to require students to continually revisit that subject. Another illustrates that the time allotted to each stage remains the same regardless of the complexity, a limitation which imposes a ripple effect on individuals who may struggle with the increasing complexities when restricted by time. However, these limitations emerge when the design is applied to traditional curriculum subjects. Unlike a restricted curriculum, this learning model does not exist to be imposed upon an individual but to be used as a tool at their discretion. These limitations are moot in the context of its application within this thesis. The individual dictates the model's use and therefore the time and level of mastery. Mastering the notion of professionalism is not implied as its intended use and remains highly unlikely. The revisitation of each stage while systematically increasing learning is the key principle being applied. Moreover, the terminology associated with its typical application implies it is grounded and restricted by a curriculum. However, in this context, the use of the term curriculum is null, as it is not being imposed by an external presence or course of study. In a similar way, 'curriculum' implies an outcome-based learning approach, and in the context of professional identity (re)formation, this usage could be contested. An outcome-based approach suggests there are pre-planned learning objectives (Ireland and Mouthaan, 2020); however, professionalism has been identified as an individualised concept. Therefore, the outcome of this spiral learning model will be a subjective interpretation and development of the self. An approach which focuses on the lived experiences of the self means the outcome cannot be pre-planned, as the learning model cannot assume how each individual will use it. There are too many variables to consider before prescribing a singular outcome in the context of professionalism.

Another key benefit of the spiral model relies on the individual's motivation to enact its use (Coelho and Moles, 2016). Micu (2017) discusses the importance of the individual's active participation and responsibility in the learning process. A learning model designed for university students must also be challenging enough in order to tempt them into the following stage of its use (Micu, 2017). However, identifying challenges at each stage may require the individual to reflect on their own progress (Baume, 2017). As the learning model is not imposed nor externally assessed, a level of self-regulation is required at each stage. Nevertheless, reflection at each stage of the process illustrates further the individualised nature of the model. The spiral design ensures the individuals will have time to maintain their own pace, allowing them to apply meaning to what they have learnt (Micu, 2017). Woodward (2019) and Harden (1999) identify the benefits of the spiral design within higher education, suggesting that progressive revisitation enables concepts acquired in the earlier phases to be given practical application as the individual progresses, which is particularly relevant to a vocational education/occupation (Cornford, 1997) such as educational expedition leadership.

Similarly, Woodward (2019) noted further that the spiral design, especially in higher education, provides the capacity for critical evaluation of the subject. This mirrors the introductory chapter, which suggested that professionalism can be taught as a standalone subject, much like philosophy, sociology, and anthropology. Harden's (1999) application of the spiral design within medicine and highlighting its uses in fields from optometry to arithmetic and from postgraduate studies to nursery education suggests it is reasonable to assume its application as a learning model for professionalism. Efland (2002) as well as Ireland and Mouthaan (2020) discuss how the spiral design, though cognitivist by nature and typically applied in positivist studies (STEM), can provide a structured approach to social sciences and social inquiry. One of the pivotal functions of the spiral design refers to the capability to instil and foster meaningful, real-world learning and problem solving (Cornford, 1997). Cornford (1997) discusses the spiral design in the context of real-world skilled occupations, explaining how they too involve the gradual progression from basic skills. Coelho and Moles (2016:165) explicitly recognise:

> The co-construction of knowledge between novices and experts during revisiting topics in a spiral curriculum leads to the socialisation into a profession, which was noted in the last century, as being crucial for adult learning.

This statement justifies the application of a spiral design for this learning model. This design has the capability to adapt with the (re)formation of professional identities. Micu (2017) discusses this adaptability, noting how individuals readjust in terms of comprehension, abilities, and way of being, and that spiral learning is a viable solution in the quest for profound learning. Having explicitly illustrated the intentions of this learning model, the account and promotion of individualistic interpretations of the professional self mirrors Micu's (2017) perceptions further. Micu (2017:223) explains:

> This way of constructing learning, as well as shaping teaching, is based on constant preoccupation for the transformative process and the idea that the knowledge, the skills and the attitudes of people are adaptable and offer them countless possibilities of development. It also implies persistent return to a subject of interest and with each stop upon it, its continuous progress due to a new power of scrutiny, a new way of thinking, a new self.

In the context of professionalism, the (re)formation of a professional identity is not too dissimilar to the development of the self.

5.3.<u>The Learning Model – 'SEPTR':</u>

This section will apply the data discussed in the previous chapter to the spiral design. It will illustrate how the data has informed the learning model, its function, and its practical application. This learning model, though founded in theory, will be data-informed and will therefore be representative of the consensuses illustrated by the participants.

Firstly, it is important to note here that the spiral design is typically represented in the literature as a ribbon turning upwards in a cyclical pattern. However, in this study the spiral design will be represented via two concentric circles. Each stage represented requires continual revisitation and increased learning, in line with the original theoretical premise. (See Figure Eight for a visual representation. Five umbrella terms have been identified to represent the participant perceptions of professionalism within the educational expedition sector:

Socialisation, Experience, Practice, Theory, and Reflection. These terms represent each stage within the learning model. Subsequently, the learning model will be called SEPTR. It is important to note here that each SEPTR stage can be entered at any point, and is not confined to, or restricted by a specific order. Each stage will be discussed independently.

Reflexive Account: Model Development:

One of the most difficult aspects of writing this thesis has been the development of this learning model. I have tried to ensure it remains applicable yet accessible like other models I reviewed for inspiration. Ensuring that it remains founded on the theory represented within this thesis yet informed by the perceptions of the participants was a process of realisation for me. The other models reviewed for inspiration were seemingly easy to apply in theory and practice, as I have used some of them as growing academic, and I wanted to develop a model which could also be easily applied in both theory and practice. However, the SEPTR model has only been represented here in theory; its application in practice has yet to be researched.

5.3.1. Socialisation:

Research participants explicitly highlighted multiple attributes, traits, characteristics, and behavioural terms that implied the requirement of interpersonal skills within the educational expedition sector. Viviers (2016) suggests that in the 21st century interpersonal skills have gained ever-increasing emphasis in the workplace, as has the role of education in developing them. The participant perceptions support literature from multiple occupational fields; though not explicit in their inferences, the requirement of interpersonal skills illustrates a correlation with career success. This notion is mirrored by Gammie *et al.,* (2002) and Viviers (2016), who recognise that interpersonal skills have the potential to increase success within an occupational field. Similarly, Schulz (2008) explains the importance of proficiency in these skills, recognising them as a tool to achieve a competitive edge within the job market. The connection between these skills and symbolic capital as a means to achieving social and occupational hierarchy is not a new concept (Kantrowitz, 2005). The participants' emphasis on interpersonal skills illustrates their importance within a seemingly competitive occupational field and reflects their requirement as a means for socialisation. Participants, referring to outdoor university undergraduates, presented an uncertainty regarding a lack of preparedness on the undergraduates' part. Though this uncertainty partly referred to undergraduate experience, much of the terminology used had arguably inferred a lack of interpersonal ability. Uncertainty regarding undergraduates and their achievement of interpersonal ability has been illustrated in the literature from established professions like accountancy (Barac, 2009; Sin *et al.*, 2012; Viviers, 2016; Van der Merwe, 2013). Therefore, adhering to the premise that a modernised perception of professionalism should be rooted in the traditional, SEPTR encompasses professional criteria outlined by both participants and established professions.

The sociological implications of interpersonal skills reflect professionalism as a socially situated and contextualised practice, one conducted by, for, and with people (Trede and McEwen, 2012). Trede and McEwen (2012) explain further that professions exist within sociological fields; these fields are spaces of social interactions. As such, the development of interpersonal skills has the capability to inform individual professional identities. Meaning, the more adept and habituated one is with interpersonal interactions in a sociological field, the more influence it will have on a (re)interpreted professional identity. Additionally, how one adopts, and manifests habituated sociological norms will in turn influence interpersonal responses and social hierarchy. This further supports the influences of externally governed symbolic capital, and bestowed status on a (re)interpreted professional identity. It illustrates how interpersonal reactions in a sociological field subconsciously governs the development of a professional identity. Emphasis on the requirement of these skills within the educational expedition sector imposes an externalised pressure to adhere to certain social pressures. Cornelissen and Van Wyk (2007) explain professional socialisation as a process of becoming, which refers to students' identifying attributes best associated with the ideal professional, followed by an attempt to model themselves after the ideal. Furthermore, Trede and McEwen (2012) argue that higher education institutions need to produce conscious professionals who are more likely to construct appropriate professional identities. Therefore, the participants saw a need for interpersonal skills within the educational expedition sector, which in association with the sociological nature of the professions justifies the application of socialisation within a learning model. The learning model assists the development of aspiring educational expedition leaders' professional identities while systematically moving towards the unveiling of the hidden curriculum within the outdoor industry. Specifically, the spiral design of SEPTR adheres to professional socialisation theory. Ajjawi and Higgs (2008) explain professional socialisation as an ongoing development of individuals through interaction with their environment and environmental situations; it is a learning journey. A similar interpretation is defined by Trede and McEwen (2012:12):

> Professional identity formation does not end with graduation. A professional identity changes over time, as people mature as a practitioner and change their positions within and outside of the field of practice.

Due to the sociological nature of interpersonal skills, they will undoubtably be developed through each stage as the individual matures as a practitioner. However, the frequent reference to interpersonal ability by the participants highlighted its importance. Positioning socialisation and interpersonal skills as its own segment ensures the students of the model specifically focus on interaction while systematically immersing themselves within the industry's/sector's culture.

The interpersonal skills participants need are identified as: communication, teamwork, empathy, expedition experience, management experience, and leadership experience. This initial list leads into the deeper, more intricate soft skills required for professional socialisation, such as: currency, competence, credibility, conduct, ethics, morality, duty, responsibility, integrity, accountability, and trustworthiness. All of these terms noted by the participants are found in the previous chapter: section 4.2, list one: professional behaviour. The participants' list of interpersonal skills support findings from the literature; Viviers *et al.,* (2016:369) provide a similar list. Additionally, the list illustrated here further justifies its application within SEPTR, as it explicitly demonstrates an increase in complexity and clear implications of the (re)formation of professional identities. How does an undergraduate begin to develop this list of interpersonal skills and initiate the process of professional socialisation? The participants advocate for active engagement in the form of networking within the educational expedition sector. Therefore, the socialisation stage of SEPTR involves full immersion within the industry. Full immersion is achieved by attending and/or participating in networking events such as, seminars, career fairs, conferences, trade shows, workshops, and online web-fairs.

However, the spiral design of SEPTR requires an increase in complexity. The increase in complexity in the socialisation stage refers to increased participation and social interaction with each successive encounter. Although the implementation of SEPTR is at the discretion of the individual, and they interpret socialisation, I suggest the increase corresponds to how one participates and the level of participation. Utilising theory applied within the methodological chapter, the role of the researcher as observer aptly suits this context. For example, the level of participation and social interaction within the socialisation stage increases in complexity, spanning from complete observer to complete participant (Baker, 2006). Complete observer in the context of this stage, implies passive participation; the individual is an unobtrusive observer (Gorman *et al.,* 2005), remaining completely detached from the event(s), listening only and appearing as a member of an audience. The following increase by this logic is the observer-as-participant. In the socialisation stage, it requires the individual to advance their level of participation and social interactions. This increase would involve the individual conducting short one-off interactions, perhaps in the form of questions and/or answers. This level allows the individual to immerse themselves in social settings and develop insight into others' interactions and the industry (Reeves *et al.,* 2008). The next increase refers to the participant-as-observer, which in SEPTR refers to the continual involvement of the individual. This takes the form of active participation in discussions, providing their own theories, arguments, and perceptions while systematically developing their own understanding. Finally, the complete participant refers to the active delivery of their own segment within a conference, workshop, seminar etc. The fundamental premise of levels of participation can be adapted to the levels of increased socialisation in the context of this learning model.

How the individual interprets the change in complexity is dependent upon what they deem complex regarding social interaction and participation. Therefore, illustrating what the researcher considers an increase in complexity would not apply, as the SEPTR model is designed to be highly individualised and subjective in its application. The increase of participation outlined above merely serves as a guide to illustrate how the increase of socialisation can be represented at this stage of the model. In addition, it is important to note here that at the end of each stage, reflection is required. Finlay (2008) suggests that reflective practice is often seen as the bedrock of professional identity, which remains highly applicable to this model. How the individual reflects is at their own discretion. Therefore, the model will not provide guidance on how to reflect or what to reflect on; it merely indicates that a form of reflection on their current progress is required to take place prior to the following stage. This stance mirrors a reflection-on-action approach, which requires the individual to 'review, describe, analyse and evaluate their past practice with a view to gaining insight to improve future practice' (Finlay, 2008:3). Reflection at the end of each stage aims to assist in the development of undergraduates' critical thinking, allowing them to provide meaning to what they have learnt in each stage while identifying and challenging their own assumptions (Finlay, 2008:5). Reflection at each stage adheres to the spiral curriculum design and its original theory.

Reflexive Account: Socialisation:

Trying to decipher how socialisation could be implemented to assist the (re)formation of professional identities remained a difficult pursuit. However, after reflecting upon my time as an undergraduate, I realised certain events were available to me, including networking opportunities like those outlined by the participants. Remembering the opportunities and attending them are two separate principles. Although I advocate here for undergraduates to network, and though SEPTR features an individualised application, motivating students to attend these networking events may be an implicit barrier for socialisation. Nevertheless, if undergraduates were to identify the SEPTR model as an acceptable tool representing professional practices outlined by the participants, perhaps their motivation would increase knowing what is expected of them by established educational expedition leaders.

5.3.2. Experience:

Another important factor necessitated by the participants was experience. The participants expressed a level of uncertainty regarding the value of, and preparedness instilled by, outdoor undergraduate degree courses. Additionally, the participants referred to the necessary experience required to remain current and competent in the sector regardless of higher education. This notion supports the transferability of this learning model. Consequently, this section concentrates solely on experiential learning/education. Defined by Lewis and Williams (1994:5), experiential learning is a process which 'immerses adult learners in an experience and then encourages reflection about the experience to develop new skills, new attitudes, or new ways of thinking'. This process appears to be most effective in developing skills that employers seek, such as communication skills, the ability to work in teams, and workplace literacy (Lewis and Williams, 1994). Though here I highlight its application within the SEPTR model, experiential learning is an area of investigation within its own right.

Therefore, due to the parameters of this thesis, in the model it merely applies its simplest form, learning by doing.

Indicated by the participants as one of the cornerstones of the educational expedition sector and highlighted here as aptly suited as the next progression from the socialisation phase, the experience stage is designed solely for the obtainment of personal experiences, as well as field-based activities like internships and volunteering. In addition to obtaining industry/sector specific experiences, it requires the participator to utilise the technical/practical skills necessary to function in the educational expedition sector. The increase in complexity for this stage is simply the increase in experiences. In order to apply meaning and structure to those experiences, one of the most cited experiential learning models, Kolb's 1984 (Kolb, 2014; Lewis and Williams, 1994; McCarthy, 2010; Sharlanova, 2004) will be presented within this stage. Simply, Kolb's model contains four components: Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualisation, and Active Experimenting (Sharlanova, 2004). Although illustrated as a list, Kolb's cycle can be entered at any point (Sharlanova, 2004). Beginning with concrete experience, in the context of SEPTR this step requires the individual to actively engage in the outdoors, to immerse themselves in concrete reality (McCarthy, 2010). This might take place via internships, volunteerism, and/or personal practice. The reflective observation stage requires the individual to reflect on those lived experiences. This reflection can be personal or relate to practice observed (McCarthy: 2010). The successive stage, abstract conceptualisation, requires the individual to develop generalisations or principles that integrate their observations into theories (Lewis and Williams, 1994). These generalisations can be utilised as guides to engage in further action. Finally, active experimentation requires the individual to test what they have learned in other, more complex situations (Lewis and Williams, 1994). Kolb's model contributes to the experience stage of SEPTR. It illustrates and provides structure to the experiences required within the educational expedition sector. Additionally, it highlights the increase in complexity adhering to SEPTR's design. Though a model in its own right, its application in SEPTR provides clarity for what is required of the learner during the experience stage.

However, like the socialisation stage, the researcher cannot assume what experiences are challenging for the individual. The increase in complexity refers to the completion of multiple, more challenging experiences, but how this is interpreted by the participator is reliant upon what they deem as more challenging experiences. This stage requires the student to actively engage in the field and reflect upon those experiences. Actively engaging in these experiences and adhering to the industrywide standards enable the participants to become more proficient in their practices. The working standards or accepted practices within the educational expedition sector require the individual to build a record of those experiences. This record will assist in the following stage in the SEPTR model.

5.3.3. <u>Practice:</u>

This stage of SEPTR requires the participant to practice specific skills and techniques and ultimately enact their position as an aspiring educational expedition leader. The study participants highlighted an unwritten consensus regarding the necessary practical/technical skills required to perform as educational expedition leaders. This consensus is ultimately endorsed by the majority of the educational expedition sector and remains a widely accepted form of self-regulation. Therefore, this section concentrates on the development of technical/practical skills, while systematically applying what the individual has learned from the previous stages. Comparatively, the previous stage concentrates on obtaining experience, whereas this stage focuses on the controlled process of consolidating what has been learned from those experiences. The process of practice relies entirely upon what the participant deems necessary to practice. Referring back to the record of experiences and evaluating what needs practice is individualised. However, the participants in this thesis referred to the achievement of NGB qualifications. Therefore, though this stage of SEPTR refers to the consolidation and development of skills, this stage should be seen as an opportunity for the practice and attainment of vocational qualifications. Like the previous two stages, a pre-existing model and/or theoretical structure will be applied here; individuals may be at different levels and may need to focus on different practices. Applying a model or theoretical structure to determine what should be practiced would be ineffective. Therefore, the continuation of NGB achievement should guide this practice. However, a structure to assist in the development of achievable goals can contribute to guiding practice to a specific end. Simply, the application of SMART targets, or similar goal-setting theoretical structures, can be used here (Maxwell *et al.*, 2015). SMART stand for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-based (Day and Tosey, 2011). Day and Tosey (2011) illustrated an advantage of SMART targets in reference to the attainment of longer-term goals. In the context of SEPTR, a model based on repetition and deeper learning, coupled with the (re)interpretation of professional identities, SMART targets can guide individualised practice. Similarly, Maxwell *et al.*, (2015) illustrate that a major advantage of SMART targets is the ability to measure achievement. Comparatively, achieving NGBs in this stage can also be considered one measurement of successful practice.

The increase in complexity in this phase relates to the reflections and experiences gained from the previous stage. Simply, the more experiences are obtained, the more practice consolidation and NGB attainment should be sought. After the next consecutive encounter, the more advanced the practices and SMART targets should become.

5.3.4. Theory:

This stage of SEPTR refers to the attainment and development of academic rigour. Although the participants revealed apprehensions regarding the value of university experiences, the acknowledgement of the theory obtained by the students was not questioned. However, it was explicitly discussed in relation to time management at university. It was noted by the participants (Matt in particular) the requirement of both experience and theoretical knowledge to achieve socialisation into the field. Similarly, the participants all referred to their personal processes of continued professional development, which necessitated an understanding of industry/sector-specific theory. Additionally, as illustrated throughout the previous chapters, the traditionalised processes of professionalism require a form of academic rigour. Therefore, this stage represents the acknowledged value of outdoor undergraduate degrees in accordance with the traditionalised processes of professional recognition. Unlike the other stages of SEPTR, a theoretical model and/or structure will not be applied here. In the context of university degrees, this stage simply refers to undergraduates and their continued professional development. This continued professional development in the context of theory requires the individual to remain updated or current. Participants suggested continued reading of industry/sector specific magazines, books, and journal articles. In the context of SEPTR, this would occur in addition to the achievement of HE qualifications. However, adhering to the accessibility of this learning model, the continued professional development can still be achieved through independent, autonomous learning outside of HE. Showing how an individual has obtained some form of academic rigour without attending HE has yet to be recognised, and this gap illustrates one of the key themes discussed within the previous chapter.

Nevertheless, continued professional development, currency, and accepted professional practice outlined by the participants require practitioners to remain updated regardless of HE qualifications.

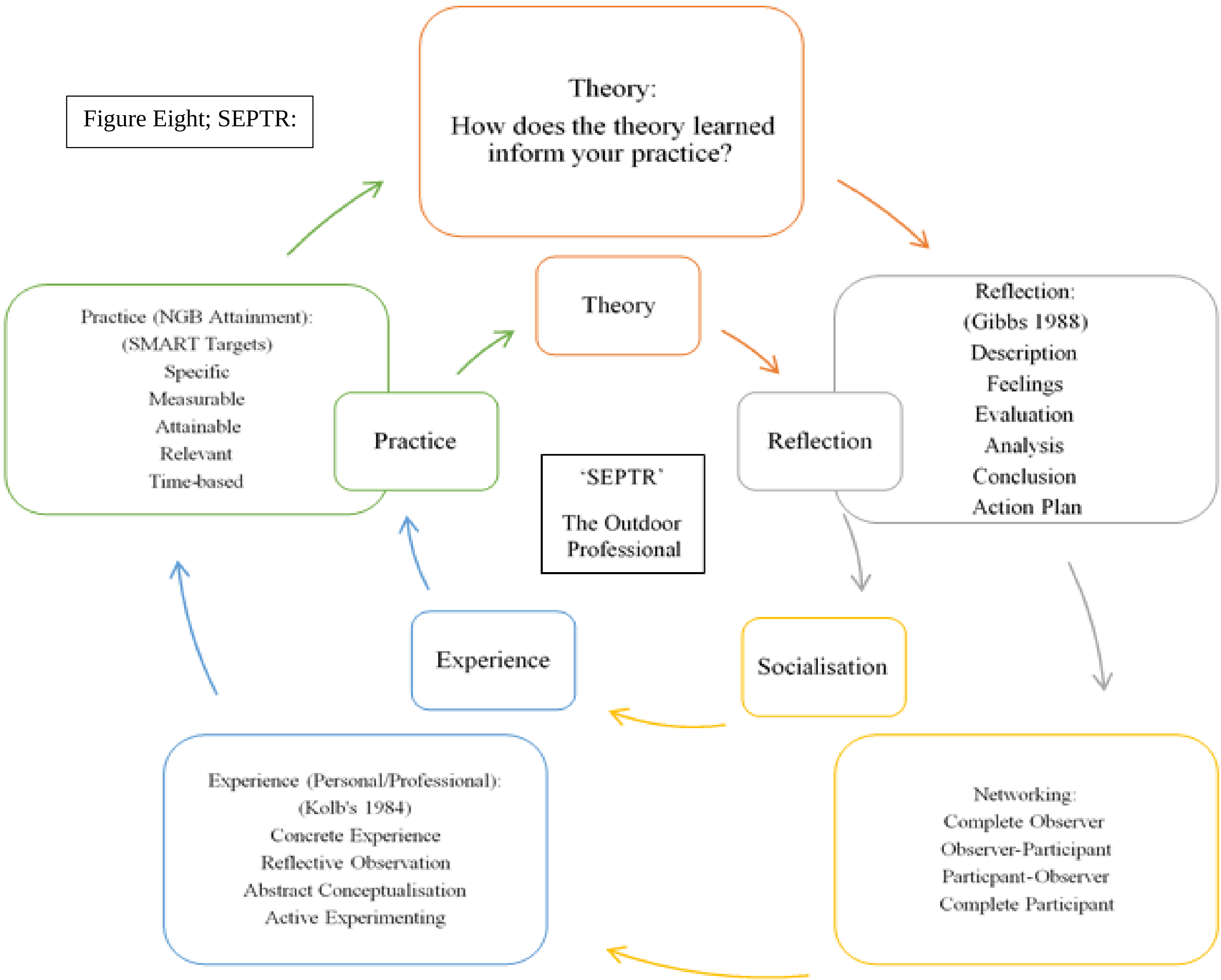
The increase in complexity for this stage simply refers to the participants continued reading and the consideration and application of the theory learned. Applying learned theory connotes different meanings in different circumstances. Therefore, applying theory in the context of SEPTR requires the individual to reflect on and consider how the theory informs their own practices and lived experiences. Although denoting a focus on undergraduate students, this stage merely identifies the importance of academic currency utilised as a form of continued professional development.

5.3.5. Reflect:

The final stage of SEPTR requires the participant to engage in a form of reflection. This stage is dedicated to reflective practice, another key attribute the participants advocated for. Reflective practice was highlighted as a tool by the participants, to be used to consolidate learning and assist in the continued professional development of educational expedition leaders. One of the key advantages of the SEPTR model is its recognition of multiple professional learning communities. Trede (2012) discusses how multiple professional learning communities enable students to clarify their professional identity development. Supporting this, the prerequisite to reflect prior to the progression of each stage deters undesirable habits left to osmosis (Brookfield, 2011). Simply, reflecting on one's practice reduces the possibility of undesirable behaviour becoming habitus. To reflect on experiences, theories, and practices and articulate 'reasons and actions is part of developing a professional identity' (Trede, 2012:161). Comparatively, Eraut (2000) argues that non-conscious learning and tacit knowledge, like the hidden curriculum, need to be made explicit through reflective practices. Therefore, this final stage presents reflective practice as a tool to consolidate the learning that transpired during each stage of SEPTR. Though reflective practice has been applied throughout, this stage requires the individual to reflect on how the previous stages have informed their own professional identity. Comparatively, the reflections conducted at the end of each stage aimed to evaluate how those lived experiences informed their practice, not on what they deemed to be their professional identity. However, there are a plethora of tools, models, and techniques available for reflection (Fook *et al.,* 2006). Therefore, for the purpose of providing structure, and to give an example of how reflective models could be applied to this final stage, I advocate the application of Gibbs' 1998 reflective cycle (Patterson and Chapman, 2013). Reflective models, cyclical in design, focus more on the process of learning (Fook *et al.,* 2006), which suits the nature and purpose of SEPTR. Gibbs' reflective model consists of six interconnecting phases: Description, Feelings, Evaluation, Analysis, Conclusion, and Action Plan (Stonehouse, 2011). It requires its users to describe an event, consider their thoughts and feelings, evaluate the activity/event, analyse what occurred during the activity/event, provide concluding thoughts, and then develop an action plan based on this reflective process (Stonehouse, 2011). The application of a reflective practice model at the end of SEPTR ensures the development of an action plan prior to the beginning of the next rotation. How the reflections are conducted is entirely dependent on the individual's preferred process. This might be in the form of a reflective journal (Adeani *et al.,* 2020), discussion with critical friends (Hardiman and Dewing, 2014), and/or critical discourse (Dumay, 2011). Nevertheless, the form of reflection is at the discretion of the individual, and therefore, the application of Gibbs' reflective model merely serves as an example of a structure to assist in the participant's reflections in the final stage of SEPTR.

The increase in complexity is represented by each rotation. The more times an individual cycles through SEPTR, the more complex the stages become, and thus more in-depth reflections are required. The key element of this final stage, in addition to reflection, is its application at the beginning of the next rotation. The reflections undertaken here should be used to inform the actions in the following socialisation stage. The SEPTR model can be seen in Figure Eight below.

Figure Eight; SEPTR:



5.4. *Conclusion:*

This learning model is designed to assist in the development of outdoor undergraduate professional identities for those aspiring to become educational expedition leaders. Though simply represented by its acronym, each stage of SEPTR is an area of investigation within its own right. The model was illustrated in this way to remain accessible for undergraduate students and remain transferable to other aspiring leaders not attending HE. Similarly, the cyclical design of this model allows it to be used at any stage; the acronym is not representative of an order of entrance. In addition, though it is applied here for a university context, its simple design enables established leaders to benchmark their own lived experiences within this model. Though representative of the data collected, its design may also be applied to other occupational fields. Its use as a tool for professional identity (re)formation is illustrated by the full immersion into the occupational field.

6. Conclusion

This research project endeavoured to explore interpretations of and beliefs in professionalism as they relate to educational expedition leaders. Beliefs regarding traditionalised approaches to achieving professional status, and the stigma associated with modernised occupations striving for professional recognition. This was conducted in order to illustrate how a modernised perception of professionalism may enable the outdoor industry to appeal to newer generations of students and become accepted as a profession, not an industry or sector. The objectives pursued to achieve this goal were: to examine the interpretations of professionalism by key stakeholders within BES; to explore, compare, and contrast competing definitions of professionalism in established professions, illuminating differing interpretations of professional identity; and to develop a learning model that demonstrates a strategy informing notions of professionalism that could be accepted within a scheme of higher education.

Throughout this thesis, emphasis has been placed on the modernised perception of professionalism, as well as its multi-faceted nature and the inconsistent use of the term. Referring here to the presumption that professionalism as a sociological construct is internalised and manifested the same in multiple occupational fields. The introductory chapter lay the foundations of the different constructs influencing the term professionalism, as well as its application in multiple occupational fields. The first chapter also introduced the key themes which informed the literature review: ethics, deontology, morality, philosophy, identity, sociology, and professional regulation. These themes illustrated the ambiguous nature of professionalism as a philosophical and sociological construct pertaining to the duty of those seeking to obtain it. Subsequently, to analyse how the term professionalism is perceived, as well as its influence in the educational expedition sector, the literature review focused on defining professionalism and professional identity and assessing professionalism. These two chapters informed the researcher's understanding of the broader, more generalised constructs, theories, and themes evident in the literature.

As suggested by the literature within, there is no clear, all-encompassing definition of professionalism to which each occupational field adheres. There are, however, individualised notions and processes of accepted professional practice which I infer exist across multiple occupational fields. These individualised constructs of professionalism remain malleable to external societal pressures at macro, meso, and micro-societal levels. Thus, the professionalism that is manifested represents the external pressures internalised, interpreted, and then demonstrated by the individual practitioners. The process of internalisation is the crux of this notion of professionalism. The literature clearly depicts professional status as a stratifying sociological construct maintained and enforced by the competition of those who wish to obtain it. Interestingly however, professional status can only be bestowed by external bodies who recognise a mutual conception of professionalism. By contrast, professional status can be self-proclaimed, but if the service provided or the behaviours, attributes, and characteristics of the individual do not match the external idealisation of professionalism, then the self-proclamation will not be endorsed. Therefore, the process of internalisation is directly influenced by the themes outlined within the introductory chapter. How a practitioner defines professionalism is dependent upon their interpretation of morality, duty, ethics, and identity. This would not be confined to or restricted by their occupational field. Each practitioner has the capability to infer what is professional in other occupations, and each has undoubtably developed multiple professional identities or reformed a professional identity in the context of differing social circumstance. Therefore, analysing how professionalism could be assessed or regulated is seemingly difficult. However, the literature suggests that if social actors within an occupational field share similar professionalised ideals, then regulation of accepted professional practice can be endorsed. To be clear, this would mean regulating not a singular definition of professionalism, but the actions manifested by the practitioners. Nevertheless, this regulatory process requires conformity. In order to conform to a regulatory process, the process needs to be relatable and provide motivation for adherence. This motivation as explained by the literature and data is remuneration in the form of finances or symbolic capital. This symbolic capital is representative of characteristics supporting social hierarchy. The struggle to obtain professional status and social hierarchy within the outdoor industry is representative of a meritocratic society. Clearly, how professionalism is inferred dictates how its status is bestowed.

Analysing the literature further illustrated how the traditionalised constructs of professionalism are seemingly founded on the attainment of HE qualifications to evidence academic rigour and an unwritten contract of service between the professional and the public. Identifying how the conformed-to, traditionalised processes affected the appearance of the educational expedition leader was pertinent to understanding how a modernised conception of professionalism and a learning model could be developed. Following the literature, the data collection stage of this thesis explored the conformable, generalised, and relatable concepts of professionalism within the educational expedition sector.

The findings explicitly illustrate what educational expedition leaders consider professionalism within the sector. Additionally, they evidence the expectations and accepted professional practice established within BES's culture. Analysis of the data supported the theory illustrated throughout this thesis, but contextualised its premises within the educational expedition sector. The findings provided an insight into the generalised conceptions of professionalism. In doing so, the exploration of participants' perceptions allowed for the cross-examination of the broader influences affecting the appearance of the sector and its leaders. This examination clearly evidences the detrimental effects of an unwritten, unspoken struggle for symbolic capital, potentially enforced by volunteerism within the outdoor industry. Without the influence of financial remuneration, only those who conform to an organisation, or in this context BES's professional ideals, are seemingly awarded symbolic capital. This struggle for symbolic capital emerges from the lack of traditionalised professional rewards within the industry. This had been supported by the traditionalised conceptions of professionalism demonstrated by some of the participants. The lack of financial remuneration uncovered a value system arguably sustained by the appearance of the outdoor industry, a value system which (sub)consciously compares the services provided by the industry to occupational fields already established as professions. Without the recognition of a valuable occupational field, professional stratification is enforced; this perception was illustrated by the participants who recognised that the outdoor industry is not given the same acknowledgement as a valuable source of income or lifelong occupation as recognised professions. However, the value system imposed by the symbolic capital held is arguably supported by the public and governmental recognition (or lack thereof). Established professions are governmentally regulated in some form, whereas the outdoor industry is not. Though the sector is evidently striving for regulation (IOL Charter), the value system demonstrated here clearly highlights the authority and power associated with individuals, occupational roles, and the professions that have obtained symbolic capital. However, literature disseminated across a wide range of occupations such as medicine, law, education, accountancy, and psychology illustrate that professionalism is a complex, multifaceted concept. One of the unique contributions of this study is the analysis of these differing notions in relation to each other. This analysis, in association with the perceptions of professionalism provided by the participants, enabled a closer examination of the symbolic capital held by established professions and how some traditionalised professional values (status, financial reward, social/occupational hierarchy etc.) correlate to the educational expedition sector.

This value system led to the examination of the traditionalised perceptions and processes enforced by society in comparison with those applied within the outdoor industry. The analysis of these perceptions in comparison with the theory had uncovered a stigma associated with outdoor university courses. Though clearly demonstrating traditionalised conceptions, participants advocated for the reformation of the current processes for professional recognition in the outdoors. However, the reformation would require mass conformity and assumes that the outdoor industry would modernise its perception in order to achieve greater symbolic capital. In an effort to combat the stigma associated with outdoor university degrees, a learning model has been developed to help modernise and inform the professional identities of aspiring educational expedition leaders. As is evident in the literature, higher education is considered the preferred and traditional process for proving academic rigour. Assisting in the development of professional identity (re)formation of undergraduates would move towards modernising the appearance and value of the outdoor industry. Examining the generalised consensuses of accepted professional practices within the sector allowed for the conceptualisation of both traditional and modernised perceptions of professionalism expected of educational expedition leaders. Though the SEPTR model arguably conforms to the practice of imposing professional expectations, without adhering to the consensuses within the industry, acceptance of professional learning communities may not be endorsed.

Therefore, the significance and implications of the findings are threefold: (1) the exploration of participant perceptions explicitly illustrate that the bestowment of symbolic capital (sub)consciously influences the manifestation of professional identities within the educational expedition sector. (2) How professional identities are (re)formed and manifested is directly associated with the externally imposed value system at macro, meso, and micro-societal level. These value systems correlate with the lack of public and governmental recognition and regulation, which ultimately stratifies the educational expedition sector. (3) Due to the stratifications imposed and the greater influence of a meritocratic system, the competition for rewards and remuneration in any form has the capacity to undermine individuals deemed to hold symbolic capital of lesser value, such as experience. Therefore, in an effort to begin combatting professional stratification, improve the perception of the aspiring educational expedition leader, and modernise professional recognition, the SEPTR learning model was created.

The SEPTR model is a conceptualised representation of the unique contribution of this study. Though each stage is simply expressed, each is indicative of the data collected and analysed. The participants needed soft skills to function appropriately as educational expedition leaders. This perception aptly suited the sociological nature of professionalism and symbolic capital. To my knowledge as a novice researcher, the application of sociological paradigms, the investigation of symbolic capital in the form of professional status, and the analysis of these differing notions in relation to each other has not been explicitly conducted. Therefore, though SEPTR remains straightforward in its design, its simplicity is founded on theoretical premises. Additionally, the simplicity of its design promotes its transfer into other sectors of the outdoor industry. This accessibility and transferability adheres to the methodological structure and axiology of this thesis. The model's individualised application enables the development of professional identities within the sector, and though it promotes the consensuses of professional practices, the (re)formation is conducted via personalised interpretations of the self. Though the SEPTR model does not revolutionise the educational expedition sector, it does add to the greater body of knowledge surrounding the implications of professionalism within the outdoor industry. Conceptualising a new learning model founded in the contemporary perceptions of the sample group provides insight into the desire for a complete reformation of the processes for professional recognition within the sector. The fulfilment of this gap in the existing literature is evidenced by the contextualised sociological and philosophical exploration of professionalism in relation to the theoretical premises discussed throughout. However, the researcher also understands that the immediate impact of this thesis may only be felt in the professional practice of the researcher and of the participants in this study.

One of the limitations of this project refers to the generalisability of the data collected. Though the SEPTR model as a framework is generalisable, the theoretical premises and participant perceptions remain exemplary of the sample group. Therefore, the perceptions of professionalism may not be generalisable to the broader population of the educational expedition sector and/or the outdoor industry. An additional delimitation refers to some of the perceptions introduced by the participants, who could/should have been questioned further. Thus, key philosophical perceptions may have been left unexplored. Though claiming data saturation is the researcher’s prerogative, after further analysis and reflection, unanswered questions still remain. This links to a further limitation: researcher bias. Though this limitation has been explicitly discussed throughout the thesis, the interpretations and analysis of the data still remain affected. Other limitations refer to the typical disadvantages associated with phenomenological qualitative research: time consumption, sample size, and replicability. However, for this research project, the key limitation refers to the lack of observational data collected. As noted throughout, Covid-19 restricted the researcher’s practice. The observations of professionalism in the context of educational expeditions were not conducted. Observing the lived experience would have enabled a cross-comparison between semi-structured interviews and focus groups with professional identities as they are displayed. The data collection methods used only reconstructed events, and therefore, an accurate representation of professionalism as the lived experience may not have been collected and analysed. Nevertheless, these (de)limitations lay the foundation for further research. Unanswered questions still remain: what process of modernised professional recognition would be accepted into the educational expedition sector? How desirable is volunteerism? Is professionalism generalisable within the educational expedition sector? Is governmental regulation desired by the outdoor industry and its sectors? How does symbolic capital affect the desirability of the outdoor industry and its sectors? Is the value system externally imposed or self-maintained by traditionalised processes? Are the participant perceptions congruent with their displayed professional identities?

The next steps are clear. Observing professionalism within the educational expedition sector is necessary to investigate the phenomenon as it manifests. Additionally, conducting the same study with another populace within the sector and analysing those findings in comparison to those written here would provide an opportunity to further assess the project's validity and reliability. Similarly, utilising CAQDAS in addition to the same methodology will provide further clarification to any additional findings. Moreover, The SEPTR model has yet to be introduced and applied in any context. The implementation of the SEPTR model at a university, or within the educational expedition sector will allow for an initial measurement of its applicability, transferability, and uses as a developmental tool; its effectiveness has yet to be studied. Finally, a cross-comparative analysis of different educational expedition organisations would allow for a more holistic interpretation of similar sociological fields, cultures, and the influence(s) of their own symbolic capital in the sector. Therefore, the questions outlined above should be used as a springboard for further research.

These findings will be disseminated as a proposed training tool for aspiring educational expedition leaders via conferences, workshops, and online forums, as well as publication as a paper on the research forum Academia.edu.

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8. Appendices

8.1. Introduction – Narrative of Lived Experiences and Reflexive Accounts

During the first interview and its analysis, I had different questions about and thoughts on how it was conducted. Though the interview had been intended to be informal, the location proved difficult for transcription (the recording had been difficult to transcribe due to the level of background noise). As a novice researcher, my ability to ask questions, create discussion, and delve deeper into philosophical meaning demonstrated my lack of practice. Although the interview had produced insightful data that would provide the foundations for further research, the next interview required a different approach. In an effort to improve, the second interview needed a quieter environment, improved articulation of the questions and prompts, and clearer attempts at creating deeper philosophical discussion.

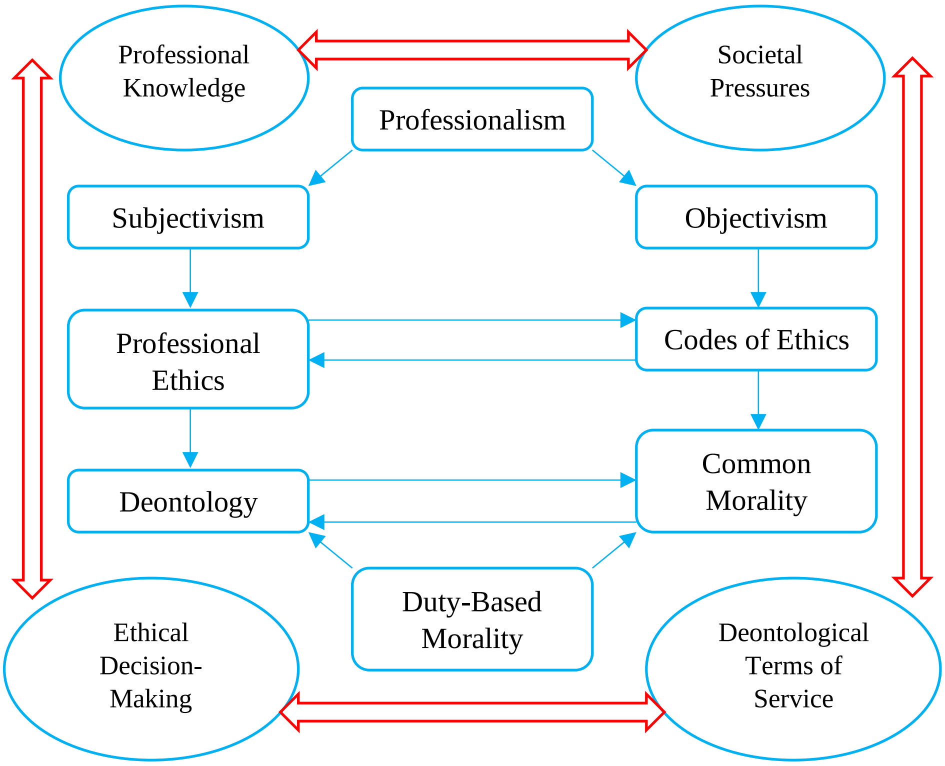
As a result of the first interview, during the second I tried to establish a better conversational tone, one that could induce discussion with greater philosophical meaning. The location of the interview was much better for conducting the interview, with no background noise to affect the recording. However, the quieter environment meant that the impression of an informal interview had been tainted. The interview had been conducted in a quiet lecture room with a desk positioned between me and the interviewee. The interview, however, generating additional data with themes correlating with those appearing in the first interview conducted, for example, the notion of 'predetermined outcomes'. Once I had ended the recording, I asked the interviewee if there I could make any improvements regarding the line of questioning; their response further echoed my stance as a novice researcher. They suggested that I email potential themes that could be introduced during the interview prior to meeting, further explaining that I might receive more comprehensive, in-depth answers.

The third interview was conducted in a location that was familiar to the interviewee. This was an active decision in order to provide an informal interview experience while trying to ensure minimal background noise and distraction. This interview went better than the previous two interviews. I emailed potential discussion themes to the participant prior to meeting, as suggested by the previous interviewee. Consequently, the questions induced a greater discussion revolving around the given themes, as well as establishing themes that had not been originally considered. In preparation for the next interview, the first three conducted were analysed in order to produce an additional line of questioning, in hope of uncovering themes with greater philosophical meaning.

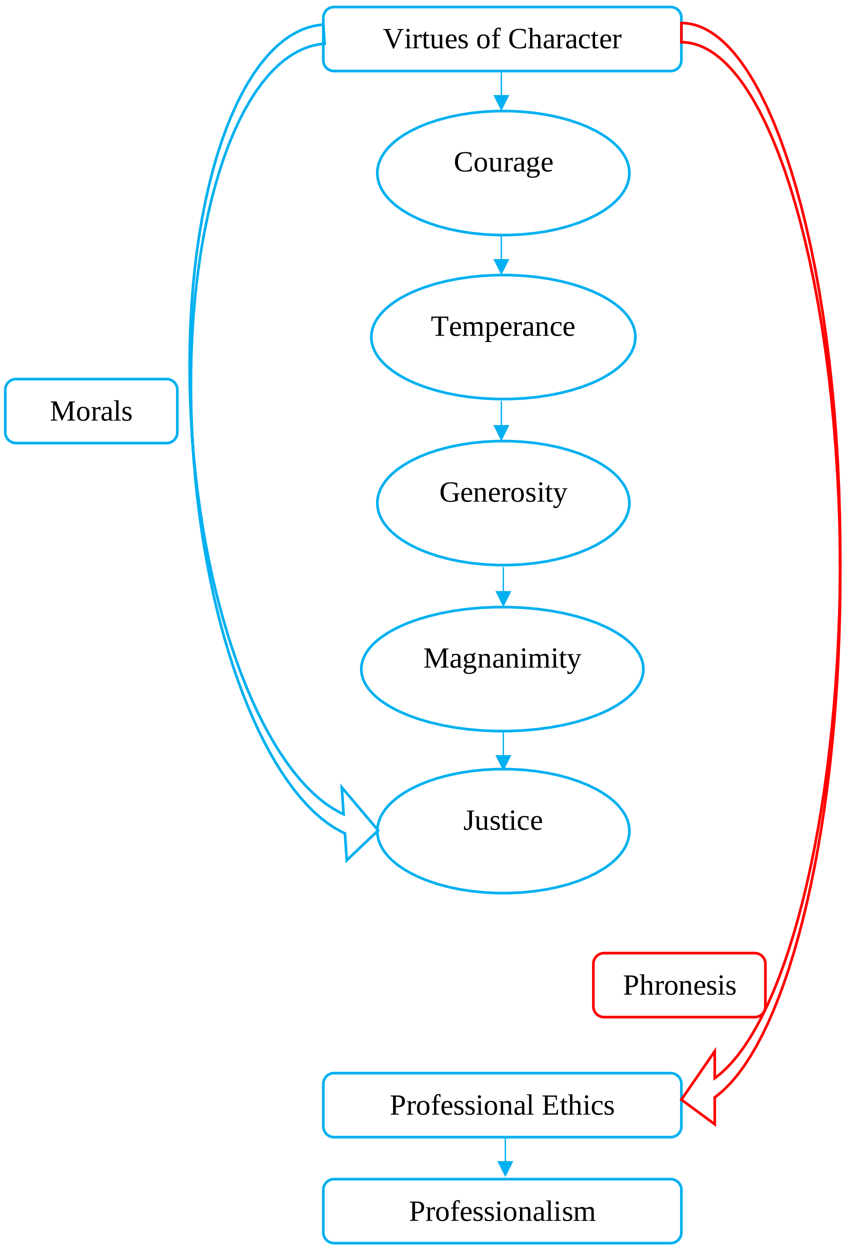
I wanted to ensure that the final interview encompassed all the previous reflexive thoughts. To ensure complete transparency within this project, I would like to remain completely honest. I had heard rumours about Bill's reputation as an academic, but I had not read any of his work prior to our meeting as I wanted to ensure I took him and his opinions at face value. If I had read his work, I would have had a preconception of him, his personality, and his opinion, and I knew this would affect my interpretation of his data. This proved to be a double-edged sword, as it meant I felt unprepared for his questions before the recording commenced. Consequently, I was unable to articulate elements of my research up until that point, clearly demonstrating my status as a novice researcher. Moreover, following precedent from the previous interviews, I had emailed Bill the corresponding forms before meeting; however, I had not included a clause whereby the participants had an option to have their voice heard without anonymity. This meant that Bill's participation in my research depended on whether he would be recognised for his contribution. Bill insisted his name was not replaced by a pseudonym. Bill further suggested that I read 'The Politics of Voice' for further clarification regarding the presentation of individuals' opinions. I believe Bill wanted me to be aware not all participants prefer to be anonymised, and I should be mindful of censorship. Bill also questioned my terminology regarding the presentation of the outdoors: are we a sector or an industry? Bill argued that we are best identified as a sector, as we do not produce anything, nor are we unified; there are subsectors within the outdoors that produce equipment, but not all the outdoors produces something. On the other hand, I had argued for industry as the correct terminology, as I believe that all subsectors produce or provide an experience, though this is a question I still ponder. During this interview, I learnt more about the process of research in the first five minutes compared to any other encounter, and one element I will take away regarding this process is to ensure that I am better prepared for any question about my research project. Thus, the interview did provide higher-order themes which merit further investigation in the context of educational expeditions.

During my time as a developing professional, I have had the opportunity to meet and work with various individuals within the different sectors of the outdoor industry. Each person demonstrated their own interpretation of a professional identity. These identities were observed in various contexts, including lecture theatres, on rivers, in an office, and many more. Consequently, as an aspiring professional and novice leader, I have had the opportunity to utilise these experiences to inform my own professional identity. However, conducting the initial data collection allowed me to reflect further on these contexts, as well as the memories I have of those individuals who helped inform my interpretation of professionalism. To take one context as an example, in the lecture theatres at university, I remember discussing various case studies of specific outdoor practices. We analysed the decision-making processes displayed in the given text. The lecturer stepped back and allowed the students to discuss the cases openly, clearly wanting to observe our reasoning without his perception influencing our own. This developed into an in-depth discussion surrounding the notion of professional decision making in the outdoors, specifically involving the participants' safety. Upon reflection, this discussion acted as a professional learning community, discussing real cases and real decisions. As a result, my peers and I were beginning to develop our own professional identity, our own professional interpretation regarding specific decisions made for participant safety. One phrase used by the lecturer at the end of this discussion never left my thoughts: 'How many lemons?' This means that if there are three lemons (hazards, potential problems, or anything involving a negative effect on the participants), you should stop to reassess the situation and your practice. You should reduce the lemons to reduce the risk. Now I cannot lead an activity without trying to spot lemons, and during these initial interviews, I encountered a few lemons of my own.

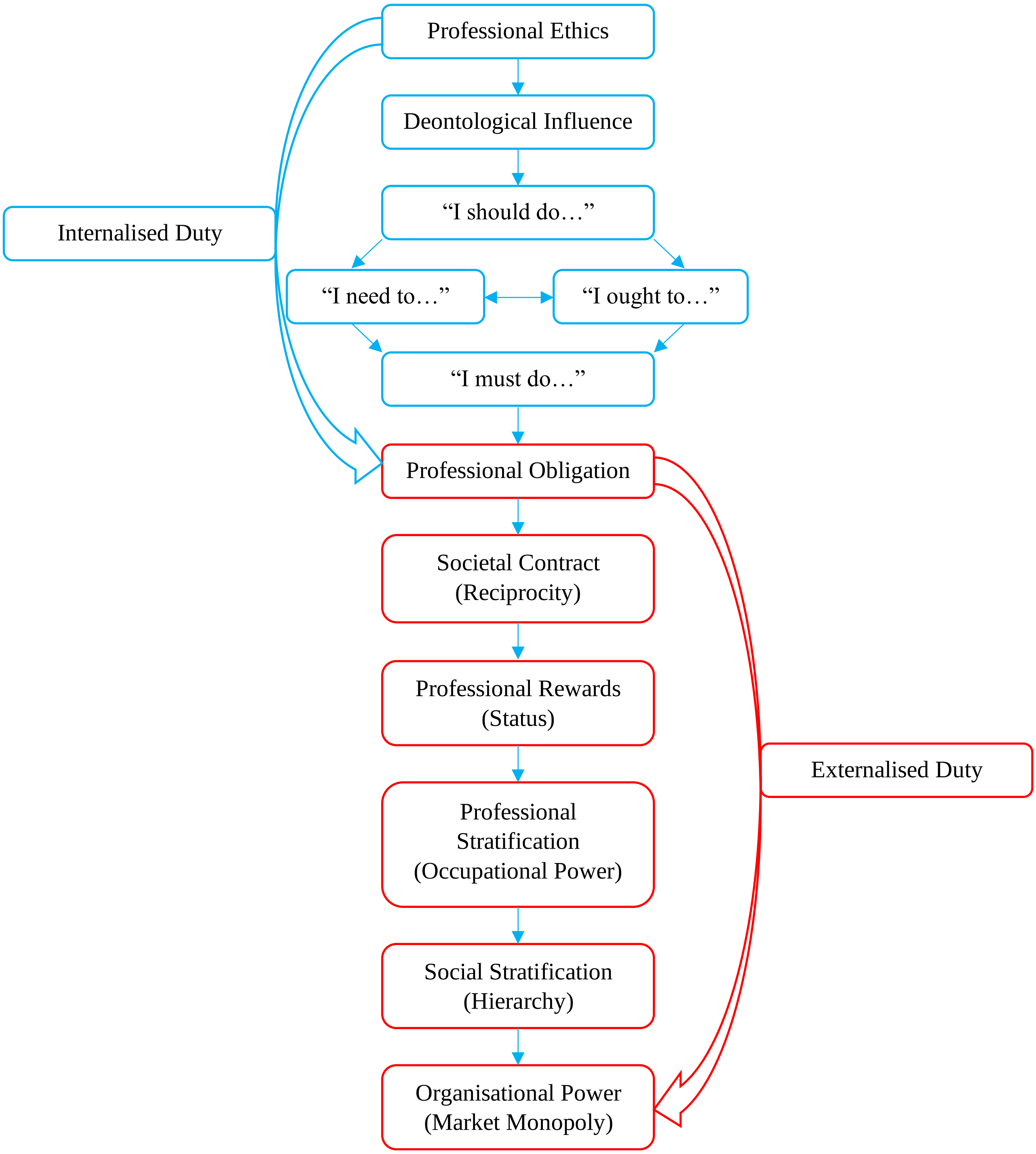
8.2.Introduction – (1.1.) Ethical Implications, Professional Behaviour



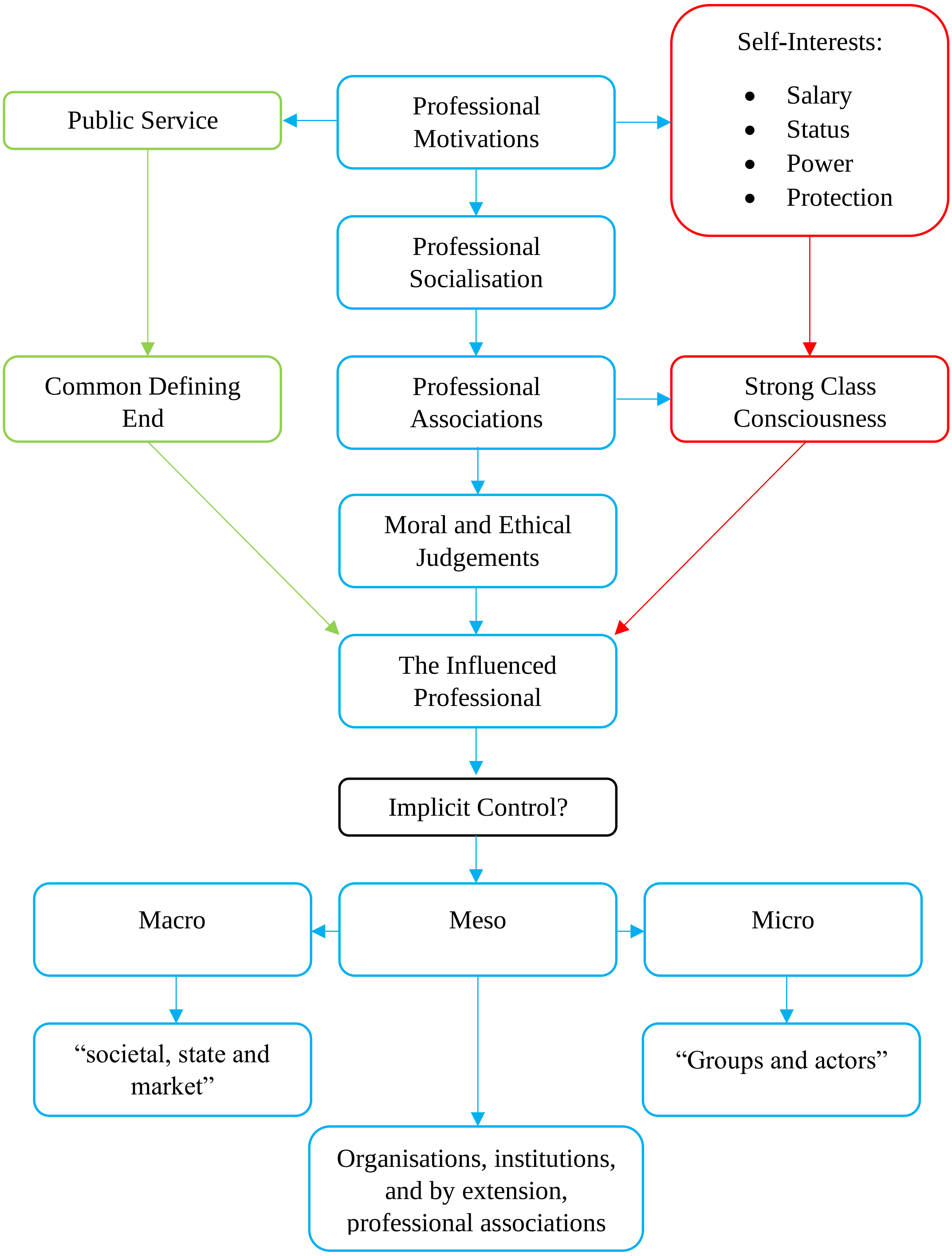
8.3.Introduction – (1.2.) Virtue and its Professional Association, Professional Ethics



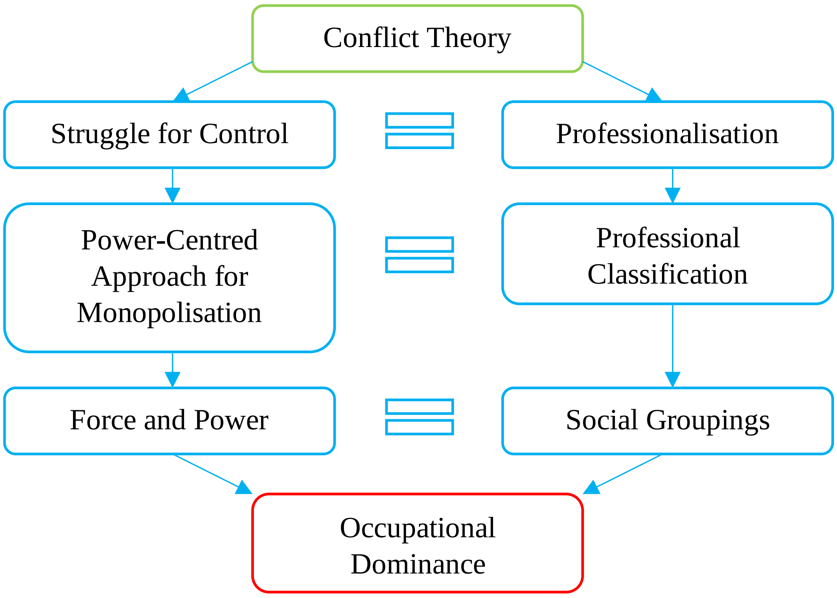
8.4.Introduction – (1.3.) Duty and Obligation, Professional Obligation

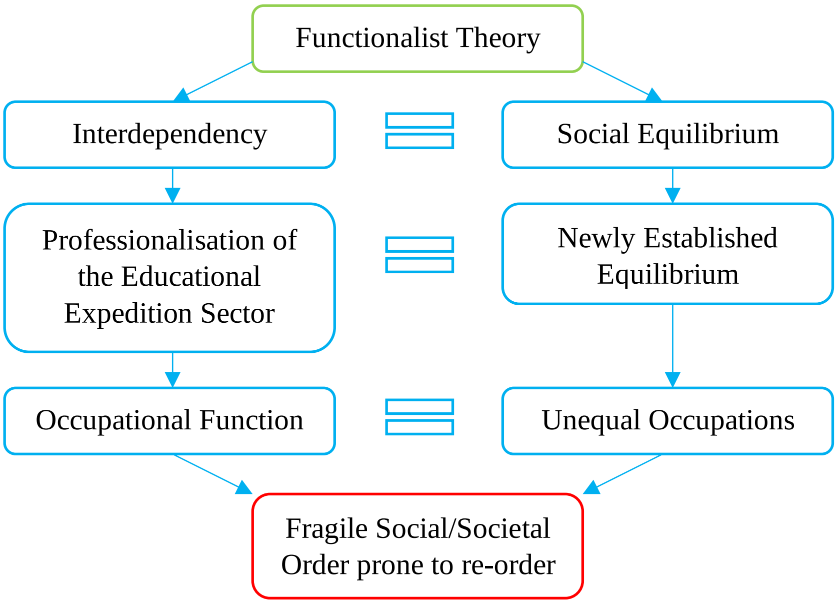


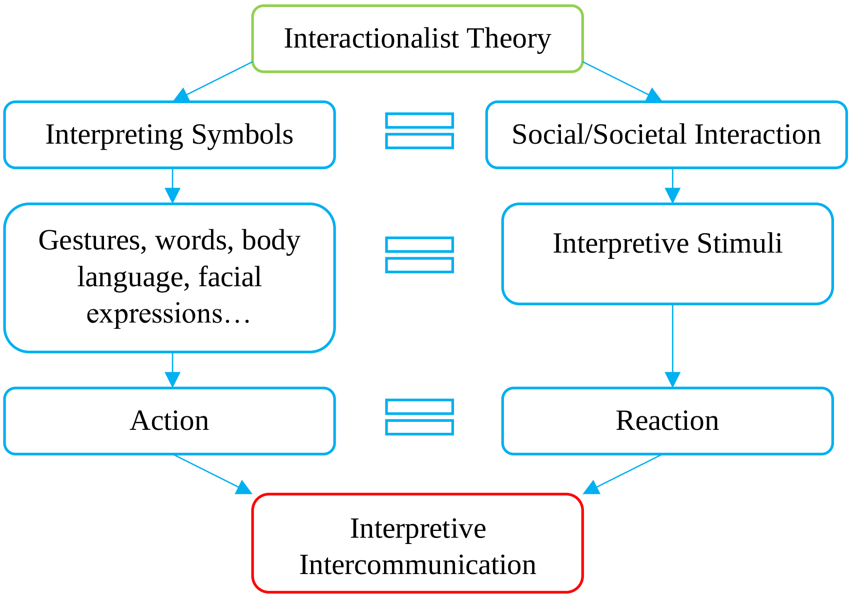
8.5. Introduction – (1.4.) Public Service Ethos and its Importance, Professional Associations



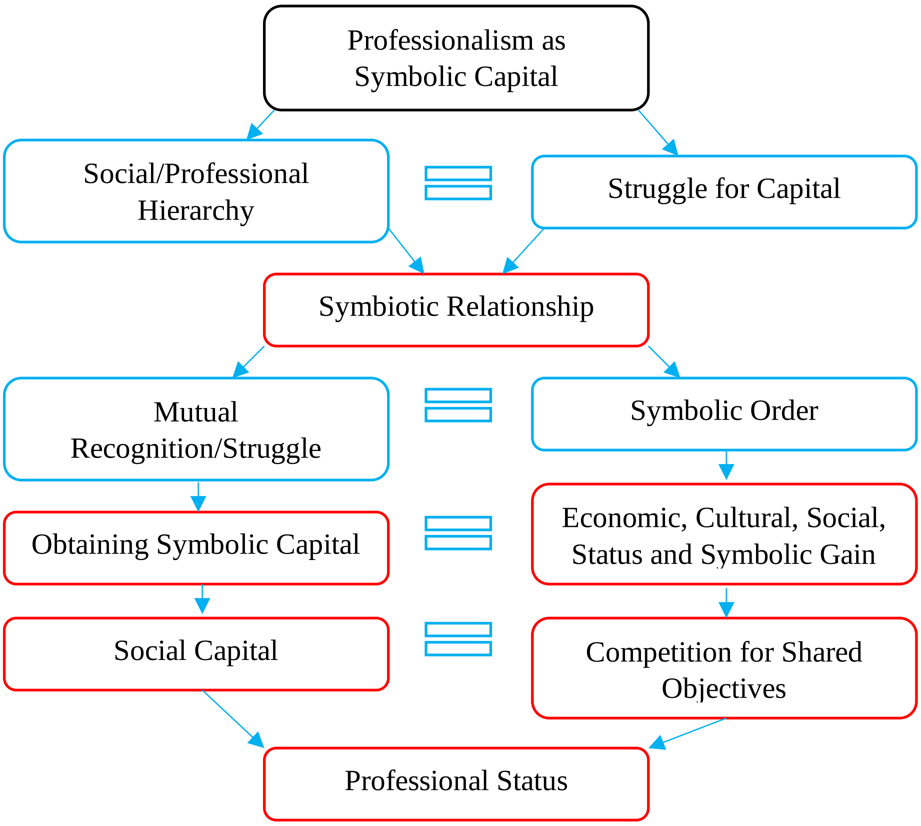
8.6.Introduction – (1.6.) Sociological Implications, Professionalism and Sociology



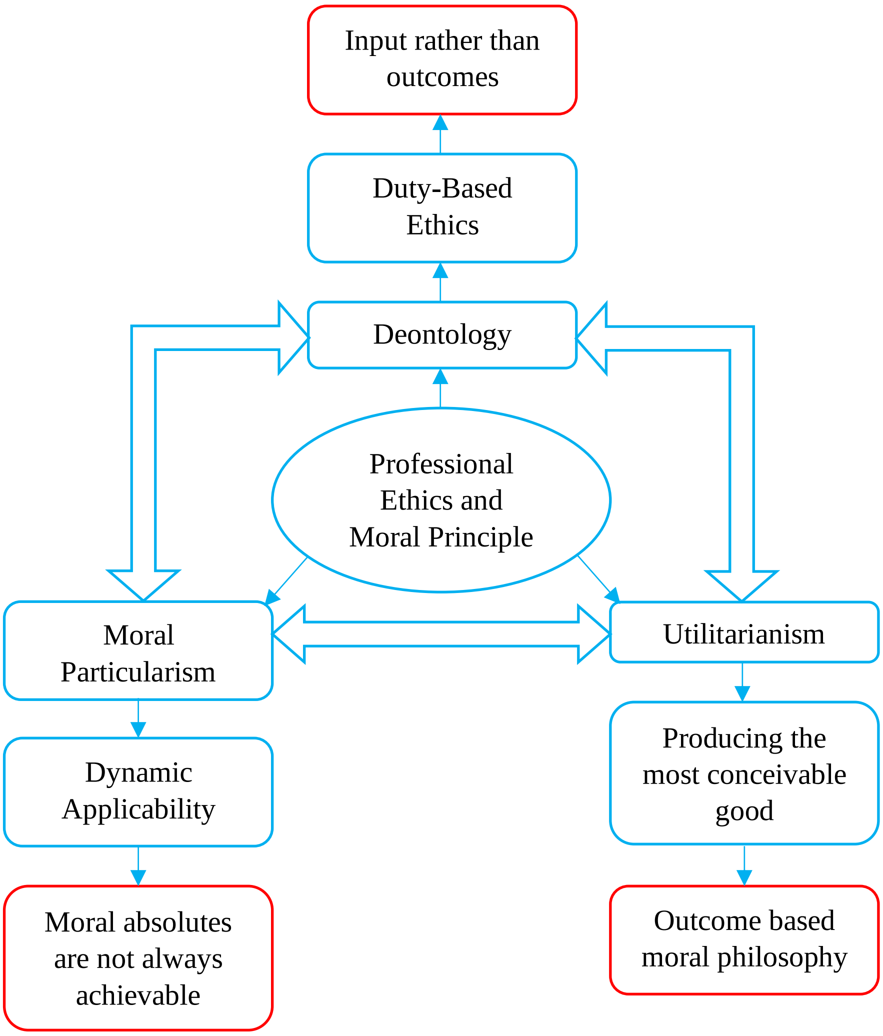




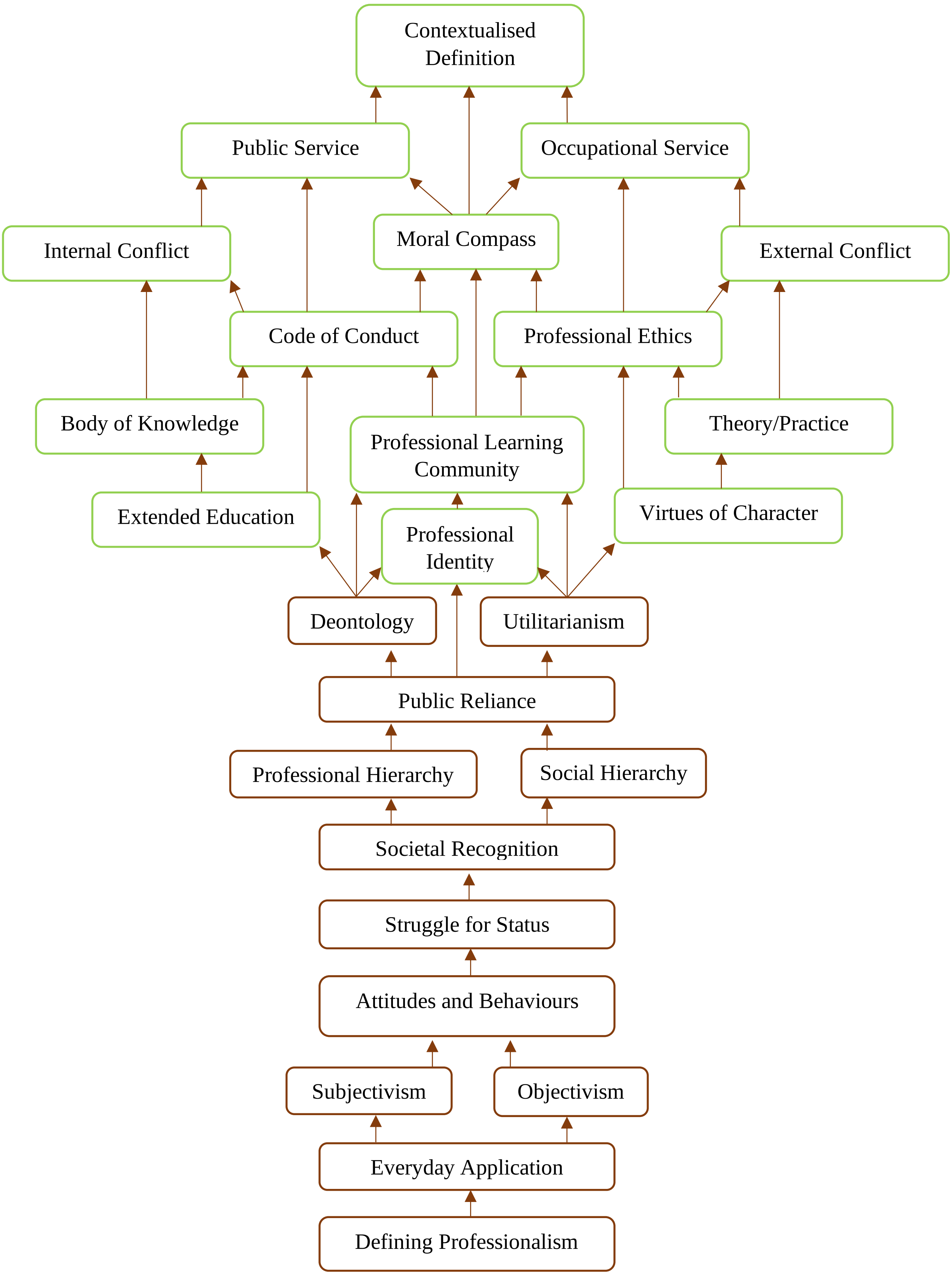
8.7.Introduction – (1.7.) Symbolic Prestige, Social and Symbolic Capital; The Fight for Status



8.8.<u>Introduction – (1.8.) Modernisation founded in traditionalism, questioning morals.</u>



8.9.Literature Review – (2.2.) Defining Professionalism; The Definition Tree



8.10. Semi-Structured Interview, Guided Questioning - British Exploring Society/Educational Expedition Leaders

Question	Probe	Stimuli	Purpose
- **Do you think the outdoor industry requires a curriculum to teach professionalism to aspiring leaders'?**	• Timescale • Influences • Experiences	• How long have you been working in the industry for? • What influenced you to become a part of the Outdoors? • Are there any important people or experiences that influenced you to become involved?	Explore the participants' personal journey to potentially obtain information for the upcoming questions. Encourage and invite open discussion.
- **How do you think the type of professionalism that you demonstrate changes during expeditions?**	• Thought process • Timescale • Experiences • Influences • Motivations • Feelings	• What do you think typically influences you during an expedition? • Is it the environment, participants, or other external factors that influence your professionalism during an expedition?	Explore the participants' perceptions of professionalism and how it is influenced during an expedition. Encourage and invite open discussion.
- **When do you feel it is most difficult to remain professional?**	• Personal feelings • Feelings towards participant • Environment • Increase/decrease in training	• Have there been cases when you recognise that the situation is getting tense, and remaining professional isn't an option? • Have you ever felt or recognised if/when your professionalism had lapsed?	Explore the personal emotions surrounding the notion and the impact that it could have. Encourage and invite open discussion.

		• Why was it difficult to remain professional during that time?	
- **Do you think that professionalism in the outdoors should be regulated by a governing body? Yes/no, and why?**	• Feelings • Other people's thoughts • Training • Potential impact	• Who do you think taught you how to be professional? • How did you learn to be professional? • How would you assess professionalism in the outdoors?	What are the reasons? Why are these influences important? How do these influences affect the participant, the professional, education, etc.?
- **Why do you think it could be difficult to remain professional in front of your colleagues and/or peers?**	• Feelings • Disadvantage • Limitations • Benefits	• Is it difficult to receive training from your colleagues and/or peers?	What are the reasons? Why are these influences important? How do these influences affect the participant and the professional?
- **What criteria do you think you would have to be reaching to be counted as a professional in the outdoor industry?**	• Thought process • Timescale • Experiences • Influences • Motivations • Feelings	• What behaviours would you want your peers, colleagues etc. to demonstrate? • How would you suggest that professional behaviours should be assessed?	What are the reasons? Why are these influences important? How do these influences affect the participant and the professional?

			What has influenced the participant to suggest the specific criteria?
- **What advice would you give to aspiring professionals in the outdoor industry?**	• Feelings • Other people's thoughts • Training • Potential impact	• What advice would you have wished you received before becoming a leader?	Explore final responses influenced by the discussion.

8.11. Semi-Structured Interviews - Information Sheet

Information Sheet

Semi-structured, one-to-one interviews:

The following information is for the perusal of the participants interested in the following research project: 'Investigating notions of professionalism in the Outdoors: by outdoor educational expedition leaders.'

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are being invited to participate in my doctoral research project investigating perceptions of professionalism, professional identity, and how you, as outdoor leaders, interpret professional behaviours in the context of educational expeditions. *Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully*. This research adopts a qualitative approach to data collection; this enables the experiences and opinions of participants to inform and be included within this research. This phase of data collection involves an informal, one-to-one interview; questions will be asked revolving around the emerging themes of professionalism. The interview will last no more than one hour.

Introduction:

I am Thomas Hampson, and this research is part of my Doctorate of Philosophy degree at The University of Central Lancashire in the School of Sport and Wellbeing. This research project is looking at the perceptions of professionalism, professional identity, and how you, as leaders, interpret professional behaviours in the context of educational expeditions. The following information explicitly illustrates what is involved in the research project and how you will be involved if you wish to participate.

Purpose of the research – Semi-structured interviews:

The aims of this research project are to ascertain and to develop an understanding of how professionalism, professional identity, and profession(s) as a concept is articulated within the outdoor industry, specifically the educational expedition sector.

1. To analyse perceptions of 'Professionalism, Professional(s), and Profession(s)' taken from educational expedition leaders.
2. To develop a curriculum model that demonstrates a strategy that may help to develop a notion of professionalism which, in turn, could be accepted within a scheme of education.
3. To critically discuss how the perceptions of 'Professionalism, Professional(s), and Profession(s)' influences the professional identity of key stakeholders within the expedition sector found of the outdoor industry.

Participant invitation:

You have been invited to participate in this research project as I recognise your experience, knowledge and a developed understanding of leadership in the outdoor industry. Your active participation in this research project is entirely voluntary; if you wish to withdraw your participation, your decision will be respected. I would only ask that you send an email to the following address: TCMHampson@uclan.ac.uk highlighting the extend of withdrawal, partial or full.

Taking part in this project - Right to refuse or withdraw:

You do not have to take part in this research project. If you do not wish to participate in this research project, there is no obligation to do so, and your decision will be respected. This research is conducted on a completely voluntary basis. You may stop and withdraw from participating at any stage of the research, and during any phase of the data collection. If you wish to do so, you do not have to provide any reasons as to why; I only ask that you send an email to the following address: TCMHampson@uclan.ac.uk highlighting the extent of withdrawal, partial or full. Depending on the stage of data analysis, withdrawal may not be possible as your contribution would have already been included; your information and contributions will be anonymised and are pertinent to this research project. I would not be able to find your personal contribution in the midst of other collected data and additional contributions.

What will happen during this project?

This research project adopts a qualitative approach to data collection, which involves your willing participation in semi-structured interviews; this will involve participants with similar experiences within the outdoor industry. The semi-structured interviews will be guided by me, and I will begin the discussion by ensuring everyone is comfortable with the procedure. I will give you time to share your knowledge if you wish to do so; you do not have to share any knowledge that makes you feel uncomfortable. The entire discussion will be recorded, and all information will be anonymous. Each participant will get the chance, upon request, to check transcriptions; however, if you do not wish to be recorded during this phase of data collection, you will not be able to take part.

This phase of data collection will be semi-structured interviews; I will be asking open-ended questions to prompt discussion; questions focussing on the research topic and key themes. The semi-structured interviews will be relaxed and informal, taking up to a maximum of an hour to complete should you wish to take part.

Benefits:

The benefits of participating in this research project include the development of your own knowledge of the notions surrounding professionalism in the outdoor industry. You will gain a deeper understanding of what other leaders in the outdoor industry deem as professional, and you are likely to find out how you perceive professionalism during educational expeditions.

Risk:

There is a risk that you may share some confidential or personal information, and you may also feel uncomfortable discussing certain topics. However, I will do everything I can do to prevent this, and if there are reasonable, additional arrangements that you would like to be put in place, I will do my best to enact them; I only ask that you make me aware of the additional arrangements before signing this document and the informed consent form. If you feel uncomfortable discussing a certain topic, and do not wish to share your opinion, then you do not have to, and your decision will be respected.

Confidentiality:

All participation within this research project will remain confidential. Any information gained during the data collection phases will be kept private. Any information you provide will be protected by a pseudonym within the transcription and the presentation of the data; in other words, you will remain anonymous. I would ask that you do not discuss any information provided within any phase of the data collection process with anyone outside of the group. This is to ensure that all topics discussed within any phase of the data collection will remain confidential; however, this cannot prevent any other participant discussing with other individuals outside of the group. Therefore, I am unable to promise complete confidentiality in the unlikely event that another participant discusses given information with an external party.

Data generated during this project will be retained in accordance with the University's policy on Academic Integrity. Data generated in the course of this research will be kept securely in electronic form for 5 years from the end of the project; this format will be kept on UCLan's password protected, secured online server.

Sharing results:

No information will be shared during any stage of this research project; sole access to the collected data remains with myself and my Director of Studies, my supervisor, Dr Clive Palmer. The results of the research will be kept online on UCLan's secured, password-protected data base; the results of this research will be used in my thesis for the MPhil to PhD transfer. If you would like a copy of the research, please contact me via the given email address, or alternatively you can ring the given number.

This research project has received full ethical approval from The University of Central Lancashire.

Contact Details; Email: TCMHampson@uclan.ac.uk Mobile Number: 07527927253

If you have any concerns regarding how the research study has been conducted, please contact:

Email: OfficerforEthics@uclan.ac.uk

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet. If you wish to take part in this research project, you are required to read and sign a consent form. If you are taking part, I would also ask that you sign this information sheet to recognise you have read the information provided. If this is something you feel uncomfortable doing, unfortunately you cannot participate in this research. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to ask.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Hampson, BA(Hons), PGCE, PhD Student.

Participant Name: ______________________________________

Participant Signature: ___________________________________

Date: ______________________

8.12. Focus Group - Information Sheet

Information Sheet

Phase Two, Focus Groups:

The following information is for the perusal of the participants interested in the following research project: 'Investigating notions of professionalism in the Outdoors: by outdoor educational expedition leaders.'

Dear Sir/Madam,

You are being invited to participate in my doctoral research project investigating perceptions of professionalism, professional identity and how you, as outdoor leaders, interpret professional behaviours in the context of educational expeditions. *Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being conducted and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully*. This research adopts a qualitative approach to data collection. This allows the experiences and opinions of participants to inform and be included within this research. This second phase of data collection will be conducted via focus groups. I will be utilising notes from the first phase of data collection to highlight emerging themes. These themes will be the basis of discussion, along with guided questioning from me.

Introduction:

I am Thomas Hampson, and this research is part of my Doctorate of Philosophy degree at The University of Central Lancashire in the School of Sport and Wellbeing. This research project is looking at the perceptions of professionalism, professional identity, and how you, as leaders, interpret professional behaviours in the context of educational expeditions. The following information explicitly illustrates what is involved in the research project and how you will be involved if you wish to participate.

Purpose of the research – Phase Two, Focus Groups:

The aims of this research project are to develop an understanding of how professionalism, professional identity, and profession(s) as a concept are articulated within the outdoor industry, specifically the educational expedition sector.

1. To analyse perceptions of 'Professionalism, Professional(s), and Profession(s)' taken from educational expedition leaders.
2. To develop a learning model that may help to inform a notion of professionalism which could be accepted within a scheme of education.
3. To critically discuss how the perceptions of 'Professionalism, Professional(s), and Profession(s)' influences the professional identity of key stakeholders within the expedition sector.

Participant invitation:

You have been invited to participate in this research project as I recognise your experience, knowledge, and developed understanding of leadership in the outdoor industry. Your active participation in this research project is entirely voluntary; if you wish to withdraw your participation, your decision will be respected and I would only ask that you send an email to the following address: TCMHampson@uclan.ac.uk highlighting the extent of withdrawal, partial or full.

Taking part in this project - Right to refuse or withdraw:

You do not have to take part within this research project. If you do not wish to participate in this research project, there is no obligation to do so, and your decision will be respected. This research is conducted on a completely voluntary basis. You may stop and withdraw from participating at any stage of the research, and during any phase of the data collection, if you wish to do so, you do not have to provide any reasons as to why. I only ask that you send an email to the following address: TCMHampson@uclan.ac.uk highlighting the extent of withdrawal, partial or full. In addition, however, depending on the stage of data analysis, withdrawal may not be possible, as your contribution would have already been included and is pertinent to this research project. Your contribution would be anonymised, and I would not be able to find your personal contribution in the midst of other collected data and contributions.

What will happen during this project?

This research project adopts a qualitative approach to data collection. This involves your willing participation in focus groups. This will include participants with similar experiences within the outdoor industry. The focus group will be guided by me, and I will begin the discussion by ensuring everyone is comfortable with the procedure. I will give you time to share your knowledge if you wish to do so. You do not have to share any knowledge that makes you feel uncomfortable. The discussion will be recorded, and all information will be anonymous. Each participant will get the chance upon request to check transcriptions; however, if you do not wish to be recorded during this phase of data collection you will not be able to take part in the focus group.

This second phase of data collection will be using open ended questions to begin the discussion. Questions may also be raised from the semi-structured interviews completed in the first phase of data collection. The focus groups will be relaxed and informal, taking up to thirty minutes to an hour to complete should you wish to take part.

Benefits:

The benefits of participating in this research project include the development of your own knowledge of the notions surrounding professionalism in the outdoor industry. You may gain a deeper understanding of what other leaders in the outdoor industry deem as professional and you are likely to find out what you perceive to be professionalism during educational expeditions.

Risk:

There is a risk that you may share some confidential or personal information, and you may also feel uncomfortable discussing certain topics. However, I will do everything I can do to prevent this, and if there are reasonable, additional arrangements that you would like to be put in place, I will do my best to enact them. I only ask that you make me aware of the additional arrangements before signing this document and the consent form. If you feel uncomfortable discussing a certain topic and do not wish to share your opinion, then you do not have to, and your decision will be respected.

Confidentiality:

All participation within this research project will remain confidential. Any information gained during the data collection phases will be kept private. Any information you provide will be protected by a pseudonym within the transcription, and the presentation of the data. In other words, you will remain anonymous. I would ask that you do not discuss any information provided within any phase of the data collection process with anyone outside of the group. This is to ensure that all topics discussed within any phase of the data collection will remain confidential; however, this cannot prevent any other participant discussing with other individuals outside of the group. Therefore, I am unable to promise complete confidentiality in the unlikely event that another participant discusses given information with an external party.

Data generated during this project will be retained in accordance with the University's policy on Academic Integrity. Data generated during the course of this research will be kept securely in electronic form for 5 years from the end of the project. This format will be kept on UCLan's password-protected, secured online server.

Sharing results:

No information will be shared during any stage of this research project; sole access to the collected data remains with myself and my Director of Studies, my supervisor, Dr Clive Palmer. The results of the research will be kept online on UCLan's secured, password protected data base. The results of this research will be used in my final thesis for the PhD. If you would like a copy of the research, please contact me via the given email address, or alternatively you can ring the given number.

This research project has received full ethical approval from The University of Central Lancashire.

Contact Details.

Email: TCMHampson@uclan.ac.uk

Mobile Number: 07527927253

If you have any concerns regarding how the research study has been conducted, please contact:

Email: OfficerforEthics@uclan.ac.uk

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet. If you wish to take part in this research project, you are required to read and sign a consent form. If you are taking part, I would also ask that you sign this information sheet to recognise you have read the information provided. If this is something you feel uncomfortable doing, unfortunately you cannot participate in this research. If you require any further information, please <u>do not</u> hesitate to ask.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Hampson, BA(Hons), PGCE, PhD Student.

<u>Participant Name:</u> ____________________________________

<u>Participant Signature:</u> _________________________________

<u>Date:</u> _____________________

8.13. Semi-Structured Interviews – Certificate of Consent

Certificate of Consent – Semi-structured interviews

Title of Investigation: *'Investigating notions of professionalism in the outdoors: by outdoor educational expedition leaders'.*

Researcher: Thomas Hampson **Supervisor:** Dr Clive Palmer

Email: TCMHampson@uclan.ac.uk
CAPalmer@uclan.ac.uk

Date of attendance for semi-structured interviews data collection: TBD

Dear Participant,

You are invited to contribute your experience, knowledge, and perceptions of 'professionalism, professional identity, and profession(s)' as a concept in the context of the outdoor industry; you will contribute to this research project via semi-structured interviews. All data will be transcribed, analysed, and anonymised. The data will be used to identify any initial themes emerging, and a copy of transcriptions can be provided upon request via the given email address: TCMHampson@uclan.ac.uk. The following stage of data collection will be a one-to-one, face-to-face informal interview, if you require any additional arrangements to support your participation, please notify me at your earliest convenience, and I will do my best to assist you with them. Your participation during any stage of the research project is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. I would like to thank you in advance for your time, cooperation and contributions to this project.

Yours sincerely,

THampson.

Thomas Hampson, BA(Hons), PGCE, PhD Student.

Contact Details; Email: TCMHampson@uclan.ac.uk Mobile Number: 07527927253

Statement by the Participant

I understand that this phase of data collection will involve a one-to-one, face-to-face interview.

I have been invited to participate in research about perceptions of 'professionalism, professional identity, and profession(s)' as a concept in the context of the outdoor industry.

I acknowledge that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from this project at any stage without giving any reason.

I agree to keep all information given in the discussion confidential, and I recognise that the information will be recorded, transcribed, and anonymised.

I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the research project, and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand what the project is about and what the research will be used for.

I understand that the results will be anonymous, and any quotations used will not be attributable to me.

I understand that the data collected will be discussed with your supervisor, Dr Clive Palmer.

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study, and I recognise that I can withdraw anytime without consequence.

Print Name of Participant: **…………………………………………………..**

Signature of Participant: **…………………………………………………..**

Date: **………………………………………..**

Statement by the Researcher

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure the participant understands that the following will be done:

1. The information given within the discussion will be kept confidential.
2. The discussions will be recorded, transcribed, and kept secure on the UCLan protected network.
3. The risks to the participants will be reduced where possible.

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

A copy of this informed consent form will be available upon request by the participant.

Print Name of Researcher: **…………………………………………………**

Signature of Researcher: **……………………………………………………**

Date: **……………………………………………….**

8.14. Focus Groups – Certificate of Consent

Certificate of Consent – Phase Two, Focus Groups

Title of Investigation: *'Investigating notions of professionalism in the outdoors: by outdoor educational expedition leaders'.*

Researcher: Thomas Hampson **Supervisor:** Dr Clive Palmer

Email: **TCMHampson@uclan.ac.uk** **CAPalmer@uclan.ac.uk**

Date of attendance for phase two, focus group data collection:

Dear Participant,

You are invited to contribute your experience, knowledge, and perceptions of 'professionalism, professional identity, and profession(s)' as a concept in the context of the outdoor industry. You will contribute to this research project via focus group participation. All data will be transcribed, analysed and anonymised. The data will be used to identify any initial themes emerging, and a copy of transcriptions can be provided upon request via the given email address: TCMHampson@uclan.ac.uk. The following stage of data collection will be a focus group comprising a minimum of four participants. If you require any additional arrangements to support your participation, please notify me at your earliest convenience, and I will do my best to assist you with them. Your participation during any stage of the research project is voluntary, and you may withdraw at any time. I would like to thank you in advance for your time, cooperation, and contributions to this project.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Hampson, BA(Hons), PGCE, PhD Student.

Contact Details; Email: TCMHampson@uclan.ac.uk Mobile Number: 07527927253

Statement by the Participant

I understand that this phase of data collection will involve a focus group, a discussion around the perceptions of 'professionalism, professional identity, and profession(s)' as a concept in the context of the outdoor industry.

I have been invited to participate in research about perceptions of 'professionalism, professional identity, and profession(s)' as a concept in the context of the outdoor industry.

I acknowledge that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from this project at any stage without giving any reason.

I agree to keep all information given in the discussion confidential, and I recognise that the information will be recorded and transcribed.

I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the research project, and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction.

I understand what the project is about and what the research will be used for.

I understand that the results will be anonymous, and any quotations used will not be attributable to me.

I understand that the data collected will be discussed with Thomas Hampson's supervisor, Dr Clive Palmer.

I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study, and I recognise that I can withdraw anytime without consequence.

Print Name of Participant: ___________________________________

Signature of Participant: ___________________________________

Date: ______________________

Statement by the Researcher

I have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant, and to the best of my ability made sure the participant understands that the following will be done:

1. The information given within the discussion will be kept confidential.
2. The discussions will be recorded, transcribed and kept secure on the UCLan protected network.
3. The risks to the participants will be reduced where possible.

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

A copy of this informed consent form will be available upon request by the participant.

Print Name of Researcher: ___________________________________

Signature of Researcher: ___________________________________

Date: ___________________________________