



*An investigation of Youth Work in Irish Youth Services*

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# **An Investigation of Youth Work in Irish Youth Services**

Cormac Doran

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of  
Sheffield Hallam University  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Education

June 2016

### *Declaration of Authenticity*

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

ID number: 13031286

Date: 25/06/2016

*Every green lighter, every tablespoon and every mile driven have made this all possible!*

*Thank you Dad.*

# Acknowledgements

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My support crew consisting of my wife and three children will finally get to have me around without having to escape to the man cave that is my office at home to write or read.

This journey would not have taken place without Ciara, my beautiful wife.

# Abstract

The aim of this project is to examine the extent to which youth work in Irish youth services pursues a social controlling function and to identify and examine types of power being deployed in the sector. The growth of youth services with paid, professional staff since the early 1990's has seen the emergence of programmes for targeted young people (Scanlon et al 2010). Different in nature to historical, volunteer led youth work that focused on emancipating young people Lorenz (2009, p.8) identifies how contemporary targeted youth work "represents the interests of the system, which regards integration as an organisational task requiring structures, rational plans and utilitarian goals."

This study investigates youth work provision within a sample of Irish youth services. This sample is from a wide geographical range and consists of community based, independent and youth work organisation type youth services. Using an adaptation of Constructivist Grounded Theory (Charmaz 2006) and Adaptive Theory (Layder 1998), perspectives of youth service managers and civil servants with responsibility for youth provision are explored. The research process is focused on two main areas: the extent to which provision of youth programmes within the sampled services fulfils a social controlling function and the identification and exploration of the role of various stakeholders in programmes.

The project addresses the above foci by gathering data through interviews and using a three stage coding process to interpret data. Key theoretical tools are adapted and deployed in a pragmatic nature to suit the project. Theory emanating from Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System is used when presenting findings relating to various levels within the area of study with Bourdieu's concepts of Field and Capital used to explore subjective data as opposed to traditional objective approaches. The result of this process is the creation of new knowledge regarding the role of programmes in youth services, the identification of agencies in the sector and their motivations for involvement in youth work programmes.

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## **Glossary of Terms**

### **Youth Service:**

A project that delivers youth programmes often made up of a variety of programmes funded in different ways and with different objectives and outcomes.

### **Education and Training Boards (ETBs):**

Formally Vocational and Educational Committees, these 16 organisations have statutory function under the Youth Work Act (2001) for the delivery and organisation of youth work in their geographical area.

### **Youth Officer:**

Employed by the ETBs, Youth Officers have work responsibility for delivery within their area as well as working alongside youth services to implement the National Quality Standards Framework.

### **Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA):**

The Government Department with responsibility for Youth Work.

### **Irish Youth Justice Service (IYJS):**

Formally a sole division of the Department of Justice, the IYJS is now split between this Department and the DCYA. The section within the DCYA has responsibility for programmes such as the Garda Youth Diversion Projects while the section still within the Department of Justice has responsibility for issues such as detention facilities for children.

### **Garda Youth Diversion Programme (GYDP):**

These IYJS projects are primarily delivered by youth organisations and some community organisations. They are crime prevention projects that use some youth work methods to achieve their objectives. They engage primary referrals that have been received cautions by the Garda Juvenile Liaison Officer and secondary referrals that are deemed at risk of offending and have been referred by other community organisations.



# **Chapter 1      Overview of the Study**

## **1.1 Introduction**

Regarding contemporary youth work, the author is in agreement with Lalor, de Roiste and Devlin's (2007, p.269) assertion that "youth work's methods and activities vary widely, and include recreational and sporting activities, indoor and outdoor pursuits, artistic and cultural programmes, spiritual development, health promotion, issue based activities (for example, social justice, the environment) and intercultural and international programmes and exchanges." With a broad range of voluntary agencies providing services to young people, a fundamental shift has taken place regarding the rationale and methods for this provision in Ireland from youth work's charity based, emancipatory past. Scanlon et al (2011, p.3) point to the State exerting "an important, if indirect, influence through its funding of the sector (and more recently through the National Quality Standards Framework)." Since the 1990's there has been a rise in the amount of youth services staffed by paid, professional youth workers and funded by the State through a variety of mechanisms (O'hAodain 2010, p.62). These services are managed by an array of voluntary agencies with varying missions and ideologies. Recent years have also seen policy changes and the introduction of one hundred Garda Youth Diversion Programmes, primarily being provided by youth work organisations as well as policy changes and a move towards outcome linked funding for organisations. A preliminary literature review could not unveil any studies that had been conducted for almost twenty years to examine practice in Irish youth services and the reasons for the different approaches to practice. This project seeks to address this gap in knowledge by examining youth services within the sector in order to create new theory that is grounded in data, to describe what is taking place in contemporary youth services as well as analysing various influencing forces at play in the sector.

## **1.2 The Research Environment**

The Youth Work Act (2001, Section 3) defines Irish youth work as "a planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the

personal and social development of young persons through their voluntary participation, and which is –

- (a) Complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training; and
- (b) Provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations.”

This section of the Act in essence defines the parameters of youth work. Under the Act the role of the National Youth Council of Ireland is recognised as being the “representative body for voluntary youth work organisation in Ireland. It represents fifty two voluntary youth organisations and uses its collective experience to act on issues that impact on young people” (youth.ie, 2010). Examples of member organisations include:

- Amnesty International
- Belong to Youth Service (A national youth organisation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) young people, aged between 14 and 23.)
- Catholic Youth Care
- Eco Unesco
- National Association for Travellers Centres

These fifty organisations come from a variety of ideological stances often trying to achieve radically different objectives from their work with young people. This range of ideologies and objectives leads to a significant variety in the style and outputs of practice. Some provide their youth work indirectly by training volunteers to provide youth clubs while some of the organisations operate youth services providing projects on behalf of and competing for funding from various agencies. Kearney (2009), writing on behalf of the Youth Services Interagency Group in his forward to the Purpose and Outcome of Youth Work (2009, p.5) states that “youth work is a voluntary and non-formal education process taking place in an informal setting...it addresses issues of formal education, health (including drugs, sexual health and physical wellbeing), community, housing, family life, crime, employment, parenting, relationships, citizenship and many others impacting on young people.” For any sector, this range of issues would be difficult to manage with various Authors such



as Powell et al (2010, p.88) calling for a national strategy to address the nature of the Irish Youth Work landscape.

### **1.2.1 Explanation of Terminology**

Following Davies and Merton (2009, p.9) and Scanlon et al (2011, p.5), youth work shall be referred to as 'universal' or 'targeted' within this research. The former is where young people have not previously been labelled and can attend on a voluntary basis without coercion. Targeted youth work within this study refers to youth work provided to young people that have been identified by a variety of agencies or organisations for specific reasons such as behavioural and health issues. This distinction between the two types provides working definitions for the study.

Non-compliance or social deviance can be viewed from a number of theoretical perspectives such as the structural functionalism of Merton (1968), Goffman's (1968) symbolic interaction or the Conflict Theory that stems from Marx's work. Merton's Structural Strain Theory outlines the role that culture plays in providing goals for members of society to aim for with the social structures providing the means or mechanisms to achieve their goals. It is when there is an imbalance between culture and the social structures that individuals behave in contrast to the norms of the society that they are in. Goffman's Labelling Theory (1968) places an emphasis on the societal actors that are in power by outlining how this grouping establishes what is criminal or not and apply labels to those that go against what is deemed to be acceptable by the powerful. By applying labels, they are able to reinforce and justify their power through their institutions by placing the labelled outside of the norm. Deviation within Conflict Theory such as that espoused by Marx identifies the role of the oppressed becoming aware of the forces that oppress and acting in opposition to these forces.

Acknowledging these theoretical views, the concept of social deviance as used in this study is located in a contemporary context of a neo liberal society. While a further examination of the workings of neo liberalism is provided within this study, the concept of regulation within it has been taken from Rose (2000, p.325). Rose

discusses society as a space where the subject is on a cycle of improvement of oneself with a constant coercion to buy products with regulation being enforced by multiple forces and agencies. The subject is always in “continuous training, lifelong learning, perpetual assessment, continual incitement to buy, to improve oneself, constant monitoring of health and never ending risk management” (p.325). Deviance within this concept can be taken to be when subjects stray from the social norms of a market driven society through their behaviour and actions.

### **1.2.2 The Problem Area – Policy and Practice**

Jenkinson (2000, p.106) discusses how “over the years, youth work in Ireland has been struggling to develop an identity of its own; an ethos and conceptual framework that is particular to that discipline, as opposed to being seen as an offshoot of social work, probation work or even sport and recreation activities.” She points out (p.7) that there is much confusion, even within the sector as to what youth work entails. Although, youth work has been provided by various charities and organisations for over a century in Ireland, the current structure of professional youth services has largely arisen over the last thirty to forty years. Devlin (2010) outlines how historical factors such as the influence of the Church, relations with the UK and the Catholic /Protestant divide have all shaped the early evolution of youth work from a movement approach based on the concept of subsidiarity and rooted in a volunteerism. This saw the state take a reserved approach regarding involvement until an initial intervention in 1943 with the establishment of the Comhairle le Leas Óige (Council for the Welfare of Youth) to tackle unemployment in Dublin city.

As a result of various policies and government initiatives such as A Policy for Youth and Sport - The Bruton Report (1977), The Development of Youth Work Services (1980) and The Final Report of the National Youth Policy Committee - The Costello Report (1984), funding and systems of governance have grown on an ad-hoc basis over this time. Coyne and Donohoe (2013, p.80) refer to the development of these services being “undoubtedly positive” but uncoordinated, inconsistent and confusing, not least for the staff and volunteers trying to raise funds and deliver services.”

With the Youth Work Act (2001) stating that youth work is “primarily provided by voluntary organisations” (Section 1), the state has taken a ‘hands off’ approach in relation to delivery and has opted to provide funding to charities to deliver front line programmes. Youth services, as studied in this research, are a relatively new phenomenon and have mainly grown since the crystallisation of government policy emanating from the Bruton Report (1977). The role of the State has evolved into that of overseer of the sector with responsibility for youth and youth work policy, allocation of funding and implementation of a quality assurance system. At the time of writing, these roles are carried out through the administration of a number of funding lines as well as the devising and roll out of the National Quality Standards Framework for Youth Work that has been piloted and is now entering a stage where it is being implemented nationwide. Policy is devised in conjunction with the National Youth Work Advisory Committee which has a statutory function under the Youth Work Act (2001) to advise the Minister of the day with responsibility for youth work.

The environment of youth work, of which youth services are a part, is also undergoing a change in how it carries out its work. As with other State funded measures there has been a rise in what Jeffs and Smith (2008) discuss as a “new managerial attempt to make Youth Work the servant of the Market” by having a “growing emphasis on identifying the potentially deviant or dysfunctional young person as the centre of Youth Work’s attention” as well as “the insidious way in which delivering accredited outcomes, even if only on paper, has formalised and thus undermined the importance of relationships in the work.” The emphasis on deviance and dysfunction has seen an increase in funded youth work programmes with a focus on issues such as crime and substance misuse while the influencing managerialism has seen the introduction of planning methods such as Logic Modelling and outcomes focused processes that align with the funding agencies requests.

Lorenz (2009, p.8) dichotomises contemporary youth work by identifying two key strands. The first is a type that stems from youth movements identified above that focuses on “autonomy, identity and authenticity as the constituting task of adolescence” as being its goal. He points to how this type of youth work can disturb “the established social order and cause instability” but also be a source of renewal



and creativity for society. The second strand, in opposition to this, identifies how youth work “represents the interests of the system, which regards integration as an organisational task requiring structures, rational plans and utilitarian goals” Lorenz (2009, p.8). While reflecting Jenkinson’s comments above, Scanlon et al. (2011, p.4) outline how increased state funding has been available for programmes with ‘targeted’ young people involved in crime and other social deviance. Moreover, they highlight concerns regarding a two tier structure within youth work with the ‘mainstream’ traditional, youth club approach being under-funded while “targeted projects take on a compensatory role, making up for the shortcomings of statutory services, including justice, education and health” (2011, p.4). Similar to the considerations of Jeffs and Smith (2002) regarding the development of a two tiered approach in the UK, Irish youth work, within the targeted approach funded through youth services, seems to be migrating away from traditional youth work values of voluntary participation and group work towards more coercive approaches to engaging young people in programmes that focus on their individual behaviours and needs using case management approaches as seen in other professions. McMahon (2009, p.123) takes the stance that through the biased funding of these targeted programmes, the state has “taken control of the management of Irish youth work.”

The National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI n.d.), when summarising youth work as defined in the Youth Work Act (2001) list the values as:

- Empowerment of young people
- Equality and inclusion
- Respect for all young people
- Involvement of young people in decision making
- Partnership
- Voluntary participation

Due to the evolving nature of youth work and associated policies and literature, as well as the large range of member organisations of the NYCI alluded to above, this listing of values does not seem to capture recent developments in youth work such as the focus on funded projects through in youth services. Indeed, when discussing this evolution almost two decades ago, France and Wiles (1997, p.72) highlight that “contemporary youth work has tended to keep the rhetoric of being a universal and

voluntaristic service, but the reality is now different.” The keeping of this rhetoric has led to a lack of literature that specifically addresses issues such as the values of targeted provision. However, Barrett (2003, p.49 – p.57) does address the tensions between the universal and targeted provision by outlining the arguments for and against the latter. In discussing the negative effects of targeting Barrett points to this type of provision being deficit focused in that it is primarily aimed at rectifying a problem that a young person has. She also highlights that young people and communities can be labelled and stigmatised by being targeted by youth work programmes as well as outlining that a social controlling function can be extended to young people by involving them in specifically focused, targeted provision. Barrett’s positive elements regarding targeting point to the involvement of young people who may find it difficult to get involved in universal provision as well as more time and resources being available to work with smaller groups than in universal provision. Her primary argument for targeted youth work is that it is the “best use of money and resources” (Barrett 2003, p. 49).

Youth work organisations now deliver programmes on behalf of a range of different interest groups such as Drugs Task Forces, County Councils, the Irish Youth Justice Service and philanthropic organisations. These programmes are primarily provided within youth services, by employed youth workers with specifically targeted young people taking part. With increased financial support for these targeted programmes, in line with Jeffs and Smith’s (2002) synopsis of British youth work, it would seem that one strand of the Irish sector has moved away from the core values and ethos of youth work as outlined by Coyne and Donohoe (2013, p.106). A preliminary literature review could find little evidence of research conducted on this aspect of the youth work sector. The majority of publications regarding Irish youth work address the sector as a whole and fail to address the divide in provision that is currently present. While multiple authors (Kiely 2009, Mc Mahon 2009) have decried the involvement of the state and targeting of young people, there is a deficit in knowledge regarding what is taking place within youth services in Ireland, the stakeholders involved and their motivations for involvement. The purpose of this study is to address this deficit and create new knowledge that outlines what is taking place and why it is occurring within Irish youth services.

### 1.3 The Research Questions

To address the gaps in knowledge identified above, the following research questions are addressed within the study:

1. To apply and extend appropriate theories to understand the extent to which current youth work provision pursues a controlling social function.

Popple (2015, p.94), while discussing community work, a sector that has many underlying similarities to youth work, portrays the associated challenges to identity when umbrella terms are applied to a sector. As Jenkinson (2000) outlines with youth work, the community sector has a number of sub models such as community care, community organisation, community development etc., with varying strategies and outcomes. Although all are state funded in some way, the pluralist nature of the sector presents difficulties when attempts are made to identify clear models as there are many overlapping features. The literature suggests that in a similar way, targeted youth work, while being funded by the state through a variety of mechanisms, is rooted in multiple epistemological perspectives with various goals and strategies. Originating in an emancipatory, movement based approach that aligns with Marxist theory, the targeted youth work now provided takes multiple forms, with various working practices and outcomes. Rather than being emancipatory, this youth work appears to act as a regulating agent of young people, responsible for inculcating acceptable societal norms and assisting in the controlling of actions that go against these norms.

By employing and adapting a number of theoretical conceptual tools such as Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) this research identifies and investigates the various types of targeted youth work that are taking place within the research sample, the methods being used, the profile of young person that is being targeted and the reasons for this targeting. By conducting the investigation using a Social Constructivist approach, the perspectives of managers of youth services and civil servants are interpreted to create new knowledge and understanding of what is taking place within selected services. Answering these sub questions will provide an understanding of targeted youth work, a sector that has not been the topic of



significant research. It will also create knowledge regarding the role that it plays as a regulatory tool within contemporary society.

2. To use aspects of Bourdieusian theory to identify and examine the power that stakeholders deploy within the sector to align it with their own objectives.

There are various statutory and non-statutory agencies involved in the funding and shaping of youth work. This aspect of the research seeks to identify these organisations and investigate their role in targeted youth work. While data to identify direct state support through the DCYA is available, there is a dearth of information in the public domain regarding statutory organisations outside of the DCYA and almost no information to identify private or commercial funding agencies. This aspect of the research seeks to identify these agencies and their motivations for involvement in the sector. Resulting from this investigation, a Bourdieusian analysis will be undertaken to show the power that these agencies possess and how they use their power to position themselves to influence the delivery of youth work to young people.

While Bourdieurian concepts such as field and capital play a vital part in understanding and representing the data from the investigation, this aspect of the research stems from Rose's interpretation (1992, p.141) of Foucauldian theory to understand contemporary notions of power and control. Ireland, as with many other contemporary neo liberal states, no longer has the traditional domineering forces such as the Church and the strict cultural norms to guide young people as they develop. Foucault's concept of power according to Rose (1992, p.143) is that "which traverses all practices – from the macro to the micro – through which all persons are ruled, mastered, held in check, administered, steered, guided, by means of which they are led by others or have come to direct or regulate their own actions". Rose argues that with contemporary moves away from harsh disciplining, it is now the subjectivity of individuals that has become the target for manipulation and regulation. Foucault (1977) considers three spaces or dimensions through which regulation takes place – Political, Institutional and Ethical. Targeted youth work, viewed through a Foucauldian lens, is an institutional practice similar to school or the home

where the focus is on maximising “certain capacities of individuals and constrain others.....towards particular ends – responsibility, discipline, diligence and so forth” (Rose 1992, p.2). In essence, this concept of power works through an individual's subjectivity as opposed to trying to suppress and dominate it in a traditional sense.

The young people within youth services are targeted by the services and the supporting agencies for involvement based on some behaviour or need for support that requires governance or alteration in various ways. The objective of this part of the research is to identify what agencies are supporting the youth services in this work as well as the nature of their support through analysing how they use their resources to influence the nature of the youth work that is delivered. Bourdieu discusses these resources or power as Capital and this study will examine the agencies' various forms of capital to show which are more dominant in steering the direction of targeted youth work to achieve their desired outcomes related to the direction of the young people's subjectivity.

#### **1.3.1 Benefits of the Research**

It is envisaged that the results of this study will contribute new theory that will be of benefit to funding agencies, students and other interested actors within the sector by identifying what is taking place and unveiling processes that guide delivery of programmes. This will benefit the sector by contributing to the 'knowledge pool' of youth work theory while specifically addressing an under examined aspect of the sector. The new knowledge will assist scholars of youth work by clearly outlining the composition of this section of youth work while also providing clarity to agencies involved in financing youth services. While over fifty-three million euro has been channelled into core programmes in youth services by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA 2014) and a large range of additional funding agencies contributing resources, previous studies such as Devlin and Gunning (2009) have merely addressed the benefits of youth work as a universal concept without examining this specific aspect of the sector within youth services.

#### **1.4 Theoretical Framework for the Study**

The research questions above aim to study the operation of youth services from different perspectives. While investigating how they operate in terms of the types of youth work that are provided, this research also addresses the various institutions



that are involved while considering the societal and social context that the youth services exist in. To understand the various levels of the research as well as the methodological considerations and chosen methods for each aspect, a multi-level theoretical framework is used throughout. By adapting Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory it is possible to map the different stages of the study. Bronfenbrenner presents a multi-level theory originally devised with the purpose of studying the development of a child within various contexts such as the family, community or society. The model also addresses the interactions between these and the resulting impact on the child.

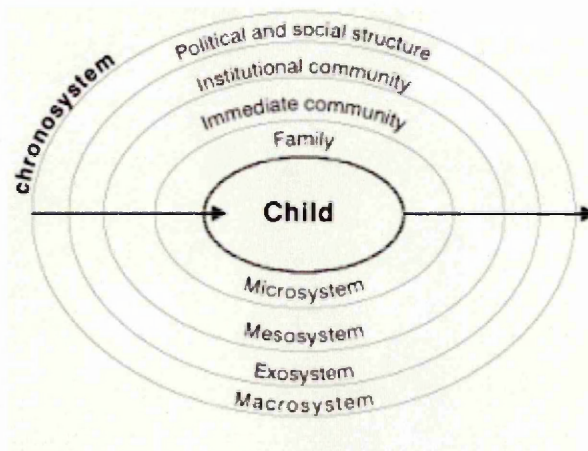


Figure 1 - The Ecological System (Halpern and Figueires 2004, p.105)

The levels within this map have some level of influence on each other. The Microsystem include those factors that are immediate to the child such as the family and the home. The Mesosystem addresses the effects of the immediate community that the child is in. For example, how the parents of a child may interact with teachers or childcare providers. The Exosystem level can be used to examine institutions such as schools and health services and their effects on the development of the child while the Macrosystem addresses the societal context and issues such as prevalent ideologies and political systems that may influence how the child develops.

Adapting Bronfenbrenner's work to act as a framework for this study allows for theorising in relation to the different objectives of the investigation. Working from the outer layer of the original model, the Macrosystem, this study identifies and

discusses the current societal context within which targeted youth work functions. By analysing this aspect, it will be shown how influencing factors at a societal level impact on the issues within the inner layers of the model thereby addressing some of the queries related to the second research question.

Also related to the study of stakeholders, investigations related to the Exosystem on the next level will identify the power that these institutions possess and how it is deployed while the Mesosystem addresses topics related to the first research question that investigates the purpose of the targeted youth work being studied. This is achieved by identifying the nature of projects within the services as well as the outcomes that are expected with young people as a result of taking part in the programmes. Investigation at the Microlevel is directed at issues such as specific methods used within the work, the profile of the young people taking part and the related reasons for targeting by youth services.

This multi-level framing of the different aspects of the project allows for a clear understanding of the factors that influence targeted youth work at different levels. as well as how it impacts on young people. Drawing on Creswell's (2003, p.5) "interrelated levels of decisions" that inform the process of designing investigations, this research process is influenced by two paradigms (Lincoln and Guba 2000) or philosophical assumptions that inform the epistemology, methodology and the methods of gathering and analysing data. As outlined above, the researcher has been faced with a lack of knowledge regarding youth services and the various stakeholders that play a role in how this aspect of the youth work sector operates. This, along with a personal knowledge of state intervention in practice was the initial issue or problem that attracted him to the topic of study. These factors also guided the research questions and influenced the selection of the research sample. More significantly, it was these 'problems' regarding contemporary targeted youth work that steered the research towards a pragmatic framework (Patton 1990) where the main focus of the process is on finding an answer or solution.

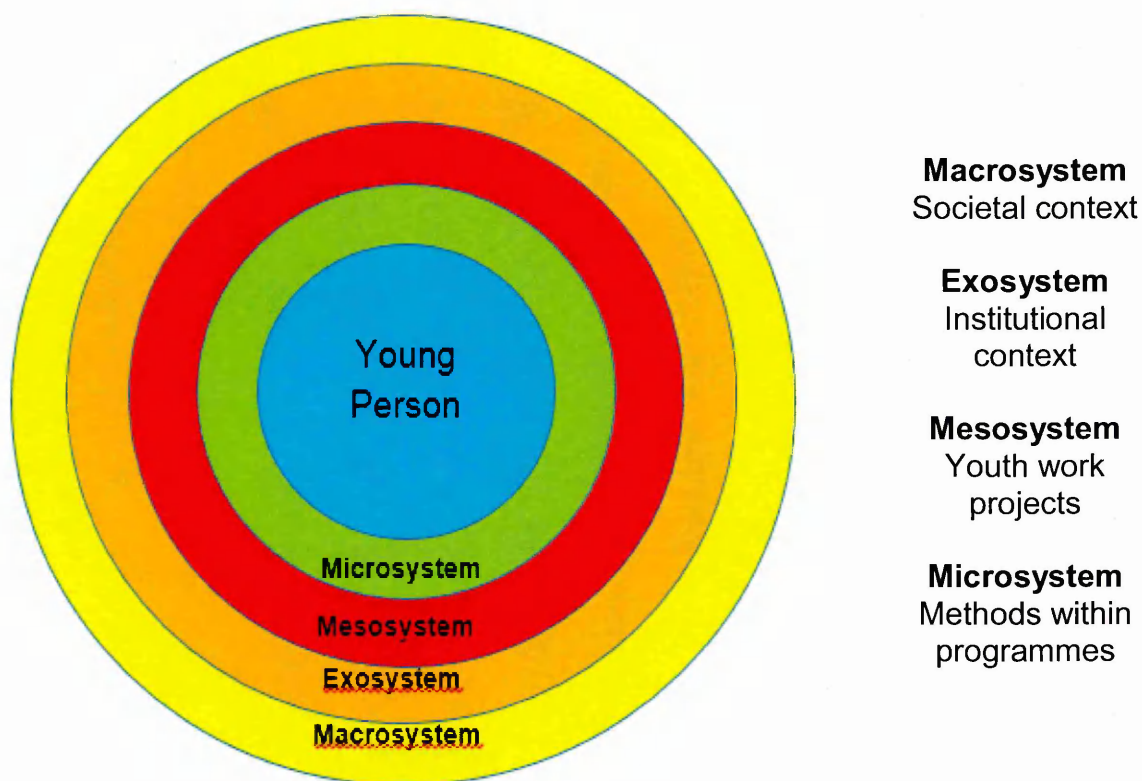


Figure 2 Adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System

This guiding pragmatic approach allows the researcher to operate without being restricted to certain research methods, allowing for a 'whatever works' approach to be adopted in order to achieve a solution, in this case further knowledge regarding targeted youth work and its stakeholders.

However, as will be outlined within the Methodology Chapter, in order to obtain the data, the researcher, in designing the research process, decided that the information would be best obtained from selected actors within the sector, relying on subjective understandings and knowledge that the sample possess about the topic. This in turn places the research within an interpretive and constructivist paradigm (Angen 2000), where the researcher must make sense of the data and generate theory in an inductive process. This framing of the research, where the context that the sample exists in as well as the previous experience of the researcher within the sector is recognised, acknowledges that an objective truth will not be discovered as would be desired in a positivist inspired study.



## 1.5 The Research Process

Following a thematic review of literature relevant to the study, chapter three and four provide extensive explanations of the theoretical framework that guides the research as well as the methods employed to gather and analyse data. Ten interviews were undertaken with eight youth service managers and two civil servants using a semi structured approach. The managers were recruited from various geographical locations across the Republic of Ireland and from differing types of youth services with the objective of obtaining their perspectives of the subject being researched. Due to the ad-hoc development of the youth work sector over time, services are now provided by an array of organisations. These include large national organisations as well as small independent organisations set up in communities with local management committees. A cross sectional analysis (Easterby-Smith et al, p.35) is discussed in more depth within the Methods Chapter to follow. While being typical of the make-up and types of services within the sector, the organisations were chosen from a wide geographical spread to take into account the impact of the Local Education and Training Boards and their Youth Officers.<sup>1</sup> Each service is also made up of differing programmes such as Special Projects for Youth, Garda Youth Diversion Programmes and drugs programmes supported by Regional or Local Drugs Task Forces. To this end, the following types of services were chosen to be representative of typical youth services:

- Youth services from a national organisation-Foroige
- Youth services from an organisation that had a specific geographical remit - Catholic Youth Care<sup>2</sup>.
- Independent youth services
- A youth service that has a local management committee but is a part of a large federation.

Using elements of Charmaz' constructivist Grounded Theory (2006) and Layder's Adaptive Theory (1998) the resulting data was analysed and new theory, that is

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<sup>1</sup> Youth Officers are employees of Local Education and Training Boards. These were formally Vocational Educational Committees. In July 2013, 33 V.E.C.'s were consolidated into 16 new Local Education and Training Boards by the Minister for Education.

<sup>2</sup> Catholic Youth Care merged with Crosscare during the course of the data gathering stage of the research

grounded in the data, emerged. This data is also explored using Bourdieusian Field Theory (1992) to examine the role of various stakeholders within the sector. Using Bourdieu's thinking tools of Field and Capital to theoretically frame the investigation rather than as methods facilitates an understanding of how power manifests and is deployed within this aspect of the youth work sector and provides the reader with an understanding of the influences at play.

## **1.6 Summary of the Introductory Chapter**

This chapter has outlined the environment and context within which the research has been conducted. A lack of knowledge regarding types of youth work as well as the stakeholders involved has been identified as the foci of inquiry. As well as an introduction to the theoretical framework that guides the process, the specific areas of investigation have been outlined within an explanation of the research questions.

## **Chapter 2      Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction to the review**

The purpose of this section is to identify and interpret literature that will assist in answering the research questions regarding the modes of provision and the actors involved in Irish youth services. Through a clearly defined process, current understanding of the issues and the context being studied are examined and certain deficiencies within the field of knowledge are highlighted to support the direction of the research. The theoretical framing that underpins the research heavily influences this review. The approach taken is one where existing knowledge is interpreted and assists in constructing a new understanding of provision. This strategy also allows for initial identification of stakeholders that are involved and their positioning within the sector. A systematic approach as represented in Figure 3 has been followed throughout this review.

The chapter is in five sections with the first addressing the logistics of the review such as the strategy employed and the parameters for inclusion. Following this, a review of state policy in relation to youth work is discussed from an Irish and English perspective. The purpose of this stage is to examine the effect that state involvement has had in the development of youth work from a mechanism for the emancipation of young people to what could now be judged as being a regulatory function on behalf of the state. English youth work policy has been included due to significant similarities with its Irish counterpart in how it has evolved both in theory and in practice. While being more outward about the role of youth work as a state mechanism, English developments in integrating into the formal system are more advanced than in Ireland. The third section of the review addresses theoretical frameworks that have been used to examine youth work and its role from a variety of perspectives such as ideological standpoints and the implications for practice of using adopting certain stances. The review goes on to examine literature related to the direct funding of youth work by the state, the projects that are delivered within youth services and the outcomes that are expected for young people and for society. Finally, in order to inform the study in identifying differences between what takes place in youth services and traditional club based youth work, literature relating to the concept of targeting has been reviewed.

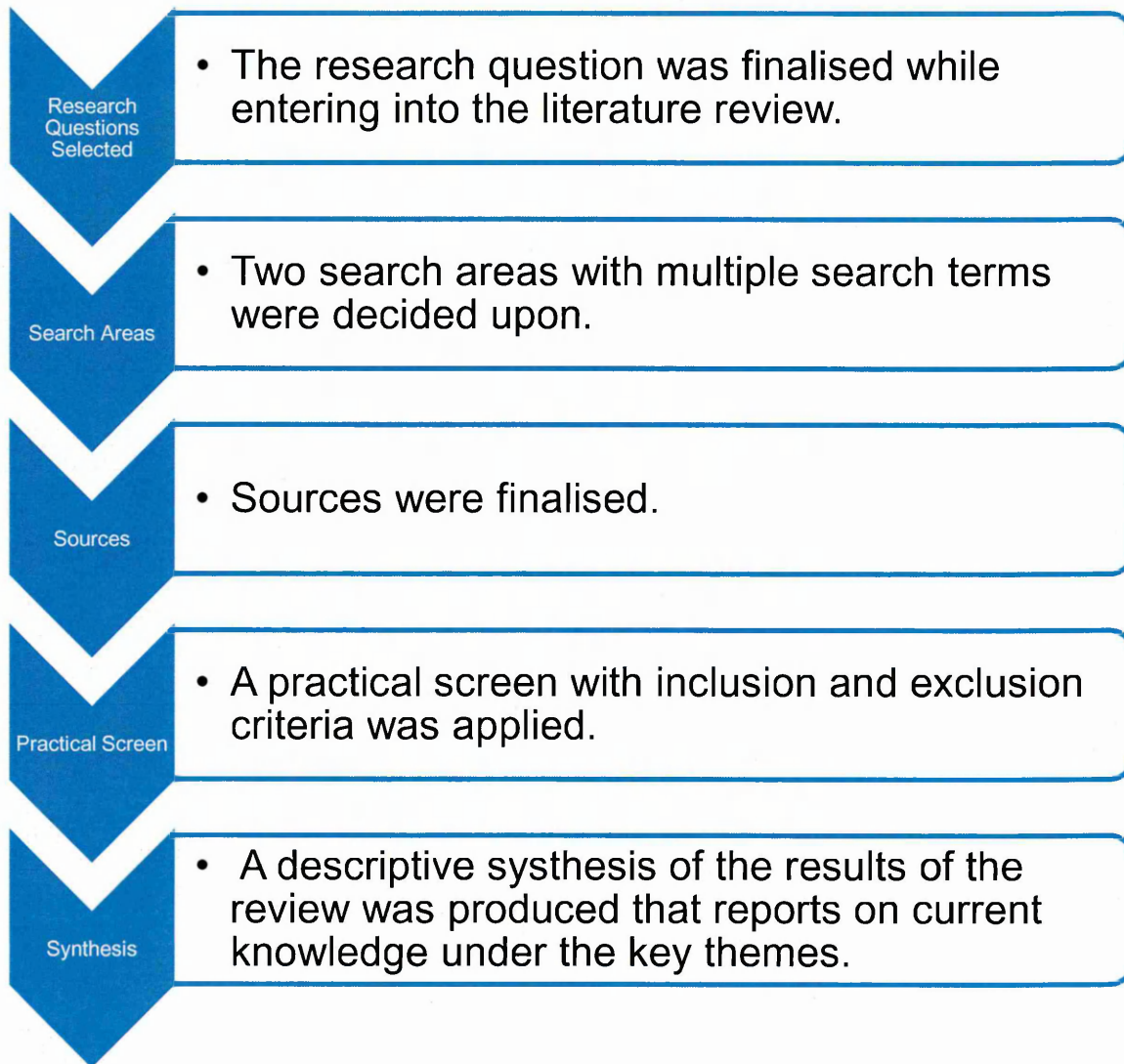


Figure 3 - The Research Process adapted from Fink (2003, p.4)

## 2.2 Search Strategy

The research questions identified in Chapter 1 guide the review by influencing the themes under which literature is examined. As well as contributing to the parameters of the search, the questions also influenced the criteria under which publications have been deemed suitable for inclusion while assisting the review process to not become unfocused by digressing to the larger field of knowledge that surrounds youth work as a whole. In line with the concept of funnelling as espoused by Ridley (2008, p.84), sub themes further focus the enquiry so as to ensure relevant literature is being addressed. Within the gathering of literature, they have acted as search



terms to gather relevant information. Figure 4 presents the initial two major areas under which literature was search for with eleven sub themes to focus the search.

### **2.2.1 Criteria for Inclusion in the Review**

Expanding on the concept of funnelling mentioned above, the nature of the topic being researched allowed for the metaphorical casting of a wide net when setting inclusion and exclusion criteria for the study. Wallace and Wray (2006, p. 92) provide a simple, four-fold categorisation for identifying literature:

1. Theoretical Literature
2. Research Literature
3. Practice Literature
4. Policy Literature

This was an initial starting point for determining criteria on which literature could be deemed appropriate for inclusion and assisted in focusing the search. As will become apparent, the theoretical literature related to the research question allows for a high level understanding of the ideologies that have influenced youth work evolution to the present day. It also provides theoretical understandings of frameworks of practice. Research literature that has been included, such as studies and reports on investigations carried out within the sector; provide specific knowledge, produced using accepted research practices. A small amount of practice based literature, while not being subjected to the same rigorous criteria as published research, has been included due to the subjective nature of the overall study. Aveyard (2010, p.73) justifies the use of various sources of 'grey literature' such as web pages and annual reports in order to expose 'hidden' evidence or to gather information from outside of what may be a biased academic view point. While these have been referred to, caution has also been employed as platforms such as websites also act as a marketing medium for organisations within the study. Due to the applied nature of youth work, there is a wealth of this form of literature in comparison to theoretical and research based knowledge. Finally, literature related to policy has been vital for consideration due to the changing nature of youth work and the influence that the state has had. Policy, whether deriving from the state or another stakeholder has been reviewed to examine its impact on the development of youth work both in Ireland and further afield. As well as this historical



contextualising using past policy papers, recent policy has been examined to garner an understanding of the current situation regarding state influence on the sector. Allowing for this broad categorisation, certain criteria were also developed so as not to be overwhelmed and have an unfocused review. Bearing the research question and the interpretive, constructive theoretical approach of the study in mind, a degree of objectivity was needed to ensure that the literature was not completely biased. To explain; the nature of the majority of the literature, outside of policy statements, is partial and not evidence based. Almost all reports were written on behalf of and funded by an organisation or grouping with an interest in the results with researchers heavily involved in qualitative investigation. Also, almost no quantitative research such as randomised control trials could be found where a positivist, approach was taken during data gathering and analysis. Whether positivist or non-positivist in nature, the literature found almost always lacked objective views. As a result of an initial scan of the literature related to the topic being studied, the following criteria were used for inclusion in the review:

#### Time Period:

One reason for this review was to gain knowledge of the historical development of youth work in order to understand the later evolution of youth services. The first formal paper in relation to the concept of youth services in an Irish context was by the NYCI (1973) where they outlined a plan for the development for services to young people by the state. This led to a number of key government reports that explain the role of the state and other agencies in providing these services. Although the universal provision of youth work existed for a century before this report, 1973 acts as a starting point for the involvement of the state in formalising its approach to the youth work sector.

#### Voluntary Participation:

Smith (2013) writes “the meaning of the term ‘youth work’ is difficult to pin down. When people talk about youth work they can mean very different things.” As youth work has a variety of contested meanings, for the purpose of reviewing and discussing relevant literature it was necessary to identify core factors. Guided by the Youth Work Act (2001), voluntary participation on behalf of young people in programmes was identified as being a criterion for inclusion. This ruled out literature

on a large amount of programmes such as those operated by the Probation Service or other aspects of the justice system where young people are compelled to participate as part of a sentencing programme. While the methods of some of these programmes may seem very similar to youth work activities, the literature suggests that voluntary participation on behalf of the young person acts as a clear identifier of youth work programmes.

#### Provided by voluntary organisations

Literature regarding programmes operated by statutory agencies has been excluded. This is based on the definition of youth work as outlined in the Act (2001).

#### Geography

As well as having contested understandings, depending on the geographical location being studied, youth work can also have a variety of aims or reasons for being carried out. This can also lead to vast differences in appearance in practice. For example, youth work in the United States is often directed at gang violence or gun crime where as in Australia a large youth work focus has been placed on working with the aboriginal community. For comparison and support purposes, this review uses English youth work for its similarities in historical evolution, funding and practice. While significantly more literature may have been available on youth work in Northern Ireland or Scotland, the Author was interested in gaining information on similarities rather than being distracted by exploring differences between nations. The main body of reviewed literature is from an Irish context as it is youth work in this specific geographical location that this study is concerned with.

#### Peer Reviewed Publications.

Due to the small amount of literature available, a difficulty arose when considering whether to apply a methodological screen for youth work related research. As well as the amount available, the methods employed when researching youth work have, like this study, been predominately qualitative, subjective and interview based investigations. There have been few quantitative studies completed to date. In the absence of a methodological screen, when reviewing research papers, a requirement that they be peer reviewed before publication was imposed by the author. This however, only applied to research papers.

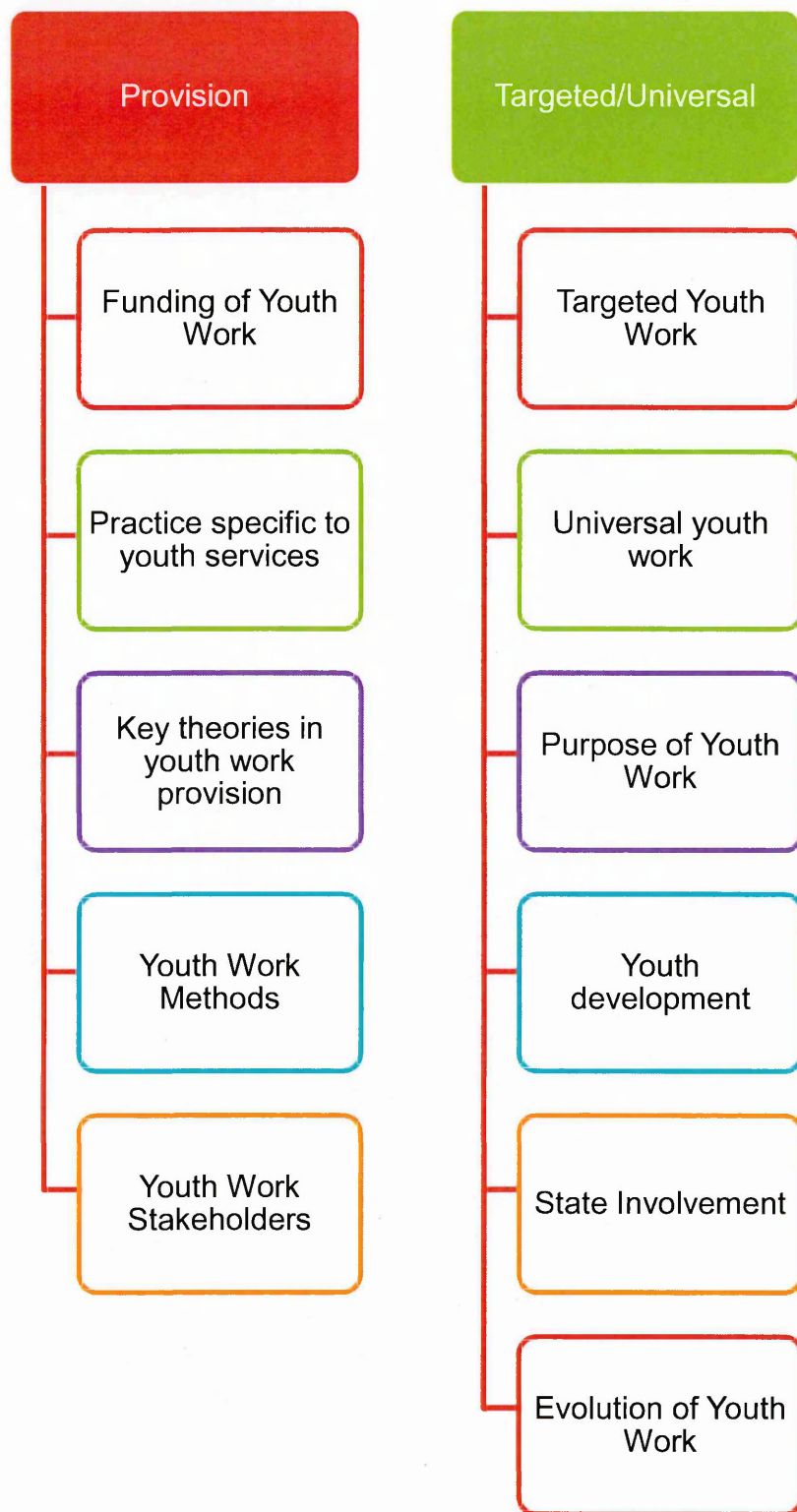


Figure 4 - Search areas and sub themes

### 2.2.2 Sources

A number of sources were used to harvest literature. These include books, academic journals, reports from youth work organisations, government departments and additional stakeholders and websites. Forde, Kiely and Meade (2009, p.2) profess that “for academics and activists who are engaged in youth work and community development practice, the very limited amount of Irish published material in these areas poses significant problems”. While I have found this statement to be largely correct in the course of my search, it must be recognised that a small body of literature published in Ireland and based on youth work specifically in Irish youth services, does exist. Recent developments such as the text book *Youth and Community Work, Critical Perspectives* (2009) as well as the launching of the peer reviewed journal, *Youth Studies Ireland* have added to the milieu. Nevertheless, the hindering effect of the current lack of literature related to this topic in Ireland can be found in the recent systematic map of youth work research conducted on behalf of the DCYA (Dickson et al. 2013). Of the one hundred and eleven empirical studies that were reviewed, only two were Irish publications based on Irish youth work. The majority of the studies are what could be deemed ‘youth development’ rather than youth work that this study is concerned with.

The Onesearch facility allowed for electronic searching of both Sheffield Hallam University and the Author’s own institute library databases. This meant that books, journals and reports could be accessed using the search terms identified above. Onesearch also allows the user to set parameters regarding what to include in the search without the need to mine individual databases and journals. As well as the literature that was found using this method, the author also undertook an in-depth scan of specific databases where he was aware of relevant literature such as the Irish Youth Work Journal, the Journal of Applied Social Studies and infed.org.

The websites of youth work organisations and other stakeholders were also explored to uncover literature relevant to the working themes. Government department websites and the publications office of the Irish Government were an invaluable source of literature related to youth work policy.

The DCYA is a recently formed government department and, at the time of this review, was in the process of developing a new strategy for children. It also works



in partnership with a number of outside agencies such as the Centre for Effective Services to produce policy that was relevant to this study. These include the Value for Money and Policy Review for Youth Programmes (2014) and various documents related to evidence based approaches to youth work. Due to the researcher's knowledge of the field, he was aware of their development and was able to discuss them with their authors before their publication. This was invaluable as it meant the study would be informed by the most current literature.

### **2.2.3 Critical Appraisal**

While reviewing the literature associated with the themes, a generic critical appraisal tool was employed to determine the strengths and weaknesses of each piece. Due to the nature of the literature as well as originating in a variety of sources, formats and including grey literature, a simple tool as outlined by Woolliams et al. (2009) addressed the following:

***What is being said?***

***Who is the author?***

***Why have the authors written this?***

***How did they carry out their research?***

***When was it said or written?***

***Where does the information come from?***

***Is this evidence relevant to the research topic?***

### **2.2.4 Refinement of themes post appraisal**

Following the gathering and critical appraisal of literature under the themes outlined in figure 2.2, it was then possible to refine the thematic approach under which the following discussion takes place as shown in Figure 2.3.

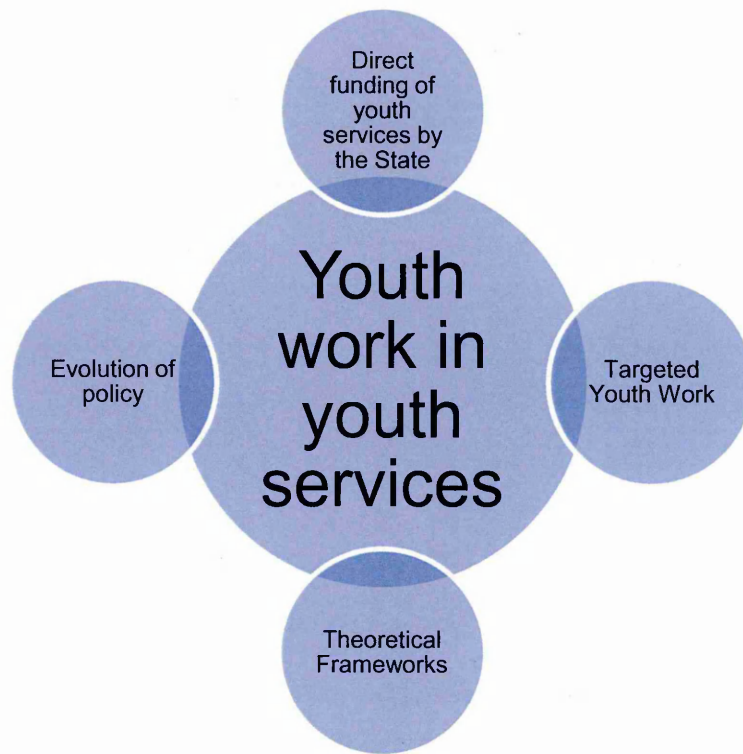


Figure 5 - Areas for Discussion

## 2.3 Review of State Policy in Youth Work

The development of youth work in Ireland can be traced back to the 1800's. While a review of literature concerning historical developments from this time may be beneficial in explaining the overall sector, this review is concerned with more recent developments since the state became involved in the funding and development of youth work. Authors such as O'hAodain (2010) and Jenkinson (1996) provide in-depth and interesting accounts of historical issues that identify factors that led to state involvement. These include an increase in urbanisation, the "deteriorating situation in Northern Ireland as tending to destabilise the south" (O'Toole 1999, p.274) in the early seventies and the decline of the moral authority of the Roman Catholic Church. This influence of the state along with the resulting professionalization began with a National Youth Council of Ireland proposal to the government entitled *The Development of Youth Services* (1973). This historical development has been taken as a starting point for state influence.

### 2.3.1 Intervention by the State

A review of policy documents and reports since this period shows that State intervention has had a significant impact in the shaping of youth work practice since the 1970's. Mc Mahon (2009, p. 107) charts an "increasing and more interventionist

role for the State” to recent years with “existing youth work organisations being deliverers of a product” (Mc Mahon 2009, p.109). Her work assesses the relationship between the youth work sector and the State against a corporatist framework with each side addressing the other’s needs. While this approach to analysis serves Mc Mahon well in that it enabled her to view relationships in the sector in terms of purchasing and selling of products, it does not expose other power influences or use of capital in the field. However, in charting the progression from when youth work existed as a movement outside of direct state influence to the contemporary situation where the majority of youth work has significant state intervention, Mc Mahon is able to show how the sector has significantly changed to a situation where it now operates in line with government policy.

By adapting this approach of studying policy documents to examine how the nature of how Irish Youth Work has changed, it is possible to see how the sector and the state are both now interdependent with the sector taking the role of Provider of a social controlling service. Jenkinson (2000, p.108) offers a summary of the influence of policy on the shaping of youth work practice since the seventies. Although the “beginnings of youth work were characterised by the explicit aim of the social and moral development of young people”, a number of government reports such as Bruton. (1977) and O’Sullivan (1980) show a shift in focus to the “development of the young person while accepting and promoting the norms of society” (Jenkinson, 2000, p.108). In the present day, the sector cannot survive without financial and administrative assistance and the state is dependent on voluntary and non-statutory organisations to deliver services on its behalf. This interdependence began with the Bruton Report (1977) mentioned above and the associated submission by the sector as a response in 1978 (National Youth Council of Ireland). This literature shows that voluntary youth work organisations began their positioning as providers of services in order to ensure their survival as well as promoting their voluntary nature for young people. While proposing a strong influence and involvement from the State by suggesting that it should have power over how delivery takes place and by whom, both documents steered away from direct statutory provision as is the case in most of Britain. Instead, the literature shows a move in favour of delegation to voluntary organisations working on behalf of the State.

**Table 1 Key Policy Contributions by the Sector and State**

Year	Policy/Report
1973	➤ The Development of Youth Services (NYCI).
1977	➤ A Policy for Youth and Sport, Bruton Report (Department of Education).
1978	➤ A Policy on Youth Work Services, submission to the Bruton Report (NYCI).
1980	➤ The Development of Youth Work Services in Ireland, O'Sullivan Report (Department of Education).
1983	➤ Youth Services 2000 (The Federation of Youth Clubs in Ireland - now Youth Work Ireland)
1984	➤ Final Report of the National Youth Policy Committee, Costello Report (Department of Education)
1985	➤ In Partnership with Youth: The National Youth Policy (Department of Education).
1992	➤ Education for a Changing World: Green Paper on Education (Department of Education)
1993	➤ Charting our Education Future: White Paper on Education (Department of Education)
1995	➤ Youth Work Act, enacted but not implemented, (Government Publications)
1997	➤ A new Impetus for European Youth, European Commission White Paper on Youth (European Commission)
2001	➤ Youth Work Act, (Government Publication)
2003	➤ National Youth Work Development Plan, NYWDP, 2003-2007 (National Youth Work Advisory Committee).
2009	➤ The Purpose and Outcomes of Youth Work, Report to the Interagency Group (Devlin, M. and Gunning, A.)
2010	Working with Young People, a national study of youth work provision and policy in contemporary Ireland (IRCHSS).
2010	➤ Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 2014 – 2020 (DCYA)
2014	➤ Value for Money and Policy Review of Youth Programmes (DCYA)

Adapted from McMahon (2009, p.107)

A more committed role was undertaken by the State during the eighties with the O'Sullivan Report (1980) and the Costello Report (1984) advocating for the social and political education of young people. The Development of Youth Work Services in Ireland (O'Sullivan Report 1980), openly discusses a role for the State in youth work by providing grant aid and structures for dissemination of this funding with the Federation of Youth Clubs in Ireland proposing an integration or joint approach for coming decades in their report, Youth Services 2000. This work culminated in a



National Youth Policy (1985), which proposed a partnership approach in working with and for young people with voluntary agencies firmly in receipt of grants and programme funding from the State in return for the delivery of certain outcomes. The policy provided, for the first time, a definitive reference point for the role of young people within the State and a description of how it would provide certain measures such as formal and informal education and recreation. The role of youth work was strongly recognised within this piece of legislation as the State endeavoured to involve it and the young people it acted on behalf of as social partners. This commenced the process of the NYCI participating in successive partnership inputs into State policy, firmly placing it as a key role player within the social consensus approach being taken at this time.

Although now largely outdated and only rarely referred to, the National Youth Policy (1985) steered the development of Youth Work for over twenty-five years. As the power and influence of the old policy waned in the 90's, both the youth work sector and the state recognised the need for further legislative developments. Academic commentators such as Hurley (1992, p.12) were already of the view that "the youth service is viewed as part of the "State machinery" with the youth service being interpreted as representing the interests of society as a whole." Adam Smith (1991) as a classic author on the legitimate function of the state writes that the role of government is "the defence of the rich against the poor, or of those who have some property against those who have none at all" (p.553). While this view, written almost three hundred years ago, highlights the role of the state in protecting the rich, Hurley's view on state machinery highlights the institutions such as schools, policy and economics of which he views youth work as playing a role in shaping youth actions and behaviour in a conformist sphere that aligns with accepted practices within society.

Although a Youth Work Act was enacted in 1997, it proved to be impossible to implement for a number of reasons. The structure of the Act did not infer enough power on State bodies by including a weak definition of youth work as well as not providing for any method of control such as an inspectorate. It was also designed and implemented without significant input from Youth Work Organisations. The Youth Work Act (2001) rectified this with strong involvement from providers as well

as placing a focus on organisations delivering youth work to disadvantaged or 'at risk' young people. This progression firmly placed youth work organisations as actors in the social control agenda by positioning youth work as being complementary to other controlling approaches such as formal education and vocational activities. The definition of youth work as a "planned programme of education designed for the purpose of aiding and enhancing the personal and social development of young people through their voluntary participation" (2001, Part 1) places more of an emphasis on young people being educated in ways that will encourage behaviour in line with societal norms thereby reducing deviance. This education is "complementary to their formal, academic or vocational education and training; and provided primarily by voluntary youth work organisations" (2001, Part 1). This is overseen by an Inspector with the support of a National Quality Standards Framework for Youth Work. The Act (2001, Part 8) imposes further compliance from organisations in working under the direction of the State with provisions such as section 8.6 stating that the Minister with control of Youth Work may "give directions to the organisation in relation to the manner in which the programme or service is provided, and the organisation shall comply with the directions" (2001, section 8.6).

### **2.3.2 Recent Policy Developments**

More recently, policy documents such as the National Youth Work Development Plan (Department of Education and Science 2003, p.14) refer to youth work being a process with "adults and young people working together to further personal, community and social development." This plan is firmly set in a broader policy arena emanating from a social inclusion agenda which, in setting the context, the Authors refer to the National Drugs Strategy 2001-2008 (Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs 2004) and programmes such as RAPID (Revitalising Areas by Planning, Investment and Development) (Pobail 2001). Within the plan, the National Youth Work Advisory Committee set out four main goals for the five years one of which is "to enhance the contribution of youth work to social cohesion, social inclusion and active citizenship in a rapidly changing national and global context" (Department of Education and Science 2003, p.17). The Taskforce on Active Citizenship (2007, p.4) describe this approach as developing "the underlying values which shape behaviour by individuals as members of communities", in effect,

inculcating thoughts and behaviour and actions that align with societal norms, accepted behaviours and conforming to the ideology of the state.

The creation of the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in 2011 has shown recognition of the role of funded youth work in tackling societal ills. Since its inception, the Department has steered towards outcomes focused approaches with youth work being part of an interagency approach guided by government policy. This is evident in the recent document *Better Outcomes Brighter Futures* (2014) which acts as the national policy framework for children and young people until 2020. The following extracts show how youth work has fully migrated from its historical emancipatory, movement-based approach to now contributing to combatting social deviance amongst certain young people. The document sees a clear role for youth work

- “both as a protective factor contributing to the young person’s overall development and in reaching out to young people at risk of crime or anti-social behaviour” (p.30).
- Youth work plays an important role in preventing, addressing and diverting young people from substance misuse and criminal and anti-social behaviour (p.80).
- The role of the youth work sector in supporting young people furthest from the labour market into further education, training and employment (p.96).
- Support quality youth work, both as a protective factor contributing to the young person’s overall development and in reaching out to young people at risk of crime or anti-social behaviour (p.105).

Along with this approach, the recent Value for Money and Policy Review (2014, p.3) of a number of youth programmes by the DCYA clearly discusses “the intended positive change brought about with and for a young person (the policy objective) as a consequence of the Exchequer investment in these targeted schemes.” These targeted schemes are delivered primarily within the youth service context.

### **2.3.3 An English Perspective**

In a similar way to Ireland, English youth work has evolved from uniformed organisations such as the Guides and Scouts to become a multi-faceted medium to engage with young people. Davies (1999) offers a detailed review of this progression



from the late 1800's. Although youth services had been in operation in various parts of the country for some time, Smith and Doyle (2002), identify the Albemarle Report (Ministry of Education 1960) as being "commonly viewed as a watershed in the history of youth work" leading to the later professionalization of some aspects of the sector in the 1970's and 80's. Based on what the committee responsible for publication saw as "a new climate of crime and delinquency" (Ministry of Education 1960, p.17), the report makes strong recommendations for the improvement of youth work in both capital funding and training of key staff. Jeffs (1979, p.39) in his commentary of the report, is of the view that "from the onset all parties predominantly saw the problem as one of social control" with the committee seeing the role of young people attending youth services as equipping "themselves to live the life of mature, creative and responsible members of a free society" (Ministry of Education 1960, p. 36). According to Jeffs and Smith (1988) "the Albemarle Report saw the youth service as having two central functions: (i) the socialization and social education of the mass of young people; and (ii) the control and containment of a deviant minority." It is against this backdrop that subsequent policy developments emerged with youth work appearing to act as a programme that matched the ideologies of successive governments

Year	Document
1960	The Youth Service in England and Wales (Albermarle Committee Report) (Ministry For Education)
1982	Experience and Participation- Review Group on the Youth Service in England (Thompson, A.)
1994	Effective Youth Work. (HM Inspectors).
1996	Education Act (Ministry for Education).
2001	Establishment of the Connexions Service.
2001	Transforming Youth Work Resourcing Excellent Youth Services (Department for Education and Employment).
2004	An evaluation of the impact of youth work in England (Department for Education).
2005	Youth Matters (Department for Education).
2007	Children's Plan (Department for Education).
2007	Aiming High for Young People: A ten year strategy for positive activities (Department for Education).
2008	Targeted Youth Support (Department for Education).
2011	Positive for Youth – A new approach to cross Government policy for young people aged 13 to 19 (Department for Education).

Table 2 - Recent English Policy

The reviewed literature also shows youth work as tackling emerging issues and being reactive to societal ills. State influence forced youth work to focus on government responses to these problems by developing programmes around participation when individualism was recognised as becoming a problem (Wilson 2011, p.1) and racism in the late seventies and early eighties (Thomas 2006, p. 49) as well as adapting how services are designed and delivered. Clear evidence of this approach lies in the Thompson Report (DES 1982) where it recommended that along with other measures “ethnic minority communities needed separate, ethnic-specific provision, staffed by workers from their own communities who alone were capable of meeting their needs” (Thomas 2006, p. 49). This was in response to rising racial tensions in parts of the country at the time. HM Inspectorate (1987) found contradictions with this approach on the ground when reporting on effective youth work. Commentary on the report by the organisation infed.org found that there was “no strong interest in targeting particular groups” (infed.org 2014). However, the report did identify goals for effective youth work that included getting young people to “identify and accept their responsibilities, as individuals, citizens, group members” (HM Inspectorate 1987, p.4). From this point in time, government policy literature concerning youth work shows the development of specific targeting of young people. Until the late eighties reports such as Albermarle (Ministry of Education 1960) and Thompson (DES 1982), and the improvements that emanated from their recommendations, still tended to support universal delivery as the main focus. With the governing ideological shifts that took place in the nineties, the Education Act (1996, section 507) provided a statutory basis for youth work and required local authorities to deliver programmes with three outputs: positive activities, decision-making by young people and 14-19 age group learning. Davies (2010, p.13) suggests “what happened to youth work after 1997 needs to be seen in the context of wider New Labour policies” and discusses how “in England councillors increasingly set the direction for youth work locally through their youth service” (Davies 2010, p.7). Authors such as Batsleer (2008), Jeffs and Smith (2010) and Davies (2005) all point towards a diminishing role for voluntary organisations and an increasing role for local authorities in expanding targeted programmes to combat problems in a minority of young people.



Transforming Youth Work-Resourcing Excellent Youth Services (DfEE 2001) was published at a time when the Government's Connexions Service was being launched and required youth services to focus all the "resources at their disposal for providing youth work to the Connexions Service" (DfEE 2001, p.12). Smith (2002) critiques that "one of the inescapable features of this is that they have to address centrally defined targets and work within the Connexions strategy". This strategy was an approach by the government of the day to remove "any wider barriers to effective engagement in learning that young people are suffering" (DfEE 2001, Ch.6). Merton et al. (2004, p.5) confirm the shift that has taken place in youth work practice over the preceding forty years by proposing that its purpose is being "increasingly framed in terms of its contribution to social inclusion" with Youth Workers acting "as a bridge between young people and their families and the services that are established to provide for and support them – for example, schools, health, social work, youth justice (Merton et al 2004, p.8). With "a growing recognition of failures in the Connexions Service" and "problems around perceived quality in state-sponsored youth services" (Smith 2005), Youth Matters (Department for Education 2005) a government green paper on youth, presented a number of tensions. While clearly developing the thrust of previous documents such as Every Child Matters (Department for Education 2003) that supported the role of youth work in working with marginalised young people with statements such as "youth work has a vital role to play in identifying and engaging young people with additional needs" (Department for Education 2005, p.34), the paper proposed steering youth policy towards more structured provision by focusing on building the role of schools and colleges. By anticipating "a new and a reinvigorated role for youth workers" (Department for Education 2005, p.71), the authors clearly saw them not as builders of social capital as in the origins of English youth work but as promoters of what Smith (2005) referred to as "the erosion of one of the key features of good youth work - that it provides young people with space away from the constant surveillance of families, schools and the state; space to find and be themselves."

The Children's Plan (Department for Education 2007, p.2) calls for increasingly integrated services" where "professionals will need to co-operate closely with other local services to ensure they are responding to the varied needs." Within the ten-year strategy for young people, Aiming High for Young People (Department for

Education 2007), case studies and proposals are put forward for Rapid Response Teams of Youth Workers “who can be tasked to specific areas where youth related disorder is prevalent, enabling them to respond to developing situations quickly and round the clock” (Department for Education, 2007, p.65). Positive for Youth (Department for Education, 2011) promotes the “relationships between schools and youth work”. Where English youth work policy promotes a complementary, separate and distinct service, Positive for Youth (Department for Education 2011, p.34) aims to “facilitate a shift from delivering youth services in detached spaces out of school hours to interweaving them into the core school day”. This clearly positions youth work as a mainstream service whose goal is to provide “youth work-led approaches to supporting pupils’ attainment.”

#### **2.3.4 Relevance to Irish Youth Work**

Literature related to English youth work has been examined due to the similarities with the Irish context in how the two sectors have developed. It would seem from the evidence that English provision is more advanced in how it has integrated with state agencies and objectives. The literature related to the evolution of policy discussed above shows a clear progression from the uniformed, movement based roots of youth work as discussed in O’hAodain (2010) to the contemporary intervention focused approaches that are evident in more recent writings. This literature points to a strong state involvement with the youth work sector now taking a social regulation role on behalf of the State. This policy related literature supports the investigations proposed in the research questions. In a similar way to what has been demonstrated in Irish literature, England’s youth work has now taken on an interventionist model of working. By the State controlling funding and policy for the sector, the literature discussed over the previous pages suggests that youth work is now embedded within the educational sphere as a method of controlling deviant behaviour and assisting with the formal education of young people. While English policy is more outward in identifying youth work as a part of the state mechanism, the creation of the DCYA and the resulting recent policy also implies a similar role. Similarities also exist in the way the English youth work sector has evolved from a participation paradigm to a prescriptive educational approach for young people that are under achieving through the development of government policy and associated funding supports. While being delivered by voluntary organisations it would seem

that Irish youth work, by participating in interagency responses similar to the Connexions in under the current policy outlined in Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures (2014) is following the same course away from its original values and principles.

### **2.3.5 Dominating Ideologies – The Societal Context for State Involvement**

Benton and Craib (2001, p.181) define ideology as “a systematically distorted set of ideas about reality” with “the ideas distorted to favour a particular social class or group.” Critical theorists such as Schroyer (1973) see aspects of ideology such as economics, history, sociology and culture as arenas for the domination of actors within society. If these and other areas can be dominated by an elite group or ruling class, they in turn can dictate how the arenas can be operated thereby dominating the actors within them. This domination can permeate society to the level of individual as well as mass consciousness so as to avoid change in the dominating system. Habermas (1975) discusses this concept as *legitimations* where actors are often unaware of what is taking place and how they are being dominated through politics and culture. These external forces serve the ruling class by generating ideas to support the ongoing existence of the ruling system. Ritzer (2008, p.149) in writing about contemporary ideological systems, suggests that we are now at a “stage of unsurpassed domination of individuals” where “domination is so complete it no longer appears to be domination at all.” Ritzer comments on control being so complete that “it no longer requires deliberate actions on the part of leaders”. While this may be true at a societal level within many western democracies where revolutionary ideas have been overcome by capitalist ideologies, it fails to recognise the role of deviance at an individual level.

### **2.3.6 An Ideological Shift in Youth Work**

France and Wiles (1997) writing shortly after ‘New Labour’ came to power in Britain chart the historical development of youth work to the late twentieth century. Describing this time period as late modernity they conclude that youth services must adapt and “engage with the new problems” (1997, p.17) that societal pressures present. Similar to Bauman’s liquid modernity (2000), the concept of late modernity suggests that life courses take place within a society where traditional demarcations such as profession, social positioning, sexuality, relationship status are ‘fluid’ and constantly changing. France and Wiles call for a shift in working methods (1997, p.15) away from traditional personal development programmes with social



education in youth work now focusing on preparing youth to make market choices. Their conception of the role of contemporary youth work is to work with young people that have failed to complete formal education as these are the people that will be excluded from the employment marketplace. They demonstrate that “for excluded and disadvantaged young people their problem is not unemployment per se but that this denies them the resources to make market lifestyle choices” (France and Wiles (1997, p.15). Bradford and Cullen (2014, p.93), when considering professional youth work show how “under a dominant contemporary neo-liberalism, influential in different ways across Europe, youth work has been subjected to a range of practices.” Hall (2011, p.715), while interpreting the hegemonic process that neo liberalism has existed as over previous decades shows how welfare services have been hollowed out and the associated ideas of the neo liberal process being the “redefining of the political, social and economic models and the governing strategies.” By internalising a way of thinking within general citizens that is primarily focused towards a growth of consumerism, neo liberalism has become an ideology with influential power. Giroux (2005, p.52) describes it as “not simply an economic policy designed to cut government spending, pursue free-trade policies, and free market forces from government regulations; it is also a political philosophy and ideology that affects every dimension of social life.” Central to a neo liberal hegemony is the lessening of state provision of services with working practices commonly seen in the private sector being adapted to public operations. This can lead to new working practices as well as the distancing by state bodies from providing services by outsourcing to private entities. Reflecting what has taken place in Irish youth work with the outsourcing of services by the state to youth work organisations, Finn et al (2013, p.1161) highlight the policy in this ideological approach as favouring “a market based governance approach the features economic deregulation, the contraction of the welfare state and government spending for social support, the privatization of social and other services, and a strong focus on individual as opposed to collective responsibility.”

At an operational level within practice this phenomenon manifests itself in youth work in various ways. Outcomes focused approaches as well as the introduction of logic model based planning have become the norm in Irish youth work as organisations adopt reporting strategies more commonly seen in the business world.

Indeed, as these organisations are now tendering for contracts to deliver work on behalf of state funding agencies, they must now be accountable with key deliverables and targets included in service level agreements. Whereas local authorities played a direct role in employing youth workers and operating youth services in England over the last couple of decades, the trend in Ireland has been to co-opt the youth work organisations to deliver programmes on behalf of the state. This approach, where the state outsources delivery and adopts a governance approach is seen in Irish youth work with the NQSF and the ETB Youth Officers now overseeing delivery, support Bradford and Cullen's assertion of a "dominant contemporary neo liberalism" (2014, p.93) having a hegemonic influence on the sector.

### **2.3.5 Summary of the Policy Review**

By examining both Irish and English state policy relating to youth work, this review shows that several key developments have taken place within youth work over the last number of decades. Since the involvement of the state and the associated financial supports, both countries' youth work has developed to fulfil regulatory and controlling functions on behalf of the state. While English youth work has become a clear state service much like formal education, the Irish context sees a typical neo liberal approach with organisations delivering a service or product on behalf of the state.

## **2.4 Theoretical Frameworks in Youth Work**

Although there has been discussion relating to youth work practice over the last two decades, Cooper (2012, p.99) points to these debates focusing "upon single issues or single approaches, or on issues concerned with professionalization, rather than the more encompassing projects of the late twentieth century". This lack of a theoretical understanding to describe contemporary political, philosophical and ideological underlying principles has created a vacuum in the contemporary study of theory that influences youth work practice, specifically in youth services. Bamber (2014, p.10), as a response to practitioners highlighting a "number of difficulties and issues with making links between theory and practice", developed an online resource where sources of theory linked to the key strands of the National Quality Standards Framework could be accessed by practitioners to further understand practice. Although a welcome addition as a tool to assist actors from the sector it is



not intended to develop overarching frameworks and focuses on specific aspects that have been identified previously in historical frameworks. By not contributing new knowledge, there still remains a deficit in theory relating to youth work, specifically in the last twenty years. The three seminal frameworks existing in Ireland and England that are identified in this resource and other current work such as Cooper (2012) as being the prominent theoretical frameworks related to youth work are proposed by Butters and Newell (1978), Smith (1988) and Hurley and Tracey (1993).

#### **2.4.1 Butters and Newell**

Using qualitative research interviews with practitioners in the field as well as a historical study of British youth work, Butters and Newell (1978) devised their framework to provide models to explain the aim, strategy and ideology of youth work as a whole over a time span of one hundred years. By dividing this time into three distinct stages with critical epistemic breaks, they argued that youth work, at different stages had been aiming to achieve different objectives. They also foresaw that from the seventies onwards, youth work would enter into a Freirean, radical paradigm using critical pedagogy for the emancipation of young people. Each progression within the framework reflects an evolving relationship between the state and youth work where the nature of the youth work reflects current societal functioning of that time.

Under this framework, youth work began as a tool for integrating young people into society using conforming approaches with the key strategy employed being character building types of programmes with young people following a dominant youth worker. After the first of Butter and Newell's 'breaks', they describe youth work from the 1920's to the 1970's as being engaged in culturally adjusting young people by using personal development approaches where young people would still conform but some self-realisation would take place.

Historical tendency	Analysis	Strategy	Method	Training model
1870–1919 (liberal incorporation)	Social integration	<b>Character building</b>	Role model	Transmissive
Critical (epistemic?) break to enter SER				
1930–1970 (progressive education)	Cultural pluralism	<b>Cultural adjustment</b>	Non-directive enabling	Interpretivist
1960–1970 (advanced progressive education)	Structural functionalism	<b>Community Development</b>	Enabling in local community	Interpretivist/constructivist
1890–1970 (social democracy)	Interest Group Conflict Theory	<b>Institutional reform</b>	Rights and mobilisation	Transmissive/constructivist
Epistemic break to escape SER				
Future (radical paradigm)	Critical sociology	<b>Self-emancipation</b>	Critical pedagogy	Transgressive

Table 3 Structure of social education and historical adjuncts (Cooper 2012, 103, adapted from Butters and Newell 1978, p.39).

Examination of each of the stages within their model reveals that it is based on the premise that since the 1870's, society has an issue or problem that youth work acts to remedy. Cooper (2012, p.102) writes that these issues were the result of how analysis of society was taking place which then led to the resulting adaptation of the strategies. Butters and Newell (1978) identified a tendency of each type of youth work identified above as liberal incorporation, progressive education, social democracy and a radical paradigm. These tendencies are the way in which each stage of youth work is inclined towards a particular type of behaviour or characteristic. Within the model, they also offer different forms of analysis, which in turn highlight various informing strategies or goals for the different aspects of youth work. These differing goals within their structure lead to differing methods and models of work being used to achieve them.

Using a paradigm of social integration, youth work from 1870 until 1919 was focused on the integration or incorporation of young people in to society so that they could take up roles within existing societal structures. To do this a strategy of building character within the young people was employed with youth workers adopting a role

model approach, dictating instructions to young people. In order to carry out the work, these role models transferred knowledge to young people. An example of this in practice would be traditional scouting where young males were trained to 'fit in' or conform to societal norms. This was often achieved through programmes designed to build character such as group hikes in the countryside or camping trips. The Scout Leader acted as a role model to the young males and as well as disciplining and taught them to be good members of society.

From the 1930's more progressive forms of education began to be used within youth work. At this time, Butters and Newell (1978) discuss an epistemic break occurring with a change from the dominating and conforming youth work outlined above to more developmental and enabling type approaches being used. This inclination towards a more progressive approach to education took place within a cultural pluralistic paradigm that recognised youth as a distinct grouping along with many others that made up society. In recognising that society was made up of different groups such as youth, old age, nationalities, cultural groups, the role of youth work within this approach was to enable young people to conform to greater society while still maintaining their groupings. Youth work programmes operating within this approach interpreted the needs of youth and responded by providing programmes that would allow them to stay within their groups while still conforming to societal expectations.

Working from another conformist approach of Structural Functionalism where the structures of society do not change, Butters and Newell (1978) discuss a model in the 1960' and 70's where, rather than focusing on youth as a separate and distinct entity, youth work took place within the context of the community in which the young people lived with work taking place to strengthen the community and young people within it. The youth worker interpreted the needs of the young people with a view to constructing new approaches to develop them and their community.

Butters and Newell also point out that as each of the above models was being implemented, a model rooted in Marxist theory also ran in parallel since the 1890's. This model sought institutional reforms and focused on mobilising young people behind a cause within democratic approaches. Young people were given information



on how they were being oppressed with the youth worker working with young people to change what was deemed as oppressive institutions within society.

At the time of writing in the late seventies, Butters and Newell proposed a break in knowledge regarding the purpose and methods of youth work. At the time they wrote that the future of youth work would be rooted in emancipatory approaches viewed through the philosophical lense of critical sociology. Pedagogical approaches would focus on the individual with a view to freeing them from oppressive forces with each stage of their model inclined towards the radicalising of young people by the youth worker.

Smith (1988) and Leigh and Smart (1985) highlight challenges of using the framework as being over theorising and not being related to practice, a charge difficult to support considering the methods Butters and Newell employed in gathering supporting data. However, applying a framework of this type to Irish youth work presents considerable difficulties due to the way Butters and Newell outline the development of youth work as having distinct stages anchored to key years. As other parts of this review show, the Irish sector is so diverse and has been throughout its development, that the strategies of Character Building, Cultural Adjustment and Institutional Reform can all be found in theoretical and practice based literature.

#### **2.4.2 Smith**

Building on his criticisms of Butters and Newell's framework, Smith (1988) developed a model that recognised the division in the sector between professionally provided services and voluntary, movement based approaches. When later reviewing and updating his model (2001, p.48) he discussed "there being different and competing forms of youth work rather than a single youth work with commonly agreed characteristics." This update also included faith based approaches to delivery which he neglected to include in the original.

Some of the key differences that appear from Butters and Newell in Smith's model are the roles he attributed to the professional and movement based strands. Smith sees professional services as fulfilling a welfaring role with young people with assistance provided in times of need or crisis. He identifies the three main concerns (2001, p.57) within this work as being:

- "to help people to clarify, understand and act upon their problems,

- the giving of advice, i.e. an actual opinion on the way that people should act.
- And thirdly, there is a straightforward giving of information, such as rights under the law, how to claim social security, etc.”

Parallel to welfaring, Smith describes (2001, p.58) the movement based approach of rescuing as being where young people are “in need of saving and such judgements are based upon an ideology drawn from a particular social movement, often religious in nature.”

Three key points influenced Smiths framework with two parallel approaches. Firstly, he saw the politicising and character building of young people as requesting that young people commit to the ideological beliefs of the providing movement which was not required when merely using a service on the professional side. Secondly, he sees the politicising of young people as being a marginal activity within the sector, firmly rooted in the movement approach and lastly, he sees Social and Leisure provision as permeating both strands.

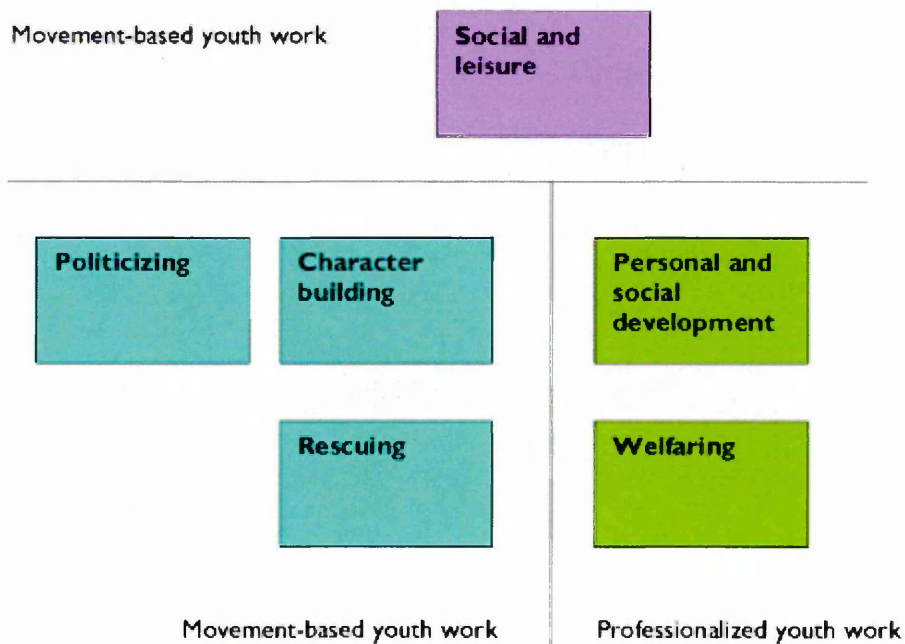


Figure 6 Smith's Framework (1988)



Applying this model to contemporary Irish youth work again proves challenging. Arguments could be made that even at the time of updating the model in 2001, Smith failed to recognise the significant crossovers and overlaps within his diagrammatic representation that were present in English youth work. To provide an Irish example of where this model is deficient: *Belong to*, is a youth organisation that provides programmes to gay, lesbian and transsexual young people. They, like other organisations, offer programmes that could be located within social and leisure while also offering services that assist young people by providing information regarding crisis that young people may be experiencing, as well as working with young people using methods to improve their social and personal development. The organisation also plays a political role by operating campaigns involving young people to lobby for changes to legislation regarding its service users. While it could be classed as a movement based approach, *Belong to* delivers this service using professional, employed youth workers within youth services. The thrust of this example could also be applied to a number of organisations delivering programmes in Ireland rendering Smiths model incomplete to describe current practice

#### **2.4.3 Hurley and Tracey**

Hurley and Tracey (1993) devised four models of youth work that have largely gone on to be accepted by the Irish youth work sector and various academics associated with it as a common classification system for the different approaches being adopted by organisations and practitioners across the country. Grounded in the work of Burrell and Morgan (1979), the four youth work models stem from four paradigms of Sociology that Burrell and Morgan presented as methods for the analysis of a wide range of social theories. These methods are based on two main historical approaches and methods of analysis of social theory that they used as parameters for the paradigms: the subjective/objective range and the regulation/radical social change dimension.

### The Sociology of Radical Change

<b>Subjective</b>	<b>Radical Humanist</b>	<b>Radical <u>Structuralist</u></b>	<b>Objective</b>
	<b>Interpretive</b>	<b>Functionalist</b>	

### The Sociology of Regulation

Figure 7 Burrell and Morgan's Paradigms (1979)

The table below shows each of Hurley and Tracey's models linked with an associated paradigm.

<b>Model of Youth Work</b>	<b>Sociological Paradigm</b>
Character Building	Functionalism
Personal Development	Interpretivism
Critical Social Education	Radical Humanism
Radical Social Change	Radical Structuralism

Table 4 Hurley and Tracey's Models and Associated Paradigms.

Both Burrell and Morgan (1979) and Hurley and Tracey (1993) view the paradigms and the resulting models of youth work as four distinct entities. Although they have shared characteristics both pairs of authors argue that each paradigm and its associated model should be viewed as contiguous but separate with Hurley and Tracey arguing that "one cannot operate in more than one paradigm at any given point in time" (1993, p.6). The radicalism associated with the two models that are geared towards social change challenge societal status quo and constraints in areas such as structures, freedom, economy and ideology. The Radical Humanism of Roy (in Ray 1997) and Fromm (in Durkin 2014) promotes the role of the human in moving beyond constraints to achieve their full potential while changing or destroying social hierarchies and social inequalities. This radicalness is in contrast to traditional forms

of humanism such as religious or secular where man continues to function within the existing structures. Within radical humanism, the consciousness of the actor is a priority with awareness being raised so that they can become aware of how their actions and ideologies have been dominated by those in power.

Traditional Structuralism such as that written about by Lévi-Strauss (1966) focuses on how actors and culture relate, conform and exist within systems and structures within society whereas Radical Structuralism stems from Marxist thought where class struggles exist within society. Social and economic structures lead to dominating and dominated classes and with the role of this paradigm to show the forces that dominate and seek to overthrow the powerful class and change the structures of society.

Within the sociology that addresses the regulation of society, Burrell and Morgan propose Functionalism and Interpretivism as two paradigms for examining society where the status quo is maintained. In discussing these, Burrell (1990) describes Functionalism as “belief that social structures have discernible purposes, or functions, that are reflected through and contain human action”, and Interpretivism as “belief that human constructs ultimately reside in and are manifestations of human thought.” Burrell and Morgan (1979) place Functionalism on the objective axis as the paradigm is concerned with studying and explaining relationships using positivist approaches that can be measured and counted. Opposing this view on the subjective side of the axis, interpretivism is concerned with the individual, their understandings of society and their role within it.

Differing views exist within the literature regarding the understanding and delivery of youth work under the models outlined above with Tracey himself asserting that “youth work practice is, in the main a vehicle for social control” (Tracey 2009, p.191). Lalor et al (2007) discuss structural powerlessness as the focus of the sector while Spence (2000, p.5) points to the work being “perceived as supplementary to other educational and welfare services” with priorities being driven by outside forms of provision such as education and welfare.

Table 5, (Hurley and Tracey 1993, p.19) presents a framework for the study of one of their models of youth work (with the remaining three models presented in the appendices). In providing analysis through a range of categories, their framework also allows for analysis of the implications for youth work practice and outcomes for the individual and society as a result of using each of the models. This approach offers a way of interpreting and understanding what is taking place in youth work from a sociological perspective. However, the models of practice that emerge offer a Weberian ideal type of progression that does not reflect practice on the ground with Tracey labelling them as “ideal types rather than descriptions of really existing projects” (Tracey 2009, p.181). Theoretical constructs of this type, devised by Weber (1949) deal with phenomena in the abstract and are not intended to describe reality. Rather, they are a tool to show characteristics and elements in order to view phenomena by providing order. This allows comparisons to take place in order to explain the constituent components of an area under investigation. Applying Weberian thinking to youth work, when used in context, provides a detailed template for examination. However, it does not reflect contemporary practice and in the absence of alternatives, has become the predominant approach in literature as well as in the teaching of youth work methods. Categorising practice using conceptual frameworks at a macro level such as this is reductive in that it forces all types to identify with four categories and does not provide adaptability for approaches that do not. An alternative to this approach as proposed in this study, is to investigate contemporary practice without predetermined categories in order to build theory related to what is taking place.



## Framework for Understanding Youth Work Theory and Practice

Structural Analysis	Ideological Perspective		Typology of Youth Work	Analysis of Young People's Needs	Role of Youth Worker
Functionalism	<b>Theoretical Level</b>	<b>Practical Level</b>	Character Building	Young people in a stage of transition from childhood to adult life have the capacity to rebel. Their energy needs to be directed towards constructive social acceptable ends. Concern for the moral development of young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organiser</li> <li>• Role Model.</li> </ul>
	Conservative	Value System is actively pursued through human and programme content			

### Implications for Youth Work Practice and Outcomes

Youth Work Model	Programme Emphasis	Process/Relationship	Structure for Participation in Decision Making	Outcomes for Young People	Outcomes for Society
Character Building	<b>Education for Life Programmes</b> Preventative focus <b>Recreational Provision</b> -Focuses the energies of young people in a constructive way -Promote healthy lifestyle and competition <b>Social Political Awareness</b> Information about existing structures and how they work -Promotion of civic responsibility <b>Vocational Training</b> Role preparation	Youth Worker acts as a role model. Relationship serves to guide and develop young people in the way society views as acceptable. The nature of the relationship is determined by the adult's agenda/authoritarian style.	Hierarchical structure with the youth worker as the decision maker. Young people's inputs is on basic programming issues. No structure in place to increase young people's leadership potential as youth workers control all aspects of the programme and organisation.	Young people develop discipline.  Young people recognise their role in society and contribute to the maintenance of society.	Status quo is maintained. Institutions of the church, family and the state remain unchanged. The values which underlie these are actively inculcated. <sup>4</sup>

Table 5 Character Building Model. Hurley and Tracey (1993, p. 19).

Table 5 shows provides analysis through one paradigm. The remaining analysis through paradigms are provided in Appendix 1.

Under Burrell and Morgan's organisational analysis, some Practitioners are trying to operate from a sociological standpoint of regulation and change at the same time. The following statement from the promotional literature of a Dublin based youth service demonstrates the confusion that surrounds this categorisation: "The model of youth work that underpins the youth work programme is based upon the Personal Development and Critical Social Education Models progressing to include elements of the Radical Social Change Model" (The Base 2015). If this is the case, this youth programme is operating from both the sociological standpoints of regulation and change, providing vastly different outcomes for the young people and society as well as having a programme with an emphasis on three different working methods. In practice, the emphasis of programmes on social awareness using a radical social change would focus on the "indoctrination of young people into revolutionary perspectives" (Hurley and Tracey 1993, p.58) while the personal development model focuses on community involvement in a conforming manner.

This unreflective and confused progression is understandable as the practice evolved on an ad hoc basis over time and was subject to many struggles and influencing factors. Also, due to the size of the sector and the small amount of research that has been produced, there are few alternatives to assist stakeholders in gaining an understanding of the sector.

#### **2.4.4 Summary of the frameworks section**

The three frameworks discussed are the main theoretical literature associated with Irish and English youth work found within the boundaries of this review. While each has strengths and provides a limited understanding of aspects of youth work, each also has significant limitations when applied to contemporary youth work, especially that taking place in Irish youth services. While Smith's model recognises the professional aspect taking place alongside movement inspired work, it is very limited in its descriptive approach to what is occurring and the influencing factors. Hurley and Tracey's approach offers a broad sociological understanding but due to its Weberian nature it has failed the test of time in being able to accurately describe the current practice.

## **2.5 Direct State Funding and Involvement in Youth Services**

Before progressing to literature related to targeted youth work the following three subsections take a descriptive turn in order to provide the reader with an understanding of the profile of projects within youth services under investigation. Literature related to practice in youth services suggests that programmes are directed at a particular profile of young person depending on the project within the service. Funded in the main by the DCYA and its executive office of the IYJS, youth services are an amalgamation of projects, often operated by a parent youth work organisation. DCYA funding schemes that specifically support youth service provision are:

- ❖ Special Projects for Youth Scheme
- ❖ Young People's Facilities and Services Fund 1
- ❖ Young People's Facilities and Services Fund 2
- ❖ Local Drugs Task Force Scheme
- ❖ Youth Information Centres
- ❖ Youth Service Grant Scheme
- ❖ And the IYJS Garda Youth Diversion Projects.

In addition to these funding streams, a number of other State schemes also offer funding to some youth services in trying to fulfil their own objectives. These have been more challenging to identify within the literature but form one of the foci within the data gathering stage to follow.

The DCYA (2014) outline the Special Projects for Youth as seeking to address the needs of young people who are disadvantaged, due to a combination of a number of factors such as a high youth population in their area, youth unemployment, drug abuse, problems with juvenile crime or an inadequate educational opportunities. This fund is valued at over seventeen million per annum (DCYA 2014) with the aim of facilitating the "personal and social development of participants to realise their potential and in particular to equip them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for their appropriate integration in society (DCYA 2014)." This quote clearly supports the educational aspect of the definition of youth work within the Act (2001) but also identifies integration into society of young people who may be

outside of acceptable boundaries, a clear social regulation agenda. Similarly, Redmond (2008, p.7) identifies Garda Youth Diversion Projects as being “aimed at young people at risk of, or at the onset of becoming involved in offending behaviour” with the key roles:

- 1) To divert young people from becoming involved in criminal or anti-social behaviour.
- 2) To provide suitable activities to facilitate personal development and encourage civic responsibility and work towards improving the long-term employability prospects of the participants.

These projects are operated on behalf of the IYJS by youth work organisations or independent youth services. Figure 2.6, taken from Redmond (2008) shows a breakdown of how projects are provided. There are one hundred GYDPs with another fourteen new projects to commence in 2015 recently announced by the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs.

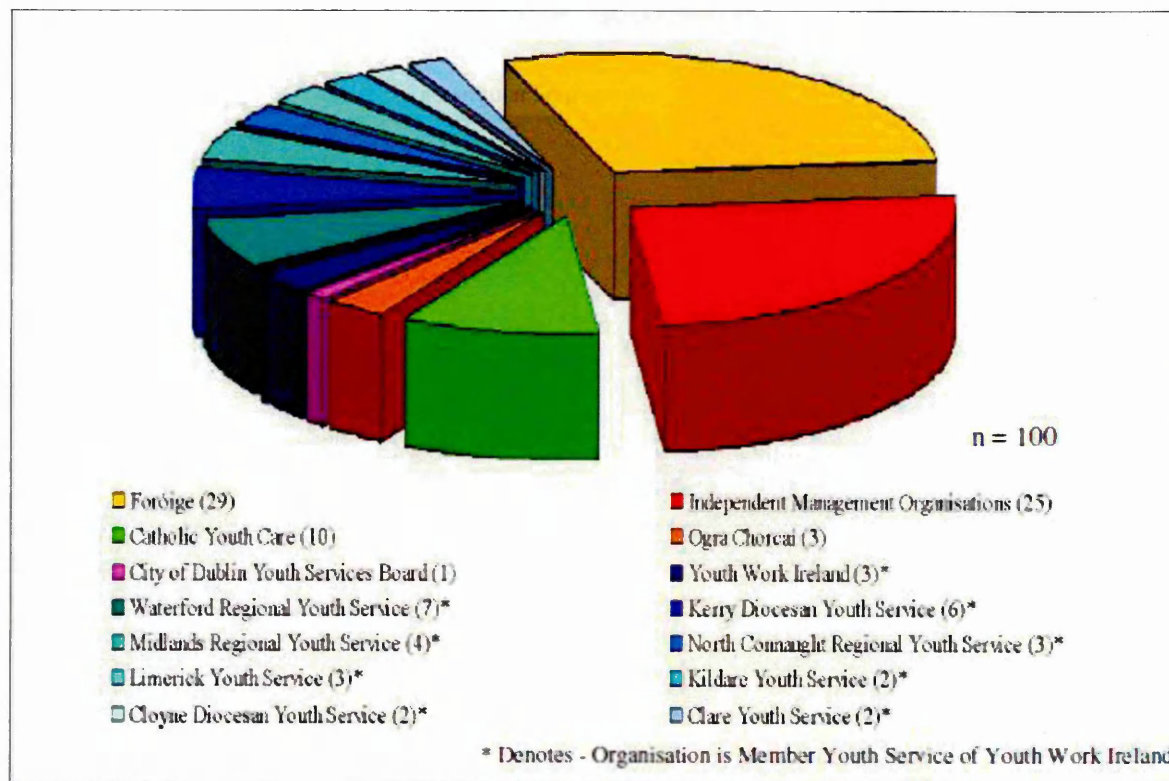


Figure 8 Breakdown of Providers of GYDPs



Swirak (2013) in a post-structuralist analysis of GYDPs highlights key themes that emerged in her research such as the rise of actuarialism and individualisation as playing significant roles in how these projects are being steered towards “policing roles” with GYDPs as “locations of containment of young people” (Swirak 2013, p. 3). Her findings outline how traditional youth work ethos and principles such as those suggested by the NYCI (2014) are challenged in GYDP settings. With voluntary participation being compromised by reports to Garda and low levels of active participation in decision making, Swirak (p.3) describes projects as “locations of containment” with the concept of ‘youth justice work’ and not youth work describing practice within the projects. With an overall objective “to reduce young people's involvement in crime and, in doing so, improving both quality of life within the community and Garda / Community relations” (National Crime Council 2015), the literature clearly leans towards a conforming agenda for these projects.

While acknowledging that the guidelines for these projects recognise that youth justice work is ‘different to youth work in general’ because of the focus on helping young people ‘to deal with the issues surrounding their offending and the need for behavioural change’ O’ hAodain (2012, p.48) upholds four similarities in how they are delivered. These are the age profile of the young people, the concept of voluntary participation that Swirak identified as being threatened above, the youth work methods employed when working with young people and that most of the projects are staffed by professional youth or community workers.

The projects have a primary and secondary profile of young person to be targeted for inclusion. Young people in the primary group have already been arrested and included in the Garda Youth Diversion Programme and are under the supervision of a Juvenile Liaison Officer from An Garda Síochána whereas young people in the secondary group are young people that have been identified within communities as being at risk of getting arrested (CSER 2008).

### **2.5.1 Substance Misuse**

The state’s strategy for tackling drug and substance misuse through youth work is primarily focused on two funding schemes: The Young Persons Services and Facilities Fund (YPSF) and various projects established through Local Drugs Task

Forces (LDTF). The YPSF fund focuses on twenty-two areas in the state and operates in “a targeted manner through the development of youth facilities, (including sport and recreational facilities) and services in disadvantaged areas where a significant drug problem exists or has the potential to develop” (DCYA 2014). The primary objective of this fund, which supports a large number of youth centres and projects in the target areas is to “attract ‘at risk’ young people in disadvantaged areas into these facilities and activities and divert them away from the dangers of substance abuse” (DCYA 2014). Outside of descriptors of what this fund aims to achieve, a lack of literature hinders an expansive review. Although in operation since 1998, only one evaluation has taken place on the fund and resulting actions – the Horwath Review (2009). This review found that success could not be determined due to a number of factors, chief among these being a lack of data and literature.

Local Drug Task Forces were set up by the Government in 1997 as a response to drug related problems in a number of areas. In 2011, 21 of the LDTF projects were transferred to the DCYA’s Youth Affairs Unit from the Department of Education (Redmond 2012, p. 25). Outside of the websites for each Task Force and one evaluation, again conducted by Horwath Consulting, there is a scarcity of literature relating to Local Drugs Task Forces, especially concerning the associated youth programmes. While they have been included in the recent Value for Money and Policy Review conducted by the DCYA (Redmond 2014), the description of this funding scheme is limited to tree lines (p.25).

### **2.5.2 Open Access Provision**

Out of all of the youth work provision in youth services funded by the DCYA, the literature would suggest that youth cafés represent the strongest offering of what could be deemed open access youth work that is available to all young people. The OMCYA (in Forkan et al 2010, p. 2) describe three types of youth café.

**Type 1** – A place or space to simply ‘hang out’ with friends, to chat, drink coffee or a soft drink, watch TV or movies, surf the Internet, etc.

**Type 2** – All the above but also with the inclusion of entertainment or leisure services chosen by the young people themselves, together with information on State and local services of interest and relevance to young people.

**Type 3** – This is where all the above activities and facilities are augmented by the actual provision of services targeted directly at young people. This can include education and training, healthcare (both physical and emotional) and direct targeted assistance.

The Youth Café Toolkit prepared for the DCYA (Forkan et al 2010, p. 2) highlights a strong role for young people in the organising and operating of the facilities which are focused on meeting the needs of young people. These official guidelines for the setting up of youth cafés suggests that they should be:

- a relaxed meeting space, which is safe, friendly, inclusive and tolerant;
- a place for both sexes and for young people from all social and cultural backgrounds to engage in social interaction with their peers in a safe and supportive drug- and alcohol-free environment;
- a location for relaxation, recreation and entertainment, and, where appropriate, as a site for information, advice or even direct care/service provision;
- a place where young people can develop good quality relationships with their peers and with adults.

These points encourage an all-encompassing approach rather than the prescribed targeting focused on correcting social deviance or promoting social control. Although projects of this type have been around for a number of years in various forms, this funding stream has only been available from the DCYA since 2010. Independent evaluations could be found to support claims on youth organisations websites to the success of the programmes.

### **2.5.3 Funding of Parent Organisations**

The state also provides a funding scheme for the parent organisations of youth services (The Youth Service Grant Scheme). Each of the voluntary youth organisations is in receipt of funding through this scheme. It is intended to “ensure the emergence, promotion, growth and development of youth organisations with distinctive philosophies and programmes aimed at the social education of young people” (DCYA 2014). However, no new applications to this scheme from new



organisations have been accepted for some time. While the criterion for obtaining funding “is concerned with the personal, social, recreational, cultural and spiritual development of young people”, funded organisations must also “serve society” (DCYA 2014). This is one of the main sources of income for the support head offices and overall operations of youth work organisations. Compliance with the terms outlined above in order to continue to receive funding would prevent an organisation taking part in activities that go against the accepted norms. Each service must take part in the NQSF process in order to receive funding.

The literature related to direct state funding of youth services would support the thesis that the majority of these services are fulfilling a social regulation agenda. With the exception of youth cafés which offer young people a strong role in the design and operation of programmes, each of the funding streams focus on correcting deviance such as drug use, crime and the dropping out of education. It is clear from the literature that if a youth work organisation accepts state funding, it is doing so in order to provide a regulatory service that serves the state and society. This could be taken as opposing the values of youth work attested to by the NYCI of empowerment of young people, equality and inclusion, respect for all young people, involvement of young people in decision-making, partnership and voluntary participation (NYCI 2015). The literature also suggests that there is a lack of knowledge regarding the effectiveness and purpose of some of the schemes with a duplication of targeted young people and expected outcomes being present.

## **2.6 Targeting in Youth Work**

In 2009, five of the largest youth work organisations (the Interagency Group), “cognisant of the need to better articulate the purpose and outcomes of youth work” (Devlin and Gunning 2009, p.5) commissioned a report to investigate these two themes. Based on the views of young people and Youth Workers from four youth services and one club, the report provides a variety of outcomes as a result of young people taking part in programmes. These include “enhanced personal attributes and qualities such as confidence, self-esteem, awareness and sociability” (Devlin and Gunning 2009, p.49). It also explicitly identifies the ‘diversionary’ purpose of the approach to contemporary youth work in youth services “aimed primarily at keeping



them off the streets” (Devlin and Gunning 2009, p.48). With the Chair of the Interagency group referring to youth work addressing “issues of formal education, health (including drugs, sexual health and physical wellbeing), community, housing, family life, crime, employment, parenting, relationships, citizenship and many others impacting on young people” (Devlin and Gunning 2009, p.5), the sector now seems to be positioning itself as a provider of an intervention based model of work as opposed to the ‘movement’ approach of its roots. Forde (2010, p.88) refers to the “bi-furcated nature” of youth work in a recent study of youth work provision and policy while calling for a strategy to address the role of ‘targeted youth work’ that takes place mainly in youth services alongside what he terms ‘mainstream youth work.’ Forde (2010, p.9) also exposes a gap in current literature by proposing that “research should examine how these two types of youth work contribute comparatively to the social inclusion of disadvantaged people in their transition to adulthood.”

When writing in relation to types of provision, Lawlor, de Roiste and Devlin (2007, p.269) suggest that “youth work’s methods and activities vary widely, and include recreational and sporting activities, indoor and outdoor pursuits, artistic and cultural programmes, spiritual development, health promotion, issue based activities (for example, social justice, environment) and intercultural and international programmes and exchanges.” While this extensive list offers information on methods of delivering programmes, the same Authors also discuss the “increasing complexity of youth work” (2007, p.273) with youth organisations “making use of a proliferation of funding” (2007, p.274) to grow their youth services.

The majority of youth work is provided outside of youth services in club settings. In 2013, the DCYA supported over sixteen hundred youth clubs led by volunteers. The purpose of these youth groups is “to provide a safe, supportive and enjoyable environment where young people voluntarily participate and progress in a range of activities that are recreational and developmental/educational” (DCYA 2013, p.1). According to Barrett (2003, p.21) “targeting, in the context of youth work, is the directing of resources towards particular communities or grouping of young people” (Barrett 2003, p.21). Within this research, which addresses the impact of targeting on the provision of youth work in a specific geographical area, Barrett outlines

arguments for and against this focusing of resources. While the strongest of these supports the effective use of money and resources, others point to a need to involve young people who may not otherwise engage in services. The surveyed youth workers point to benefits such as the 'knock on effect' on peers as well as being able to support specific actions that broadly funded, generic provision could not cater for. In contrast to these positive effects, arguments against targeting focus on the segregation of young people to specific projects such as GYDPs with young people and their communities being labelled in order to achieve additional funding. If funding is focused on certain young people and communities, the research also argues the many other young people are excluded from provision as they may not be positioned as deviant. Barrett (2003, p.25) also points out that entire geographical areas can be excluded which neglects the needs of young people from the majority of areas.

### **2.6.1 Summary of Targeting Section**

In addition to Barrett's points above, the literature regarding targeting has shown that youth work plays a significant role albeit an unclear role. While targeted youth work seems to be used as a method for tackling a wide range of societal ills, there seems to be no clearly identified parameters or limitations as to what issues it cannot address. This could be due to the funding mechanisms that are in place where youth services, in order to ensure their survival, must apply for whatever funding scheme is being advertised with its associated conditions.

## **2.7 Conclusion of the Literature Review**

Examination of literature related to policy, state involvement, targeting and sociological theory related to targeted youth work has contributed and informed the research to a considerable degree. The literature shows considerable state involvement in a funding and policy context that allows significant influence to be exercised in how the sector operates. By targeted youth work delivering programmes to address a variety of societal ills such as drug misuse, educational disadvantage and behavioural difficulties, through the DCYA, the state is able to use it as a regulatory function within society. This form of youth work is applied to a wide range of issues. However, a review of associated theoretical frameworks, the most

recent of which was written over twenty years ago, could not find an adequate approach that could be applied to contemporary target youth work.

Reviewing policy developments related to Irish and English youth work shows that Irish youth work has followed a similar path to its English counterpart. While targeted English youth work has been primarily controlled and delivered by state services such as local authorities, the Irish context has seen outsourcing to parent youth work organisations with the state taking a governance role typically associated with neo liberal approaches. A significant outcome that emerged from the search for literature was the lack of information that was available relating to funding agencies in youth work outside of that provided through the DCYA. This also limits the identification of types of youth work that can be identified through the literature.

The review has highlighted the lack of knowledge that this study seeks to address. Specifically, the review could not identify types of targeted youth work and the associated actors outside of direct state funded programmes. Without this data, an understanding of how the sector operates cannot be obtained. This is a considerable lack of knowledge relating to how targeted youth work operates and provides justification for the creation of new theory that will result from this study.



## Chapter 3      Methodology

*“Study what interests and is of value to you, study it in the different ways that you deem appropriate, and utilize the results in ways that can bring about positive consequences within your value system”* (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998, p.30).

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodological approach to this study and the factors that contribute to the theoretical underpinnings of the project. As well as ontological and epistemological considerations, this section will briefly critique the various theoretical approaches to conducting research that were considered. The study, while being focused on obtaining understanding and producing new knowledge in line with a pragmatic approach is mainly supported by a blend of constructivist and Bourdieurian theory. On the topic of enquiry, Reason and Torbert (2001, p.3) write that its purpose is “to forge a direct link between intellectual knowledge and moment to moment personal and social action, so that inquiry contributes directly to the flourishing of human persons, their communities, and the ecosystems of which they are part.” The positioning of the researcher before the commencement of this study was that youth work has changed from its original emancipatory values and is now operating as an agent of social regulation. This stance was the original motivation for the investigation and is reflected in the research questions. However, as outlined in the following chapters, this investigation aims to garner an understanding of the sector from the perspectives of the research sample. As stated in Chapter One, it is hoped that the resulting findings from this study will contribute to further understanding of the sector for academics, students and practitioners.

In the upcoming search for ‘truth’ that will be this study of youth work the Author is faced with Guba and Lincon’s “three fundamental and interrelated questions” as discussed by Heron and Reason (1997, p.276). “There is the ontological question- what is the form and nature of reality and, therefore, what is there that can be known about it?; the epistemological question- what is the relationship between the knower or would be knower and what can be known; and the methodological question - how can the enquirer.....go about finding whatever he or she believes can be known



about?” It is over the following pages that an attempt will be made to answer these fundamental questions by examining the overarching paradigmatic choices that dictate how the research has been carried out.

### **3.2 Ontological and Epistemic Influences on the Methodology**

Emanating from the work of Piaget (1954), the concept of constructivism, specifically social constructivism, used in the research is one where humans construct knowledge and meaning from their experiences. While a study may seek data on one specific topic, many more such as a respondents’ work or personal life may influence how a person views the topic and thereby the data that they may provide. Constructivist knowledge is “socially and experientially based” with reality being intangible and mentally constructed (Highfield and Bisman).

Crotty (1998 p.8) discusses constructivists abandoning “objective truth waiting for us to discover it” and writes that by taking this approach, truth or meaning “is not discovered, but constructed” (p.9). “There may be local truths, established within various scientific fields, within the various communities of humankind, and these must surely be honoured from within the traditions of these communities” (Gergan 2004). By constructivism influencing the methods of data gathering, the researcher was focusing on the context of the actors as well as openly acknowledging that interpretation of their meanings about the research area, in which each had their own views and stances, would lead to a complexity of views that could then be inductively developed towards the generation of a pattern of meaning. Crotty (1998, in Creswell 2009, p.8) identified several assumptions that are present in viewing this approach:

1. Meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage in the world.
2. Humans engage with their world and make sense of it based on their historical and social perspectives. The gathering of data is performed personally and the interpretation is shaped by the researcher’s own experiences and background.
3. The generation of meaning is social and the process is inductive, with the inquirer generating meaning from the data collected in the field.

These three assumptions align with the researcher’s ontological and epistemic views of the nature of reality and what can be known about it. Evolving from Berger

and Luckmann's (1967) views of meaning and knowledge being constructed in a social way within specific contexts "Constructivism's interpretive methodology seeks to comprehend meanings so as to explain social life" (Pouliot 2007, p.365). Adopting this relativistic approach, whereby all of the information being garnered would be context dependent, meant a commitment to an ontological stance whereby the researcher was denying a reality exists objectively within the sector concerning data that was outside of the funding and structural information discussed previously. While the three points above could also be applied to some realist inspired projects, the relativistic ontological positioning of this investigation recognises the influence of agency as well as structure on the nature of the what can be known. While the youth work field provides a structure or context for the investigation, the relativist ontological view of the researcher and the underpinning ontological stance of this study aligns with an approach whereby this structure can only be understood in the context of how the research subjects and the researcher interact with the structure. By acknowledging that the schema of the youth work field can be interpreted differently depending on how they are interacted with, this study sets out to understand what is being understood by the research sample by examining their views and interactions with it. However, this recognition of the importance of agency and how participants interact with the structural context also has to recognise that "there is no hypothetical moment in which agency actually gets 'free' of structure; it is not, in other words, some pure Kantian transcendental free will" (Emirbayer and Mische 1998, p.1004).

As discussed in the Methods Chapter, in order to discover aspects of economic power, some factual data is required. However, the majority of the information being gathered is from the perspectives of those being interviewed. By accepting their perspectives, the researcher, in using a constructivist paradigm accepts that multiple social realities exist based on a variety of factors such as how research subjects view youth work, historical factors that may influence their views, their own ideological viewpoints etc. This also leads to the acceptance of multiple truths as opposed to other more positivist philosophical positions or paradigms associated with a singular objective truth.

Simpson (2002 p.347) suggests that like interpretivism, to which it is heavily linked, "there is no true way of constructivism; one person's version of the theory cannot



claim to be the true version.” Although constructivist approaches can be used with many research methods, “constructivists have yet to devise a distinct *modus operandi* designed for the study of the social construction of meaningful realities” (Pouliot 2007, p.359). In stark contrast to the preliminary test study that was conducted using a structuralist approach, Garfinkel (1967 p.11) recognises this guiding philosophy where actors “organise practices of everyday life” as being dependent on how research subjects relate to their own everyday world. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992 p.9) support the value of this approach in acknowledging how actors normal, everyday understanding and personal competencies continually produce cultures. While much of Bourdieu’s work focuses on plotting objective relationships within an arena and aligns with realist views, he also points to the value of constructivism in exploring agency within the study of phenomena and to “the socially approved system of typifications and relevances through which persons endow their life-world with sense (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p.9).

### **3.3 Pluralism**

“The quantitative – qualitative debate has been unfolding for several decades now and has evolved from one about the incompatibility of quantitative and qualitative techniques and procedures to one about the incompatibility of the more fundamental epistemological assumptions of quantitative and qualitative (positivist and interpretivist) ‘paradigms’” (Howe 1992 p.236). As Howe posits, many debates regarding methodological thinking have historically fallen into qualitative versus quantitative choices being explained by researchers. Like Howe (p.237), the author endeavoured to move beyond the traditional rigid positivist versus interpretivist choices by employing a variety of ‘thinking tools’ from the spectrum of philosophical positions. Suri (2011, p.890) points to the importance of situating our research in relation to paradigms so that in conducting research we can engage in a reflexive process relating to how the design of the study interacts with the associated findings. With Kuhn (1970) promoting paradigms as frameworks through which work can be viewed, Mertens (2005) highlights challenges in obtaining consensus and authors such as Patton (1978) and Nesper (2006) question their application as the knowledge obtained may be limited to the parameters or boundaries of the framework. Motivated by Bernstein’s comments (1987, p.1) of researchers not being

“prisoners locked into our own perspective, frameworks and paradigms”, it is hoped that the approach outlined below will “reach out, communicate, and share with what is different from ourselves” (Bernstein 1987, p.1) by allowing for the selection of aspects of paradigms in order to suit the research that is taking place. This ‘cherry picking’ of ingredients is being employed for a variety of reasons. In an attempt not to be drawn into Popper’s metaphorical “myth of a framework” where “we are prisoners.....of our theories; our expectations; our past experiences; our language” (1970, p.56), the research is endeavouring to operate with a degree of freedom that will avoid becoming “entrenched in limited languages, horizons and paradigms” (Bernstein 1985, p.511). Like Bernstein, I too am inspired by the words of Dewey when he calls for the “casting off of that intellectual timidity which hampers the wings of imagination” (Dewey 1931, p.12). Bernstein advocates a confrontational approach in the fostering of an “interpenetrating pluralism” (1987, p.523) in order to make this possible. This pluralism has led to three theoretical approaches being chosen for different aspects of the research.

The methodological considerations are in three stages with each paradigmatic position representing a different phase of the research. Supported by Bernstein’s pluralistic approach (1992, p.323), this way of viewing the study also clarifies the ontological and epistemological assumptions of the project. Aspects of pragmatism support a solution-orientated approach in the overall design of the research while a relativistic ontology and an epistemological view that what can be discovered is context dependent support a social constructivist stance. Having constructed new knowledge based on the subjective perceptions of a research sample, Bourdieusian theory is then used as a lens to view and represent processes that are taking place in the sector.

### **3.4 A Pragmatic Approach**

Before delving into the theoretical views related to the research it is important to revisit the research questions and discuss the nature of the data that will be needed to address them.



1. To apply and extend appropriate theories to understand the extent to which current youth work provision pursues a controlling social function
2. To use aspects of Bourdieusian theory to identify and examine the power that stakeholders deploy within the sector to align it with their own objectives?

Each of these questions has sub headings that further focus the research and later influence choices made in the research strategy. In order to determine the purpose of provision in targeted youth work, it is necessary to identify the types that are being provided within the sector as well as factors such as the type of young person involved, the geographical and socio economic remit and the expected outcomes of the different types. To answer the second question, it is necessary to identify the various stakeholders in the sector and their motivations for involvement. To address the power aspect of the question it is initially necessary to identify the type of power that they possess and then examine how it is used to influence the sector and position them within it. In breaking down the main research questions into these sub themes the researcher is also clearly directing the study along a certain path by predetermining aspects of the enquiry. While providing a clear focus, this approach also has a theoretical influence in that the study becomes solution focused in a pragmatic fashion. These solutions or consequences (Garrison and James, 2003) play a role in determining many factors of the research with Garrison and Neiman (2003, p.21) stating “this emphasis upon consequences provides the starting point for almost any pragmatic analysis.” Pragmatism in this study is taken as “the pragmatic ethos” (Bernstein 1992, p.323) in that the decisions taken regarding methods for obtaining and representing data are taken as the most appropriate way of addressing the sub areas of the research questions. James (1995, 1907 original) discusses this outcome focused approach as a way of settling disputes regarding paradigmatic or methodological choices by using the pragmatic method to “try to interpret each notion by tracing its respective practical consequences” (p.18). Bernstein’s process orientated ethos leading to outcomes thereby rejects traditional dichotomies or dualisms between traditional paradigms by following the most appropriate path to find ‘what works’ for the project being considered in order to find solutions. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, p.18) in highlighting key characteristics of pragmatism, also point to the “influence of the inner world of human experience”,

the subjective world, as well as the view that within pragmatism knowledge is being “both constructed and based on the reality of the world we experience and live in.” As pragmatism does not align with one single philosophy it supports choices from various traditions regarding methods to conduct research as well as recognising that investigations take place within contexts such that can be historical and social. This provided researchers with the freedom to choose the most appropriate method.

For a variety of reasons discussed later in this and the next chapter, the managers of youth services and two civil servants were chosen as the best sources of knowledge related to the questions. This immediately positioned the research as relying on people to provide data based on their own understandings of the topic. This information was from the perspective of the research subjects therefore being subjective in nature and relying on a degree of interpretation in order to construct theory to describe the purpose of the work being carried out and the nature of the power that the stakeholders possess and deploy. Amongst other reasons, these factors strongly contributed to Constructivism being chosen as a methodology that would influence the methods used to gather data with various aspects of Bourdieurian theory used to understand the new knowledge created.

Overarching pragmatic focus on what is the best way of creating, representing  
and understanding new knowledge

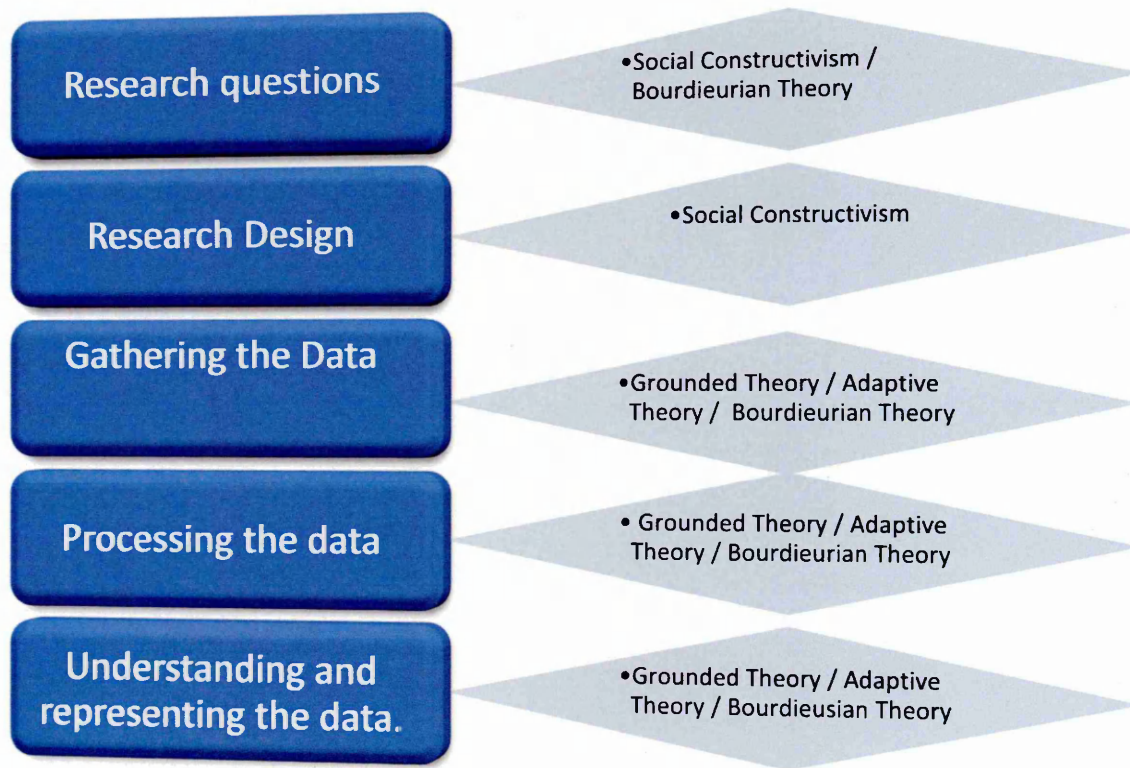


Figure 9 Methodological Influences on the Research Process

### 3.5 Positionality

*"In fact his freedom in the face of the social determinisms which affect him is proportionate to the power of this theoretical and technical methods of objectification, and above all, perhaps, to his ability to use them on himself, so to speak, to objectify his own position through the objectification of the space within which are defined both his position and his primary vision of this position, and the positions opposed to it" (Bourdieu 1988, p.15).*

The researcher does not come to the process as a tabula rasa without previous experiences impacting on his thinking and positioning in relation to the research. On the contrary, fifteen years of working in the sector in various roles including youth



worker, youth service manager and as a lecturer on youth work courses have influenced perspectives on all aspects of the sector as well as how the inquiry can be conducted. Indeed, as discussed previously, the original concept for the project came from a belief that the sector had moved away from its emancipatory roots and was now acting as a controlling agent on behalf of the state. In considering Bourdieu's comment above it is also important to state that the researcher does not support the concept of youth work as a left leaning emancipatory process conducted using critical, Freirean pedagogy. Rather, being predominately led by a centre right view of the world and how he acts within it, the researcher has often adopted contradictory stances to the traditional approaches to youth work in writings and debates. In aligning with conformist approaches in his views, the author also believes that if the state is investing funds in youth services, it should then have a strong role in dictating the processes involved and the resulting outputs and outcomes resulting from the youth work. At this point in the research design it is important to state that the Author may be unable or unwilling to be objective in the traditional sense. Weberman (2000, p.45) suggests "objectivity is not a suitable ideal because there does not exist any one correct interpretation of the phenomenon under investigation". The researcher's own *Vorurteile*, his personal influences, prejudgments and prejudices cannot be separated completely from how the research is conducted or theorised. As with Bourdieu's comment above, Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) promote the concept of reflexivity at all stages of the research process by being conscious of one's own habitus and how it is influencing decisions being taken. This acknowledging of the researcher's positionality in relation to the topic being studied has also raised awareness of familiarity relating to the research environment and potential research subjects within it. The researcher's habitus has been influenced by his long experience within the sector as well as the people that also operate within it. As a well known actor within the sector, the majority of potential research subjects would have some knowledge of the researcher, organisations that he has worked for and positions taken within debates surrounding youth work. Relating to the relativist approach discussed above, this is also the case in relation to potential research subjects as each of them is also affected by their habitus in how they enter and conduct themselves within the research due to factors such as personal background, ideological views or work history.



### 3.5.1 Insider and Outsider

Adopting an approach to the research process where the researcher and the researched become key actors in a relativist project had key implications for the choice of data gathering methods as well as the resulting outcomes. The work of Guba and Lincoln (1985), Green (2000) and Stordy (2012, p. 92) offers five such implications:

1. As there are multiple realities, divergences will be apparent in how the reality is investigated from one to another.
2. In order to capture these multiple realities, humans should be the primary data collector.
3. The topic under investigation and the 'knower' or person to provide the information are inseparable so the data should be gathered and more importantly, understood in context.
4. By being present, the researcher is influencing what is being seen.
5. The focus of the project should be "on the identification of contextualised meaning of these multiple points of view (Green 2000) with the goal of creating a joint, collaborative reconstruction from the multiple realities that exist" (Stordy 2012, p.92).

Hollis (1994, p.202) constructs a dichotomy between an insider and an outsider in understanding social worlds and associates these with Naturalism and Hermeneutics with the former being used to explore behaviours and material conditions and hermeneutics delving into ideas and action. He further posits that rather than aligning solely with one, the question should be about whether explanation or understanding is what is required. For the choices associated with aligning with specific philosophical paradigms or stances, the researcher would argue that this phase of the project should be needs led with named outputs in mind. While this might align well with Dewey's Pragmatism (1915), this study was required to move beyond explanation of what is taking place in the sector and develop an understanding of the deeper causes. This would also allow new theory to emanate from the project. Rather than aligning with Hollis' views (1994, p.202) in how he sees the divide, the author is proposing that an understanding of the sector and research problem is vital for any further explanation to take place. This would place the philosophical underpinnings of this project towards a constructivist approach where

knowledge is constructed by the researcher and the researched (the epistemological stance) resulting in multiple realities being constructed (the ontological position).

Within Burrell and Morgan's framework (1979, p.28) outlined in chapter two, Interpretivism is placed firmly within regulatory sociology and "seeks explanation within the realm of individual consciousness and subjectivity, within the frame of reference of the participant as opposed to the observer of action. This is in contrast to the sociological theories of change concerning Humanism and Structuralism as outlined in figure 3.2. As previously discussed, this supports the positioning of this inquiry as taking a consensus approach where it examines and interprets what is taking place rather than acting as a change agent in the sector.

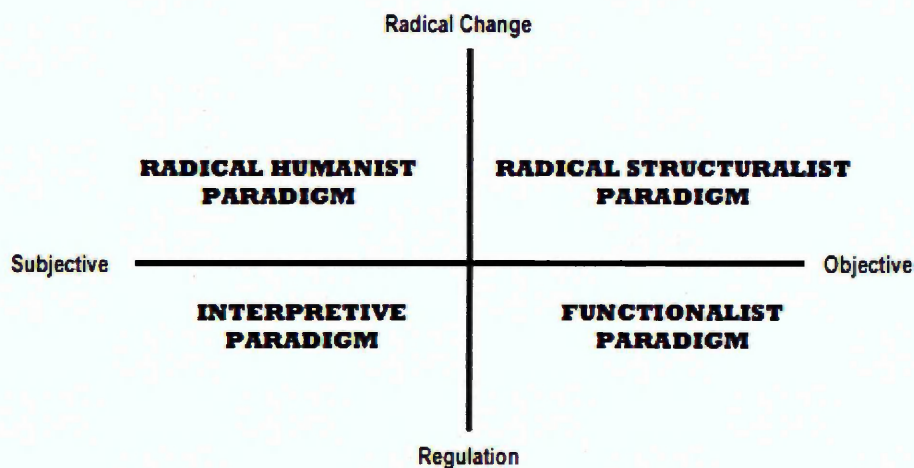


Figure 10 Burrell and Morgan's Framework (1979)

In order for the researcher to develop an understanding of what is taking place within the field of inquiry, his views and the views of those participating must be explored as both have considerable influence on how the inquiry is conducted and the findings that are produced as a result. Both of these heavily influence each other meaning that approaches, as found in positivist frameworks, cannot be applied to this paradigm. Perhaps the most rigorous response to rapprochement from a positivist reader is a high level of transparency in the process and being truthful

about the degree of subjectivity involved as that offered in the Methods chapter to follow. Heavily influenced by works such as Ambert et al. (1995) and Siraj-Blatchford (1995), I am endeavouring to “feel and act accordingly” (Siraj-Blatchford 1995, p. 213) so the research will have a “specific social function to be a producer of knowledge”.

Gubrium and Holstein (2005, p.484) write that using aspects of hermeneutic enquiry will allow for “an understanding of the *hows* and the *whats* of social reality; it is centred in how people methodically construct their experiences and their worlds, and in the configurations of meaning and institutional life that inform and shape their reality-constituting life”. Within the literature surrounding this sociological approach there are vast differences as to what Interpretivism consists of or appropriate methods of deployment. These differences are apparent from supporters of the approach such as Dilthey (1989), Habermas (1984) and Giddens (1986) who recognise that an interpretive approach cannot match more positivistic inquiries regarding the production of ‘truthful’, robust knowledge claims. Instead, they “infer that the social sciences need not meet naturalistic standards, for the social sciences have their own routes to knowledge which in no way embody scientific virtues” (Kircald 1996, p.205). The stance taken in this project, resulting in a constructivist methodology with methods inspired by Grounded and Adaptive Theory stem from William’s (2000, p.4) use of the term Interpretivism “to indicate those strategies in sociology which interpret the meanings and actions of actors according to their own subjective term of reference.”

However, there were certain ‘immoveables’ that have steered this stage of the research. Not only were these rooted in the research questions and what the study was trying to discover but also in the nature of new knowledge that this study was attempting to create. By investigating methods of provision within youth services the research was endeavouring to conduct an analysis of what takes place within a relatively small life world or field. The bourdieusian inspired mapping of capital involved thinking that would inform representational methods to display positionality within a field and the generation of new theory to address decades of ontological deficiencies would need to be robust enough to withstand scrutiny from peers while also being simple enough to deploy within the sector. Focus on research outcomes



such as representational maps and new theory is a paradigm in itself and led to the adoption of 'means to an end' type thinking that would achieve the desired results.

### **3.6 Practical Choices**

The data required to address the aims discussed above was heavily localised to youth services and due to a lack of previous studies in this area a scarcity of knowledge exists. To this end, in considering how the data should be generated, it was decided that knowledge from actors within the sector would be the most suitable source of data. While the nature of the data is discussed in depth in the next chapter and having ruled out positivist, participatory and other types of enquiry, this stage of the design led to a number of pertinent questions:

- 1) Who was best placed to provide knowledge relevant to the aims?
- 2) What was the nature of their knowledge?
- 3) What was the nature of the researchers' knowledge of the phenomena under scrutiny?

A choice was made to use the managers of youth services and the main civil servant for overseeing the youth work sector as it was deemed that they could provide the most appropriate information (as discussed in the following chapter). The nature of the data required research subjects that could provide both objective data such as information on the nature of projects and funding levels but also subjective information in order to garner data on issues such as power and provision in each area. The objective information was deemed to be relatively simplistic to obtain as much of the information is everyday knowledge to the manager of a service. The input of the civil servant is also vital in considering this aspect of the data as much of the work of this office is concerned with channelling funding from the State exchequer towards these services. These areas could be addressed with some simple questioning using a number of methods such as surveys or interviews. Both of these types of actors work in specific contexts so subjective data would be able to explain cultural aspects of the sector from their own perspective.

As has been explained, the researcher has been involved in the sector for over twelve years in roles such as a youth worker, a manager and a lecturer so his own experiences over this time heavily influenced the topic and nature of the research. As with the managers and civil servant, he was in possession of a large amount of



subjective and objective knowledge regarding how the sector operated. Accepting that the most appropriate approach to obtaining knowledge relevant to the research aims would be through the views of the sample above, the researcher was situated in a relativistic ontological position where “multiple constructed meanings” (Denzin and Lincoln 2005, p.22) made up what could be deemed as truth within what Stake (2010, p.21) describes as “situated research”. This ‘truth’ or ‘reality’ could only be “knowable through socially constructed meanings” (Snape and Spencer in Ritchie and Lewis 2003, p.19) and each of the research subjects mentioned above could not have individual approaches, views and understandings of the lifeworld that they each exist in. When offering information in relation to data outside of that required to address the funding and structural make-up of the sector, they would be providing their own interpretations of their existence that would be heavily reliant on subjective understandings. Considering the above factors, epistemologically concerning how it was possible for the researcher to know about the phenomena under consideration, an interpretive stance was adopted towards “the nature of the relationship between the knower or would-be knower and what can be known” (Guba and Lincoln, 1998 p. 201).

Before delving into the final stage of the discussion relating to the philosophical positioning of the research, which traditionally represents objective data, it is important to summarise the implications of the stance taken so far. Adopting a hermeneutically influenced approach to constructivism positions the research as having no one truth due to multiple subjective perceptions of reality being used to create knowledge. This approach is also context dependant and the researcher accepts that his presence has an influence on the research process and the resulting knowledge that is created.

### **3.7 Field Theory**

Field, according to Bourdieu (1992, p.97), is “a network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions” which have objective existence outside of individual consciousness and these positions reflect the “structure of the distribution of species of power (capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field”. Fields are bounded in order to define what can and cannot exist within them. Mills (2008), basing her view on the work of Mahar,

Harker and Wilkes (1990) highlights that “the conception of field that Bourdieu uses is not to be considered as a field with a fence around it, but rather as a ‘field of forces’ that is dynamic and in which various potentialities exist.” This allows for the existence and uncovering of both internal and external forces. Bourdieu elaborates on his concept of field in “The Field of Cultural Production” by discussing a “space of possibles, which transcends individual agents, functions as a kind of system of common reference which causes contemporary directors, even when they do not consciously refer to each other, to be objectively situated in relation to the others, to the extent that they are all interrelated as a function of the same system of intellectual coordinates and points of reference” (Bourdieu 1993, p176-177). Thompson expands on the concept of social fields as areas of struggle with “participants in the field having differing aims” (Thompson in Mills, 2008) and (Naidoo 2004, p.459) speaks of permanent conflict within fields with actors within fields employing strategies, the manifestations of which are referred to as “position taking” (Naidoo 2004) with the rules of the field only ever partially articulated (Grenfell and James 1998, p.20). As “field allows for a study of the social setting” (Rawolle and Lingard 2008, p.732) and youth work is one such setting, it is the deployment of field as a relational theory with which the Author is most concerned. King (2000, p.425) refers to “the objective structure of unequal positions which accumulate around any form of practice” with these unequal positions being formed by the possession of capital.

Thompson (in Mills 2008) explains the field as being a “structured space of positions in which their positions and their interrelations are determined by the distribution of capital” and also posits that “Bourdieu’s own explications of field often involved four semi – autonomous levels: the field of power, the broad field under consideration, the specific field, and social agents in the field as a field in themselves” (2008, p.79). It is an explanation of the specific field of youth services and how it functions as a field of power within the broader field of Irish youth work that this chapter is concerned with. While the tendency of many Bourdieusian inspired studies is to portray chiasmic diagrams in order to address the research questions, this study is concerned with identifying both the actors and their capital that are present in the field. It is envisaged that using his theories as thinking tools will provide the reader with the following:

- An explanation of which agencies and actors are present in the field.
- What power they possess.
- How they use their power within the field.

However, this study, due to various constraints, makes no attempt to explore the Habitus of the various actors and agencies within the field. While Bourdieu (1984, p.101) provides a formulaic approach to the study (below), this research is concerned only with identifying participants in the field being studied as well as the resources that they possess.

### **[(Habitus) (Capital)] + Field = Practice**

(Bourdieu 1984, p.101)

### **3.8 Capital**

Morberg, Lagerstrom and Delve (2012, p.356) discuss Bourdieu's concept of Capital and its various forms as overlapping in operation. "Capital refers to resources of either a real or a symbolic character, related to specific fields or arenas in which a form of capital is utilised. Capital means power and can be described as resources that are useful for power" (p.356). Bourdieu (1986) describes power and capital as the same thing and in his dialogue with Wacquant (1992, p.97) he describes how this power in its multiple forms can be used to define positions in the field by actors or organisations imposing the strength or their accumulation of capital on others within the field. This vying for positions whereby agents or institutions are trying to accumulate some sort of profit while deploying resources in the way of capital has roots in economic theory dating back centuries. Bourdieu refers to this vying as taking place within the metaphor of a game of roulette (1986) and later explains (1992, p.99) how within a game involving piles of tokens with differing colours representing various forms of capital, players make decisions based on the volume and structure of the capital that they possess. One may have more monetary power while another may possess more cultural power thereby leading to each taking different positions within the field and making different decisions on their next play or their overall strategy. Remaining within the metaphor, each actor or player can accumulate or lose some of their tokens while also being able to exchange the 'currency' of each by trading within the game or field. With each form of capital



having more value to specific fields than others, agents can be dominant in one type of field while being subordinate in another depending on the type of power that they possess. This competition and accumulation of various capitals according to Thompson (2008, p.69) are the main “process within, and product of, a field” with each field “shaped differently according to the game that is played on them”.

Bourdieu (1984, p.225), in broadening the concept of capital beyond a mercantile exchange “which is objectively and subjectively oriented toward the maximization of profit” initially offers three forms of capital: economic, cultural and social with each leading to the deployment of symbolic capital. These can be summarised as “the resources one uses in practice – for example, economic capital (wealth), social capital (relations), cultural capital (knowledge of how to practice in a particular field) and symbolic capital (right to be heard) (Ritzer 2008, p.329). Ritzer’s summary of symbolic power may be more easily understood as the extent or ability to extend recognition on others in the way a company decides job titles for employees or a University confers a degree. Measuring the different manifestations of capital can be done over two axes to determine its true worth, volume and composition.

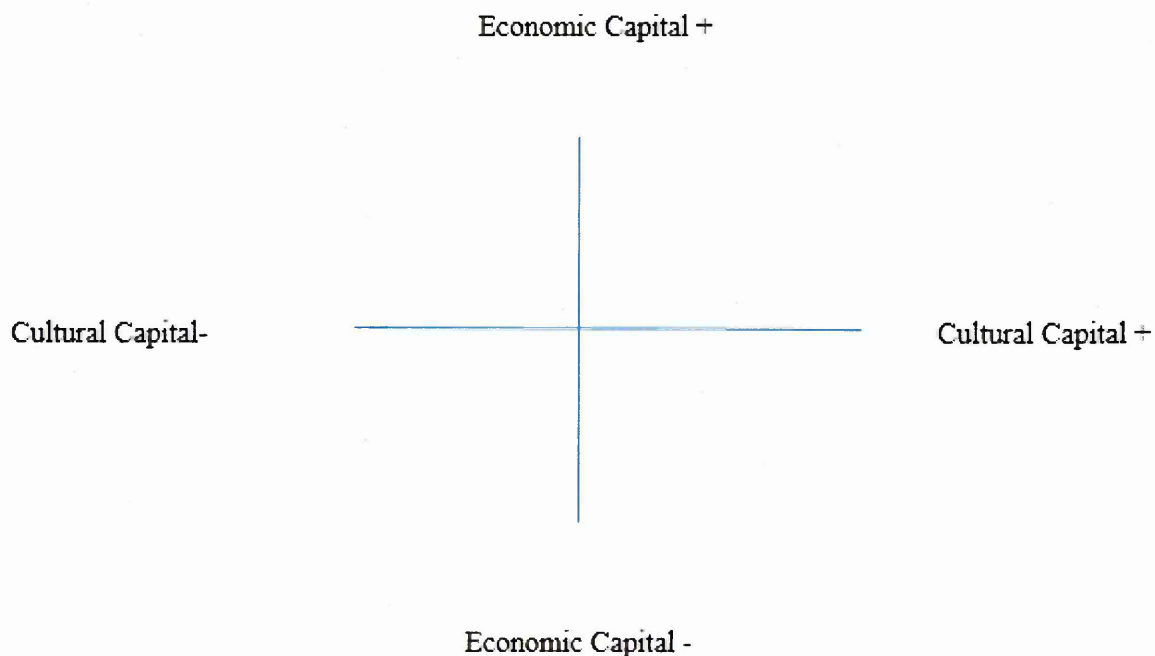


Figure 11 Diagram of a social field (Thompson, 2008 p.72)

Quantification and representation of capital in ways similar to that above has been carried out extensively in recent years and applied to contexts such as education,



occupations and national studies of class (Savage et al 2013). While these studies have addressed Bourdieu's manifestations of capital in individuals and the role that capital takes in shaping interactions with institutions or existence within fields, many have applied traditional bourdieusian statistical measurement approaches to quantifying capital Alireza and Anders (2015, p.5). In an attempt to break with these traditional approaches to the study of capital, this study diverts from quantifications and offers an approach to the study of capital that can be readily accessed by readers in the field of youth work. This is an attempt to demystify and simplify the approach to studying a field in order to make this research usable for organisations and actors within the sector by acting as a baseline for future studies to refer to. As the field changes over time due to its dynamic nature, a similar approach can be used by future studies to identify capital and assess how it is being deployed within this section of the overall youth work sector.

When examining capital, the following points are addressed within a qualitative approach as opposed to traditional statistical analysis:

- An identification of the various forms in practice.
- An analysis of which types of capital the identified participants in the field are in possession of.
- An examination of how it is deployed.
- Identification of who or what the deployment of capital has an impact on.

### **3.9 Alternative Methodologies Explored:**

In deciding on the three methodological influences outlined above, others were examined to address which approach would best align with the ontological and epistemological orientations of the researcher. This and other factors such as context, prospective sample and the research outcomes were also considered in reaching a decision.

Using Guba and Lincoln's spectrum of philosophical approaches to research (1994), Participatory research would have allowed for "innovative adaptations of methods drawn from conventional research and their use in new contexts, in new ways, often by as well as with, local people" (Cornwall and Jewkes 1995, p.1668).

	<b>Ontology</b> (Nature of reality)	<b>Epistemology</b> (What can be known; Relationship of knower & known)	<b>Methodology</b> (How knowledge is gained)	<b>Products</b> (Forms of knowledge produced)
<b>Positivist</b>	Reality is out there to be studied, captured, and understood	How the world is really ordered; Knower is distinct from known	Experiments, quasi-experiments, surveys, correlational studies	Facts, theories, laws, predictions
<b>Postpositivist</b>	Reality exists but is never fully apprehended, only approximated	Approximations of reality; Researcher is data collection instrument	Rigorously defined qualitative methods, frequency counts, low-level statistics	Generalizations, descriptions, patterns, grounded theory
<b>Constructivist</b>	Multiple realities are constructed	Knowledge as a human construction; Researcher and participant co-construct understandings	Naturalistic qualitative methods	Case studies, narratives, interpretations, reconstructions
<b>Critical/Feminist</b>	The apprehended world makes a material difference in terms of race, gender, and class	Knowledge as subjective and political; Researchers' values frame inquiry	Transformative inquiry	Value mediated critiques that challenge existing power structures and promote resistance
<b>Poststructuralist</b>	Order is created within individual minds to ascribe meaning to a meaningless universe.	There is no "Truth" to be known; Researchers examine the world through textual representations of it.	Deconstruction; Genealogy; Data-based, multivoiced studies	Deconstructions; Genealogies; Reflexive, polyvocal texts

Table 6 Guba and Lincoln (1994). Adapted by Hatch (2002, p.13)

However, a number of reasons steered the researcher from using this stance as a thinking tool in deciding how the project would be conducted. These included the nature of the research aims as well as the type of research sample best situated to contribute to new knowledge. Engaging in participatory approaches such as Action Research would place a considerable time burden on both the sample and the researcher. While Frererian approaches that tend to stem from participatory paradigms such as these may have been useful in assessing power dynamics within the youth work field, there was also concerns regarding whether the sharing of power within the research process was necessary or even if it would be desired by the sample in order to obtain relevant data.

The inquiry is specifically addressing one aspect of the youth work sector. There are no emancipatory motivations or transformational aspirations and while there has been an acknowledgement of the researcher's stance, it does not seek to enter into a left/right debate regarding what the role of these services should be. Whilst not addressing traditional Marxist oppressive use of power, the project is designed to unveil some of the structural power issues that are taking place in the field. This is from a stance of trying to understand how these relations influence practice rather than adopting an advocacy role as in a critical paradigm. With the researcher of an

ontological view of multiple realities being constructed by individuals, the project called for an “abandonment of the fundamentally positivist enterprise of producing law-based theories and explanation” (1987, p.34), further placing the data gathering and analysis stage clearly within an interpretive range.

### **3.9.1 Conclusion**

This chapter has outlined the ontological, epistemic and methodological considerations and the associated paradigmatic choices that have been taken in conducting this research. The ontological view of the researcher is that there are multiple realities constructed by individuals. Epistemologically, this means that knowledge is built or constructed by the researcher interpreting understandings and working with the research sample to develop new knowledge. However, in focusing on the research questions and in trying to develop new knowledge to address these, a solutions orientated, pragmatic approach has been taken to both methodological thinking and the methods to conduct the research as discussed in the following chapter. While working along a pragmatic path, a social constructivist approach has been taken in relation to choosing methods for data gathering and interpretation while the thinking tools of Bourdieu will be used to further understand and represent the data.



## Chapter 4 Method

*Disciplined inquiry does not necessarily follow well-established, formal procedures. Some of the most excellent inquiry is free-ranging and speculative in its initial stages, trying what might seem to be bizarre combinations of ideas and procedures, or restlessly casting about for ideas' (Cronbach and Suppes 1969, p.16).*

### 4.1 Introduction

Rather than being confined to what Baert (2005, p.194) refers to as a “methodological straitjacket”, I opted to approach the methods of this study using qualitative approaches that were influenced primarily by the paradigmatic positioning discussed in the previous chapter. By methodologically theorising within a paradigm heavily influenced by Interpretivism and Constructivism, the research was firmly placed within a qualitative context with the resulting associated methods that have traditionally been linked with this approach. While a mixed methods approach using quantitative instruments may have been possible, the author again let the overarching aims and objectives influence the decision. Other determining factors were the nature of the data that could be produced using quantitative approaches, learning from the pilot study and the limited size of the aspect of the youth work sector being investigated.

Following the work of Dabbs (1982) and Berg (2001), a decision was taken to search for quality rather than quantity regarding the data and the research sample. The nature of the data required to fulfil the aims of the study meant that quantitative statistical analytical approaches were deemed unsuitable. Berg (2001, p.3) offers that “qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things. In contrast, quantitative research refers to counts and measures of things.” Aligning with qualitative approaches in the data gathering and analysis stage presented a quandary with certain internal and external demands. These included the audience that would finally read the project, rigour, my own ontological views and the proposed use of Bourdieusian Field theory at a later stage in the project to explore issues pertaining to how capital is deployed around the field of youth services.



Koch (2006, p.91) discusses rigour within naturalistic research as trustworthiness in that the reader should be able to audit the events that have taken place as it is undertaken. This conceptual view of rigour being trustworthiness is the approach that is taken within this Thesis. Using this conceptual approach, Guba and Lincoln (1985) provide criteria to assess the trustworthiness of studies that have been adapted and tabularised by Baille (2015 p.37).

Criteria to evaluate trustworthiness in qualitative research			
Traditional or quantitative research criteria	Naturalistic or qualitative research criteria	Explanation	Example of techniques to promote rigour
Validity	Credibility	The findings make sense.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Member checking.</li> <li>▶ Prolonged time in the field.</li> <li>▶ Triangulation.</li> <li>▶ Peer debriefing.</li> <li>▶ Negative case analysis.</li> </ul>
Reliability	Dependability	The research has been conducted in a dependable way that can be audited.	Audit trail of decision making throughout the research process.
Generalisability	Transferability	There is potential for findings to be transferred to another setting.	Rich description of the setting and participants.
Objectivity	Confirmability	Confirmation of the researcher's position and influence.	Reflexivity – reflective journal.

Table 7. Criteria to Evaluate Trustworthiness in Qualitative Research (Baille 2015, p.37).

While the author did engage in a limited process of reflexivity through a memoing process, the trustworthiness of this study comes from an audit trail that is provided in this and the following chapter by discussing the various stages. By providing significant information on aspects of the research such as sample recruitment, the data collection instrument as well as the analysis process, the research process can be viewed as having reliability as it has been conducted in a dependable way that can be audited. The researcher did not strive for Guba and Lincolns validity, generalisability or objectivity as, apart from the memoing mentioned above, the study did not employ alternative techniques for promoting rigour. This was a conscious decision taken by the researcher based on the objectives of the study and the best methods to be employed to achieve them.

Unlike quantitative processes that involve positivist processes, Maykut and Moorehouse (1994, p.25) point out that “the qualitative researcher or naturalistic inquirer is a part of the investigation as a participant observer, an in-depth

interviewer, or a leader of a focus group but also removes him/herself from the situation to rethink the meanings of the experience.” With the process of the research being of paramount importance, Yardley (2008, p.248) emphasises the “need to show that you have carries out an analysis that has sufficient breath and/or depth to deliver additional insight into the topic researched.” In taking the approach outlined below as well as outlining the quality of the full process within this and following chapters, the author has provided a reflexive methodological account of the process that should allow for trust in the steps taken to achieve the research objectives.

## **4.2 Selected Methods**

The factors above led to adopting aspects of Grounded Theory and Layder’s Adaptive Theory (1998) while avoiding being constrained by rigid boundaries or having to stay strictly aligned with one approach. Inspired by Morse’s comments (2009, p.14) of grounded theory not being “performed in exactly the same way every time it is used”, a pragmatic approach was adopted when trying to find suitable working methods to address the aims of the research. This was done by combining aspects of grounded theory and adaptive theory for processing the data and Bourdieusian methods as a “thinking tool’ for addressing the role of stakeholders within the sector. This provided a system for the framing of data once it had been coded to allow further representation and exploration of power dynamics within the field, an aspect that both Adaptive and Bourdieusian theories allow for. While Dey (1999, p.2) points to there being “probably as many versions of grounded theory as there are grounded theorists”, an exploratory approach was adopted similar to Hunter *et al* (2010) to the three versions of ‘Classic Grounded Theory’ from the work of Glaser and Strauss (1967), refined by Glaser (1978, 1992, 2002), Straussian Grounded Theory (Strauss 1987, Strauss and Corbin 1990, 1998) and Charmaz’s (2000, 2006) constructivist Grounded Theory. Of the three, it was an adaptation of the work of Strauss and Corbin, what Thornberg (2012, p. 243) describes as “informed grounded theory” and more predominately Charmaz’s constructivist approach that allowed me to conduct the research while focusing on the aims and objectives of the overall project. Projects operating in this fashion and the resulting



generated theory are “thoroughly grounded in data by GT methods while being informed by existing research literature and theoretical frameworks” (Thornberg 2012, p.249).

Charmaz (1995, 2002) provides features that all grounded theory approaches have in common that have been included in the treatment of the data:

- Development of codes and categories for the data
- The unveiling of social processes from the data
- Theoretical sampling
- The writing of memos and
- The merging of categories into a theoretical framework.

Taking a similar approach to Charmaz (in Denzin and Lincoln, 2005), the grounded theory methods “consist of simultaneous data collection and analysis, with each focusing the other throughout the research process” with the intended results being “an analytical interpretation of participant’s worlds and of the processes constituting how these worlds are constructed” (2005, p.508). The grounded theory used in this project has no agenda as a vehicle for change but instead is being used for learning and limited representation. As grounded theory is “not performed in exactly the same way each time it is used” (Morse, 2009, p.14), a freedom exists to alter it and create analytical and classifying systems, such as coding, as theory emerges from the data through examination. Morse’s interpretation also allows for a blending with Adaptive Theory in order to deploy a method that suits the research, the type of data to be gathered and explored and the epistemological and ontological views of the researcher.

This study also employs aspects of the approach developed by Strauss over a number of years (Strauss 1987; Strauss and Corbin, 1997, 1998) in that the grounded theory operates in an interpretive manner allowing the researcher to interpret understandings from the data that then form some of the basis for later analysis. While accepting that the researcher has not been a *tabula rasa* at any stage of the project, a grounded theory type approach allowed him to aim for Dey’s (1993) “difference between an open mind and an empty head”. The approach

outlined over the following pages allowed for the use of tacit knowledge while still being able to treat the data, when required, with an empirical approach. For the purpose of appropriately conveying how data was gathered, more detail regarding the grounded theory analytical methods such as coding and constant comparison is provided in the following chapter.

The lesser known Adaptive Theory (Layder 1998) has been intertwined throughout as it allows the researcher to focus on both what is taking place in the field as well as providing an understanding of the systems that enable provision within the sector. This added benefit of Adaptive Theory, where systemic aspects of the topic under investigation can be understood, is additional to grounded theory's focus on behavioural aspects. This allows a wider understanding of the data in that the reasons for behaviour can be explored. While the application of this theory as a method is similar to Grounded Theory, Layder (1998, p.153) points out that the use of existing theories and theoretical scaffolding are encouraged and that emerging and existing stances do not 'stand still' as they are reflexive depending on what is emerging from the data. This encourages a degree of flexibility and adaptability in the gathering and analysis of data. While Grounded Theory mainly addresses behavioural aspects of data and interviewees, Adaptive Theory also involves the systemic aspects by appreciating the world and social orders that the data is being gathered in. The theory can also be employed in addressing stakeholders and their motivations as it can underpin the deployment of Bourdieusian theory which is normally used as a method in a purely objective fashion. Jacobsen and Kristiansen (2013), drawing on the critical realist roots of Adaptive Theory point to the importance of pre-existing theory in directing the creation of knowledge but also reinforce Adaptive Theory as a method rather than a methodology or philosophical approach as it draws on a range of methods that are both deductive and inductive. As Layder points out (1998, p.38), by using aspects of a range of approaches, Adaptive Theory "both adapts to, or is shaped by, incoming evidence at the same time as the data themselves are filtered through the extant theoretical materials that are relevant and at hand." Employment of a method with this flexibility can lead to a process whereby pre-existing theory, emerging data and ongoing theorising throughout the data gathering and analysis can exist. Emanating from Grounded



Theory, the methods of Adaptive Theory data analysis provide three steps: pre coding, satellite coding and axial coding.



Figure 10 Interplay between theory and data (Kristiansian and Jacobsen, 2011)

## 4.3 Recruitment and Data Collection

### 4.3.1 Sampling of Participants

The research participants were mainly managers and assistant managers from the different youth services discussed previously. All have vast experience of working in the sector with each one originally being youth workers and progressing into management roles over time. As the projects differed in their makeup, each participant was able to offer a unique view, grounded in what they experienced in the day-to-day management of their project and their interactions with other actors and organisations operating in the field and interacting with their service. Similar to Fossey et al. (2002, p.723), the data was gathered “to give privilege to the perspectives of research participants and to illuminate the subjective meaning, actions and context of those being researched”. This positioning was the main imperative behind the purposeful sampling strategy (Patton 2002, p.230) of eight

youth services. The management of these services were deemed as being in the best position to provide information on youth work as they were managing projects that were made up of programmes from different funding streams. Bourne (2009 p.6), drawing on the work of Lewis (2003), and Higganbottom (2004) while working with a similar sample size, discuss “information rich cases” and a “conscious selection, of certain subjects to include with a ‘purpose’ to represent a phenomenon in relation to certain characteristics, often socio demographic, particular knowledge or experiences of interest to the research phenomena.”

Two civil servants were also interviewed. One of them, from the Irish Youth Justice Service had responsibility for overseeing all of the one hundred Garda Youth Diversion Projects for the State. The decision to interview him was taken because of preliminary analysis of data from the first four interviews during the open coding stage when it became apparent that the presence of Garda Youth Diversion Programmes was having a significant influence on the youth work sector, youth services and the research. Strauss and Corbin (1998, p.73) describe this approach within grounded theory like studies as “Theoretical Sampling: Sampling on the basis of emerging concepts, with the aim being to explore the dimensional range or varied conditions along which the properties of concepts vary.” Patton (1997, p. 238) supports this approach in grounded theory type projects that are analysing and comparing data as the data gathering continues to take place by pointing to how researchers can examine “variations in, manifestations of, and meanings of a concept as it is found”. As the findings show, this flexibility within the study provided by Grounded and Adaptive Theory proved to be worthwhile in being able to present a comprehensive overview of what is taking place within the subject area. Without the inclusion of this interviewee and the capturing of the influence and power that their organisation has within the sector, the results of this study would lack what has been found to be a significant portion of the overall make-up of youth services.

The option to interview the second civil servant with overall responsibility for funding provided and administered by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs was taken before the interview process had begun. As this Department has responsibility for the majority of funding mechanisms associated with youth work and youth services as well as providing over fifty million Euros in funding to the sector, she was deemed as being an essential contributor to the research. This civil servant also has



responsibility for the overall implementation of initiatives such as the move towards a more outcomes focused approach and responsibility for the National Quality Standards Framework for youth work. It was envisaged that this participant would be able to offer an enlightening insight into the Department's policy towards youth work and the associated guiding factors. This is another example where the purposive sampling strategy was employed as opposed to the one case of theoretical sampling outlined above. The openness of the study to using theoretical sampling also allowed for further participants to be recruited and interviewed should the need have arisen. However, throughout the analysis and data gathering stage of the project, no specific need arose.

#### **4.3.2 Those not sampled**

Justification may be needed as to the reasons for not recruiting what some in the youth work sector may deem as important subject groupings of actors such as V.E.C. / E.T.B. Youth Officers, Staff of youth services not serving in management roles and young people using the service. Within the pilot phase of the research, Youth Officers were consulted and interviewed. Resulting from this process, a decision was taken not to use this grouping in the main study as the resulting data could only offer a limited amount of usable information. This is because each Youth Officer is specific to an Education and Training Board geographical remit and only has responsibility for limited aspects of youth work funding while acting as a local conduit for finances on behalf of the DCYA. While the ETBs have responsibility for the roll out of youth work in their area and the implementation of the National Quality Standards Framework at local levels, this is only in relation to projects within youth services as they relate to DCYA funding. As most services include projects outside of programmes related to the DCYA, ETB Youth Officers were deemed unsuitable for the sample as in some areas they would have limited or no knowledge or interaction with a service if it does not fall under certain funding categories. The youth service of P3 is an example of this as it is made up entirely of Garda Youth Diversion Projects and has no interaction with the ETB or the DCYA outside of the IYJS executive office.



Staff outside of managerial roles within services were deemed not suitable as they are specific to their project within the wider concept of a youth service. For example: A Drugs Prevention Officer has a very specific role within a youth service and would probably only be able to offer limited information related to their specific role and how it relates to the individual project they are employed to deliver. Young people were not consulted as they are the recipients of individual programmes and this study is primarily focused on overall delivery within youth services as well as the influencing forces related to that delivery. The pilot study proved to be vital in allowing the researcher to experiment with these various aspects of sampling to confirm the best approach to the overall study. Arising from the pilot, a decision was taken that the informants required to supply data relevant to the research objectives, must be in 'overarching positions' where they can take a view of multiple forces at play in the sector while being the most suitably informed to discuss services.

#### **4.4 Sample size**

In the process of conducting initial interviews and while still pondering the quantity needed, Baker and Edwards (2012) published the musings of fourteen "renowned social scientists and five early career researchers" (p.2). The views of these contributors heavily influenced choices regarding sample size in this study as each of their stances were considered. Research design concerns regarding the number of interviews centred around issues such as obtaining adequate amounts of data to allow for the type of analysis that was intended, validity in terms of allowing the research to be robust enough to develop new theory and how the research would stand up to scrutiny by peers, supervisors and the research community at large.

Balnaves and Caputi (2001, p.122) discuss "three major kinds of validity: construct validity, internal validity and external validity. Construct validity is the extent to which your constructs are successfully operationalized and represent the phenomenon you want to study. Internal validity is the extent to which your research design really allows you to draw conclusions about the relationship between variables. External validity is the extent to which your sample is genuinely representative of the population from which you have drawn it." While all three are vital to research processes, within the recruitment and data collection stage of the process, more

emphasis was given to issues concerning internal and external rather than construct validity which has been discussed when addressing the methodological approach to the study. At its simplest, according to Baxter, Hughes and Tight (2010, p.245) “validity has to do with whether your methods, approaches and techniques actually relate to, or measure, the issues you have been exploring.” Arising from Baker and Edwards work (2012) and the constant comparative method employed to analyse the data, it was decided that increasing the quantity of the sample would not lead to any significant new findings.

When addressing validity in relation to the data collection, outside of the researcher’s subjectivity which has already been addressed, maturation of the data also posed a significant threat to the project as there would be at least one year between data gathering and the completion of the project. The youth work sector has been in a state of flux in recent years with the earlier referred to influence of GYDPs, outcomes focused work, mergers and reductions in funding due to economic circumstances. To counteract difficulties and to offset any ‘staleness’ in the data, the subject areas used in the interviews were deliberately structured in an open format to address areas that would not be affected in a significant way over the course of the study leading to findings that would be reflective of the associated time lines.

#### **4.5 Importance of the Literature Review**

Dunne (2010, p.113) examines the ‘chicken and egg’ role of literature reviews within discussion relating to their timing within Grounded Theory type studies labelling it as a “polemic and divisive issue which continues to spark debate” between supporters of Glaser and Strauss (1967) and later Strauss and Corbin (1998). Glaser and Strauss originally argued against a literature review before data gathering and analysis calling for researchers to ignore literature and theory on the topic to be studied (1967, p.37) so as not to contaminate any new theories “that emerge naturally from the empirical data during analysis, uninhibited by extant theoretical frameworks and associated hypothesis” (Dunne 2010, p.114). While this is an ideal approach, supported by authors such as Nathaniel (2006) and Holton (2007), the realities of studying the phenomena that the researcher has been immersed in for



many years cannot be ignored. Strauss and Corbin (1998, p.48) acknowledge that “the researcher brings to the inquiry a considerable background in professional and disciplinary literature” and take a more relaxed view towards the role of literature than Strauss had previously while working with Glaser. This author supports their approach and the adaptation of Layder’s method (1998) by acknowledging his previous immersion in literature related to the topic from lecturing and working as a youth worker. As outlined in Chapter 1, the concept of this research emanated from how the researcher was experiencing practice within youth services and how this practice did not echo what was appearing in literature that was predominately ideologically driven and from traditional volunteer led, emancipatory youth work sources. These realities, as well as the requirement to complete an initial review of literature as part of the pre dissertation doctoral process, set this study in opposition to the views of Glaser and other purists. While supporters of Glaser may argue that this approach could heavily influence theory development and how theory is collected and analysed, this author would argue that Glaser’s supposed “tabula rasa” (Dey 1993, p.63) is impossible, a point echoed by Layder (1998) in acknowledging the subjective nature of research design. Similar to Maijala, Paavilainen & Astedt-Kurki (2003), the researcher would point to the importance of the role that reading the literature plays in addressing preconceptions of the topic. In addition, Dunne (2010), supported by the writings of a large amount of authors including McCann and Clarke (2003), Creswell, (1998) and Mc Ghee et al. (2007), highlights five positives for engaging with the literature at an early stage. These include providing a rationale for the study, ensuring the study has not previously been carried out, helping to contextualise the research, developing concepts and avoiding conceptual and methodical pitfalls. However, Strauss and Corbin also point out that “there is no need to review all of the literature in the field beforehand, as is frequently done by analysts using other research approaches” (1998, p.49). They stress the importance of allowing concepts to emerge and not being stifled or constrained by previous readings and call for researchers to “put trust in their abilities to generate knowledge” (p.49). Following this, Charmaz (2006, p.10 & p.166) draws on the Chicago School, interpretive and pragmatist roots of Grounded Theory and calls for researchers to attend to the writing of theory while recognising the role of early interactions with the literature. Her approach asks researchers to let the early literature “lie fallow” (p.166) while the development of theory is taking place with a view to further engagement.



This approach allows for further focusing and increased quality as researchers have developed their understanding of the research subject and related theory over the time of the study. It also allows relevant literature to be linked with concepts as they arise throughout the gathering and analysis that may not have been within the criteria of a literature review conducted before these stages. Having considered these varying points, the approach employed in this study stems from the views of Charmaz as well as Strauss and Corbin above. This will be shown in Chapter Six where, after analysis of the data, relevant literature as well as recent literature that has been published in the time between the initial review and data analysis will be used to support the building of theory.

#### **4.6 Theoretical Memoing**

To counteract concerns regarding aligning with the views of Charmaz (2006) as well as Strauss and Corbin (1998) regarding the role of the literature, the researcher engaged in theoretical memoing throughout the process. While this aspect of the process is developed further within the Analysis Chapter, it is worthwhile to briefly discuss its role in influencing the gathering of data. In all, sixty one memos were written and served as an ideal tool to enable reflexivity within the data gathering and analysis stages as well as serving to develop new theory and thoughts on the research process. Gardner (2008, p.76) describes memoing as “a record of a researcher’s personal responses to data, and the experience of data gathering.” Ideally, memoing would have begun at the conceptual stage of this study. However, a research diary was maintained at this time that served a similar purpose. Birks, Chapman and Francis (2008, p.69) discuss how memos “help to clarify thinking on a research topic, provide a mechanism for the articulation of assumptions and subjective perspectives about the area of research, and facilitate the development of the study design.” Examination of the memoing conducted while interviewing was taking place clearly show how this tool heavily influenced how the data was treated while also focusing the gathering of data within interviews. Strauss and Corbin (1998, p.75) acknowledge that due to the nature of the phenomenon being studied as well as the grounded theory process, “different questions and issues arise at different points of the inquiry. Memoing allowed the researcher a degree of abstraction from the project, where dilemmas and thoughts could be processed through writing thereby contributing to the overall directions and success of the project.”

As this process took place at the same time as data was being gathered and analysed, it naturally assisted in the ongoing thinking and theorising that was taking place. This continuous process led to new ideas, routes to pursue and the development of concepts, codes and understandings as these stages progressed. This formed the basis of the discussion to take place towards the end of this study where the Author presents the most relevant knowledge garnered from the investigation.

#### **4.7 Recruitment Process:**

Due to many years of being a practitioner and lecturer, the researcher was familiar with the management of a large number of youth services within the sector. While this was a valuable asset, it did add to concerns regarding potential responses from Interviewees i.e. the influence of the researcher by being present during interviews. Other issues considered regarding the sample were the representation of what are a diverse and heterogeneous population and the number of interviewees that would be required to provide representation. In my pragmatic phenomenological approach as discussed within the Methodology Chapter, I was deliberately not concerning myself with data saturation akin to other Grounded Theory type studies. I had chosen to pre-designate the number of interviews that would be conducted based on what I decided would, as Ruane (2005, p.105) explains “mimic or accurately depict the larger whole or population from which they come”. By obtaining data that were subjective by consisting of the perspectives of those interviewed, the study is not attempting to be representative of the whole sector. However, in order to understand the various stances, differing types of services were chosen.

Selection of management Interviewees was made by endeavouring to get a representation of the various types of youth services such as Community, Independent or Voluntary led and maintains a geographical spread as discussed in section 1.3. A crucial decision for the researcher was the quantity of interviews to be conducted. While endeavouring for representativeness of the type of youth services and not conduct an investigation whose results would be representative of the whole sector, a sector that is small in quantity to begin with, the focus was on the range of response rather than frequency as in traditionally saturation focused



studies. Due to pragmatic and other reasons discussed earlier, the strategy of deciding on how many interviews would be appropriate was not merely about picking a sample but more about selecting cases that would provide the range as discussed in Baker and Edwards (2014, p.2). This attempt by Baker and Edwards to quantify 'how many interviews are enough' led them to converse with ten experts and relatively new researchers in order to find a definitive answer. Within this paper, the researcher was specifically drawn to the opinions of experts such as Becker (2014, p.15), Charmaz (2014, p.22), Mason (2014, p.30) and that of an early career researcher, Jensen (2014, p.40). Becker (2014, p.15), when discussing interviews regarding phenomena, points to researchers needing to convince critics that the amount of interviews is enough to justify the claims. Within this research, all of the different types of youth service present in the sector are represented thereby not allowing for claims of unrepresentative sampling. Baker also points to the purpose of the study, in this case, to investigate the types of provision and the reasons for providing programmes in certain ways. This, as will be shown in the presentation of the data is fully explored within eight interviews with managers as well as the two civil Servants. Mason (2014, p.30) warns of "a knee jerk reaction to simply want to do 'more interviews' because that must somehow be 'better.'" She also posits a number of questions to which this research had to consider: Does the phenomenon, for example, require that you factor in a number of different perspectives or sets of experiences before you can understand it fully? Does understanding the phenomenon depend upon exploring how processes can operate under different sets of circumstances? Does it require that you explore things in considerable depth in each 'case', or that you examine how things work and change over time? Does it require that you observe broad patterns of behaviour, for example, at a 'population level'? The answer to each question was no. With Charmaz discussing "excellence rather than adequacy" (2014, p.22), Jensen points to spending time on issues such as "the quality of analysis, as well as the dignity and care of respondents" rather than the quantity of respondents. It was with these views in consideration and later confirmed with a data set that reflected the sector that confirmed that there would be no benefit in conducting more than a representative sample of the total population of youth services.



#### **4.7.1 Composition of the Sample**

Once this task was completed, I contacted members of the sample firstly by phone to organise times and dates for the interview. This was followed by a formal letter (Appendix 2) outlining the process and containing more information on the research as well as including contact details of my supervisor and faculty should there be any concerns on behalf of the research subjects that I could not address. Participants were also provided with two copies of a consent form (Appendix 3); one to be returned to me and one for them to keep. This form outlined standard issues such as the aims and objectives of the study, procedures, risks, right of withdrawal and confidentiality.

As outlined above, there was a cross section of the different types of youth service management. However, each service was also purposely chosen as they were different in their make-up. There is no standard structure or template for youth services bar that they are made up of a variety of projects and are usually headed up by a manager. Outside of this, services can be made up of a combination of funding streams with differing outputs and objectives. For example: Participant 3's youth service is made up of three Garda Youth Diversion Projects, Participant 6's service has a SPY project and Participant 5 has the Probation Service, Irish Youth Justice Service, SPY and a project funded by the local School Completion Programme. In choosing participants for this study, efforts were made to include samples of the different types of youth service that exist. Due to the ad-hoc nature of Irish youth work development over the last thirty to forty years, services are provided by an array of parent organisations. These include large national organisations as well as small independent organisations set up in communities with local management committees. To this end, managers from the following types of services were chosen to be representative of typical youth services across the country:

- Youth services from a national organisation
- Youth services from an organisation that had a specific geographical remit
- Independent youth services
- A youth service that has a local management committee but is a part of a large federation.

While being typical of the make-up and types of services within the sector, the organisations were chosen from a wide geographical spread. Each service is also made up of differing programmes such as Special Projects for Youth, Garda Youth Diversion Projects and drugs programmes supported by Regional or Local Drugs Task Forces.

<b>Participant Number</b>	<b>Type of Youth Service</b>	<b>Role</b>
P1	Independent, Inner City Youth Service with a range of funding agencies.	Manager
P2	Independent, Inner City Youth Service with a range of funding agencies.	Assistant Manager
P3	Youth Service with parent organisation made up of three GYDPs with a distinct geographical remit.	Manager
P4	Youth service with parent organisation consisting of projects with a range of funding agencies.	Manager
P5	Rural Independent Youth Service with a range of funding agencies and part of a federation.	Manager
P6	Youth service with parent organisation consisting of projects with a range of funding agencies.	Manager
P7	DCYA	Civil Servant with direct responsibility for youth work.
P8	Youth service with parent organisation consisting of projects with a range of funding agencies with a specific geographical remit.	Manager
P9	IYJS	Civil Servant with direct responsibility for Garda Youth Diversion Programmes.
P10	Youth service with parent organisation consisting of projects with a range of funding agencies with a specific geographical remit.	Manager
P10A	Youth service with parent organisation consisting of projects with a range of funding agencies with a specific geographical remit.	Assistant Manager

Table 8 Identification of Participants

#### **4.7.2 An Evolving Sample**

As previously alluded to, the decision to include the civil servant from the DCYA (P9) was taken before the research commenced. She was recruited as a result of the pilot study as it was felt that in order to get a full comprehension of issues within the sector, it was vital to include one of the main influencing parties that is responsible for funding. The office of P9 is also responsible for the creation and implementation of policy within the sector as guided by the Youth Work Act (2001). The decision to include Participant 6 was taken as the first three interviews were being analysed. It became apparent that the IYJS, through their Garda Youth Diversion Programmes, had become a significant influencer on the landscape of the youth work sector. With one hundred projects, the majority of which are hosted by youth work organisations, their funding is the equivalent of twenty percent of the DCYA's annual fifty million euro funding. The IYJS were also strongly viewed by the initial interviewees as being crime prevention programmes as opposed to programmes driven by traditional youth work leftist ideology. This led the researcher to broaden the scope of the project to include P6. Baker et al (1992) view interviewees such as P6 and P9 as "significant individuals" within qualitative research with Morse (1991, p.129) describing their role as "one who has the knowledge and the experience the researcher requires, has the ability to reflect, is articulate, has the time to be interviewed and is will to participate in the study". The relatively recent reporting structures that this organisation has brought to the sector has also shown a shift towards outcomes focused programmes and reporting structures as borne out in these initial interviews.

Participant 6 from the IYJS was the only interviewee to request a transcript of the interview prior to it being analysed and based permission of use of the data subject to the approval of the transcript. He did not ask for anything to be removed from the transcript prior to analysis.

#### **4.8 Data Collection Instrument - Interviews**

Primary data was collected using semi-structured interviews with each person within the sample. While a range of authors over previous decades discuss interviews simply as a conversation with a purpose (Denzin 1978) (Lincon and Guba 1985)



(Babbie 1992), a lack of consensus also exists within the literature pertaining to what a good quality interview is as well as what resources are needed to be a good interviewer. To this end, Berg (2012, p.66), drawing on literature dating to the 1960's, offers four characterisations or paradigmatic viewpoints:

- the ability to be a good interviewer as an “innate ability” only possessed by some,
- interviews being treated as a game where “respondents receive intrinsic rewards”,
- a technical skill that can be learned “in the same way you might learn to change a flat tyre”.

Berg's fourth point, referring to “many sources” describes interviews “as some sort of interaction, although exactly what distinguishes this type of interaction from others is often left to the imagination” (Berg 2012, p.66). Turner's practical guide (2010, p.754) provides three formats or categories for designing qualitative interviews:

- a) Informal conversational, interviews which are spontaneous in nature and rely on natural interaction.
- b) General interview guide approach which has more structure than the informal conversation but still has a large degree of flexibility and;
- c) Standardised open ended interviews that are extremely structured regarding questions with each participant being faced with identical questions but able to provide open ended responses.

Of these, the general interview guide approach (b) was employed. The informal approach was deemed unsuitable due to its relying “entirely on the spontaneous generation of questions in a natural interaction” (Gall, Gall and Borg 2007, p.239). The process of organising the interviews, obtaining consent and meeting in the interviewee's office at a designated time to discuss issues that are not discussed as part of either person's typical day meant that spontaneity or natural flow could not be achieved. The structured, standardised approach also presented difficulties due to the lack of flexibility offered to the interviewer when attempting to probe a response or seek more clarity from a respondent. This type of interview also

presents a risk of interviewees providing for very short responses that will lead to later difficulties when coding the data. While Turner (2010, p.755) identifies a weakness of the guided approach being “a lack of consistency in the way research questions are posed because the researcher can interchange the way he or she poses them”, he also points out the positive qualities that influenced the decision to adopt this as the primary data gathering method for this study. These include the informal nature of the interviews where rapport can be developed which enables probing and follow up questioning based on initial responses and the researcher controlling the direction of the interview due to the ability to move through a series of prompts. A key strength identified during the process was the ability of the interviewer to alter the sequencing of areas being discussed within each interview. Although the researcher addressed each of the points on the guide in all interviews, the transcriptions show that the informal nature and the desire to probe responses rendered the guide as being comparable to a checklist for areas covered within the interviews.

#### **4.8.2 Guiding Sheets**

Guiding sheets (Appendix 4) were developed for use in the interviews to gather data relevant to the needs of the project. One sheet was developed for all managers with two separate sheets with slight differences being developed for the two civil servants. Within the sheet used for the managers, the areas were grouped to address the aims of the research to investigate the provision within their services and to be cognisant of the factors that influence it.

The researcher chose to begin each interview on topics where he felt that the person being interviewed would feel at ease in order to set the tone for the remainder of the interview. These areas were also deemed not to be confrontational or did not require challenging thought, thereby putting interviewees at ease in the process. Evers and Boer (2012, p.67) identify this as the ‘opening the locks’ model that allows for a significant amount of follow up questioning as the interview progresses. Within the managers interviews, Areas 4 and 5 address funding within the youth services with the identification of the funding agencies as well as questioning related to their expectations. To gather data related to stakeholders, areas 6 to 12 address specific influencing factors and within this, area 11 aims to identify changes that have taken

place in the sector. This specific area was included as each of the managers within the sample would have originally been involved in youth work before the current era of accountability and large, multi-project youth services. This was an attempt by the researcher to allow participants to offer information on how youth work has evolved and the associated reasons.

As with the managers, when interviewing the civil servants, a lead in topic was included which was then followed by an examination of the funding that their office is responsible for. As in the interviews with managers, the civil servants were also questioned regarding influencing factors such as stakeholders, ideologies and location of projects that are funded with a question on the evolution of youth work in recent years also included.

#### **4.8.3 Learning from Mistakes**

Again, for this stage of the research, the pilot study that was conducted proved to be invaluable. As this was the interviewers first time conducting research interviews of a semi structured nature, a considerable amount of errors were made which, as a result of reflection and improvement led to interviews being of a much higher standard in the main project. Pre pilot, the researcher decided to take a relaxed, informal approach, putting him at ease and allowing the interviewees to respond in an open ended manner. Skills in line with Guion, Diehl, and McDonald's (2011) key attributes of a skilled qualitative interviewer by being open minded, flexible and responsive, patient, observant and a good listener were adopted. On reflection, using both the audio files and the corresponding transcriptions, I can identify that these skills needed vast improvement before commencing the scaled up version of the pilot. Holland and Ramazanoglu (1994, p.135) discuss interviews as social events and a learning process where "at the level of this process, participants can discover, uncover or generate the rules by which they are playing this particular game. The interviewer can become more adept at interviewing, in general, in terms of the strategies which are appropriate for eliciting responses".

Personal views on the sector were difficult to suppress and at times it was a challenge to be open minded about some of the responses that were being put



forward. A process similar to Bourdieu's "inverse ethnography" as described in Behnke (2007) where Bourdieu set out to observe the effects that objectification of his native world would produce in him (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p.162) was undertaken allowing these skills to be vastly improved. Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p.194) refer to the overbearing influence of a "passionate participant" within research. While analysing the transcriptions of the interviews this effect was searched for but was not found to have influenced the flow, content or responses from the interviewees. As a relatively inexperienced interviewer, the researcher found that in order to improve his skills, each audio file had to be reviewed as the interview schedule progressed to identify areas for improvement. There is a significant difference in quality between the first interview and those later in the process as these skills improved. Transcriptions clearly show that the frequency of the researcher interrupting in the initial interviews was high. This coupled with the skill of making the interview more informal and relaxed, allowing the interviewee to offer more information are skills that vastly improved as the data gathering stage progressed.

A significant reason for using the instrument of an interview was to explore the doxa (Bourdieu 1977, p.165 - p.166) that underpins the logic of practice of the field of youth work, the so called 'taken for granted' of the research participants everyday lives that may not be revealed by using other collection methods. By adopting Denscombe's (2003, p.167) guidance on semi structured interviews, the researcher was prepared "to let the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues" with answers that were open ended where "there is more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest". By allowing them to provide more detailed answers it was hoped that these responses would unveil some of the symbolic power discussed later in Chapter Six.

#### **4.9 Challenges encountered while interviewing**

Vähäsantanen and Saarinen (2012) when discussing qualitative interviewing use the metaphor of dance with both the researcher and the interviewee engaged in a power dynamic. The findings of their study would suggest that this 'dance' is based mainly on factors such as the "subject's gender, age, and professional background"

(2012, p.494). Rather than dance, this researcher would engage metaphorical thinking related to cunning or perhaps draw similarities to a game where the interviewer's role is to get the research subject to volunteer or provide as much information as possible. While traditional authors such as Glesne and Peshkin (1992, p.87) would point towards trust being the "foundation for acquiring the fullest, most accurate disclosure a respondent is able to make", where interviewees "feels good, rewarded and satisfied by the process" with a "warm and caring" researcher, the learning from this process highlighted 'levels' of disclosure that were dependent on a large range of factors. A deliberate decision was taken to interview each subject at their own service or office as it was felt that being in a familiar setting, where they would normally be in power would help them to feel more relaxed. The inverse ethnography mentioned above revealed significant influencing factors that had to be mitigated against so as not to interfere with the flow and nature of the interviews. Each of the subjects was familiar with the researcher either on a first hand basis or through knowledge of his work as a manager, Lecturer or Trainer in the sector. While this immediately pitched the interviews at a level that assumed a certain amount of knowledge of the topic by all concerned, it also made an impact in the level of trust or reserve met by the Interviewer in some of the cases. In a number of instances, a distinct lack of knowledge regarding some of the topics discussed was revealed. When certain subjective knowledge was questioned, for some of the sample, it proved to be their first time in thinking about or being challenged on issues that play a strong role in how their work is carried out. Harraway (1988, p.581) when examining objectivity within the Feminist movement coined the phrase "situated knowledge" where the knowledge exists within a small specialised field and is often policed by interests. As the Irish youth work sector is small with limited supporting literature it is not difficult to see how certain knowledge has become accepted without being challenged.

Stretching the metaphorical thinking even further, at times, the researcher found himself in what felt like a game of 'cat and mouse' or 'shadow boxing' with some of the sample when trying to guide them towards more than just traditional cliché answers. This became most apparent when interviewing P9 (the civil servant) and P10 and P10A, the manager and assistant manager of the same service. Reflecting

on the interviews as they took place, the main power factors in addition to those mentioned above include:

- The interviewees trying to protect the reputation of their service,
- Protecting their personal reputations and status,
- Not wanting to appear ill informed,
- Defending their belief system or ideology.

On two occasions, when the researcher arrived at the interview location, the youth service manager had already arranged for the assistant manager to take part in the interview. Care had to be taken to ensure that power dynamics between both participants did not negatively influence the collection of data. Contrary to the fears of the researcher, these additional subjects added vital information to the process that will become apparent in the Findings section.

#### **4.9.1 Compensation:**

No compensation was offered for participation in the research. This was clearly outlined in the consent form that the research subjects were asked to sign (Appendix 3).

#### **4.9.2 Reflexivity:**

Hamel (1998, p.2) discusses Pierre Bourdieu's own liberation from positivism by undergoing a "provoked and accompanied self-analysis". By carrying out a personal self-analysis it is possible for the researcher to list various factors that have influenced this research path. Life experience and personal preferences have played a part in steering the research away from methodologies that rely on the generation of certain types of data. Personal interests also add to the avoidance of approaches that stem from quantitative thinking. Although these personal preferences lean more towards qualitative approaches, significant qualitative orientated paradigms such as emancipatory or personal narrative based research simply do not interest him. The second main factor that has contributed to the selection of a practical strategy is the influence that research anxieties are playing. These anxieties come in various forms and a number of them have permeated into and influenced the design of this study. These can be rationalised and grouped under the headings of:

- Validity issues



- Quality Issues
- Political Issues
- And, objectivity/subjectivity issues.

#### **4.9.3 Reflections on the data gathering method**

Throughout this discussion on the gathering of data, the author has described challenges and opportunities regarding the chosen method. To summarise, limitations that were encountered include the high dependency of qualitative interviewing on the skills of the interviewer as well as the impact that the presence of the researcher has as data is being gathered. While some may argue that the large volume of data that is created in using this approach can be a limitation to the research process, this can be countered by the contribution that these significant levels provide in demonstrating rigour and depth to the audience.

In contrast, the interviews offered a large amount of flexibility to both the Interviewer and Interviewees. First hand engagement with the data as it was being gathered allowed for thinking about the first level of coding and analysis to begin at an early stage thereby preventing being overwhelmed by the data if analysis had been left to the end of the gathering process.

#### **4.9.4 Summary**

This chapter has outlined the methods that were chosen to gather and analyse data as well as the factors that influenced these decisions. The author has outlined how using aspects of Charmaz' Constructivist Grounded Theory (2006) as well as Layder's Adaptive Theory (1992) have allowed this stage of the study to be led by the overall aims and objectives. The data gathering and analysis process has been outlined with reference to the recruitment, composition and size of the sample. Within the chapter, the importance of using theoretical memoing while gathering and analysing data is discussed with a comprehensive account of the challenges of using the chosen research method also being provided.

## **Chapter 5     Analysis**

### **5.1 Introduction to the Analytical Approach**

The strategy used within this study draws on the constructivist views of Charmaz while also taking a pragmatic, purposeful approach to process data gathered from the interviews. This section outlines how this was achieved by applying constant comparison within the process as well as discussing practicalities such as memoing, using computer software to assist analysis and, the approach that was chosen for coding data. It is important to note that the analysis of data was attempting to complete a number of tasks with different methodological needs. As well as analysing the practice of youth services within the sample group, the results of the analysis would also need to show the factors that contribute to this approach. At a risk of committing “methodological anarchy” as discussed by Seale and Silverman (1997, p. 380), the analytical strategy adopted for this research, similar to the methods section, adopted aspects of pragmatism that would suit the quest outlined in the research objectives by clearly linking resulting data to the Bronfenbrenner (1979) inspired stages of the study.

### **5.2 Strategy:**

A clear analytical strategy was devised based on the work of Maykut and Morehouse's (1994) understanding of the constant comparative method and coding strategies. Again, a choice was made to not rigidly align with traditional Grounded Theory approaches by using inductive reasoning whereby “explanation and theory are fashioned directly from the emerging analysis of the data” (Mason 2002, p.180). Instead, Blaikie's abductive approach (2000, p.25), stemming from the Interpretivist underpinnings of the research, was pursued to allow data generation, analysis and the production of theory to take place within an environment where initial literature as well as the researchers ontological and epistemological positions were also recognised. This facilitated a flow between each without rigid boundaries.

### **5.3 Constant Comparative Method**

Glaser and Strauss (1967, p.104) discuss the constant comparative method as being “concerned with generating and plausibly suggesting many categories, properties and hypotheses about general problems” being researched. This method of systematically coding and analysing data is ideally suited to the working aims of

the research as it allows for the generation of theory that is “integrated, consistent, plausible and close to the data” (Glaser and Strauss 1967, p.103). This also suits the constructivist leanings of the research by attempting to address how the youth sector operates as the comparative method makes connections between various sections of the data. This is achieved through various levels of coding of the data. While Glaser and Strauss (1967, p.105) present four levels of coding in their original concept of grounded theory, Maykut and Morehouse (1994, p.127) expand the process to six and Strauss and Corbin (1998) avoid clearly identifying levels outside of open coding and discuss axial and selective coding along with coding for process within studies. The chosen approach for this project was initially conceived to mirror that of Glaser and Strauss but as the project progressed phases two and three were merged to present an overall three phase coding strategy that formed the basis for the Findings and Discussion chapters to follow. Coding in this way, as outlined below, allowed for the comparison of data within codes in order to achieve grouping of relevant information. This approach also enabled comparison across levels of coding and the inclusion of memos from various stages of the analysis.

#### **5.4 Computer Aided Analysis**

Rather than using traditional tools for analysis, this project afforded the researcher with another opportunity to learn a new research skill through the use of qualitative data analysis software. While a number of packages were examined, Nvivo was chosen due to its suitability for this project in that a clear audit trail could be constructed for examiners and for the researcher. It was also the most suitable for importing and examining files from other formats and, should the researcher have wished, Nvivo may also have been employed to analyse the audio files simultaneously. A clear support structure was available through the University as well as the researcher's home institution, thereby avoiding delays. The use of this software offered a number of advantages over traditional approaches to using cut out pieces of card and paper when organising and analysing textual data. Other benefits of using Nvivo for this project include the range of functions as opposed to traditional approaches such as creating and linking memos, running queries, constructing hierarchies within files, linking with external data and the ability to link to cloud services such as Dropbox so the project could be worked on from various locations. As well as these strengths, (Humble 2012, p. 123) also points to this type



of programme being able to complete “data entry and database structure, coding, numbering and annotation, data linking, search and retrieval, conceptual and theory development, and data display.” This led to a deep understanding of the data with the researcher forming an in-depth knowledge as he learned to operate the software. This was a key benefit to various stages of the project outside of mere data analysis as a detailed understanding of the data formed the basis for linking with the stages of the research outlined in later chapters.

#### **5.4.1 Difficulties Encountered During Analysis**

One deficit that was discovered within the process was the ability of Nvivo to represent data in visual form through the use of graphs and diagrams. For this function, the software seemed cumbersome and limited so a decision was taken to use Excel where a visual representation would be needed such as graphs etc. This was relatively simple as both packages are designed to link easily with each other. With learning any new skill, a number of errors were made which were easily corrected as the researcher’s understanding and experience of the software grew. Perhaps the most significant benefit in using Nvivo was the clear level of organisation that was provided to the analytical process at every stage.

### **5.5 Transcribing**

Within the pilot study, software for recording and automatically dictating audio files (Dragon Dictate) was trialled to assess if it would be of benefit to the main study. This proved to be ineffective due to strong accents within the research group, the informal nature of the interviews and the speed and nature of responses to open ended questions. To avoid similar difficulties, the interviews for the main study were recorded using a Dictaphone for transcribing as the interview schedule progressed. Transcribing on an ongoing basis rather than waiting for all of the interviews to be completed allowed for immediate analysis as outlined below.

Powick and Tilley (2002) heavily influenced the decision not to outsource transcription. Ethically, the researcher was obliged to protect the confidentiality of participants within the data and ensure the quality of the resulting data to be analysed. Powick and Tilley (2002, p.303) discuss the danger of ‘distancing’ from the data where the “transcribers degree of investment in the work was tied to the distance between the transcriber and the data collected”. By taking on the task of

transcription, the researcher was able to control issues such as trustworthiness and the reduction of errors due to him being present for the initial events. While raising some issues regarding involvement and influence on the data, this approach also enabled the transcribing of audio in its original form, negating fears about subtleties in the data being lost. It also facilitated a familiarity with the data that led to the in-depth knowledge mentioned previously.

### **5.5.1 Coding**

As stated above, the coding process employed in this study is an adaptation of the work of Glaser and Strauss (1967 p.105-p.113) and their explanation of the constant comparative method. The result of this process is the development of theory that emanates from the analysis as well as a number of significant findings. With the goal of coding using the constant comparative method to “discern conceptual similarities” in the data, phase one of the process began as soon as the first interview was completed. The interview was analysed and coded into a large number of categories with some sections of the data already being relevant to a number of codes thus reinforcing the interpretivist and constructivist stance guiding the research. Each concurrent piece of data from this initial interview and the others from the data set were compared when being coded. When a piece of data was compared to the existing codes, it could either be included or a new code would be developed to house the data. This led to a total of forty-three codes emerging from the first phase of analysis of the interviews. Glaser and Strauss provide a defining rule for the constant comparative method at this stage: “while coding an incident for a category, compare it with the previous incidents in the same and different groups coded in the same category” (1996, p.106). By constantly comparing in this way, the theoretical properties of each code began to emerge from a very early stage. This approach also aligns with Layder’s (1997) views of the influence of the researcher and prior knowledge in the field of study. For example, at the time of coding the first interview, thoughts were already developing regarding the make up or characteristics of each code, its defining features, relational issues to other codes and criteria for inclusion of data. Theoretical memoing as an integral part of the coding process led to the capturing of the researcher’s thoughts and conflicts as well as the development of emerging theory. In effect, phase one of the coding process where each line of the data was examined and assigned to a code or to multiple codes, was treated as a

fracturing or breaking down of the data into as many codes as possible to allow for intricate examination as well as enabling the commencement of the theory building process.

In Glaser and Strauss's original work (1967), phase two of the coding process involves the integration of categories and their properties where instead of comparing sections of data or 'incidents' with other incidents which formed the initial open codes in phase one, the analyst now compares incidents with the properties of these codes. Glaser and Strauss (1967, p.109) discuss how the theory develops "as different categories and their properties tend to become integrated through constant comparisons that force the analyst to make some related theoretical sense of each comparison." Phase three of their work is when delimiting of the emerging theory and categories occurs. This involves clarity regarding the direction and form of the theory as well as the reduction of categories through the reduction and jettisoning of data regarded as not being relevant to the direction of the emerging direction of the study.



Name of code	Sources	References by interviewees
Methods used	10	346
Reason for using specific methods	10	323
Expectations of funding agencies	10	359
Why the youth work is provided the way it is.	10	342
Key stakeholders in the various types of youth work	10	341
Dominant influencing force	10	328
Manifestation of power	10	57
Does work take place with specifically categorised young people	10	35
classification of method	10	57
issue based work	10	64
youth work organisations ideology or mission	10	335
Funding determining how work is carried out	10	372
Funding agency	9	39
Funding agency outside of DCYA, IYJS, HSE	9	34
Ideology of the youth work v's organisations ideology	9	23
location of where the work takes place	9	30
use of mediums	9	27
Individual work	9	14
Conflict with external agency	9	381
Planning and reporting	9	38
Set programmes	8	16
Group work	8	14
Is it youth work	8	22
influence of youth worker	7	34
Outcomes	7	36
supporting voluntary clubs	6	8
staffing make up	6	13
Indirect work	5	6
NQSF	4	9
youth participation	4	12
logic model	2	2
lack of knowledge or understanding	2	16
Policy	2	9
iyjs specific nodes	0	0
amount of projects in youth services	1	1
reasons for gydp's in youth services	1	2

Table 8 Example of initial codes

Within this study, what traditionally would have been phase two and three were amalgamated into one phase. Although the strategy initially envisaged phase two

and three as being separate and distinct, in practice, the use of computer software allowed data reduction as well as integration of properties to take place simultaneously. Glaser and Strauss devised their strategy long before research aids such as Nvivo were available. In a similar approach, Charmaz (2008, p.92 – p.107) moves from open coding to what is labelled as 'focused coding' (p.96) followed by a rising to conceptual categories. This stage allows for the amalgamation of multiple codes and enables evaluation and clarification to determine further inclusion as the process develops. Comparison between the codes and categories continues, as underlying themes in the data become more apparent. Charmaz (2008 p.99) highlights that these categories represent the researcher's "theoretical or substantive definition of what is happening in the data." At this stage, as integration of the data occurs and theoretical areas that are rooted in the data are emerging, Glaser and Strauss (1967, p.111) describe a commitment by the researcher to the data and the direction of the process as parsimony of variables and formulation occurs. This parsimony or reduction of variables to the least amount needed to explain as much as possible (Ragin 1994), led to a significant reduction in the levels of codes at this stage. The applicability of the emerging theory was considered through the continuation of memo writing and capturing of ideas and concepts as this integration and amalgamation occurred.

Phase 2 3 - Categorisation of Codes Coding on

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Category: 01 Is it youth work	10	540	17/07/2013 12:43	D	13/08/2013 10:04	D
Category: 02 Types of youth work	10	1675	17/07/2013 13:07	D	08/10/2013 11:01	CD
Category: 03 Interaction: conflict with external agency	10	2335	17/07/2013 14:22	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD
Category: 04 Influencing forces	10	1950	17/07/2013 14:35	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD
Category: 05 Funding agencies expectations	10	480	17/07/2013 14:37	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD
Category: 06 Funding steering how the work is carried out	10	1487	17/07/2013 14:40	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD
Category: 07 Key stakeholders in the sector	10	414	17/07/2013 14:42	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD
Category: 08 Ideology: Mission	10	360	17/07/2013 14:44	D	08/10/2013 11:03	CD
Category: 09 Reporting and governance	10	443	17/07/2013 14:49	D	08/10/2013 11:03	CD
Category: 10 Staffing	7	21	12/08/2013 12:22	D	10/10/2014 12:30	D

Figure 11 Phase 2/3 Categorisation of Codes (Coding On)

The initial forty-three codes from phase one were categorised into ten groups at this stage. Figure 12 shows the labelling of each category, data related to the amount of interviews that the category relates to and the number of references from the interviews in the category. Each of these categories has a further level of sub categories that act as preliminary categories that lead to a level where the codes from phase one are evident. The three screen shots – Figures 12,13 and 14 show this approach within the analysis.

In Figure 12, the overarching categories are evident. In providing an example, Figure 13 presents the mid-level layer of sub categories for Category 01 with ten sub categories present and Figure 14 shows thirteen areas from phase one where data was assigned to codes. This process is repeated for each of the ten overarching codes in this phase (further information is available in the appendix). The use of Nvivo for this process also provided the researcher with the ability to quantify the



amounts of data in each category. This could be done by viewing the cells related to each category. For example, Category 10 Staffing, has very few associated references (10) and is only mentioned in seven sources (interviews). In comparison, Category 03 Interaction, conflict with external agency, has over four thousand references and has been associated with all ten interviews. This enabled the researcher to view the data in terms of frequencies as well as the prevalence of some of the themes of the study within the data.

The screenshot shows the NVivo interface with a list of codes under 'Phase 2 3 - Categorisation of Codes Coding on'. The table below represents the data visible in the screenshot.

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Category 01 Is it youth work	10	540	17/07/2013 12:43	D	13/08/2013 10:04	D
Lives work with phase with specifically categorised young people	10	35	17/07/2013 12:45	D	08/10/2013 11:59	D
Group work	8	14	17/07/2013 12:45	D	27/06/2013 10:47	D
Indirect work	5	7	17/07/2013 12:45	D	20/08/2013 10:25	D
Individual work	9	14	17/07/2013 12:45	D	08/07/2013 11:29	D
Is it youth work	8	22	17/07/2013 12:45	D	08/07/2013 12:02	D
issue based work	10	64	17/07/2013 12:45	D	08/07/2013 12:05	D
Methods used with young people	10	346	17/07/2013 12:45	D	07/01/2014 14:05	D
philosophy of youth work	2	2	13/08/2013 18:15	D	14/08/2013 13:21	D
policy	2	9	17/07/2013 12:45	D	08/07/2013 11:35	D
use of mediums	9	27	17/07/2013 12:45	D	08/07/2013 11:21	D
Category 02 Types of youth work	10	1675	17/07/2013 13:07	D	08/10/2013 11:01	CD
Category 03 Interaction: conflict with external agency	10	2335	17/07/2013 14:22	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD
Category 04 Influencing forces	10	1950	17/07/2013 14:35	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD
Category 05 Funding agencies expectations	10	480	17/07/2013 14:37	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD
Category 06 Funding steering how the work is carried out	10	1487	17/07/2013 14:40	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD
Category 07 Key stakeholders in the sector	10	414	17/07/2013 14:42	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD
Category 08 Ideology Mission	10	360	17/07/2013 14:44	D	08/10/2013 11:03	CD
Category 09 Reporting and governance	10	443	17/07/2013 14:49	D	08/10/2013 11:03	CD
Category 10 Staffing	7	21	12/08/2013 12:22	D	10/10/2014 12:30	D

Figure 12 Further codes within Category 01

The screenshot shows the NVivo software interface. On the left, a tree view displays the project structure: 'youth work in youth services (NVivo 10).nvp - NVivo', 'Nodes', 'people', 'Phase 1 - Open Coding', 'Phase 2 & 3 - Categorisation of Codes', 'Phase 4 - Data Reduction - Jb', 'Relationships', and 'Node Matrices'. The main window displays a table titled 'Phase 2 3 - Categorisation of Codes Coding on'. The table has columns for Name, Sources, References, Created On, Created By, Modified On, and Modified By. The data is organized into categories, with sub-codes listed under each. The bottom status bar indicates 459 items.

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Category 01 Is it youth work	10	540	17/07/2013 12:43	D	13/08/2013 10:04	D
youth work with speciality / Marginalised young people	10	35	17/07/2013 12:45	D	08/07/2013 11:59	D
anti social behaviour	3	4	13/08/2013 14:06	D	10/10/2014 12:50	D
crime prevention and reduction	6	12	13/08/2013 13:20	D	10/10/2014 12:50	D
disadvantaged	5	7	13/08/2013 13:25	D	10/10/2014 12:50	D
geographic categorisation	1	1	13/08/2013 14:38	D	10/10/2014 12:50	D
international	1	2	13/08/2013 13:55	D	10/10/2014 12:50	D
marginalised	1	2	13/08/2013 11:17	D	13/08/2013 13:57	D
not having to work with categorised young people	4	8	13/08/2013 11:19	D	13/08/2013 14:34	D
school based programmes	2	7	13/08/2013 13:24	D	10/10/2014 12:50	D
Travellers	1	1	13/08/2013 13:32	D	10/10/2014 12:50	D
under 12s	2	2	13/08/2013 13:34	D	10/10/2014 12:50	D
youth unemployment	1	1	13/08/2013 11:35	D	10/10/2014 12:50	D
youth work being used for social conformity	1	1	13/08/2013 13:10	D	10/10/2014 12:50	D
youth work being used to improve education	6	12	13/08/2013 13:11	D	10/10/2014 12:50	D
Group work	8	14	17/07/2013 12:45	D	27/06/2013 10:47	D
Indirect work	5	7	17/07/2013 12:45	D	20/08/2013 10:25	D
Individual work	9	14	17/07/2013 12:45	D	08/07/2013 11:29	D
is it youth work	8	22	17/07/2013 12:45	D	08/07/2013 12:02	D
issue based work	10	64	17/07/2013 12:45	D	08/07/2013 12:06	D
Methods used with young people	10	346	17/07/2013 12:45	D	07/01/2014 14:05	D
philosophy of youth work	2	2	13/08/2013 13:15	D	14/08/2013 13:21	D
policy	2	9	17/07/2013 12:45	D	08/07/2013 11:35	D
use of mediums	9	27	17/07/2013 12:45	D	08/07/2013 11:21	D
Category 02 Types of youth work	10	1675	17/07/2013 13:07	D	08/10/2013 11:01	CD
Category 03 Interaction, conflict with external agency	10	2335	17/07/2013 14:22	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD
Category 04 Influencing forces	10	1950	17/07/2013 14:35	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD
Category 05 Funding agencies expectations	10	480	17/07/2013 14:37	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD
Category 06 Funding agencies how the work is carried out	10	1487	17/07/2013 14:40	D	08/10/2013 11:02	CD

Figure 13 Categories with codes and sub codes

### 5.6.2 Coding Challenges

At this stage of constructing categories, the researcher was faced by another dilemma within the research that is not adequately discussed in the literature related to analytical processes inspired by grounded theory methods. Within the data gathering stage, semi structured interviews were used as the main research instrument. The dilemma at this point of the analysis was whether to use the guiding areas from the interview guide sheet (Appendix 4) as categories or to allow the categories to emerge based on the data that was being analysed. Traditional Grounded Theory approaches such as Glaser and Strauss would affirm that these categories emerge from the data. However, as the responses were all related to general queries by the researcher, specifically focusing on a number of topics rather than original Grounded Theory studies that are rooted in analysis of a loose discourse in the health field, the data was still linked to specific pre-determined areas. Traditional approaches do not enter analysis in this way instead favouring totally new categories based on emerging themes.



The researcher, approaching again from a pragmatic stance without the restrictions of being forced to stick to any one approach, decided to remain aligned with the aims of the project and to seek a balance between pre-determining categories and developing new categories based on the data and codes that were formed in phase one. One shortfall of this approach, which could not be foreseen, was the attempt to predetermine an analysis of Bourdieusian capital at this stage rather than waiting for it to emerge because of the analytical process. To explain: a category labelled as Capital with sub categories of Economic, Social, Cultural and Symbolic Capital was created at the beginning of phase two on a predetermining basis. It was envisaged that coded data from phase one could be assigned under each sub category thereby leading to clear constructs to base a theory on. However, this approach did not take account of the context in which this capital occurs or how the capital is deployed within the youth work sector as a field. While useful as an identifier of capital, the function of this approach was deemed unnecessary, as it would inevitably develop within the next phase as well as in the discussion stage of the study.

Outside of Charmaz (2008 p.97) and Glaser and Strauss (1967, p.111), there seems to be a literature deficit in adequately addressing the topic of data reduction within the various approaches to Grounded Theory or similar approaches such Adaptive Theory. No clear methods for ruling data in or out could be discovered outside of these works and this analysis used a combination of both. The worry of theoretical saturation whereby the analyst codes data for the same category a number of times, is redundant as the computer software easily sifts and organises the information to avoid repetition as well as clearly showing what data is present in each code and phase. Within this analysis, reduction of data took place through a clear logical progression from the initial open coding to focused coding (Charmaz 2008, p.96) approach to the raising of conceptual categories in phase two/three and four. Charmaz (2008, p.98) highlights how analysis progresses through this approach in two crucial ways: "(1) it establishes the content and form of your nascent analysis; and (2) it prompts you to evaluate and clarify your categories and the relationships between them." As the analysis moved from focused coding to categorisation, frequency and the significance related to the emerging category formed the basis of



whether data were brought forward. Memo writing played a crucial part in this and the following move towards data generation as it allowed the researcher to process thoughts relating to the data and its relationship to the emerging theory. Drawing again on Charmaz and her discussion of grounded theory analyses (2008, p.96), the researcher and the initial coding play a central function where “the strength of grounded theory coding derives from this concentrated, active involvement in the process” where “you act upon the data rather than passively read through your material.”

## **5.7 Final Coding Phase**

This final phase of analysis led to the construction of three high level categories that would act as themes for further discussion to be based on. Based on the aims of the project and the theoretical direction that the data was leading the study in, three labels were chosen:

1. Youth work being delivered
2. The youth work field
3. Understanding the Field of power.

As well as aligning with the adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model used in the design of this study, these categories formed the basis for the presentation of findings to follow by allowing a degree of abstraction from the data to occur. They also acted as the main areas that relevant theory crystallised around by providing key ‘thinking themes’ in which to view the study. As with the previous phases, the level of data has been reduced as progression to phase four took place thereby providing a concentration on the key themes.

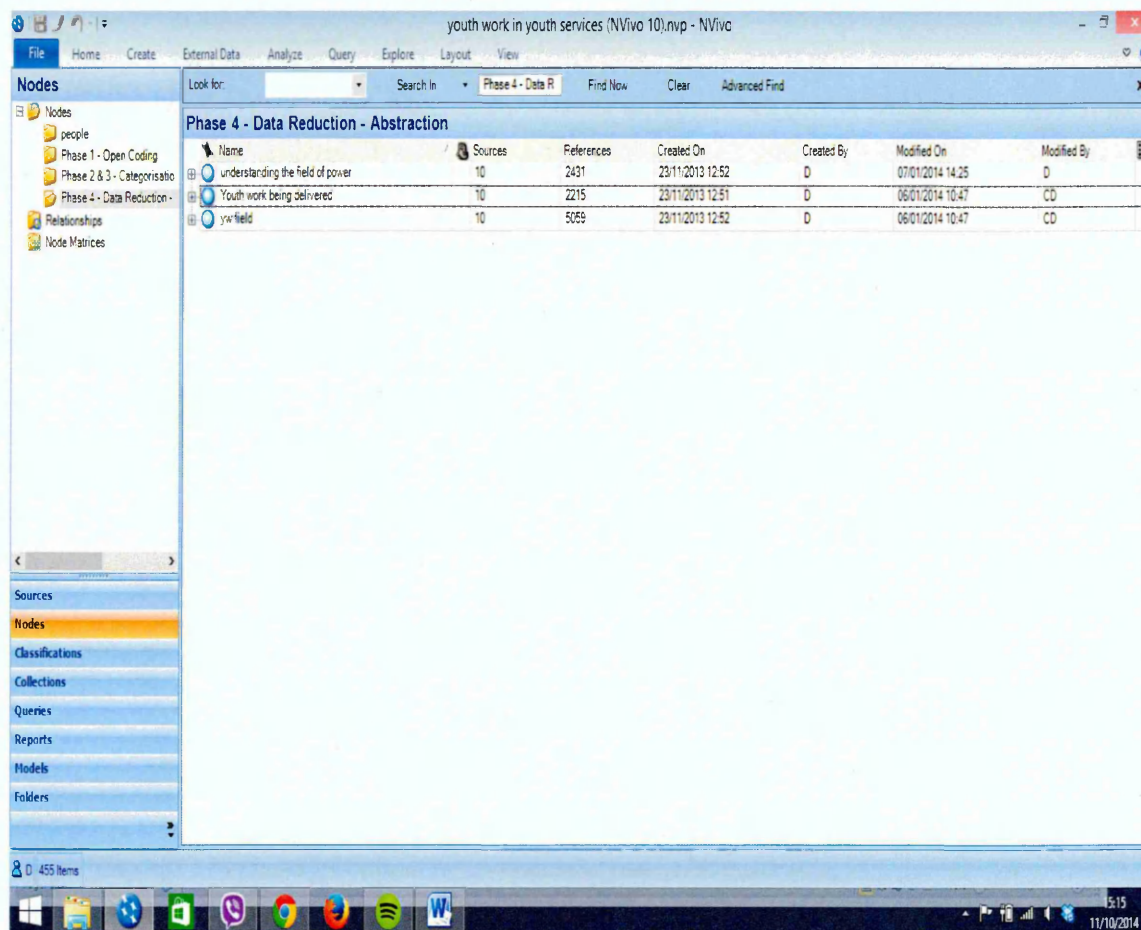


Figure 14 Final Phase of coding

### 5.7.1 Categories for Further Discussion

**Category 1- Youth Work being delivered**, is made up of over two thousand references from within the analysis. Within this category, information pertaining to the nature of delivery of programmes and the researcher's endeavours to extract information from respondents regarding whether they viewed various methods as being youth work are grouped together. This grouping, following significant reduction of the data to be left with what the researcher views as relevant, allows for further abstraction to take place with each of these categories to provide an explanation of the type and nature of the youth work being delivered. Plotting this category on the Bronfenbrenner inspired model as in Figure 16, the selected data and emerging theory relates to both the Microsystem and Mesosystem. This is vital to the objectives of the study as the output of this stage allows for further analysis and questioning of the data regarding the nature of contemporary youth work delivery when compared with the explanations within the literature that provided the initial motivation for the

study. The data also provide a substantive list of approaches that are being used within youth services thereby contributing to the overall understanding of the sector. This category also contributes to the Bourdieusian abstraction that takes place in Chapter six by contributing towards the understanding of power within the sector and how it is mobilised.

### **5.7.2 Category 2**

**Category 2 - The Youth Work Field**, consists of data which provides an overall 'picture' of the sector by identifying and listing the various stakeholders that have a role in the field. As well as this identification, the data shows how youth services link with various external agencies and organisations and captures conflicts that exist as a part of this interaction. Data has also been included which identifies influencing forces outside of stakeholders with the category including information regarding the ideology and mission of the parent organisations that the youth services are a part of. This allows further discussion regarding conflicting views as to the role of youth work. Within the adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's work, this category relates to the Macrosystem as the output of this grouping of data will be a mapping exercise that will enable the reader to understand the various actors within the field, how they interact and the factors that influence the various interactions.

### **5.7.3 Category 3**

**Category 3 – The Field of Power**, contains data related to how power manifests within the sector. The data is broadly linked to the 'steering' of youth work within services predominately by funding. Within the adapted Ecological Systems Model, this category relates to the Exosystem. Expectations of funders and information related to the profile of young person related to the type of youth work that they receive is included, thereby allowing links to the various forms of power that are deployed within the field to be discussed at a later point. Data related to cultural power has also been captured while information related to policy, reporting and reasons for using specific methods allow further exploration of domination under Bourdieu's (1992) terms of Capital.



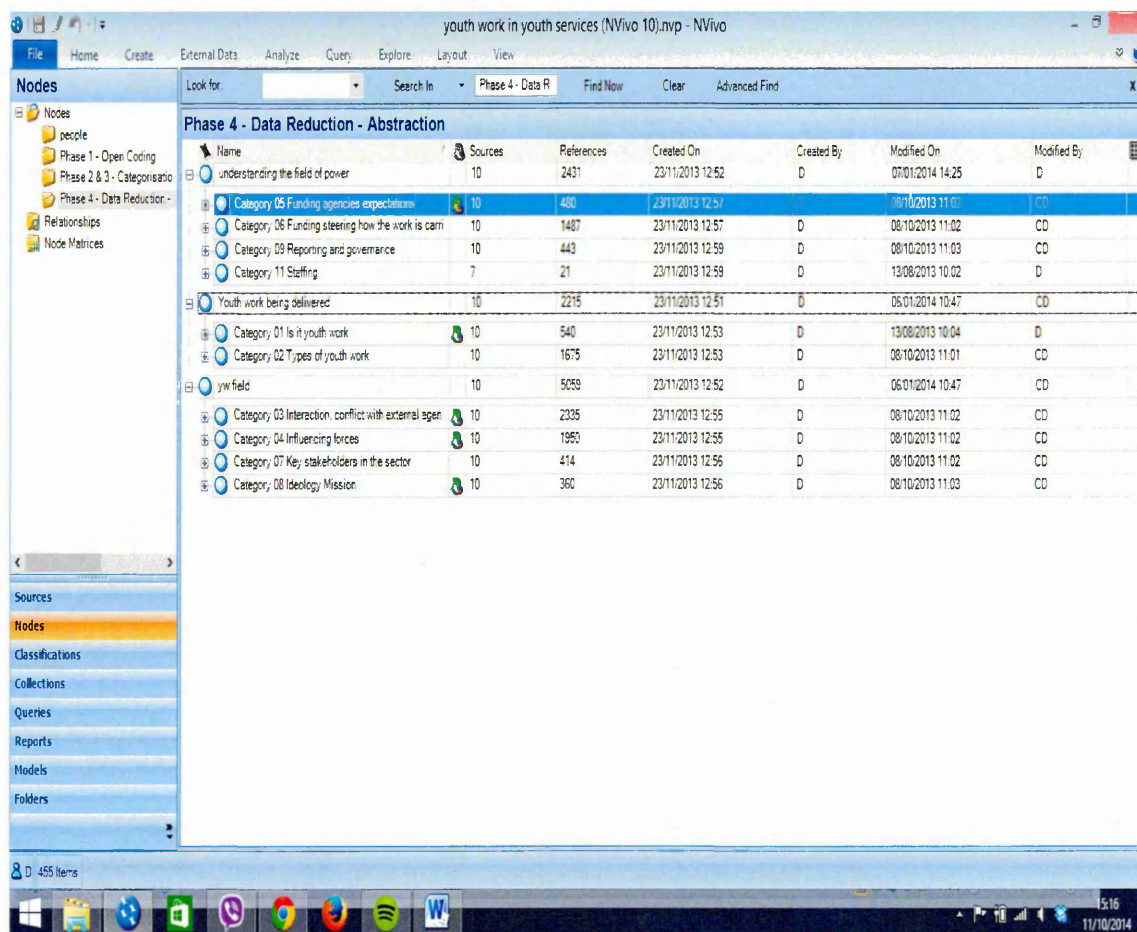


Figure 15 Phase four codes with sub codes

## 5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the processes that were deployed in analysing the information gained from the interviews at the data gathering stage. It is important to note that the analysis of data was attempting to complete a number of tasks with different methodological requirements. As well as analysing the practice of youth services within the sample group, the results of the analysis would also need to show the factors that contribute to this approach. At a risk of committing “methodological anarchy” as discussed by Seale and Silverman (1997, p.380), the analytical strategy adopted for this research, similar to the methods section, adopted a pragmatically influenced, outcomes focused approach that would suit the quest outlined in the research objectives.

# Chapter 6 Findings

## 6.1 Introduction

In the following pages, findings from analysis of the data using an adaptation of Grounded and Adaptive Theory methods are presented with related discussion taking place in the following chapter. The findings are presented under three headings:

- **The Micro and Mesosystems - Youth Work being delivered**
- **Macrosystem - Identification of key actors and stakeholders**
- **Exosystem - The Field of Power**

These multi-level themes have evolved as from the theoretical framework that guides the study (an adaptation of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Framework discussed in Chapter One) and data that have been gathered through interviews with the research sample. The themes have also been selected to directly address the foci of the research questions identified in Chapter 1 and are presented using direct quotations and diagrammatic representations.

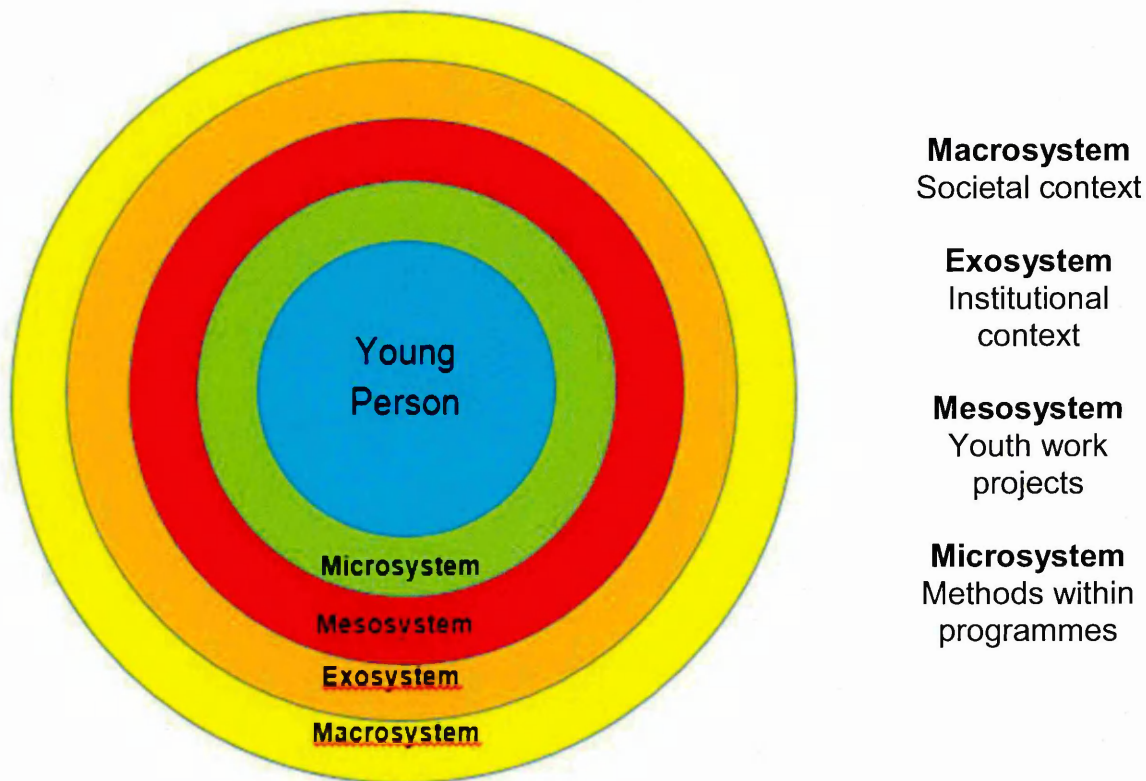


Figure 16 Adaptation of the Ecological System

While previous authors such as Devlin and Gunning (2009) compared the perspectives of youth workers and young people, this research is primarily concerned with the views of management of eight youth services and two civil servants. The services are from a wide geographical spread across the Irish Republic. Another point to be considered while viewing these findings is that the sample is made up of youth services that, as supported by the Youth Work Act (2001), are provided by voluntary and independent agencies with differing missions and ethos. Under the Act (2001, Section 25 and 26), these agencies are sanctioned by the Minister as either youth work agencies or national youth work agencies. These agencies employ professional, paid youth workers who, as supported by the evidence from this study are often supplemented by assistants from State schemes such as Community Employment or Tús. Volunteers also support a small number of the sample. While the National Youth Work Development Plan (2003 p.14) states “that the vast majority of the adults involved in youth work are volunteers (unpaid)” and that “most youth work takes place in the voluntary [i.e. non-commercial and non-



statutory] sector”, the direct provision in the sample services was mainly delivered by paid youth workers or similar type professionals.

### 6.1.1 Performativity and the impact of policy

The findings from the perspectives of those interviewed suggest that across the layers of the adapted Ecological System that they are involved in, youth work acts as an instrument of a larger normative force on the young people that take part. An example of this would be P4's (*Manager of youth service with parent organisation*) comment that ***“it would be about impacting maybe on pieces like anti-social behaviour in the areas or if it's about participation in community.”*** Where traditionally discipline would be used within society to maintain order, both Lyotard (1979) and McKenzie (2001) suggest that the contemporary approach to ensuring order lies in “dominating, and often completely overriding, traditional philosophical traditions based on emancipation and freedom” (Locke 2015 p.249). This, within the work of the investigated, is pursued through a performative structure that McKenzie (2001) suggests focuses on economic, cultural and technical aspects of society. The perspective of those interviewed, suggests that the transfer of policy to practice or “policy assemblages” (Ureta 2014 p.303) using performative, outcomes focused structures, influences funding arrangements, the culture of youth work being provided in youth services and the technical aspects such as the profile of targeted young people and reasons for targeting. P6 (*Manager of rural independent youth service*) confirms this with by commenting that ***“we have really bought into this outcomes focused work em we're following a specific, we're using logic models it's much clearer around what we're doing and how we're going with it and as such I think that has a much stronger impact on the young people.”***

## 6.2 The Micro and Mesosystems - Youth Work Being Delivered

This section is presented using two thematic sub divisions namely, how the youth work is provided and why it is provided the way it is. The data suggest a wide variation in both of these themes across the research sample. Forde's bifurcation claim (2010 p.88) relating to a split between volunteer led and paid worker led provision is upheld by what has been discovered about practice within youth services.

The profile of whom youth work is delivered to and how it is delivered in the sample youth services could be viewed as contradicting the nature of the National Youth Work Development Plan 2003-2007. Within this guiding document for the sector, it is stated that “youth work should be regarded as something from which all young people can benefit, rather than a remedial service for those whose needs are not being met otherwise” (Department of Education and Science 2003 p.14). In direct opposition to this position, the findings that have emerged from the data lend support to Tracey’s (in Forde et al 2009 p.183) writings on the role of youth work as an agent of social control as opposed to a left leaning social change agent. This also contradicts the view of Kiely (cited in Tracey 2009 p.180) regarding “the purpose, methods, programmes and outcomes of any youth work intervention being influenced by the prevailing values of the youth workers and the organisations in which they work”. It is clear from the data that the sample is mainly providing a service on behalf of their funding provider and this leads to them adapting the associated methods, outputs and outcomes as dictated by that provider.

#### **6.2.1 Youth Service Provision – A Typology**

The data presented below represents a typological classification of provision within youth services in the sample. By outlining categories such as the issues being addressed, the methods being used and the associated expected outcomes, this study has produced results that suggest a split in the Irish youth work sector between a traditional universal approach to participation and an evolving targeted youth work response to social deviance. The latter approach is being delivered through specific programmes within the sample services in what could be described as a ‘funding circle’. In order to receive funding, the services are required to deliver projects and programmes to certain categories of young people which they then are evaluated on by the funding agency and the Youth Work Assessor. McKenzie (2001, p.7) identifies this social evaluation, through the three spheres of influence (economic, technical and cultural) that are heavily intertwined and act as a performative power. By contextualising these findings within the Micro and Mesosystems of the adaptation of the Ecological System being employed in this study, an understanding can be garnered of the factors within the investigation that impact primarily on the

young person at the point of contact with the youth service. Findings from the data related to the reasons for certain types of provision and as well as the factors that influence why certain provision exists are presented within this (context which leads to the following section; findings on the Exosystem.

Analysis indicates that there are twelve categories emerging from the data as outlined below. The predominant foci for the youth services, from the perspective of those interviewed, are **Crime Prevention and Reduction** as well as **Youth Work being used to improve educational outcomes**. While the latter reflects the complementary nature of youth work to education as in the definition within the Youth Work Act (2001), both of these categories are diametrically opposed to types of youth work that “characteristically adopt a critical stance” and are in “a place of permanent opposition” to dominant social norms (Batsleer 2010 p.153).

- ❖ Youth work being used to improve education
- ❖ Youth work being used for social conformity
- ❖ Youth unemployment
- ❖ Under 12's
- ❖ Travellers
- ❖ School based programmes
- ❖ Marginalised
- ❖ International
- ❖ Geographic categorisation
- ❖ Disadvantaged
- ❖ Crime prevention and reduction
- ❖ At risk of drug use
- ❖ Anti-social behaviour

Throughout this aspect of the data, there appears to be an underlying theme of youth work within the sample progressing an agenda that is against social deviance. As a review of literature pertaining to this area could find no previous study of the nature and make up of youth services, little has been known about what takes place. Two of the eight services (P4 and P5) provide direct services in schools during school time while all of the programmes are intertwined with the formal education sector by



providing services such as drug programmes, homework clubs and offering programmes alongside or on behalf of School Completion Programmes (a programme of the National Educational and Welfare Board funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs through Tusla - The Child and Family Services Agency). In all of the services, a variety of programmes are offered to early school leavers with a view to reintegrating them into formal education, be that in the secondary system or second chance education through Youthreach. Five of the services offer alternatives to secondary and second chance education by providing programmes to early school leavers using youth work methods. These programmes are certified using FETAC and Leaving Certificate awards. Four of the interviewees also saw a strong role for youth work in working with young people that are classified as disadvantaged, specifically regarding educational and geographical disadvantage with the following quotation from a manager clearly outlining a connection between funding at addressing disadvantage. ***P4 (Manager of youth service with parent organisation) “And it is on the basis of that proposal that we actually have grants allocated so, for instance say if basically it would be around addressing disadvantage.”*** As outlined in Table 7, P4 is the manager of a youth service with multiple funding sources that is also part of a parent organisation.

### 6.2.2 Issues Addressed by Youth Services

In analysing data from the ten interviewees, forty-two issues were identified that contemporary Irish youth work in services is addressing (Appendix 6). While the predominant issues again reflect the classifications of **Crime Reduction and Prevention** as well as **Education** raised above, it is surprising that one sector is openly working to address such a wide range of issues while working with young people. In Appendix 7 these issues have been grouped into ‘Societal Issues’ where the youth work is focusing on problems or what traditionally may have been deemed a social education approach (Jeffs and Smith 1988) and ‘Individual Problematic Issues’ where the foci is directed towards rectifying deviant behaviour that goes against social norms. While this division between societal and individual issues is inferred by the researcher, youth services focusing on these issues in their work with young people suggests attempts to inculcate conforming behaviour rather than the

approach of historical youth work that stems from critical theory (Schroyer 1973) and strives to bring about change with emancipatory methods such as protests and critical education.

While there is a wide range of sources and references associated with each issue, it is important to note that the deficit focused approaches score most frequently for being present in the sample and for the amount of time that they are referred to. Outside of the previously discussed definition of youth work within the Youth Work Act (2001), the recent Youth Work Policy and Delivery in Ireland report (2012) does not clearly identify issues or significant guiding policy steering targeted youth work towards addressing the issues identified in Appendix 7. Although Brighter Outcomes Better Futures (2014), the framework designed to inform youth policy until 2020, has five national outcomes, the data would suggest a gap from these high level policy expectations and implementation of programmes to address issues within services.

### **6.2.3 Methods Being Used**

The methods used to address the above issues, when analysed, are also part of a wide range with twenty-seven approaches identified by the researcher to carrying out work employed across the sample. As can be seen in Appendix 8, drop-ins, IT/Multi-Media and youth cafés are the most popular. The wide spread of categories and the low reoccurrence in the source categorisation point to the different youth services using different methods. The most interesting indicator of note for the researcher is the occurrence of such a high number of methods. The data would suggest that youth services within the sample do not base their choice of methods of working with young people on specific overarching rationales. While four of the organisations would point to the funder dictating the methods, only three of the sources based their methodological choices on a needs analysis, with only one grounding their choice of methods on quantifiable data such as statistical information relating to the area they are operating in or related to the young people that they are providing services to. However, as will be discussed below, the data suggest that economic power plays an important role in dictating style and the results of provision.

Young peoples' participation in the process of deciding methods was not present in any of the sample and the interviews would point to their input to the process taking place much later at the time of the activity. This shows young people having quite a weak and minimal stake in dictating how methods are decided on a meaningful level but they may have input as the activity is running. The data would point to these choices seem being decided either by the funding agency or by the youth worker based on an analysis of need that lacks significant evidence.

#### 6.2.4 Outcomes

With the recent changes in accountability in projects funded by the State through the NQSF and the move towards youth projects focussing on logic modelling in the planning, delivery and reporting of their work, some interesting findings have come to the fore from this sample. As Garda Youth Diversion Projects were present in all of the youth services, it is not surprising that six of the sources identified **crime prevention or reduction** as being an outcome of their work. This outcome is also a move away from traditional youth work approaches or philosophies as supported by the National Youth Policy (1985). More recently, the National Youth Work Development Plan 2003-2007 (Department of Education and Science 2003, p.14) refers to youth work being a process with "adults and young people working together to further personal, community and social development." Strongly linked with the issue based work as identified in Appendix 7, **educational outcomes** were highlighted by five of the sources, again pointing towards a strong functionalist role for some of the sample. In all, fourteen outcomes were identified in the data. This reflects the wide spread of issues that the youth services are working on and the vast differences in the nature of youth work from service to service.

Other conformist type outcomes from the sample include **changes in attitude and behaviour, improved role in society** and **preventing drug abuse**. Social education type outcomes were also present, to a lesser extent, in the data. These include **addressing disadvantage** and **community relationship building**. These findings regarding outcomes could act as an indicator to the extent of how far the youth service section of the sector has moved towards a conformity paradigm.



The presence of these assorted outcomes aligns well with Davis' conceptual view (2010 p.6) when he posits, "good youth work can be seen as having some of the same contradictory qualities as great jazz". However, the alignment of the outcomes and issues with funding agencies directions as discussed above contradicts Davis' view of youth work continuing, "to express the worker's own intentions, insights, ideas, feelings and flair". The data suggest that this is only the case when it comes to choosing an activity or medium at the final stage of delivery. Similarly, to the previous findings on issues being addressed by youth services, the nature of these perspectives suggest that performative power is being exercised by the funding agencies through the influence on technical issues in the operating of programmes as well as influencing the economic standing and cultural nature of youth services. By providing funding for programmes directed towards certain outcomes, agencies can influence what outcomes are expected as a result of the youth work, how it is carried out and with whom.

Deficits in knowledge regarding outcomes between the services and the two civil servants that were interviewed became apparent. While high level, nation policy may be directed towards five outcomes, data related to these and the interviews with managers suggest deficit at the lower levels of policy and resulting implementation. It should be remembered that these Civil Servants have considerable influence over the relationship between the sector and the DCYA. P9 (*IYJS Civil Servant*) discussed an inability on behalf of the sector to effectively articulate the outcomes and outputs of its work stating, ***"there's a lack of visibility in relation to what the 53 million investment in youth services is contributing towards the national policy goals. I'm not saying they're not doing it, I'm saying they don't recognise where they're doing it, they don't articulate how they are doing it and it isn't visible."*** P9 also points to a tacit knowledge that is not supported by evidence by stating ***"I know they're doing that but I don't know to what, sometimes you get the impression that it's youth for youth's sake."***

This comment from the civil servant connected to the Irish Youth Justice Service came in the context of a section of the interview regarding youth work philosophy. ***P7 (DCYA Civil Servant) "But I think once you take the contract then, if you accept the kind of understanding behind it then that, that frames the***

*relationship and just the one thing I would say as well is that in discussing with the professionals on the ground, the outcomes which we have kind of developed or are developing with the programmes were generated from practice.”* P7 clearly saw the work that the youth services carry out on behalf of his agency as the delivery of a service as part of a contract. In a similar way to P9, he also pointed to the youth work sector’s inability to articulate their work.

#### **6.2.5 Reasons for nature of youth work**

As in other sections of the data, when asked what factors influence how youth work is provided in youth services, multiple responses were received such as basing provision on evidence, geographical limits related to funding, outcomes tied to funding, an analysis carried out by the youth services, influence by stakeholders and the ethos of the organisation.

A focused, predetermined approach to guiding youth work provision could not be provided by interviewees as a whole within the sample. Each of the interviewees had a differing reason as to why the youth work is provided the way it is however, seven of those interviewed clearly identified the funding agency as being the main factor that shapes or directs provision. Data emanating from surveys or analysis of the needs of young people or issues was only identified by one participant. This points to a number of issues such as the difference in delivery of programmes within services as well as no coherent rationale being present in literature being provided by the DCYA, other funding agencies or by the sector. As previously discussed, a large range of issues and methods have emerged from the data. However, no clear rationale that justifies the use of youth work instead of other types of provision was ascertained from the data or the literature.

#### **6.2.6 Young People’s Participation in Decision Making**

Contrary to expectations, this study did not find significant levels of youth participation matching that of O’Donoghue et al (2003 p.16) at a project or programme design level within represented youth services. While structured youth committees were present within three of the sample, it would appear that their role is related to contributing at an activity level with examples being the operation of youth cafés and youth information.

The views of both civil servants as represented in the data are interesting in that only one of those interviewed discussed young peoples' views as being a vital component in the improvement of the projects that they fund: **P7 (DCYA Civil Servant)** ***"what we genuinely try to do now is to em hear kind of young people's voices as well."***

**P7** ***"But the space that I would like to get into is so we're asking em so as part of the site reviews we talk to staff about practice."***

**P7** ***"And we also then talk to young people about em not whether they like being there but whether in a kind of em in I suppose trying to find out what they are getting is what was intended."***

While this interest in the input of young people using the service came across strongly in P7's interview, he sees this process taking place as part of site reviews by his organisation and did not mention how young people's participation should take place on a day to day basis. This data would point towards these programmes being designed by the youth worker and other stakeholders based on evidence that does not include an active role for young people in the overall design stage.

The data supports a thesis of low levels of input and participation in the provision of youth work within services apart from input related to programmatic matters. However, this could reflect that the data indicates that funding agencies have the strongest role in influencing the design of youth work within the sample as represented in Figure 6.1. Principle One of the NQSF states that youth work programmes should be "young person-centred: Recognising the rights of young people and holding as central their active and voluntary participation." A prescribed indicator (1.4) of this taking place is that "young people involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of services." It would appear that outside of the level of direct activity with young people, this is not taking place within the sample.



### **6.2.7 Summary of the Micro and Mesosystem**

The key themes emerging from the data at this stage point to a strong role for funding agencies in directing provision in youth services. While the data suggest that these agencies possess significant influence relating to performative power, there is no clear direction and resulting implementation between high level policy and programmes within services. Although, as identified in Appendix 6, programmes are directed at problematic social and individual issues for young people, the perspective of those interviewed point to this occurring due to the influence of the funding provider and not because of a clear national policy. This suggests a weakness in the transfer and implementation strategies from national policy to implementation within services.

The sample is attempting to tackle a large range of issues using a high number of methods. Despite directly addressing the issue within interviews, no clear mode of operating could be identified for how youth services should approach issues. The predominant areas being tackled are crime prevention and reduction as well as improving educational achievement amongst participants. Examination of the data from interviews with all of the sample could find no rationale for using or not using youth work as an approach to working with young people to tackle the identified issues.

## **6.3 The Macrosystem – Actors and Stakeholders**

Moving to the outer layer of the adapted ecological system in figure 6.1, in this section, data is presented relating to key Actors, Stakeholders and influencing forces in youth services. While the next section of this chapter focuses on the Exosystem and how it functions by stakeholders using their power, this section identifies who these actors are and what role they play.

### **6.3.1 Sources of Funding excluding DCYA / IYJS**

The most striking result to emerge from the sample is the range of stakeholders, particularly funding agencies. This would suggest that outside of the fifty three million Euro that the sector receives from the DCYA to finance youth work, youth work services are accessing and receiving significant funding from other State funded sources and from the private sector. Drug Task Forces fund six of the eight

services with the sample to carry out prevention and education programmes related to addiction.

Source of Funding
Drugs Task Force
Local Authority
HSE
ESF
VEC/ETB additional funds
North South bodies
Philanthropy
Department of Education
Partnership
FAS
School Completion Programme
National Childcare Investment Programme
Tús
Forfas na Gaeilge
Pobal
Arts Council
Leargas

Table 9 Sources of funding excluding main DCYA support

**6.3.2 Additional Funding Agencies.**

Some of the funding agencies above such as School Completion and The National Childcare Investment Agency are also funded by the DCYA while the work of many on the list overlaps with the issues and methods identified previously in this chapter. While within youth services, some of the projects and posts that make up the service are funded by agencies such as Drugs Task Forces, P9 (*IYJS Civil Servant*) did not place much importance on this aspect of how the sector is funded:

### **Interviewer**

***And I'm interested to see what do you think of that because youth work in youth services like the paid direct youth work because the funding comes from lots of sources external sources not just the department.***

***P9 (IYJS Civil Servant) I haven't really thought about that now since you mention it. I don't know to what extent people get other funding and do they get it from local philanthropy***

This excerpt could suggest an absence of knowledge on behalf of the State regarding how projects are funded outside of that being provided through the DCYA and the IYJS. As some of the funding streams originate from other Departments, it could suggest a 'silo' type arrangement on behalf of the State when trying to tackle issues that leads to significant overlaps on behalf of agencies. It is important to note that the figure of fifty-three million Euro provided by DCYA funding is related to the sector and not just to youth work services. This study did not isolate how much of this sum is specifically directed towards youth work services. This funding is administered through ***"a lot of schemes, we have 477 projects, we've nearly 40,000 volunteers"*** P9 (IYJS Civil Servant). At the time of gathering the data P9 was aware of ***"9 or 10 funding streams"*** under the authority of the DCYA, not including the executive office of the Irish Youth Justice Service with thirty nine administrative bodies mainly made up of V.E.C.'s which have since been merged into sixteen Education and Training Boards.

### **6.3.3 Staffing**

The information from the sample would suggest that just as the label 'youth work' can mean a variety of things depending on the interpreter's own views and type of youth service being viewed, the term 'youth worker' can also have a range of connotations. The title of the worker within the sample was closely related to the programme and nature of funding that they worked on within each service. Some of the labels used within interviews include: Youth Justice Worker, SPY or DCYA funded worker, Community Employment youth worker, Sessional workers, Drugs Worker, Street Worker, Education Worker and Artist in residence.



#### **6.3.4 Influencing actors and factors identified by the sample**

While the DCYA and the IYJS are clearly identified by managers as being significant influencers of the sector, an emerging theme from the data suggest that local actors such as Gardai, communities and youth work staff in services also play a major role in shaping how the services operate. While the influencing actors, as identified from the data and represented in the list below, overlap significantly with the funding agencies it should also be noted that in some of the sample, the E.T.B., play a significant role. These bodies have historically acted as a channel for DCYA funding as well as taking up a role in the National Quality Standards Framework implementation and assessment in recent years.

- Youth work Managers and Staff
- Irish Youth Justice Service
- Gardai
- Population and Geography
- Community
- Funding
- Education and Training Boards

Along with young people playing a minimal role in influencing the work of the sampled services, other issues were raised by managers as influencing on a minimal level within the data. Surprisingly for the researcher, these include policy and associated expectations such as the need to link youth work policy with other agencies/sectors policy and the minimal role that educational and European policy play. This would contradict P9's narrative regarding youth work's role in the overall strategy towards young people while supporting the finding of a lack of rationale for the use of youth work in working with some issues.

Within the interviews, participants from the sample identified and referred to the following agencies being present in their day to day work (Table 9). These are represented in tabular form for the reader's ease rather than any attempt to appear as objective data.

Drugs Task Forces	Pobal
Local Authorities	Arts Council
Health Service Executive	Leargas
European Social Fund	Young People
Education and Training Boards	DCYA
Philanthropic Bodies*	Youth Work Parent Organisations
Department of Education	Church
Partnerships	Volunteers
FÁS/Solais	Staff
School Completion	IYJS
National Childcare Investment Programme	Gardaí
Tús	Youth Services
Forfás na Gaeilge	

Table 10 Actors and Agencies Present in the Field.

### 6.3.5 Involvement of State Agencies

Interestingly, outside of three identified actors above (volunteers, Church and Philanthropic agencies), every other actor identified by participants is strongly linked to the State. While Leargas and the European Social Fund are European Union related, they are also statutory in nature as Leargas is the conduit for European funding and the ESF is overseen and administered to GYDPs by the Irish Youth Justice Service. Each actor above is also a sub agency or receives funding from a Government Department as shown in Table 10.

Government Department	Associated Agencies
Department of Health	Health Service Executive
Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government	Local Authorities, Partnerships, Pobal
Department of Children and Youth Affairs	School Completion Programmes, National Childcare Investment Programme, Irish Youth Justice Service.
Department of Education and Skills	Education and Training Boards
Department of Social Protection	FAS,
Department of Public Expenditure and Reform	North South Bodies under the Special European Union Programmes Body
Department of Justice and Equality	An Gardaí Drugs Task Forces
Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	The Arts Council, Foras na Gaeilge.

Table 11 Government Departments and Associated Agencies

## 6.4 The Exosystem – The Field of Power

In order to understand the Exosystem relating to youth services, findings from data related to the power that agencies and actors possess are presented within this section. This is carried out by utilising Bourdieu's concepts of Capital (1992), in particular, Economic, Cultural and Symbolic Capital as outlined in Chapter three. Clarke and Newman (1997 p.27) discuss the deployment of capital in terms of a "field of power relations" with various dimensions such as cultural attachments, decision making power, sources of legitimacy and relational power that positions actors and agencies. By providing findings and subsequent discussion in relation to this organisation of youth work in youth services, the reader is provided with new knowledge relating to how the field functions.



#### 6.4.1 Economic Capital in the Field

Analysis of the data, from the perspectives of those interviewed, suggests that the hierarchy shown in Figure 17 is present in the field in relation to how economic power is being operationalised. The deployment of this capital influences many areas of this section of the youth work sector such as the methods used within the work, the outcomes being worked towards, the overall ideological approach of the work as well as the ability to expand or restrict the sector.



Figure 17 Hierarchy based on Economic Capital

A surprising result emanating from the data is the domination of certain aspects of the sector by funding agencies and the resulting compliance by youth services. The data points to this being due to concerns regarding financial support and its withdrawal. The following excerpt is one example of the use of economic capital to influence compliance.

## **Influencing Compliance**

***P2 (Manager of independent inner city youth service)***

***there's a kind of I suppose due to funding cuts and closure of projects there's a kind of a silence around anything cos of fear.***

***Interviewer***

***Yeah***

***P2 (Manager of independent inner city youth service)***

***Anyone who did stick their head above the parapet fairly recently who is funded through us down through our channels anyway got a very heavy hand afterwards so that's why I would sometimes.....***

***Interviewer***

***Too the party line is that what you're saying?***

***P2 (Manager of independent inner city youth service)***

***No no I just might have to be economical about the truth (laughs) you know you might just have to go round things yeah I think that has happened quite a bit***

Specifically regarding the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the data exposes how, through the use of economic capital, the Department can influence and steer the sector to comply with policy and initiatives such as the National Quality Standards Framework. The DCYA funding streams, while focusing on disadvantage and at risk young people, focus the work of the youth service on specific geographical areas. This can lead to a youth service being set up within a town but with the majority of the work that it delivers directed and focused on certain problematic areas or estates within that town.

Through the NQSF, the Department can dictate certain ideologically influenced approaches to the work being delivered within projects. For example, the NQSF (2010 p.3) states that all youth work should be “Committed to ensuring and promoting equality and inclusiveness in all its dealings with young people and adults.” While this may be an example of a dominant contemporary discourse in society, it also rules out agencies that have alternative views from entering the youth work field unless they are willing to adapt their approaches to be assessed under this framework.

The responses from all interviewees and examination of related literature would point to the DCYA, the executive office of the IYJS and the additional funding agencies possessing high levels of economic and cultural capital making them the main dominating actors within the field. Through their use of economic capital and the ways in which they provide funding to the youth services, they are able to dictate terms of how, where and with whom the work should be carried out as displayed by the following comment from P7 (*DCYA Civil Servant*): ***“so we have the power to cut somebody’s funding if we don’t think that they’re playing ball.”***

Due to this dominance, both the DCYA and the IYJS are positioned to deploy cultural capital in the form of planning and reporting through schemes like the NQSF and tailored reporting focusing on specific outcomes. Expressions of domination similar to this are where the DCYA is able, to a certain level, to dictate how work should be carried out in youth services where they may not even be the dominant funding agency. P9 placed a strong emphasis on governance within the sector and the role of the Department in controlling how economic capital is deployed:

***P9 (IYJS Civil Servant) “I mean the issues that arise are really very pertinent because em the straightforward pragmatic part of it Cormac is just to get the money well managed and save costs so that money can stay in the frontline services. But we in the department need to keep control of the allocations, the negotiating of the budget and how much money that we get.”***

This controlling of economic capital thus allows the Department to create policy within youth work to meet the needs and goals of the State. This is carried out by



dictating how the youth work should be delivered through determining the outcomes expected for receiving funding as well as overseeing the implementation of the principles and standards of the NQSF.

By deploying economic and cultural capital discussed above and to follow, the DCYA's dominance of the field of relational power aligns with Clarke and Newman's concept of an 'organisational regime' (1999 p.61) in how it functions. Clarke and Newman point to sources of legitimacy of power which in this case is the Youth Work Act (2001) and the DCYA's positioning within the state system. They also discuss "frameworks of criteria or principles that should govern decision making power" as normative power within an organisational regime. As outlined in preceding paragraphs, this normative power is deployed through frameworks such as the NQSF and policy such as Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures (2014).

#### **6.4.2 Economic Power linked to Outcomes**

Both the DCYA and the IYJS clearly see the work as being outcomes focused and linked to funding while being transparent about linking whether a project gets funding to their ability to deliver the associated outcomes as specified in their service level agreements or similar contracts. This is borne out by comments from both civil servants:

***P9 (IYJS Civil Servant) To me they're delivery outcomes.***

***P6 (Manager of a youth service with a parent organisation) So we have the power to cut somebody's funding if we don't think that they're playing ball but what we don't have the power to do is to you know find out whether to act on things like creative compliance.***

There also seems to be a recognition of the influence of the deployment of economic capital by the IYJS and the DCYA within the sample of managers that were interviewed. The following excerpts from P3 and P4 are typical of the data gathered relating to this topic indicating compliance between the youth services and the funder in determining outcomes.

*P3 (Youth service made up of three GYDPs) They're very specific like you're been paid to get a specific outcome and that's it. They're not really too worried about a rationale or how we do that but that it's based on local crime analysis and that kind of stuff so I suppose in some ways it works directly opposite to what youth work should be youth work.*

*P3 (Youth service made up of three GYDPs) I suppose the funders hold a lot of power cos we're told that the plan that we have to submit every year will be subject to funding for the following year and those again will have to be based on that crime statistical analysis locally and if we're not doing it and we're not saying what they want us to say.*

#### **6.4.3 Cultural Capital**

Bourdieu and Passeron (1973) and Bourdieu (1986) use the concept of cultural capital as a way of explaining how the possession of attitudes, skills, education and similar resources bestow prestige. Bourdieu (1986 p.47) discusses cultural capital in three states: Embodied, Objectified and Institutional. In contrast to traditional analyses of cultural capital that mainly deal with individuals, this study is concerned with identifying the actors, in this case organisations in the field as well as presenting findings related to the capital that they possess under Bourdieu's three forms.

#### **DCYA**

**Embodied Cultural Capital:** Although it is a relatively new Department, it was formed as an amalgamation of parts of others. At its inception, the DCYA chose to follow an evidence based and outcomes focused approach to planning and reporting. As almost all policy in the field is driven by this department, it allows it to dictate terms to youth work organisations if they are to receive funding to deliver work in certain areas.

**Objectified Cultural Capital:** The DCYA oversees initiatives such as the NQSF as well as a variety of funding programmes. "To support the alignment of youth policies and services with other Departmental policies and services and the broader policy and services field to help ensure an integrated and coordinated approach to the

needs of young people” (DCYA 2015). The DCYA, to a large degree, initiates, funds and directs a large amount of the research and resulting literature in the field. This is done through a number of research funding schemes in which the DCYA sets the research parameters. An example of this is: The Value for Money and Policy Review of Youth Programmes (VFMPR) (2014).

**Institutionalised Cultural Capital:** While discussing Institutional Cultural Capital in the context of conferring degrees in the academic field Bourdieu (1992) refers to a certificate of cultural competence which confers on its holder a conventional, constant, legally guaranteed value with respect to culture, social alchemy produces a form of cultural capital which has a relative autonomy vis-à-vis its bearer and even vis-à-vis the cultural capital he effectively possesses at a given moment in time.” The positioning of the DCYA as the agency with overall responsibility for youth work programmes is outlined in the Youth Work Act (2001). This legislation confers power on the Department and positions them at the peak of the hierarchy in terms of institutional power. It allows the DCYA to then confer institutional recognition on all others in the field in how it recognises them, funds them, confers its own institutionalised capital on them and allows them to survive. For example, recommendation seven of the previously mentioned VFMPR report (DCYA 2014, p.12) proposes increasing the governance capacity of the Department over youth programmes by “sourcing from existing Youth Officer time, requiring a rationalisation and replacement of professional effort from existing activities to governance oversight.” Should this recommendation come into practice, it would mean that the DCYA would be exercising power to withdraw resources from other State agencies, the Education and Training Boards, and redeploy these resources in their own structures.

### **Youth Services**

**Embodied Cultural Capital:** The data suggest that a large amount of youth services cultural capital is linked to them emanating from their parent youth work organisations. As the work of these organisations was historically situated within emancipatory and poverty linked contexts, the goals and working ethos of almost all of the youth services seem to be rooted in these approaches. While heavily reliant of funding, interviewees saw themselves as using this funding help young people



rather than fulfil the funding agencies objectives. Some also have acquired a level of embodied cultural capital as they represent or act as advocates on behalf of the young people that they work with. While this aligns well with the historical roots of their parent organisations it suggests that there is a shortfall in the contracting of the work by the DCYA, that are looking for a service to be provided, and the youth service, who are receiving the funding and attempting to provide services that will increase young people's social and personal development rather than addressing key objectives and targets as outlined in their applications. With the aforementioned move towards more accountability and targeting of young people with funding linked to key objectives, the data suggest that youth services embodied cultural capital is of a low calibre in the current climate. It would appear that the majority of this capital is historical and is of low relevance or use when being dominated by the capital of the DCYA.

As youth services work directly with young people and have done so since their inception, they possess high levels of cultural capital regarding their ability to engage youths with challenging behaviour as well as young people in an out of school setting. This allows them to deliver programmes that other services would not be able to due to the nature and flexibility of their provision.

**Objectified Cultural Capital:** While relying on annual funding from the DCYA and others, many of the youth services do not own cultural assets.

**Institutionalised Cultural Capital:** The Youth Work Act (2001) conveys recognition on youth work organisations as being the primary providers of youth work in the State. However, no mention is made specifically concerning youth services. The main institutional recognition that can be found within the data and literature is that conveyed by the DCYA, ETB's and Additional Funding Agencies in the form of delegating projects, contracts and financial support to youth services. No specific conferring system outside of these were found that would suggest additional high levels of institutional cultural capital.

## **Irish Youth Justice Service**

**Embodied Cultural Capital:** In a relatively short period of time since its inception (2005), the IYJS has acquired a high degree of embodied cultural capital through the imposition of a system of working on GYDPs and the associated youth services that operate them. This is prevalent from how projects plan, gather evidence, provide programmes and report on programmes. Within the youth work sector, this focus on local crime patterns and data was relatively novel with certain funding of programmes linked to this process. Although projects funded by other sources also provide data to the DCYA and previous associated Departments, it seems from the data that once approved, projects were largely left to carry out the work how they pleased. Due to the relative short time since the inception of this office, and its move from the Department of Justice to the DCYA, it does not seem to have inherited cultural capital in relation to the youth services field.

### **Objectified Cultural Capital:**

The positioning of the IYJS as a significant funding agency provides high levels of objectified cultural capital. As it has the power to withdraw funding from underperforming projects, it can be placed in a relatively high position in the hierarchy of the field.

**Institutionalised Cultural Capital:** Within the Children's Act (2001), the IYJS are recognised as being the agency responsible for certain aspects of youth justice and as an extension, reducing youth offending. Before its inception, GYDPs were funded by the Department of Justice with An Garda Síochána acting as the conduit and overseer of projects. Control was transferred to the IYJS once it was established in its current form. Institutional cultural capital is recognisable in the relationships that the IYJS has with Gardaí, youth work organisations and individual projects within services stemming from its statutory nature.

## **Additional Funding Agencies<sup>5</sup>**

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<sup>5</sup> \*To avoid repetition, many of the additional funding agencies that make up the Field have been grouped for the purpose of showing their cultural capital. This is due to similarities existing in the data.

**Embodied Cultural Capital:** This category has inherited cultural capital due to the length of time that the youth work sector has relied on additional funding to carry out its work. For example, projects within youth services may be funded by the DCYA in order to pay for the youth worker post and some additional funding for programmes. However, this often needs to be supplemented by obtaining grants from outside agencies. These grants are often thematically linked with examples being youth services applying to Health Authorities for grant aid to provide healthy eating programmes or applying to the Local Authority for grants linked to sports. This places additional funding agencies in a position where they can dictate priorities for youth services as services are often reliant on this additional funding to carry out programmes.

**Objectified Cultural Capital:** As many of the additional funding agencies are on a statutory footing such as Gardaí, Social Work Departments and Health Officials, they have access to data, can initiate investigations and also have a statutory place on many statutory groupings such as Children's Services Committees. This allows access to key decision making processes regarding individual young people as well as policy at a local and national level.

**Institutionalised Cultural Capital:** The statutory nature also provides convers significant levels of institutional cultural capital as these funding agencies are recognised within legislative frameworks as well as by each other. This does not apply to youth workers who are not deemed to be on a similar footing in legislation or practice.

#### **Education and Training Boards:**

**Embodied Cultural Capital:** Since the Bruton and O'Sullivan Reports (1978) (1980), ETB's (previously V.E.C.s) have had significant responsibility within geographic areas for oversight of the provision of volunteer led and professional led youth work. Since the Youth Work Act (2001), Youth Officers have been responsible for the allocation of certain funding streams on a local level as well as overseeing the fulfilment of aims and objectives of different streams. Only recently, with a more detailed and stronger role being taken by the DCYA, is this under threat. The acquired cultural capital that the ETBs possess comes, along with inherited cultural



capital, from this historical responsibility as well as the role they still play in oversight through schemes like the NQSF.

**Objectified Cultural Capital:** Within the field, the ETBs own a number of properties that youth services provide programmes out of.

**Institutionalised Cultural Capital:** The data suggest that the ETBs levels of institutional cultural capital seem to be diminishing due to the stronger, more direct role that the DCYA is taking in relation to how policy is devised. Recent legislative changes and the inception of Tusla, have commenced a weakening of their role enshrined within the Youth Work Act (2001). While the DCYA still confers a role through the ETB Youth Officers' involvement in the NQSF process as well as certain aspects of planning and reporting, recent DCYA literature (DCYA 2014 p.134) has called for a reduction in the role of the ETBs with the resources that currently support their posts being redirected to the DCYA to support a centralised approach.

### **Youth Work Organisations**

**Embodied Cultural Capital:** Through decades of working in certain communities, as well as with disadvantaged and at risk young people, youth work organisations have acquired considerable cultural capital within this sphere. However, it could be said that this inherited capital is relevant only to its voluntary provision through clubs and events as they in effect, manage services that deliver on behalf of the DCYA and others. P9's statements support this view of the organisations as his comments see them as contracting for a service that can be delivered using youth work methods.

**Objectified Cultural Capital:** On the whole, youth work organisations own very few goods thereby conveying low levels of objectified cultural capital.

**Institutionalised Cultural Capital:** Their role in delivering youth work is stated within the Youth Work Act (2001) and institutional capital is conferred on them by the DCYA as they are provided with the right to provide services within certain geographical areas. However, the DCYA can withdraw this institutional recognition and offer the contract to another provider. As the IYJS civil servant sees the work of

GYDPs as using youth work methods, and not youth work as such, there is also little to prevent the withdrawal of recognition and funding to youth work organisations to provide these projects. The data from this interview provides an impression that this has been an arrangement of convenience rather than a necessity as the civil servant had no preference to youth work organisations or other types of agencies providing GYDPs so long as the outcome of a reduction in youth offending was being achieved.

#### **6.4.4 Changing Nature of the Field**

The data, as well as the outline of agencies' varying forms of cultural capital above, support Moore's approach to capital as the " 'energy' that drives the development of a field through time" (in Grenfell 2008, p.105). As the field is constantly changing, so too do the levels of cultural capital that each agency possesses. A prime example of this is the depleting levels of capital that can be attributed to the ETBs within the field as the DCYA increases its levels of cultural resources in embodied, objectified and institutional capital as it firmly establishes itself within the field as the dominant agency. However, the cultural capital outlined above is also relational and relative. While the DCYA may have high levels of cultural capital within this field, it only applies to this field and is not transferrable to others. This aligns with Clarke and Newman's concept of organisational regime above.

#### **6.4.5 Symbolic Power Within the Field**

Bourdieu (1984 p.241) in discussing a move beyond objectivism to understand symbolic struggles that take place in the field, identifies the social hierarchy as "strategic emplacements, fortresses to be defended and captured in a field of struggles". Within these struggles, there are the dominator and the dominated with the dominator using some style of discipline to reinforce their position in the hierarchy of the Field, usually the deployment of capital. This hierarchy acts as a social structure with various strategies and struggles used to implement and maintain order. Bourdieu (1984 p.247) identifies these struggles as the "appropriation of economic or cultural goods".

The data from the perspectives of interviewees and literature points to the DCYA and its executive office of the IYJS being the main dominating agency within the Field of youth services due to the deployment of significant levels of both economic and cultural resources. These include the ability to dictate the direction of policy and

the workings of the field to align with overall state policy in relation to young people. Exploration of the data, as has been shown in the sections related to economic and cultural capital, has shown how the DCYA influences the workings of youth services to match the policy agenda, but shortfalls exist in how this takes place. This is achieved by deploying resources such as the assessment framework for youth services (NQS), dictating the outcomes of the work as well as designing and implementing specific planning and reporting structures that match the objectives of the Department. Due to its position within the State governing apparatus, it is also in a position to dominate lower State agencies such as the Education and Training Boards. Two of the examples of this appearing in the data and literature are:

- 1) The ETB Youth Officers carry out an assessment role on behalf of the DCYA within the NQS roll out by being part of the implementation team and
- 2) Recommendation four (p.134) of the recent Value for Money Review of Youth Programmes (2014) calls for a change in how Youth Officers carry out their work by redirecting them towards governance.

As a dominating agency, the DCYA is able to direct the evolution of the field and the dominated actors by using disciplining strategies such as awarding or withdrawing funding, a deployment of economic capital. While the Education and Training Boards may have historical power, the data highlights that this is waning. Although historically viewed as powerful within the field, the advent of the DCYA and the IYJS and their deployment of capital has shown a dilution in their role. Historical legitimacy came from their role in being the main State organisation with responsibility for the sector since the late seventies and later through the role appointed to them through the Youth Work Act (2001). However, the increasing dominance by the DCYA and the IYJS has negated some of their control over economic and cultural capital. As funding, policy, and the strategic directing of the field becomes more centralised, the ETBs have become an agent of the dominators specifically the DCYA, whose role is related to local issues concerning youth services.

Youth Services and their parent youth work organisations possess little capital in economic or cultural forms. They are largely dependent on the dominating agencies that are above them in the hierarchy to bestow capital on them in the form of funding



as well as recognition and legitimacy. Should the dominators withdraw either of these, it is difficult to see how the organisations or their services could exist in their current form. While services and youth work organisations could point to their ability to form relationships with young people with a view to delivering youth work outcomes, no reason could be found in the data to support an organisation's or services existence over another. While the Youth Work Act (2001) bestows some legitimacy, their existence, structures and presence in certain geographical areas would appear to be historical. With this, the interviews with civil servant P9 revealed no rationale or tendering process for youth services to obtain funding. The IYJS did accept applications for the recent expansion of Garda Youth Diversion Projects and based their allocation on objective data such as crime figures and organisational capacity. However, many of the same youth services that have historically existed in certain geographical areas continued to be funded even though demographics have changed over time.

#### **6.4.6 Funding Agencies Outside of DCYA / IYJS**

By bestowing economic capital in the form of finance on youth services, these funding agencies obtain a degree of symbolic power over them allowing them to dictate terms and results of the youth work. Culturally, often through their statutory or delegated footing, they are able transmit symbolic power as youth services are, in effect, businesses bidding for contracts.

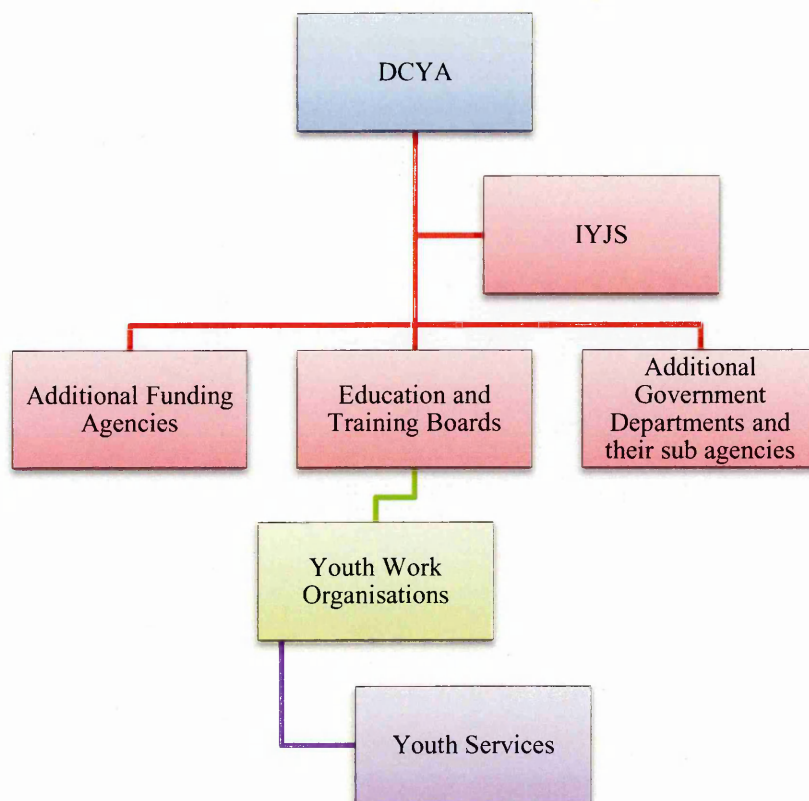


Figure 18 Diagrammatic representation of the hierarchy based on symbolic capital

#### 6.4.7 Summary of the Exosystem

The objective of examining the Exosystem surrounding youth services has been to identify and understand, using Bourdieu's forms of Capital, the ways in which the groupings of agencies function as a working system and impact on the other levels within the model. By treating the Exosystem as a sub field (Bourdieu 1992) it has been possible to view the levels of capital that agencies possess as well as how they use it to gain advantage and position within a hierarchy. This has provided an insight into the struggles that take place and how the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and the Irish Youth Justice Service are dominant actors in the field of youth service provision. In a hierarchical structure within the field of youth services, these agencies are followed by the additional funding agencies, Education and Training Boards and additional statutory departments and their sub agencies that are present in the Exosystem. Youth services and youth work organisations are heavily dominated due to a lack of economic, cultural or symbolic power.

## **6.5 Conclusion of the Findings Section**

Using an adaptation of the Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model (1979) as a framework, this chapter has presented findings related to the two research questions identified in Chapter One. These findings relate to the role of current provision within youth services as well as the identification and highlighting of the role of key Actors within this aspect of the youth work sector. The power to influence the provision within services has been presented using Bourdieu's (1992) theoretical concept of capital. The adaptation of the systems model places the child at the centre with a view to investigating how the systems impact on the youth work being provided to them. However, the findings from data related to each system could find little reciprocal influence by young people on this provision.

Findings related to the systems in closest proximity to young people, the Micro and Mesosystems, highlight that the focus of provision in youth services, from the perspective of those interviewed, is directed towards reducing crime and educational outcomes while also trying to direct youth work towards a large range of issues by using many methods. Outside of the presence of funding, no rationale for working towards these issues or using such a large range of methods could be found.



# Chapter 7 Discussion

## 7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the discussion will point to the major findings outlined from the investigation in relation to the research questions and objectives of the study. The meaning or implications of these findings as well as how they relate to other literature related to the sector are also discussed. A new theoretical understanding of youth work in youth services, which has emanated from this research is discussed with a possible galvanising approach proposed for the sector.

The study set out to explore two main areas:

1. The extent to which provision in youth services pursues a social controlling function and,
2. To identify stakeholders in youth service provision, the power that they possess and how it is deployed.

## 7.2 Findings related to research questions

As a result of the investigation, the major findings that can be drawn from interpretation of the research sample's perceptions of their work related to question one are:

- That programmes within youth services associated with the sample play a regulative function with young people,
- That the purpose and rationale for youth services within the sample is unclear,
- The programmes provided to young people by the sample's youth services are directed at a large range of individual and social issues and use a significant amount of methods.

In relation to the second question, the major findings drawn from the perceptions of the sample are:

- That there are a high number of stakeholders with an interest in services being delivered within the sample,
- That these stakeholders have considerable influence in the youth work that is provided in services where the sample participants are employed,

- That the predominant forms of power influencing the investigated youth work are economic and institutional cultural power reinforced by legislation,
- That the DCYA are the dominant stakeholder and use their economic capital to direct policy and practice associated with youth service provision within the services that have been studied.

The following paragraphs, where the key findings are discussed represent the main areas of new knowledge that have been created as a result of this research process.

### **7.3 Provision as a regulative function**

In addressing the first research question regarding the role of youth service provision as a method of social control, the main findings from the sample highlight a strong alliance with the objectives of the State, through the DCYA, the IYJS and additional state agencies in relation to young people. Rather than having an approach that supports universal provision as in volunteer led youth work, youth service provision is predominately focused on certain young people that are categorised as being in need of corrective interventions due to their involvement with crime or their poor educational attainment. The results provide interpreted evidence that the nature of youth work in selected Irish services is now similar to English youth work and how it evolved in the nineties to be an agent of social control carrying out state objectives through agencies such as Connexions. Jeffs and Smith (2002 p.55) portray this approach as “‘individualised’ intercessions such as mentoring, advice work, guidance and counselling .....designed to bring ‘socially excluded’ young people into direct contact with the ‘model’ adults they should aspire to emulate.”

Within the Statement of Strategy (2014 p.5) the DCYA list one of three of their mandates as “ensuring high-quality arrangements are in place for focused interventions dealing with child welfare and protection, effective family functioning, adoption, school attendance and reducing youth crime.” With the main areas of focus within the sample of this study being crime reduction and educational attainment, as the financial support dictates, the findings suggest that the majority of provision in the sample is targeted at young people that are acting outside of social norms or accepted achievement indices in certain geographical disadvantaged areas. This view is reinforced by the latest initiative and funding

programme to be announced by the DCYA (2015), The Youth Employability Initiative. With this new funding the DCYA will provide funding to youth services “for programmes that target disadvantaged young people to improve their employability” (DCYA 2015). The programme focuses on fifteen to twenty-four year old young people described as NEET (not in employment, education or training) with a view to developing employability skills such as team working, adaptability, leadership “which are much sought after by employers and business” (DCYA 2015, p. 2).

### **7.3.1 Neo liberal type control**

Clarke and Newman (1997), discuss alterations to public spending in Britain in what they describe as a transition from a welfare state to a managerial state with the associated impacts on issues such as delivery and relationships with the state. They outline (p.25) how in a similar way to the Irish context, local authorities now play the role of purchasing and commissioning of services rather than being the service provider. This sees the power of the state exercised through “regulation, contracting, monitoring and surveillance” (p.26). Operating by these neo liberal type methods as discussed in Chapter One, allows the power of the state to be extended to agencies that are operating on its behalf, even though they are not public bodies. Clarke and Newman label this as ‘dispersal’ of power that takes place through delegation by the state to other agencies. As with Rose (2000), they also view this dispersal as a Foucauldian form of social governance (Foucault 1982) (Allan 2013) where the individual is integrated into the totality of society through the regulation of patterns within their lives.

By involving and delegating to a number of agencies that are not part of the central state apparatus, these agencies in turn become extensions of the state and form a hierarchy based on the amount of power that they possess. Along with Bourdieu (1992), Clarke and Newman (1997) emphasise the importance of economic and social power within this hierarchy with the focus for the state being on financial management and directing the ‘rules for the game’ (1992) for the stakeholders through policy directives. Within the adaptation of the ecological model, these power struggles take place in the outer layers with a variety of agencies within the hierarchy vying for dominance.



## **7.4 Lack of Clarity Regarding Aim of Provision**

With youth services consisting of a number of projects with different outcomes being worked towards, there can be multiple approaches to the process within each service. The available evidence points to an unclear working focus for youth services as a whole, outside of the general approach of working to correct social and individual issues. This claim is supported by the reactive nature of provision in that what is provided to young people depends to a large degree on where the youth service accesses funding to support the individual piece of work. This may lead to situations where the funding is received and then the young people with needs or issues that fit the mandate of the programme are then recruited. This is in contrast to having a service or programmes that are based on the needs of young people. The large range of issues highlighted in Appendix 6 provide evidence to support the view that the work of the sampled youth services is mainly led by funding rather than an underlying cause or ideology as present in historical youth work provision (Scanlon et al 2010). In a similar way to the large amount of issues that youth services seek to address, a high number of methods are employed to carry out the work. While revealing this large quantity, the data yielded in this study could find no rationale or basis for youth workers or youth services to base their choice of method on when working with young people.

## **7.5 Funding**

While the funding supplied to youth services by the DCYA and the IYJS is the predominant mechanism for the State to resource the sector, financial support is also provided by a number of agencies that are resourced by other government departments with no responsibility for youth work or young people. While no quantification of this funding took place in this study, the available data seems to suggest that young people may have multiple state agencies providing services to them that may cause overlaps in provision. This also leads to duplication in funding by the State. For example, of the twenty-two funding measures provided by Pobal on behalf of the State (Appendix 10), youth services within the sample were in receipt of funding from ten of the measures. Also, the DCYA directly funds programmes such as School Completion Programmes to increase educational attainment but within the sample, youth services were receiving funding from both

the DCYA and the School Completion programmes which suggests the presence of outsourcing type arrangements by some organisations in receipt of State funds.

## **7.6 Stakeholders**

The second research question relates to the identification of stakeholders in the sector and how they influence the youth work that is provided within services. With over twenty-five<sup>6</sup> being identified, a high degree of variance exists regarding their reasons for involvement in youth service provision. With this sample being only approximately a third of the overall amount of youth services in the country, the researcher is confident that the quantity of agencies would increase if the study was to include all youth services. While the amount is large and the type of agency varies widely, the underlying motivation for their involvement in youth services is similar in that it relates to them contracting youth services in order to outsource aspects of their work. This in turn creates a dependence by the youth service on the associated financial payment associated with contracts and achieving outcomes. With this comes what Mizen (2010 p.25) identifies as a “disciplining power” for agencies providing funding that allows them to dictate the approach of the service being delivered. With economic power being identified within this investigation as one of the predominant forms of influence over the direction of provision, the current state of youth services could be seen as precarious as they are constantly having to pursue financial support through contracts on behalf of others leaving them constantly open to influence in the direction of their work. This section of welfare provision to young people could be open to competition from providers in other spheres such as social care provision as privately operating companies enter the tendering market and compete with youth work organisations for contracts from funding agencies.

This lack of a determined direction also points to a deficiency of a core rationale or purpose for this aspect of youth work provision and the existence of youth services. However, this investigation points to youth work having some central aspects to its

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<sup>6</sup> A number of grant awarding agencies have been grouped under the heading of Philanthropic Agencies in the previous chapter. The number of stakeholders would be larger if they were listed individually.

work that would enable youth work organisations to clearly identify a product that could be marketed to commissioning agencies. This product includes the ability of youth workers and youth work to engage the target groups that stakeholders require services provided to, key methods that have been developed over decades of provision within traditional youth work that include a focus on group work and experiential learning and the ability of youth service provision to engage young people in a voluntary capacity without them having to be compelled to engage as is the case with probation style projects. While established youth work authors such as Davis (2010) and St. Croix (2010) perceive a threat to youth work, this author would argue that in Irish youth work, delivery within services has already embraced the neo liberal approach to contemporary welfare services outlined by Fraser (2008 p.4) where the service is treated as a business with specific targets and the state or agencies acting as the purchaser. While being cognisant of the roots of youth work, youth services could now crystallise the products that they have to offer rather than trying to operate within a confused existence which now is present. By adopting this approach, targeted provision could then strengthen through creating resources such as an evidence base to support its work or clear boundaries as to what it can provide compared to other welfare type provision that works with young people.

## **7.7 A way forward?**

With community and voluntary providers such as youth services now forming part of local Children and Young Persons Services Committees (DCYA 2015), the product delivery approach could be vital to the ongoing formation of youth services. These committees position youth services firmly as an early intervention agency within the Hardiker Model approach that is underpinning services to young people in the coming years.



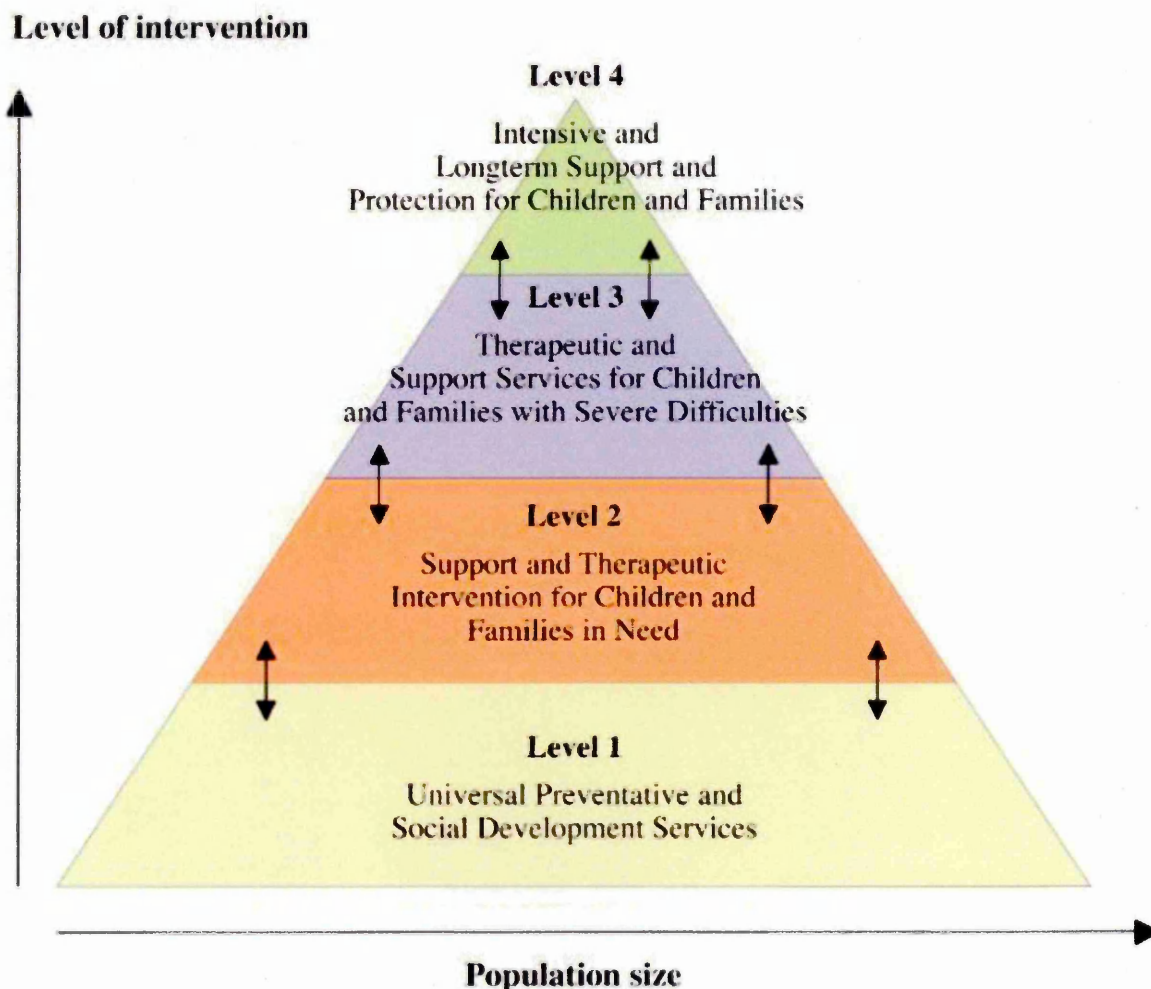


Figure 19 Harkidker Model (Owens 2010, p. 17)

This approach sees youth services providing programmes at level one and two of the Hardiker Model with more intensive, therapeutic services provided by qualified professions such as Psychologists and Psychiatrists at levels three and four. Current approaches to provision mean that some youth services within the sample are also operating within level three. By youth services and their parent agencies clearly setting boundaries related to the first two levels of the Hardiker Model, they could then develop a suite of products with associated outcomes rather than the disparate and confused approach to current provision. As the DCYA, the dominant stakeholder within youth service provision is also the government department championing the development of the Children's and Young Peoples Services Committees, a clear mandated role could be identified. There are twenty-two committees across the country that cover every County and promote inter agency cooperation and delivery (DCYA 2015). Clear consolidation and development of products and services that could be marketed to these services, could position youth

services as a main provider of services at the preventative agency level, thereby removing the need for services to constantly adjust provision to suite a large number of funding agencies.

## **7.8 Implications for the Youth Work Sector**

In writing about the change that British youth work was undergoing almost two decades ago, France and Wiles (1997) explore how a similar split occurred in the sector with the associated lack of purpose for youth work in services as this aspect of youth work developed. Writing at the time of the New Labour project that they termed “late modernity” (p.59) where market choices dictate provision, they recognised that the British sector was then undergoing developments that this research has highlighted in its Irish equivalent at present. The findings of this investigation, supported by the lack of supporting literature related to this aspect of Irish youth work, in a similar way, now “needs to develop a more clearly targeted notion of service delivery” (France and Wiles 1997, p.62) and clarify the purpose and rationale of its work. The undertaking of such an exercise by relevant youth work stakeholders could see specific forms of provision emerging with clear identities. The current labelling of all programmes provided by youth work agencies as youth work with associated understandings of what that is could be detrimental to the sector as a whole. The author proposes that new identities should be formed to clearly demarcate aspects of provision to young people. This would allow for the emergence of key strands of provision such as those delivered within youth services to develop with associated research to support growth. By forming identities around terms such as youth development or youth progression, informal and non-formal provision to young people could then decouple from the limited theoretical aspects that currently guide provision under the title of youth work. This could see a shift away from current practices of labelling the majority of programmes delivered to young people by youth agencies as youth work programmes. Early indications of this shift are evident with Foroige, one of the largest youth work organisations now using a strapline of “the National Youth Development Organisation” (Foroige 2016). A more consistent approach by the sector to openly acknowledging that youth services are operating as service providers within a funding driven field, could see further changes in how the sector evolves. An example of this is the current

professional endorsement for youth work qualifications. This is undertaken by the North South Education and Training Committee for Youth Work (NSETS). In order for Universities and Institutes of Technology to obtain professional endorsement for their programmes at Honours Degree level, they must provide evidence that the learning processes within the courses “must recognise, incorporate and promote” youth workers “developing and activist identity” (NSETS 2013 p.12). While NSETS requires that these programmes must prepare students to “enter generic youth work post” (NSETS 2013 p.12) it clearly identifies that it is within a context where the youth work is guided by values such as “equity and the importance of choice, freedom, responsibility and justice” (NSETS 2013 p.11). While these values may reflect historical youth work as discussed previously within this study, the education that youth workers receive on endorsed programmes may need to diversify to reflect the data of this research where the nature of youth work programmes is driven by economic power. This economic power, as reflected in the perceptions of those interviewed, is being used to devise outcomes that match policy objectives with youth services now contracted to achieve these outcomes. This may lead to conflict between youth workers who have been educated to be activists guided by left leaning values using service delivery methods of working aimed towards achieving conformist outcomes such as educational achievement and crime reduction identified in the previous chapter. A contemporary example exists in GYDPs where youth workers work alongside Gardai and the Probation Service to achieve these outcomes which are driven by the IYJS.

The current structure of the sector reflects the British sector with the state adopting the role of ensuring quality of delivery, legislative and core financial support. However, as Jeffs and Smith (2014 p.76) point out, “most governments are not really interested in the empowerment of young people” as youth work claims to be. The findings of this investigation highlight that there is no sole purpose for youth service delivery with a large range of interventions that use traditional youth work methods being commissioned by stakeholders. Moving away from an all-encompassing label of youth work to describe all programmes taking place in youth services that may not align with traditional youth work values and principles, this study proposes a classification system as outlined in Table 11. A progression from Hurley and Tracey’s earlier work (1993), this simple system provides key information on the



specific mode of provision whereas the earlier model focused academic constructs to describe ideal types. Classifying forms of provision in this way clearly outlines the main factors that would influence practice within youth service programmes.

## Classification of Provision

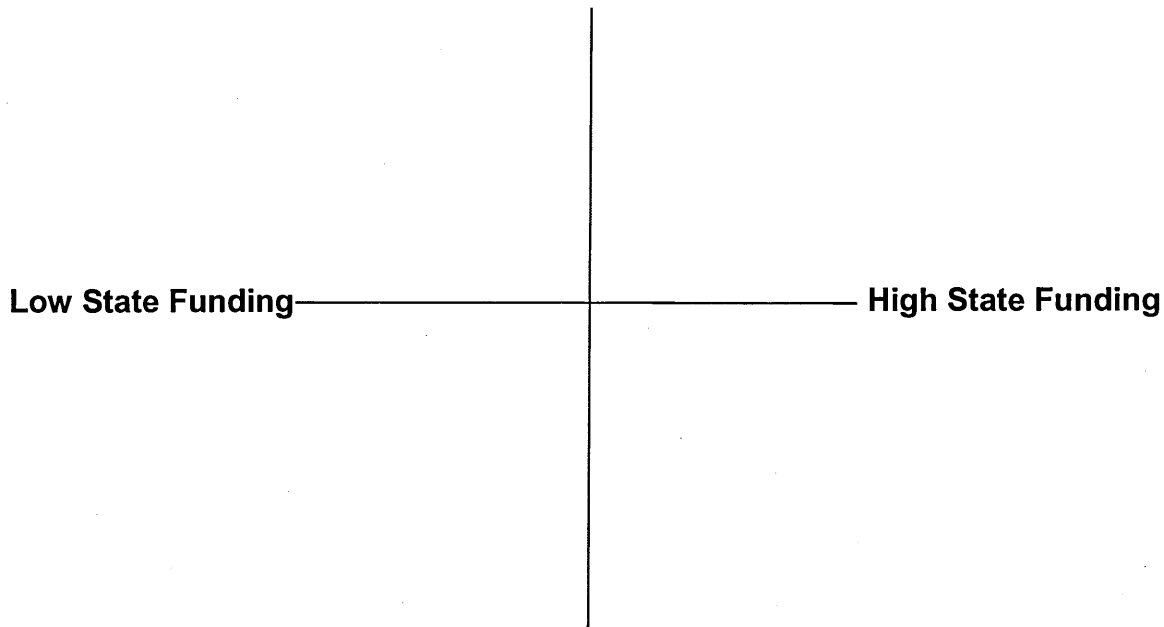
Funding Agency	
Outcomes Required by Funding Agency	
Associated Policy (National or Regional)	
Profile of Young People to be Targeted	
Methods to be Employed	
Outcomes for Young People	
Societal Outcomes	

Table 12. Classification of Provision

As the clear column on the right is populated and expanded by the worker with responsibility for the project, an overall picture of each individual project within a youth service materialises. This tool could also be expanded or adapted by youth services to align with the reporting requirements of individual funding agencies to provide evidence of programme delivery and outcome achievement.

As a result of this study Figure 22 is also proposed for use within the sector to provide an understanding the influence of funding by the state and sub agencies on the outcomes of programmes. The findings from the perspectives of the sample within this study show that funding dictates outcomes which are broadly regulatory in a societal context. As youth work organisations continue to tender for contracts to deliver services, by plotting the type of provision, this tool could be used to make decisions on whether the type of service aligns with the mission and values of the organisation.

### **Conformist Outcomes**



### **Non-Conformist Outcomes**

Figure 22 State Funding and Associated Outcomes

## **7.9 Conclusion of the Discussion Section**

This chapter has discussed provision within the sample as playing a regulative function within a neo liberal type system of state governance of young people. Within this role, funding agencies with delegated roles from government departments possess power to dictate terms of work and contracts to youth services. Despite youth services within the sample acting as commissioned entities, a lack of clarity exists regarding their role and the role of their work. A prospective approach with suggested tools for the coming years for youth services to clarify their identity as well as securing funding is proposed.

# **Chapter 8 Limitations, Dilemmas and Recommendations**

## **8.1 Limitations of the project**

Due to the absence of previous research in this area, this study has acted as an exploratory project that examines sample youth services and their associated provision. With any research of this nature, it raises a number of areas for further investigation as well as displaying a number of strengths and limitations.

By adopting a broad approach, the study has examined a number of areas including the nature of current provision, the agencies involved and, their reasons for involvement. While being an important first step which can act as a baseline for further studies as the sector evolves, the researcher acknowledges that only a small aspect of youth services, stakeholders and provision has been investigated.

## **8.2 Methodological Limitations**

The study has adopted a number of theoretical tools and approaches to thinking about the research. These include adapting the Ecological Model (Bronfrenbrenner 1979) to assist with providing an understanding of the different aspects of the investigation, adopting a constructivist approach to the gathering and interpretation of data as well as aspects of Bourdieu's Field Theory (1992) to understand some of the aspects of power within the sector. While these approaches have provided excellent assistance to the researcher, at times there was a danger of the project becoming 'theoretically unwieldy'. While being a powerful learning experience and contributing immensely to the research, future research as discussed below will probably adopt a more refined approach. It should be noted that the thinking aids identified here have been vital to the different stages that they have been employed in and have allowed the researcher to approach sections of the project using abstract theory as well as enabling the theorising of practice.



### **8.3 Dilemmas**

As the data were being coded, it became apparent that the findings of the project would not align with the dominant traditional narrative of youth work being focused on groups using empowering and emancipatory mediums. The investigator was faced with an ethical dilemma in how dissemination of the findings would take place. By discussing current provision as being a tool to promote social conformity, this project and related conference presentations and papers would also promote debate regarding the role of youth work. While this exposition may be positive, it also should be tempered by the fact that people rely on the sector for employment as well as young people relying on services for the delivery of vital programmes for their development. By exposing and discussing issues such as overlaps in the service delivery by agencies supported by the state, any resulting action taken by related government departments could be detrimental to youth work. The researcher also had to consider that by highlighting that youth services are in receipt of funding from a large array of sources, both statutory and private, they may be influenced in how they do their work by these funders. This could leave the projects liable to funding cuts from their main financiers should they be of the opinion that the projects may not face difficulty if one of a number of sources is removed from a project.

Faced with these dilemmas, the researcher chose to forge ahead with openly discussing and disseminating the findings. This was carried out at an international conference, in house seminars and a submission to the Irish Youth Work Journal. The consequences of these actions are, as yet, unclear. However, the researcher is of the opinion that the youth services section of the sector, as it is in receipt of considerable exchequer funding, should be open to critical investigation both in this and future projects.

### **8.4 Quantification of Funding**

Ideally, this study would have made attempts to quantify the funding being received from additional funding agencies. The scale of this funding was not apparent to the researcher before in designing the project. However, having carried out the research, it seems that this financing plays a significant role in contributing to the overall make up of youth services.

## **8.5 Recommendations**

This study has been conducted during an economic recession in Ireland with increased pressure on public finances. Within this time, debate surrounding the youth work sector has concerned issues such as effectiveness and reductions to funding (DCYA 2014), youth services competing with social care type bodies for the awarding of contracts such as Garda Youth Diversion Programmes (Fitzgerald 2016) and the role of youth work and what youth work programmes hope to achieve in engaging young people (DCYA 2013). Considering these issues and as a result of the findings of this research, the author now presents the following recommendations for the DCYA, the youth work sector and suggests areas where future research may be of benefit to the sector.

### **8.5.1 Recommendations for the DCYA:**

- 1) The literature review, as well as the interviews, found that at present there is no quantification of the total spend by the state on youth service projects. Quantification of funding to youth services and the youth work sector could be undertaken. While the DCYA produces budgets and reports on the main funding that it provides, this does not include funding available to services from other agencies that are also funded by the DCYA and other government departments.
- 2) Due to the absence of one overall auditing agency on behalf of the taxpayer that can oversee the allocation of funds from multiple agencies and government departments, a coordinated approach should be taken by the Department of Public Expenditure, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and Pobal. This would reduce the instances of multiple agencies obtaining funding and recognition for delivering overlapping programmes to the same young people as discovered in this investigation.

### **8.5.2 Recommendations for the Youth Work Sector:**

- 1) Youth Services should develop a clear rationale for the use of specific methods. This could be linked to a needs analysis and specific determined outcomes based

programmes. Within the sample, there was an absence of rationale for determining methods. Clear planning using approaches such as logic modelling could eliminate this and provide programmes with measurable results.

- 2) Measures should be taken to clearly identify the role of youth services, be that as a deliverer of programmes to alleviate social deviance or another role. Within the literature and practice there seems to be an aversion to identifying provision as being the provider of a service on behalf of a funding agency. This may be related to the historical development of traditional youth work.
- 3) As a component of the process identified in point two, the identity of youth workers and their role should be crystallised. The data suggest that the current working definition is too narrow and does not reflect what is taking place in youth services. The existing definition of youth work clearly reflects traditional, voluntary led youth work and not professional provision on behalf of funding agencies.
- 4) Arising from the findings and the literature review, parent youth work organisations and the DCYA should now recognise that two types of youth work exist, voluntary led which is primarily focused on participation and youth services led which is primarily focused on delivering outcomes on behalf of funding agencies.

### **8.5.3 Recommendations for Further Research:**

Considering the findings emanating from the sample's perspective of their work, the following recommendations are suggested for further research:

- 1) Research be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of youth work methods and practices in achieving the outcomes required by funding agencies. Although youth service provision has grown in recent years (Scanlon et al 2010), evidence could not be found within the review of the literature and did not arise elsewhere within this study that proves the effectiveness of youth work type provision.
- 2) While the above recommendations for the DCYA call for a quantification of state funds being directed towards youth work, there is also a knowledge gap regarding the amount of funding being provided by private entities such as businesses and



philanthropic funds. Further research could also be conducted on the impact of this funding regarding how it influences programme design and outcomes.

- 3) With the evolution of youth service provision and the associated alignment of programmes with the objectives of funding agencies, further qualitative research could be undertaken related to the identity of this contemporary approach to working with young people to address societal issues. This could also involve the identification of principles and values of youth work within services to reflect current provision.
- 4) As the literature review has shown, there is a dearth of literature related to youth service provision. While a small amount has been found to reflect the English context, the academic field does not seem to have held pace with the recent evolution of youth services throughout the country. With the emergence of new level eight degrees incorporating youth work and youth development at Dundalk and Blanchardstown Institutes of Technology, further postgraduate research could be developed in these areas in the coming years.

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# Appendix 1: Hurley and Tracey's Models of Youth Work

## Personal Development Model

### Framework for Understanding Youth Work Theory and Practice

Structural Analysis	Ideological Perspective		Typology of Youth Work	Analysis of Young People's Needs	Role of Youth Worker
Interpretive Paradigm	<b>Theoretical Level</b> Liberal	<b>Practical Level</b> Personal value system of the worker is not imposed	Personal Development	Young people are passing through a transitional period from childhood to adulthood and need to surmount the tasks that go hand in hand with that stage. Young people thus need to develop: Positive self-images Stable inter personal relationships Social skills to participate with existing structures of society	Group worker Confidante Supported Motivator Counsellor

### Implications for youth work Practice and Outcomes

Youth Work Model	Programme Emphasis	Process/ Relationship	Structure for Participation in Decision Making	Outcomes for Young People	Outcomes for Society
Personal Development	<b>Education for Life Programmes</b> -Promotion of personal responsibilities for choices made -Leadership development <b>Recreational Provision</b> -Means through which young people can learn to mix socially with others and learn more about themselves. <b>Social Political Awareness</b> Community Involvement	Youth Workers act as confidante / counsellor  Development of relationship with young people to take part in all aspects of the programme structures  Group processes and group work values guide the operations of practice.  Young people are respected as equals by adult volunteers.  Relationship created supports the personal learning and development.	Structures created for young people in the project to contribute in a limited way to decision making.  Adults will usually exercise a veto in relation to decision making.	Young people are prepared for an active role in society. Young people develop respect for themselves and others and have the ability to build and maintain relationships. Young people have learned basic leadership skills by limited basic leadership skills by limited opportunities in decision making structures.	Status quo is maintained. Support for state institutions is based on personal choices which is usually supportive of the majority.

## Critical Social Education Model

### Framework for Understanding Youth Work Theory and Practice

Structural Analysis	Ideological Perspective		Typology of Youth Work	Analysis of Young People's Needs	Role of Youth Worker
Radical Humanist	<b>Theoretical Level</b>	<b>Practical Level</b>	Critical Social Education	<p>Inequalities exist in society which impact adversely against young people.</p> <p>Structural factors impede the personal development of groups of young people.</p> <p>Inequalities can be addressed through change within existing institutions.</p>	<p>Enabler</p> <p>Consciousness raiser</p> <p>Critical social analyst</p>
	Reformist	Personal value system actively guides the approach of the worker.			

### Implications for youth work Practice and Outcomes

Youth Work Model	Programme Emphasis	Process/Relationship	Structure for Participation in Decision Making	Outcomes for Young People	Outcomes for Society
Critical social education	<p><b>Education for Life Programmes</b></p> <p>-Young persons personal experienced is explored as a means of raising consciousness about broader/global issues</p> <p><b>Recreational Provision</b></p> <p>-Useful mechanism in building solidarity</p> <p><b>Social Political Awareness</b></p> <p>Campaign/issue based</p> <p>Historical enquiry</p> <p><b>Vocational Training</b></p> <p>-Critique of how roles are reinforced.</p> <p><b>Arts/Creativity</b></p> <p>-Creative mechanism for exploring young peoples' life.</p>	<p>Youth work has the positive intention of transferring power to young people.</p> <p>Relationship with young people is undertaken with a view to engaging them as partners.</p> <p>Youth Worker adopts the role of problem poser.</p> <p>Young people actively involved in identifying, exploring and understanding issues of concern to them.</p> <p>Two way process of mutual dialogue between young people and adults.</p> <p>Action is the result of analysis and reflection.</p>	<p>Enabling self-managing structures.</p> <p>Young people and adults are seen as partners.</p> <p>Reflect the interests and energy of young people.</p>	<p>Young people have developed the ability to analyses and assess alternatives.</p> <p>Young people have developed the capacity to define their position in their world and the skills to act to change it if they sought.</p> <p>Young people are aware of the inequalities which institutions promote.</p> <p>Young people are active in mobilising groups at local level to seek changes within existing structures.</p>	<p>Institutions undergo internal structural change to respond to demands for change.</p> <p>Tensions exist within institutions as they progress and change.</p>



## Radical Social Change Model

### Framework for Understanding Youth Work Theory and Practice

Structural Analysis	Ideological Perspective		Typology of Youth Work	Analysis of Young People's Needs	Role of Youth Worker
Radical Structuralist	<b>Theoretical Level</b>	<b>Practical Level</b>	Radical Social Change	<p>Young people are a socially exploited group in society.</p> <p>The interests of dominant and social groups have the impact of marginalising young people and reducing their life changes.</p>	Radical Activist.
	Revolutionary	Personal value system actively guides the approach of the worker.			

### Implications for youth work Practice and Outcomes

Youth Work Model	Programme Emphasis	Process/Relationship	Structure for Participation in Decision Making	Outcomes for Young People	Outcomes for Society
Radical Social Change.	<p><b>Education for Life Programmes</b> -Young persons' personal experienced is explored to help locate young people as a culturally exploited group within society. Hidden curricula of programmes rejected as a form of oppression.</p> <p><b>Social Political Awareness</b> Indoctrination of young people into the revolutionary perspective. Preparation of young people to reject existing social institutions as oppressive.</p>	<p>Youth worker has the intention of building anti-institutional lobby groups.</p> <p>Relationship with young people is undertaken to recruit them as activists.</p> <p>Young people actively identify with and endorse the agenda of the campaign cause.</p>	Structures reflect a preset social revolution agenda within which young people act as partners.	<p>Young people are viewed as political.</p> <p>Young people are skilled to act towards an objective of social transformation.</p>	<p>Institutions are overthrown and replaced arising out of cultural struggles and interest groups gaining dominance and control over former institutions.</p>

## Appendix 2

### Introductory Letter



00/00/0000,

Dear .....

Further to my recent email and our phone conversation, I am writing to invite you to take part in a pilot study of research that I am conducting as part of my doctoral studies.

The research is concerned with gathering data on the various types of provision in youth services in Ireland. I am hoping to produce new theory that will enable Practitioners, Students and Academics to understand the different approaches and contributing factors in modern youth work, specifically in youth services. This will be done by gathering data and analysing factors such as outcomes, staffing and funding.

Taking part involves taking part in a semi structured interview with me. This will not require any personal information. All information from the interview will be coded and personal identities will not be revealed.

On completion of this study, I will be happy to forward you my findings. Should you wish to meet up and discuss these or be de-briefed on the interview I will be happy to do so. I enclose a written consent form and stamped addressed envelope that I would ask you to return as soon as possible.

I will be in contact by phone in the coming weeks to organise a time and date for us to meet. Should you wish to discuss any aspect of this pilot study, please contact me at the number below.

Regards,

---

Cormac Doran

Doctoral Student

Ph.: 0879077694

[dorancormac@gmail.com](mailto:dorancormac@gmail.com)



## Appendix 3

### Consent Form



#### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

##### *Investigation of Provision of Youth Work in Irish Youth Services*

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Cormac Doran, from the Faculty of Development and Society at Sheffield Hallam University. This study will contribute towards the awarding of a Doctorate in Education.

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Cormac Doran: [dorancormac@gmail.com](mailto:dorancormac@gmail.com) or 0879077694.

##### **The aims of the research are to:**

- Investigate methods of provision in Irish youth services,
- To map the sector of youth work, specifically youth work taking place in Irish youth services using Bourdieusian field theory,
- To develop new theory to describe the provision of modern youth work in youth services.

In order to achieve these aims the following objectives will be undertaken:

- A thorough review of literature relevant to youth work including literature from overseas for comparison purposes,
- Data collection and analysis using methods influenced by grounded theory and Bourdieusian theory,

Identification of key stakeholders and how they deploy their capital within the field

## **PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, I would ask you to take part in a semi-formal interview- this should take about one hour.

## **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

For some participants, this may be the first time that they have been asked to examine and reflect on the work that they do. This may not be a positive experience. De-briefs are available post interview should they be requested.

## **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO THE YOUTH WORK SECTOR**

It is hoped that this research will contribute to the 'knowledge pool' of youth work theory and provide an increased understanding of modern provision within youth services.

## **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

Participation in this pilot study is on a voluntary basis and no payment will be made.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

**Every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality of any identifying information that is obtained in connection with this study.**

Only the researcher will be aware of the personal identity of participants and their identities will be coded. Their organisation or their personal identity will not be revealed in any processing or presentation of data. Participants have open access to all data related to them and can review audio files before processing. These files will be destroyed on completion of the study.

## **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw within three weeks of the interview without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise that warrant doing so.

## **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS**

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Sheffield Hallam University Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact:

**Cormac Doran**  
**15 Mornington Manor Park**  
**in Education**  
**Mornington**  
**Co. Meath**  
**0879077694**  
[dorancormac@gmail.com](mailto:dorancormac@gmail.com)

**Dr. Paul Garland**  
**Programme Leader for Research Degrees**  
  
**Faculty of Development and Society**  
**Sheffield Hallam University**  
**Sheffield**  
**S1 1WB**  
[p.garland@shu.ac.uk](mailto:p.garland@shu.ac.uk)



## SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

I have read the information provided for the study *Investigation of Provision of Youth Work in Irish Youth Services* as described herein. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

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Name of Participant (please print)

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Signature of Participant

Date:

## **Appendix 4**

### **Discussion Sheets for Interviews**

# **Areas for Discussion with Irish Youth Justice Service**

1. How many of the projects are located in Youth Services?

2. Funding- Types

Where does it originate?

What is expected?

Why?

3. Methods in projects.

Why as opposed to other methods?

4. Stakeholders involved in the delivery of projects.

5. Power in projects/Power around projects.

6. Designation of areas for projects.

7. How has the work changed over the last couple of years?

8. Ideology of YW organisations v's IYJS ideology.

## **Areas for Discussion with Youth Service Managers**

1. What methods are used in your service? Eg: Youth Café, drop ins, etc.
2. Why are these methods used as opposed to other methods?
3. Who funds your youth work?
4. Are there funding agencies outside of the main DCYC/Youth Justice/Health
5. What do these funding agencies expect as outcomes/outputs?
6. Why is the youth work that is provided in this service provided the way it is?
7. What stakeholders are involved in the various types of provision?
8. Who/what is the dominant influencing force on the youth work?
9. How does power manifest?
10. Does your work take place in specifically designated areas or with specifically categorised young people?
11. Has your work changed over the last few years? How?/why?
12. Ideology of the youth work v's organisations ideology?



## **Areas for Discussion with DCYA**

1. How many of the projects are located in Youth Services?
2. Funding- Types  
Where does it originate?  
What is expected?  
Why?
3. Methods in projects.  
Why as opposed to other methods? Why choose youth cafes?
4. Stakeholders involved in the delivery of projects.
5. Power in and around funding streams.
6. Designation of areas for projects.
7. How has the work changed over the last couple of years?
8. Ideology of YW organisations V's DCYA ideology.
9. Anything to add?

## **Appendix 5**

### **Outline of Research Participants**

P1 – Manager of a community youth service.

P2 – Manager of a community youth service. <sup>\*7</sup>

P3 – Manager of a youth service that is a sub service of a parent youth work organisation. This service consisted of a number of Garda Youth Diversion Projects.

P4 – Manager of a service that is part of a parent youth work organisation.<sup>8</sup>

P5 – Manager of an independent youth service.

P6 – Manager of a youth service that is a sub service of a parent organisation.

P7 – Senior Civil Servant with the Irish Youth Justice Service

P8 – Manager of a youth service that is a sub service of a parent organisation.

P9 – Senior Civil Servant with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs.

P10 – Manager of a service that is part of a parent youth work organisation.

P10A – Assistant Manager of a youth service that is part of a parent organisation.

P11 – Manager of a youth service that is a sub service of a parent organisation.

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<sup>7</sup> P1 and P2 jointly manage the same service and were interviewed together.

<sup>8</sup> Youth services from three of the largest national youth work organisations were used within the sample.

## Appendix 6

### Issues being addressed by provision in youth services within the sample

Issue Based Work	Sources	References
Education	6	14
crime prevention or reduction	5	10
Drugs	5	8
physical health	4	7
suicide and mental health	4	7
development education	3	6
Disadvantage	4	5
community development	3	5
building relationships with adults	2	5
social education	3	3
behaviour change	3	3
child services or social care	2	3
sexual health	3	3
Employment	2	3
Recreation	2	3
rural isolation	1	2
Advocacy	2	2
Marginalisation	2	2
International	1	2
asset building	1	2
self determination	1	2
Bullying	2	2
Aggression	1	2
Unemployment	1	1
youth guarantee	1	1
spiritual development	1	1
environmental work	1	1
political awareness	1	1
Equality	1	1
safe environment provision	1	1
personal development	1	1
Families	1	1



peace and reconciliation	1	1
European integration	1	1
conflict resolution	1	1
empowering young people	1	1
Entrepreneurship	1	1
animal welfare	1	1
information provision	1	1
communication skills	1	1
working in a team	1	1
domestic violence	1	1

## Appendix 7

### Division of Issues between societal and individual problematic issues being addressed by youth service provision

Societal Issues	Individual Problematic Issues
Animal Welfare	Behaviour Change
Building Relationships with adults	Bullying
Child services and social care	Conflict Resolution
Community development	Crime Prevention or Reduction
Development Education	Domestic Violence
Disadvantage	Drugs
Empowering Young People	Education
Entrepreneurship	Employment
Environmental Work	Family Functioning
Equality	Physical Health
Advocacy	Suicide and Mental Health
Unemployment	Sexual Health
Safe Environment Provision	Asset Building
European Integration	Aggression
Information Provision	Youth Guarantee
International Work	Personal Development
Marginalisation	Communication Skills
Peace and Reconciliation	Working as a Team
International Awareness	
Political Awareness	
Rural Isolation	
Self Determination	
Social Education	
Spiritual Development	

## Appendix 8

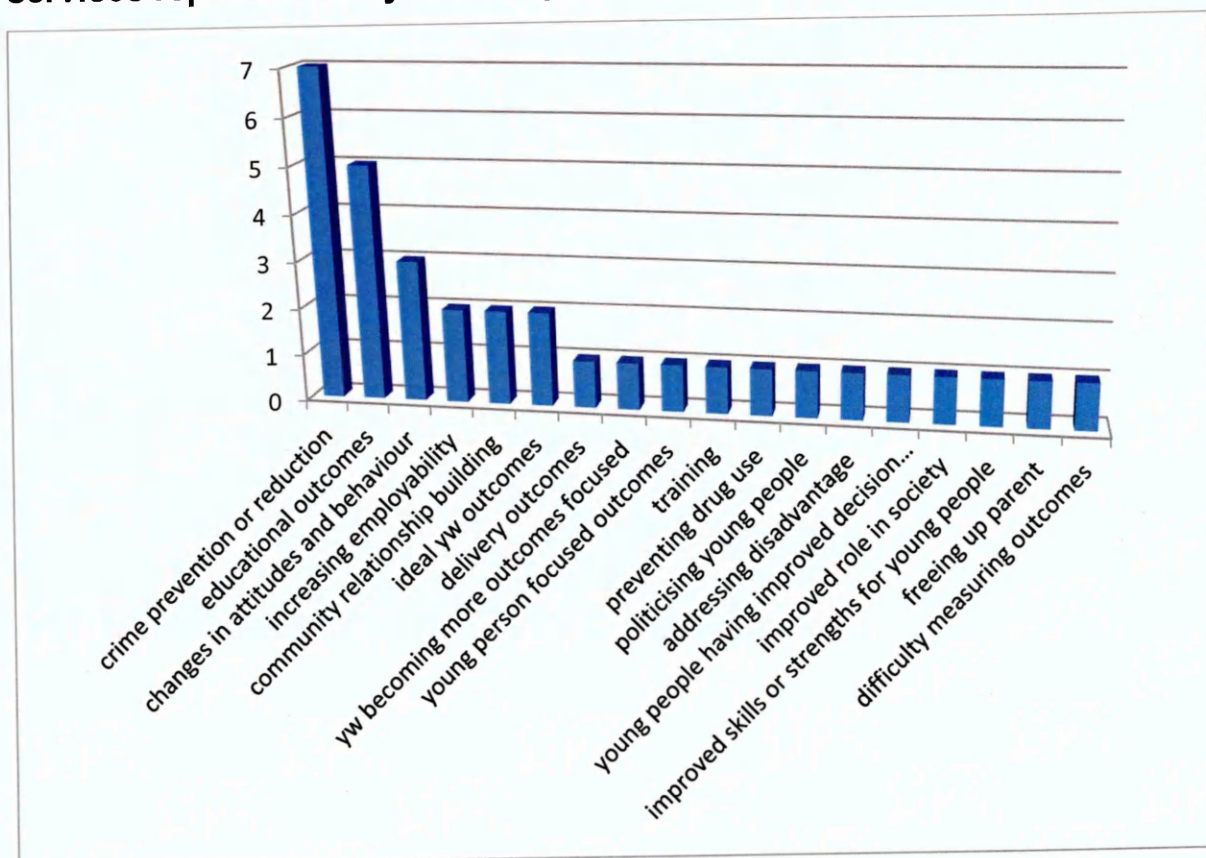
### Methods used with young people by youth services within the sample.

Methods used with young people	Sources	References
drop ins	3	4
building casework relationships	2	2
youth cafe	2	2
information provision	1	2
IT and multimedia	2	2
sports and recreation	1	2
informal learning	1	1
non formal learning	1	1
pool	1	1
conversations	1	1
adventure sports	1	1
school based induction programmes	1	1
school based transition programmes	1	1
visits to facilities	1	1
conferences	1	1
workshops	1	1
drugs specific methods	1	1
cookery	1	1
environmental projects	1	1
arts	1	1
music and dj'ing	1	1
Dance	1	1
street work	1	1
detached youth work	1	1
residential trips	1	1
Education	1	1
Horticulture	1	1
visits by ex-prisoners	1	1



## Appendix 9

Outcomes being worked towards by programmes within the youth services represented by the sample.



## **Pobal Funded Programmes**

Pobal (2015)

Area Based Childhood Programme (ABC)

Community Services Programme (CSP)

Community Fund 2014 (CF/CSP)

Dormant Accounts Fund (DAF)

Disability Activation Project (DACT)

Early Education and Childcare

Equality For Women Measure (EWM)

European Integration Fund (EIF)

European Refugee Fund (ERF)

Gateway

LEADER

Learner Fund

Local & Community Development Programme (LCDP)

National Early Years Access Initiative (NEYAI)

PEACE III

Rural Social Scheme

Rural Transport Programme

Scheme to Support National Organisations (SSNO)

Tús

Seniors Alert Scheme

SICAP

Youth Capital Programme