

AN EXPLORATION OF YOUTH WORK'S IMPACT ON THE SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING
OF YOUNG PEOPLE

A phenomenological Study of Youth Work in Wales

Darrel Williams B.Sc.(Hons), M.A.

Supervised by: Dr Nichola Welton, Dr Caroline Lohmann Hancock, and
Professor Bettina Schmidt

Submitted in partial fulfilment for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Wales Trinity Saint David

2021

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

SignedDarrel Williams..... (candidate)

Date01.02.21.....

STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Where correction services have been used the extent and nature of the correction is clearly marked in a footnote(s). Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

SignedDarrel Williams..... (candidate)

Date01.02.21.....

STATEMENT 2

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

SignedDarrel Williams..... (candidate)

Date01.02.21.....

STATEMENT 3

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for deposit in the University's digital repository.

SignedDarrel Williams..... (candidate)

Date01.02.21.....

ABSTRACT

Advanced economies are ever more concerned with the well-being of their populations (Dolan, Layard and Metcalfe, 2010; Fischer, 2009a; Harvey, 2013). This study aimed to critically explore whether Youth Work can have an impact on the *subjective well-being* (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD, 2013) of young people. To achieve this, a phenomenological research methodology has been utilised to research young people's experiences of youth and community work across Wales in urban, rural and former industrial areas. The study employed interpretive phenomenology (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012) through a process of in-depth interviews with young people. This supported young people to share their experiences of Youth Work and to identify the essence of its contribution to their subjective well-being (SWB) as defined by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2013).

The study identified four key themes integral to the relationship between Youth Work and subjective well-being (OECD, 2013) of young people. These key themes are: firstly, the significance of consistency while growing up; secondly, the significance of key people; thirdly, the importance of place; fourthly, the significance of diverse experiences in Youth Work. The study identified 18 sub-themes which detail distinct elements of Youth Work and its contribution to the enhancement of subjective well-being. These key themes and sub themes enhance SWB by acting on the life satisfaction, life meaning and happiness of young people.

To explore these themes a model has been developed which utilises the interrelationship of ecological systems (Watling Neal and Neal, 2013) and Youth Work. This analysis recognises that social change is, for some young people, making a satisfactory transition to adulthood increasingly difficult and that Youth Work has a role which can ease this

transition through enhancing SWB. Overall, it is concluded that Youth Work, based on a distinct set of characteristics, provides participants with opportunities to enhance their subjective well-being.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	x
1. INTRODUCTION	1
<i>Boundaries of the Literature Review</i>	13
2. LITERATURE REVIEW	16
2.1. Introduction.....	16
2.2. Youth Work Policy – The Context of the Study.....	17
2.3. A critical rationale for the Theoretical Framework	18
2.4. What duty does society have to children, young people and families?	27
2.5. What is Well-being	32
2.6. Pressures on the Youth Service in the 21st Century	36
2.7. Youth Work policy in Wales – Organisational and Policy Context	37
2.8. Research Questions Arising.....	41
2.9. Scant Research Concerning Youth Work and Subjective Well-Being.....	44
2.10. Limitations of the research.....	45
2.11. Critical Review of the Literature	50
<i>Table 1. Espoused Characteristics of Youth Work</i>	64
<i>Youth Work: A Non-Formal Education Approach</i>	75
2.12. Youth Work in Wales – what outcomes is it trying to achieve?.....	81
2.13. What is Subjective Well-Being among Young People?	83
2.14. What are the ingredients of well-being and why is it important?	86
2.15. Well-being - A Positive Physical, Social and Mental State.....	88
3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	95
3.1. Introduction.....	95
3.2. Ethical Considerations	97
3.3. Ethics – a critical view	100
3.4. Minimising harm.....	104
3.5. Rationale for the choice of research methods	107
3.6. The Ontology and Epistemology of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis ...	113
3.7. Quality Criteria in Qualitative Research.....	115
3.8. Research with children and young people	126
3.9. Critique of existing well-being research with young people	134
3.10. Overall philosophical position	137
3.11. Situating oneself.....	143

3.12.	Problem Statement - Uncovering the meaning of Subjective Well-Being to Young People.....	146
4.	RESEARCH METHODS.....	148
4.1	Introduction.....	148
4.1.	Practical Examples of Ethical Decisions	154
4.2	Identifying Research Questions	163
4.3	Key Research Questions	164
4.4	An overview of the Process of Analysis	167
4.5	A Commitment to Children’s Rights	174
4.4	Research Methods	179
4.5	Research challenges	181
4.6	Topics for questions in semi-structured interviews	183
5	PRESENTATION OF DATA	185
5.1	Introduction.....	185
5.2	Key Research Questions	186
5.3	A brief description of the research design	187
5.4	Analysis and emergent themes.....	190
5.5	Key themes emerging from the data	198
	<i>Key Theme 1. The significance of a consistent environment while growing up ..</i>	<i>198</i>
	<i>Key Theme 2. The significance of key people</i>	<i>203</i>
	<i>Key Theme 3. The importance of place to young people</i>	<i>206</i>
	<i>Key Theme 4. The significance of Youth Work experiences</i>	<i>211</i>
	<i>Listening to young people – specifically on their subjective well-being</i>	<i>218</i>
5.6	Summary of the Data	222
6	CRITICAL DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS.....	224
6.1	Key theme 1: Consistency, Reliability and Caring is Important for Young People, Both at Home and Within Youth Work.	230
	<i>Youth workers and dependability and practical help</i>	<i>235</i>
6.2	Key theme 2: Youth Workers Offer Young People a Unique Relationship which is Valuable to Young People	240
	<i>The Connected Worker</i>	<i>241</i>
	<i>The moral educator.....</i>	<i>246</i>
	<i>Having expectations.....</i>	<i>250</i>
	<i>Being Friendly</i>	<i>252</i>
	<i>The Unique Relationship.....</i>	<i>256</i>
	<i>Giving Hope.....</i>	<i>257</i>
6.3	Key theme 3: The Places in which Youth Work Takes Place are Special To Young People.....	261

6.4	Key theme 4: The Experiences Youth Work Offers Young People Impact Positively on their Subjective Well-Being.....	270
	<i>New experiences</i>	270
	<i>Movement/ Physical experiences</i>	274
	<i>Freedom to experiment</i>	276
	<i>Having Fun</i>	278
	<i>Benefits of recreation</i>	280
	<i>Physical activity</i>	282
	<i>Freedom to experiment</i>	285
	<i>Physical Activity and Gross Motor Activities</i>	286
	<i>Adversity and trauma</i>	288
7	CONCLUSION	292
8	BIBLIOGRAPHY	307
	<i>Appendix 1</i>	338
	<i>Appendix 2</i>	339

Abbreviations

Community Learning and Development (Scotland) (CLD Scotland)

European Community (EC)

Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS)

Lifelong Learning United Kingdom (LLUK)

National Assembly for Wales (NAW)

New Public Management (NPM)

Non-formal learning (NFL)

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Principal Youth Officers Group (PYOG)

Standing Conference for Youth Work in Wales (SCYWW)

Subjective Well-Being (SWB)

Welsh Assembly Government (WAG)

Welsh Government (WG)

World Health Organisation (WHO)

Youth Work in Wales Review Group (YWIWRG)

Table of Illustrations

	Page
Table 1. Espoused Characteristics of Youth Work	64
Table 2. Approaches to Learning: synergies between formal and non-formal learning	76
Table 3. Entitlements for young people aged 11-25 in Wales	80
Figure 1. Location of Youth Work	52
Table 4. A typology of Youth Work organisations and contexts	157
Table 5. Exploratory comments young man K	167
Table 6. Identifying recurrent themes	171
Table 7. Key Themes from the Data	297
Figure 2. A geographic/ thematic representation of the research frame	187
Figure 3. Illustration of interview topics carried out in each type of community (urban, rural and former industrial)	188
Figure 4. Schematic representation of the characteristics acting on young people's subjective well-being in Youth Work	223
Figure 5. The roles of Institutional Agents are each manifested through a specific set of actions	242
Figure 6. Integrated model of human attachment and place attachment	267
Figure 7. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model	295
Figure 8. A hypothetical networked Ecological Systems Model	299
Figure 9. A hypothetical networked Ecological Systems Model – Youth Work/ Family Mesosystem Level including Favourable Adolescent and Childhood Experience	302

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to all the young people who kindly gave up their time to meet me, you are at the heart of this study. Thanks also go to all the Youth Workers who have offered their time and energy to support me. The study would have been impossible without your good will.

I wish to acknowledge my gratitude to Associate Professor Sue Davies and Sue Ainsworth for their guidance and good humour during some difficult times. Sincere thanks go to Dr Nichola Welton, Dr John Rose, Dr Sue M.B. Davies, Dr Caroline Lohmann Hancock and Professor Bettina Schmidt who have all, in their own ways, guided me so very skilfully through my studies and believed in me and challenged me when I had lost belief in myself. For their help and encouragement, thanks also go to Angharad Lewis and Alana Enoch and many other staff and students in the School of Social Justice and Inclusion who have listened and offered advice and feedback on my emerging ideas.

I must also acknowledge my great mates, particularly Martin Harsant, who was by my side during some of life's speed bumps. To Martin I owe more than I can say.

Finally, thanks to my family, my late parents for somehow giving me confidence to have a go. My children, Daisy, Molly, Phoebe, for listening, for your guidance and allowing me to try and put into practice some of what I have learned through the journey.

Without you all, without your support I would certainly not have been able to complete this work.

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to carry out a critical exploration of the extent to which Youth Work in Wales (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007; Welsh Government, 2014; Learning and Skills Improvement Service, 2012) can impact upon the subjective well-being of young people, by acting on their sense of life satisfaction, life meaning and happiness (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, (OECD), 2013).

Positioning, and the inspiration for the study

The author continues to be inspired to explore Youth Work's impact on the subjective well-being of young people, having been involved in Youth Work for 30 years. I began my career as a volunteer in the aftermath of possibly the most significant industrial dispute in the United Kingdom in living memory (Cavalier, 2005; Mello, 2008; Macintyre, 2014), the Miner's strike of 1984/85. This affected me deeply. Seeing the struggle to come to terms with a growing realisation despite a mammoth struggle on the part of communities, that the Government of the day would prevail and that the result of the struggle would devastate previously vibrant communities.

It was in the aftermath of this rapidly changing social context that I began in Youth Work by helping in a youth club in the local community. Reflecting back on this formative time, I have come to realise the impact this social struggle had on me as a young person, at such a significant time in my life. My subsequent experience, my own learning and analysis now tells me that the aftermath of this seismic social struggle and subsequent re-forming of society has been wrought by the maturation of the neoliberal ideals proposed by von Mises (1927), and taken up by his student Freidrich Hayek. The ideas of Hayek also significantly influenced the ideology of Margaret Thatcher (Bourne, no date).

In my view many of the issues prevalent in contemporary society can be traced to the pursuit of neo-liberal ideals, ultimately resulting from the work of von Mises and Hayek, the effects of which have been summed up by George Monbiot in an article in the Guardian (2016) as ‘massive tax cuts for the rich, the crushing of trade unions, deregulation, privatisation, outsourcing and competition in public services.’ (Monbiot, 2016, np). These symptoms of neoliberalism have influenced society for forty years and, arguably, continue to act to influence every aspect of modern life in the developed world. By extension, it could be argued that these influences, stemming from the free market are having an undue impact upon young people growing up in this post-industrial, neo-liberal social context.

The fact that the proportion of 15/16 year olds reporting that they frequently feel anxious or depressed has doubled in the last 30 years, from one in thirty to two in thirty for boys and one in ten to two in ten for girls (Nuffield Foundation, 2012), one in five long term unemployed young people feel they have nothing to live for, one in four long term unemployed young people have been prescribed antidepressants, one in four long term unemployed young people have self-harmed, ‘Poor mental health’ is positively associated with the probability of being ‘not in education, employment or training’ (NEET) (Cornaglia, Crivello and McNally, 2012, pg 11) suggests that something is happening in society which is impacting on the lives of many young people. These trends are occurring despite apparent material progress where ‘real GDP in the UK has typically increased every year.. the UK economy experienced sixteen consecutive years of growth before output fell in 2008’ (Office for National Statistics, 2015). This conundrum is cause for concern and outlines the need for this study, to better understand what can enhance the life experiences of young people and what might Youth Work be able to offer to enable an improvement in their sense of well-being.

These are some of the issues which have concerned me and which have motivated this study. After living through the miner's strike I was directly affected by the process of social change. As the son of a miner I would almost by default have followed him underground. However, due to the process of mine closures this avenue of employment was no longer open. I was fortunate after a few years to be able to return to college despite having gained very few qualifications and to study a sports course. It was this course and the opportunities it provided me that set me on the path to Youth Work. During my career I have had many Youth Work roles including full time Youth Worker, as a manager of projects, teams and also as the manager of a local authority youth service.

Studying for a Master's degree in 2002 introduced me to a range of learning experiences which raised my awareness of the long history of radical educational approaches. Since that time this awareness has had a profound impact on my life (Freire, 1993). Altering my perspective and commitment to critical thinking, motivating me to want to carry out this study.

I have since served as a Higher Education lecturer in Youth and Community Work since 2008. During the last 30 years I have worked with many young people but have found the most rewarding experiences arose from working with a small group of young people on a voluntary basis, as part of a master's degree this provided the opportunity to apply high levels of engagement with theory, thinking and reflection into direct work with young people. Both the process involved and results of this work have been a continual source of reflection and have undoubtedly added to my understanding of the potential role, importance and potential impact of Youth Work.

As a result of my own lived experiences I am most interested in considering well-being from a holistic, subjective perspective, a perspective which draws upon ideas of the good

life, of an approach to such a life which is sustainable. Due to the increasing inequality which is apparent in many so called developed nations it has become apparent to me that the predominant, individualising discourse may further disadvantage young people. This view is an important element of the study and one which rejects an approach to the study of well-being from a particular and narrow, discipline specific or objective viewpoint. For example, the viewpoint of the psychologist or the economist or the health professional. These offer, in my view a limited conception of a good life and do not take into consideration life as a whole but rather consider relatively narrow aspects of the lived experience. Considering SWB through this narrow lens can arguably result in a relatively limited appreciation of individual aspects of life including mental well-being, emotional well-being, economic well-being or health and well-being. Fischer has identified that, for example, 'physical and mental functioning would not be considered components of SWB, but rather be viewed as their conditions' (Fischer, 2009, p 6). Increasingly I have regarded my perspective on the issue of subjective well-being as a critical sociological one, this subject specific positioning Giorgi has described as being necessary, as 'the disciplinary value of each unit can be made more explicit' and the researcher can expose 'the essential structure of the concrete, lived experience from the perspective of the discipline' (Giorgi, 1997, p. 247).

These lived experiences have shaped my world view, into a view of critical thinking, of a commitment to tackling oppression and developing a model of practice based on principles of anti-oppressive practice (Dalrymple and Burke, 2001, pp. 56-57). In order to inform the methodology of this study there has been an attempt to triangulate a position which leans towards a critical perspective, informed by the work of Habermas who has explored the basis for a pragmatic 'reconstruction of society along socialist lines' (Jary and Jary, 2000, p. 255).

Having been involved in Youth Work for over 30 years, I have observed a move within the helping professions to the pursuit of outcomes in the lives of young people (Merton, 2004; Piper, 2008; Dickson, Vigurs and Newman, 2013). However, from this extended period of experience I have become aware that Youth Work can have a lasting effect on young people involved in it beyond immediate, short term reactions. It is hoped this study will contribute new knowledge of the role of Youth Work and its role in young people's subjective well-being.

It is fundamental as a qualitative researcher to appreciate the importance of positioning oneself and how this positioning impacts on the subsequent research process (Creswell, 2014, p. 251). It has been argued that this positionality, or bringing out personal biases in pursuit of critical reflexivity is the only way to conduct social research (Greenbank, 2003). Positionality has been described as an individual's world-view and its resultant influence upon the position they have chosen to adopt in relation to a specific research task (Foote and Bartell, 2011). Creswell suggests that in qualitative research 'the only reality is that constructed by the individuals involved in the situation' (Creswell, 1994, p. 4) and that in this constructionist ontology is based upon how human beings experience the world (Stainton-Rogers, 2006, p. 79). The stance adopted within this study has been an ontologically idealist one, that, in this context, the truth of the concepts I am interested in exist in the minds of the participants; that the reality of subjective well-being exists in their minds alone and that the phenomenological method will enable the identification of the universal truths which are contingent with how young people understand, interpret and acknowledge SWB themselves. The author has come to understand the potential of ontology in both a philosophical and a social context, where, within a social ontological perspective, one identifies the underlying parts and processes of society which create the crucible for SWB as young people experience it.

Pursuing greater knowledge of the impact of Youth Work for young people is worthwhile both for the Youth Work sector, and most importantly for the young people of Wales. Increasing levels of unhappiness, dissatisfaction and distress among the population have become more apparent in recent years (Thurston, 2011; Mylona, 2015). At a time when advanced economies are increasingly concerned with the well-being and happiness of their populations (Dolan, Layard and Metcalfe, 2010; Ereaut and Whiting, 2008; Fischer, 2009a; Harvey, 2013), the results generated by this empirical study provide new knowledge about the elements of Youth Work which can improve the subjective well-being of young people.

The impetus for this study arose from my observation of the condition of society and many young people in Wales. Despite young people living in an increasingly wealthy and developing economy (Bradshaw and Keung, 2011), rather than becoming happier, evidence suggests that over a considerable period of time many are becoming more anxious and less satisfied with their lives (Burger and Samuel, 2017, Layard, 2005). This trend is apparent despite evidence that the United Kingdom consistently spends more as a proportion of gross domestic product on services for children and young people than the average among global developed nations, with the UK spending nearly 4% of Gross Domestic Product on cash payments to families, the highest level within the OECD countries, nearly 4 times as much as Greece, Korea and the United States (OECD, 2017). This paradox, of United Kingdom public spending well above average levels among comparative nations, with ensuing poor levels of achievement and happiness among young people raises questions regarding legitimate public investment processes and the purpose of welfare spending. This riddle of a poor return on high public spending is at the heart of the rationale for this study. Wales has been at the forefront of the global development of policies seeking to secure social justice for the population which appear to be reaping scant rewards in respect to Child Poverty for example, almost one in three children live in poverty (Save the Children, n.d.). Further evidence is provided in a recent report

commissioned by the Children's Commissioner for Wales which concluded that 'numerous examples exist of differential outcomes for children in areas such as health and wellbeing and educational attainment, particularly for those from a lower socio-economic background', and that 'Both children and professionals report high levels of racist, sexist, homophobic and transphobic language and bullying in schools', and that 'children's use of social media is impacting on their sleep, concentration at school and general levels of wellbeing' (Barrance, 2018, pp. 4-5).

In a national and global context which places greater focus on the concept of well-being (Office for National Statistics, no date), Youth Work has a significant opportunity to demonstrate how it can offer young people experiences which enable them to develop greater levels of SWB. There are two fundamental questions addressed in this study, the first being that there is a significant gap in human knowledge - the extent to which Youth Work impacts upon the subjective well-being of young people. The second fundamental question critically explored within the study is the continuing rhetoric among the polity regarding the need for evidence of impact as a justification for financial investment in youth services. There is a situation whereby considerable public investment is made to improve outcomes for children and young people but despite this investment there is limited meaningful scrutiny at a systemic level. Despite current research which focuses on social policy and the pursuit of impact; there is little evidence of change in either well-being or levels of educational achievement (Merton, 2004; Piper, 2008; Dickson, Vigers and Newman, 2013) despite the high levels of investment outlined above. In addition, despite comparatively high levels of public spending on children and young people across the United Kingdom, the youth service has seen a considerable erosion of financial support in recent years. A reduction in funding of the youth service in Wales of £13,000,000 (30%) between 2010 and 2017 has been recorded (Welsh Government, 2017). Despite its stated intention to put young people first, the youth service has largely accepted this

disinvestment which at a time where there is a broad acceptance of increased levels of unhappiness among young people, this could be interpreted as a socio-political betrayal of children and young people (Aynsley-Green, 2018).

Despite a back-drop of diminishing financial support, the youth service is in a position to do more to champion the position of young people who are among a group being adversely effected by continued policies of fiscal austerity. The youth service at a strategic level could consider seek to further develop an awareness of the role its work can play in enhancing outcomes for young people desired by decision makers. In my personal view, as a former Youth Work practitioner and lecturer in Youth Work it would seem that, rather than adopt a stoic approach of battening down the hatches and making do with diminishing resources, the youth service has the opportunity to contribute to the case for increased levels of national spending on recreational and social activities for young people through Youth Work. Rather than contributing to the continuation of an agenda which portrays young people as lacking in achievement and the ability to show resilience (OECD, 2018; Pedace, no date) the youth service has the potential to be more vocal and adopt a campaigning stance far different from the rather conservative role it has taken on during the recent period of national fiscal austerity. The role of campaigning enables individuals to feel more in control of their lives which in turn leads to a greater sense of SWB (OECD, 2013).

This notion of taking control in times of uncertainty is one aspect of adulthood which society should consciously foster, it has been said that ‘a human adult is someone who believes that change is possible in their own lives and the lives of those around them’ (Williams, 2005, p. 1). On a cultural level it could be argued that United Kingdom society is in need of a process of working out the nature of a good life and the place of social justice, ‘if we don’t know what it is we are inducting people into when we try and help

them grow as humans, we cannot be surprised if chaos results' (Williams, 2005, p. 1). I would suggest that the youth service could play a part in advocating for a national conversation regarding the place of young people and public investment in a rapidly changing social context. There is more to continued well-being and a good life than the pursuit of educational or professional achievement and an abstract notion of success linked to economic progress. Evidence at the individual level shows 'development then becomes a teleological process trying to promote well-being through abundance' (Schimmel, 2009, p. 93). The bonding together of well-being and abundance as a popular sub-text within popular discourse is detrimental to the pursuit of a model of sustainable living based on equity and sustainability. Evidence from this study suggests that a principled approach to Youth Work can play a role in encouraging young people to develop many of the qualities needed to build a successful life in the 21st Century. Unfortunately, the youth service in Wales has repeatedly been unsuccessful in articulating this message. As a result there is a situation where there is an opportunity to develop human understanding of the role of Youth Work. The potential for this area of human development demonstrates the topic of Youth Work and subjective well-being is worthy of further research.

Public Spending and the Happiness of Young People

Available data clearly describes the performance of macro-social systems and structures and how well these prepare young people for an adult life well lived (Layard, 2013; Van Hoorn, 2007; WAG, 2008; ONS, 2015). Despite a relentless agenda of measurement, there appears to be very little attention paid to this issue of scrutiny of the relationship between macro investment and what might be described as the national outcomes for young people, for example, in relation to their happiness or well-being . There are studies which explore issues of inequality (Hallam Centre for Community Justice, 2006), and of the links between wealth and happiness (Burkhauser, DeNeve and Powdthavee, 2015; International Monetary Fund, 2008; Fischer, 2009), but research has identified a dearth of either

academic or political attention paid to national economic investment in childhood and adolescence and the return on that investment. However, if one takes a critical stance on the issue of the fundamental purpose of decisions about public spending, it could be argued that the implicit role of government in a democracy might be:

essentially a conservative institution. It is responsible for creating and sustaining markets, enforcing contracts, protecting private property, and producing systems of education and infrastructure that allow commerce to function efficiently (Funkhauser, 2015, p. 59).

This purpose appears to disregard the well-being of individuals or nations, rather, priority being the improvement of the economic functioning of a nation rather the living conditions of the people. Conversely, it has been argued that the purpose of government is to win and retain power (Sercombe, 2010, p. 76). Taking into account this notion of power, it is reasonable to accept the notion that those in power want to maintain the status quo. There is also evidence of an increasing conservatism among the general population (Fuchs, 2016), and therefore it is reasonable to accept that social policy for young people is developed as a response to this increasing conservatism. This conservative trend portrays young people as largely problematic, and as a result government policies commonly respond to young people from what has been described as a deficit perspective (Davies and Merton, 2009), seeing the solution to these problems from a medicalising perspective consisting of the pursuit of treatment for a social problem of the results of perceived deficiencies. This view has been typified with the narrative of ‘young people as yobs, thugs and vandals, as a group to be feared and who lie beyond the boundaries of citizenship and respectability’ (Henderson, Holland, McGrellis, Sharpe and Thomson, 2007, p. 61). The notion of certain elements of society being deficient, often resulting in moral panic and a perceived threat to society have been promoted within neoliberal societies. Many philosophers and researchers have explored this in recent years (Cohen, 2002; Hier, 2008; David, Rohloff, and Petley, et. al. 2011). The notion of moral panic and its resultant impact in amplifying the labelling of young people, has arguably been used as

a means of manipulating public opinion. The framing of the public narrative portrays young people as incapable and deficient rather than active agents able to influence their own destiny, which is a position more akin with the principles of Youth Work. The question has been posed whether ‘the social reaction to the problem is disproportionate’ (Young, 2011, p. 245) and that as a result of this portrayal of young people as problematic has had an undue influence on social policy resulting in increasingly draconian policy climate.

This portrayal of young people as deficient has influenced society and Youth Work policy in recent years. As a result, the youth service has attempted to contribute to Welsh policy development. For example; to the issues of child sexual exploitation, to child poverty, to education and to emotional well-being by producing a number of position papers (Principal Youth Officers Group (PYOG), no date). The voluntary youth sector in Wales is represented by the Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services (CWVYS) and aims to provide ‘advice, support, guidance and also to challenge Welsh Ministers and the Welsh Government on Youth Work in Wales’ through the ministerial reference group. Although this group had no executive powers and was advisory in its purpose (CWVYS, no date). These two groups, the PYOG and CWVYS contribute to important representative structures within Youth Work in Wales attempting to put forward the case for a principled approach to Youth Work.

The PYOG have produced discussion papers on contemporary topics highlighted above, seeking to demonstrate the potential contribution of the maintained youth service to government objectives (PYOG, no date), while the participation of CWVYS in the ministerial reference group and other participatory structures shows a real commitment to the procurement of social value for young people. Despite these willing contributions, which somewhat implicitly make a case for investment based upon a contribution to the

broader goals of contemporary social policy (Wylie, 2010), there has been a reduction of 30% in the local authority youth service budget in Wales between 2011 and 2017 (Welsh Government, 2018). Even while budgets have reduced, the youth service has continued making an increasingly targeted contribution to the creation of the good young person, envisaged as ‘someone who works hard, gets a job, and has good relationships with family and the local community’ (Piper, 2008, p. 49). It could be argued that the youth service has inadvertently taken up a role which contributes to the narrative of moral panic associated with a deficit perspective of young people. Rather than challenging this agenda and advocating for a more radical approach to the development of communities and a society which places greater value on young people, the youth service has coalesced with budget cuts. However, the youth service has an opportunity to recreate itself and to seek to challenge budget cuts. The youth service can work with young people and involve them as actors in the process of challenging budget cuts. This active involvement of young people in a process of resistance can enable them to develop an enhanced sense of well-being at a time of rapid social change.

A children’s rights approach (Welsh Government, 2019b, p. 4) suggests that young people should be involved in further research in order to create a stronger evidence base for Youth Work in its own right. It has been noted that better evidence of the impact of Youth Work is required to underpin the design and delivery of Youth Work activities (Dickson, Vigurs and Newman, 2013). As mentioned above, this constant re-statement of the need for Youth Work to make explicit its contribution to current policy goals has proven difficult due to the inherently subjective outcomes achieved by many young people as a result of their involvement in Youth Work. This study has explored Youth Work’s impact on the subjective well-being of young people. The literature review chapter will explore the context of the study, Youth Work. The will consider the principles, purposes, standards

and the characteristics of Youth Work which make it a distinct means of work with young people.

Boundaries of the Literature Review

The literature review in the main focuses on the field of Youth Work, exploring Youth Work policy and practice, reviewing the recent history of Youth Work in Wales and also briefly the United Kingdom, considering historical documents such as the Fairbairn-Milson report (HMSO, 1969), and a historical discussion of youth work in Wales (Jones and Rose, 2001, 2003). The literature review though mainly explores the Welsh context since devolution. Youth Work policy and strategy in Wales is included, predominantly since the development of the first National Youth Service Strategy (WAG, 2007), taking into account the subsequent national strategy published in 2014 (WG, 2014). This provides the reader with an understanding of recent strategic developments concerning Youth Work in Wales from the perspective of the government. The literature review also critically examines the policy context from the field, taking into account the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales (SCYWW, 2007). The important Youth Work in Wales: Principles and Purposes policy (CWVYS, 2013) document is also considered in its role of providing guidance for policy makers and practitioners in Wales. The Education Workforce Council has taken on a role in producing this document and also in providing a registration system for youth workers and youth support workers in Wales, this is discussed on page 37-38. The role of CWVYS is also included, how it represents the voluntary Youth Work sector in Wales. The literature review also discusses the recent review of Extending Entitlement (Jervis, 2018) which concluded that Youth Work in Wales requires long term strategic direction. This may be provided by the impetus of the Interim Youth Work Board which has developed the most recent Youth Work Strategy for Wales and subsequent (Welsh Government, 2019b). The literature

review also considers the policy context provided by the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work which have been in place in one form or another since 2002 (Paulo, 2002, LLUK, 2008, LSIS, 2012, CLD Scotland, 2019). This document sets out clear and agreed values for Youth Work and a vision for youth work which supports the well-being of young people. These are the key policy documents which provide the policy context for Youth Work in Wales. In addition to this policy context, Youth Work is impacted by its theory base. Key aspects of Youth Work theory are summarised in Table 1. these include the work of Davies (2010), Young (2006), and Jeffs and Smith (2010). Additionally, the review has also considered the work of Ord (2009) and his approach to thinking the unthinkable, youth work without voluntary participation. This characteristic of voluntary participation is almost universally agreed as a pivotal aspect of Youth Work and it could be argued that this has a significant role to play in the relationship between the young person and the youth worker (Young, 2006). Relationships are regarded as a fundamental aspect of the human condition (Smith, no date) and as such are significant in the maintenance of subjective well-being. The literature review also considers relevant well-being literature.

The literature review acknowledges that well-being is commonly understood from two perspectives, that of the objective perspective and also from a subjective perspective. The literature review considers the well-being literature, exploring sources from philosophy and the good life (Warburton, 2014). From an objective perspective (Brown, 2013, Thurston, 2011, Price et al, 2013) which has been identified as providing a proxy and, in this context an unsatisfactory approach to the assessment of well-being. Objective approaches have been heavily drawn upon when exploring population wide levels of well-being (Cameron, 2010). However, these objective approaches have proven inadequate for the scope of this study which is driven by a commitment to understanding well-being as it is experienced by individuals.

To aid this understanding at an individual level, the review explores literature concerning subjective approaches as illustrated by Samman (2007), Fischer (2009), and the OECD (2013). The review further explores the work of Layard (2005), Dolan, Layard and Metcalfe (2010), and Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi (2009). In the search for ready definitions of well-being the literature review has included the work of Dodge, Daly, Huyton and Sanders (2012) and Defra (2008) and the New Economics Foundation, (no date).

The review also includes an exploration of social factors arguably impacting on young people's subjective well-being such as a consideration of neoliberalism (Kennedy, 2014, Monbiot, 2016, McGimpsey, 2017), cuts in services (WG, 2018) and time use (Zick, 2010).

The wide ranging scope of this literature has enabled the study to take into account factors impacting on the SWB of young people and explore them from a critical theoretical perspective (Mosleh and Golyar, 2009). The critical perspective is a key part of the rationale of the study, which rejects a narrow, discipline specific approach to concepts of subjective well-being in favour of individual understandings shaped by the social context of the individual which is crucial to the rationale of the study (Watling Neal and Neal, 2013).

The previous passage has effectively summarised the boundaries of the literature review, the scope of the Youth Work and well-being literature reviewed. This has provided a context for the rationale of the study which is further illustrated on page 85, page 98, pages 116 and 146 and which is summed up in the problem statement of the study on p. 145. It is this mix of social factors, policy, theory and philosophy which frames the study. The literature reviewed sets out the boundaries of the study. The next chapter is the literature review itself.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to provide the reader with a critical exploration of the literature of Youth Work and the theory of well-being as it applies to young people. The literature explored within this chapter highlights the principles and values of Youth Work as a particular form of practice with young people since the turn of the century. It is necessary to understand the nature of these characteristics to appreciate the context of the work. The literature review begins with an exploration of the policy context of Youth Work, exploring four elements: youth work, young people, and subjective well-being and its impact. The literature review explores developments within Youth Work since the turn of the century in Wales, considering Youth Work policy and strategy in Wales since 2007, explored the Welsh government vision for Youth Work in addition to the view from the field. For example the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales, the more recent Principles and Purposes document, the work of the Interim Review Group for Youth Work in Wales, the recent review of Extending Entitlement in addition to the review of the implementation Youth Work strategy implementation carried out by Glyndwr University in 2017.

This review of the relevant literature predominantly covers the period after 2000, taking the development of the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work developed by the then sector skills council, Lifelong Learning UK as a starting point. This policy document developed a clear and consistent purpose for youth work across the United Kingdom (LLUK, 2008). While this document set out a shared approach to youth work across the United Kingdom, this review of the literature will focus on developments in Wales. It has been noted that with the development of youth work in Wales diverged from similar developments in England in the mid 1980's, a conference in Wales 'Young People in

Wales - A New Perspective' for the first time made proposals for the establishment of a Welsh Youth Affairs Unit / Secretariat with the vision of developing a Wales specific approach to youth work and the youth service, independent of England (Rose, 1997a)

2.2. Youth Work Policy – The Context of the Study

Youth Work is a form of work delivered mainly, but not wholly within what is known as the youth service (see Figure 1), the youth service in Wales has been described as the framework by which Youth Work is delivered and is done through the local authority, major voluntary youth organisations and through independent local projects (Principal Youth Officers Group, no date). Youth Work in Wales is based upon a clear set of characteristics which set it apart from other forms of youth support services. The National Youth Service Strategy for Wales has identified these distinct characteristics as:

- The voluntary involvement by young people who have chosen to engage in the process
 - Being age specific, focused on 11-25 year olds
 - A non-formal education approach
 - Being driven by a young-people-first approach
 - A universal approach
- (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007, p. 3)

Despite the production of policy documents subsequent to 2007, this study has focussed on the characteristics above in greater depth as they were developed through a process which was consistent with the values of Youth Work (Lifelong Learning United Kingdom, 2008; Learning and Skills Improvement Service, (LSIS) 2012). The 2007 national strategy was developed democratically, with reference to, and involvement of, the sector. Later policy documents have been developed more centrally by government and the youth service rather than by Youth Workers (Welsh Government, 2014) which results in a more transactional approach which responds to concerns stemming from the moral panic outlined above. The democratically developed characteristics apparent in the 2007 national strategy make explicit the distinct nature of Youth Work which sets it apart from

other forms of work with young people and as such are worth taking into account here. These characteristics have long been championed by Youth Workers, this chapter contains an in-depth critical review of these distinctive characteristics.

In addition to these clear characteristics, it is also necessary for the professional youth worker to understand the purpose and principles of Youth Work (Standing Conference for Youth Work in Wales, 2014). Arguably, youth workers will provide more effective provision by developing an informed understanding of the purpose of Youth Work and considering how the lived experience of young people can be improved within their particular social context. The Youth Worker can arguably provide a more effective intervention by adopting a systematic approach to researching the lived experience of young people.

2.3. A critical rationale for the Theoretical Framework

This study has used an interpretive phenomenological approach, as proposed by Smith Flowers and Larkin (2012) to listen to the voices of young people on family life, on the community and their involvement in Youth Work. A process of phenomenological research has enabled the researcher to develop a clear and in-depth understanding of the data and how young people have constructed meanings from their lives. This process of ‘exploring the meaning people attach to a particular phenomenon concept or idea’ (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard and Snape, 2014, p.13) is fundamental to the process of phenomenological reduction and this search for greater knowledge is integral to the intention to better understand the subjectivity of how the young people experienced and made sense of Youth Work and subjective well-being.

In order to better understand the extent to which the community and structural elements of society impacted upon young people and their sense of well-being, different models were

considered - including Thompson's PCS Model (Thompson, 2006), and traditional features of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998).

Ecology involves the study of the interactive relationship between living things and their environment (Jary and Jary, 2000). There remain a number of limitations concerned with models which have been developed to study how social factors influence human development. The following passage will explore some of the criticisms of ecological systems theory which constitutes a key concept within the theoretical framework of the study.

The complexity of interaction between the subject and their environment can be summarised with a recognition that:

Every human being deals, in everyday life, with ecological reality's complexity in a relatively flexible and efficient, nonetheless also rather global, all embracing way — as superficially as possible, as thoroughly as necessary (Kaminski, 2005, p. 195).

One of the key ecological systems models developed was that of Urie Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The seminal work of Bronfenbrenner remains relevant in the field of social research and an adapted version of this model has provided a framework within which to explore the results of this study.

There are a number of limitations with Bronfenbrenner's original model, for example it has been criticised due to the difficulty in empirically testing every aspect of the model and also due to the extent of data necessary to build up a meaningful picture of individual lives. In addition, further difficulties include the need for appropriate research design, similarly,

the model has been criticised for its perceived weakness in the search for cross-case comparison. These limitations are referred to as “methodological gaps” relevant to the applicability of the model in different contexts (Partelow, 2018). However, while it is important to understand the limitations of key models used in this study, these methodological gaps do not impact on the conduct or results of the study. Rather, following the phenomenological method the study has used the model as a framework which has sought to aid understanding of the pure subjectivity of experiences of young people, exploring interpretations of their lived experiences, rather than a deterministic approach to identifying cause and effect relationships.

The adoption of the networked model (Watling Neal and Neal, 2013) rather than the more traditional nested model put forward by Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner, 1997) is a strength of this study as it allows for a more nuanced view of the interaction between the different levels of the cycles within the model. For example, the networked model more easily respects individual differences in development of two young people with equal resources where they may still have different developmental trajectories if one is motivated to succeed and persists in tasks and the other is not motivated and does not persist (Tudge et. al., 2009). The complexity of the interaction between the person and their environment or proximal processes have been described as the engine of personal development (Bronfenbrenner, 2006, p. 6).

It has been recognised that Bronfenbrenner continually developed the original model throughout his life (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998, Bronfenbrenner, 2005, Tudge et. al, 2009) and the subsequent development of the networked model adopted here shows a commitment on the part of the authors to continue this development (Watling Neal and

Neal, 2013). Ultimately, the networked model provides a robust theoretical framework within which to explore and conceptualise the results of this study.

The study has utilised the networked model to locate the superordinate or key themes and the sub-themes within each of the applicable nested systems (Watling Neal and Neal, 2013). The model provides a framework within which to examine the proximal processes of interaction between aspects of the context and the lives of individuals (Bronfenbrenner, 1997).

The fact that ecological systems continue to be utilised within social research demonstrates the value of the approach. A meta-analysis carried out in 2018 found that:

studies using Bronfenbrenner's ecological system concepts by clearly considering interactions between and within these systems can result in recommendations that are most useful for guiding public mental health policy and practice (Eriksson, Ghazinour and Hammerström, 2018, p. 414).

While the concepts first theorised by Bronfenbrenner undoubtedly have their limitations it is clear due to the continuing use and exploration and development of ecological systems, this approach to surveying the context in which people live and experience the world has value within the field of social research and policy development. The interrelationship between process, the person, their context and time is undoubtedly complex. The application of ecological systems as a key aspect of the theoretical framework of this study is an appropriate strategy. The model serves to clearly acknowledge and allows for the illustration of the results and how these results can be located within the social context of the young people who participated in the study. As a result, ecological systems are a key model within which to frame the findings of this study.

Youth Workers must understand the context of the lives of young people and ecological models provide an appropriate tool to enable this to be achieved. Youth Workers are concerned with the development of young people (CLD Scotland, 2019) and it is noted that development ecology as proposed by Bronfenbrenner focuses on development within a context. Specifically, that:

In order to understand the individual, it is not enough just to describe them in the context of their family (the micro context); we must also take into account how the various systems interact with the individual and with each other (the meso context). The macro system is then crucial for placing this analysis within the context of daily living (Christensen, 2016, p. 24).

Youth Work practice can benefit from such understanding. Bronfenbrenner regarded his initial ecological systems model as one to be developed, and latterly hypothesised a bioecological systems model which was based around the interaction between firstly; the person, secondly; their context; thirdly, the process of their involvement and lastly, of the passing of time. It has been proposed that it is the complex, holistic interaction of these processes, described as proximal processes which brings about human development (Ettetal and Mahoney, 2017).

After reviewing the traditional nested application of the ecological systems theory proposed by Bronfenbrenner, it was decided that the nature of the nested approach proposed by Bronfenbrenner offered too simplistic a model which does not adequately cater for individual life circumstances. It has also been recently noted that the approach put forward by Bronfenbrenner alienates the role and importance of the individual within their own social context (Elliot and Davis, 2018). Rather than utilise the traditional nested approach, after careful consideration, it was decided to draw on an adapted, or networked model of the ecological systems model (Watling Neal and Neal, 2013). This networked model provides greater potential for a more nuanced understanding which can enlighten

the researcher by providing a means of examining the individual circumstances young people find themselves in whereas Bronfenbrenner's original model represents a more fixed, uniform representation which relies on the interrelationship and interdependence of multilevel systems on individual development and minimises the influence of individual agency within lived experience. For example, due to the nature of social change, the services which may have been available face to face when the original model were being developed are, in some cases no longer available in that format. Therefore, the networked model proposed by Watling Neal and Neal (2013, p. 728) which is illustrated in Chapter 6 provides a contemporary model within which to consider the results of this study.

Authors have proposed that out-of-school research situated within a framework of ecological systems theory provides insight into how young people engage with activities, how other settings affect development in activities, and the role of broader society in development activities (Ettetal and Mahoney, 2017). This would suggest that research utilising ecological and ecological systems are an appropriate vehicle for exploring young people's experiences of Youth Work and the youth service as an ecological artefact which impacts on the lives of young people accessing such services.

Applying the nested model (Watling Neal and Neal, 2013) of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) has firstly enabled this study to plot a holistic understanding of the impacts of the social milieu upon the condition of young people as members of families; their communities and as members of Youth Work organisations. Secondly, the model enables an illustration of how elements of ecological systems can act upon the SWB of young people. These elements are illustrated in Figures 8 and 9 below.

The results of this study suggest that Youth Work, through its interactions with society, community, and individuals can have a strong protective effect in relation to the subjective

well-being of young people. As a result, the Youth Work sector might be in a position to build on these findings to make a case for this contribution. From a community and family perspective, it can be seen that there are social changes which have affected the communities within which young people live (Rose and McAuley, 2019). Young people regularly commented on the changes that were apparent to them in their own lives. Respondents often acknowledged the importance of their social context and that Youth Work had enabled them to develop a greater sense of well-being, this is supported by the following excerpt from an influential publication. It has been suggested that:

Most people want more income and strive for it. Yet as Western societies have got richer, their people have become no happier... But aren't our lives infinitely more comfortable? Indeed we have more food, more clothes, more cars, bigger houses, more central heating, more foreign holidays, a shorter working week, nicer work and, above all, better health. Yet we are not happier. Despite all the efforts of governments, teachers, doctors and businessmen, human happiness has not improved (Layard, 2005, p. 3).

Evidence suggests that policies adopted by British governments since the late 1970's have created results which have brought about a situation of dissatisfaction for many of our young people (Antonio, 2013; Pilkington, 2016). This dissatisfaction may, in part, stem from many young people being delayed in gaining fully adult status (Hendry and Kloep, 2010) as a result of changing social policy. The expression of a changing policy context have been summarised as 'massive tax cuts for the rich, the crushing of trade unions, deregulation, privatisation, outsourcing and competition in public services.' (Monbiot, 2016, np). These symptoms of neoliberalism have, arguably, influenced society for forty years and continue to influence aspects of modern life in the developed world. By extension, it could be argued that these influences stemming from the dominance of the unhampered economic market are having an undue impact upon young people. Young people growing up in this post-industrial context are, as a result of changes in policy experiencing low levels of well-being and participation in democratic life (Brown, Shoveller, Chabot and Lamontagne, 2013; Hart and Henn, 2017).

Youth Work has a stated purpose of encouraging young people to take part, to participate (LSIS, 2012) in public life. In the experience of the researcher, changes in Youth Work have been observed over thirty years. Youth Work was a pursuit which commonly sought to promote young people's participation in personal, social and educational activities, actively recognising and respecting wider communities cultures (Paulo, 2002, p. ii). As discussed on page 10 (above), Youth Work has increasingly become a pursuit which consolidates a corporate identity and approach as identified in current policy (WG, 2014). The outcome of this has been an increase in its ability to make a specialised contribution to current and developing social and economic agendas of the Welsh Government (Rose, 2018, p. 1). These changes represent a shift in emphasis for Youth Work policy, from one which respected and reflected the collective consciousness of the Youth Work sector which prized how young people felt and not just what they knew or what they could do (Paulo, 2002, p. ii) . Rather, in recent years Youth Work has become a pursuit with a much more limited capacity and intention to enhance the lives of young people by offering provision which has been arbitrarily redefined to meet more quantifiable or single-issue outcomes for young people (Rose, 2018, p. 1).

Throughout a career of over thirty years, the researcher has observed considerable change in the wake of a seismic shift in politics and social life manifest through the politics of Thatcherism, New Labour's third way, and Cameronism during the Conservative Liberal coalition and latterly the Conservative legislation in Westminster. Social changes have been consistently maintained through 'unities of ideology and policies that want to implement a particular model of society and for doing so, these are organised along three dimensions: the economy, politics, and culture' (Fuchs, 2016, p. 163). This period of ideological and political upheaval has brought with it rapid and widespread social change in these dimensions, also including a modification in the beliefs of subsequent generations,

particularly a shift towards more widespread conservative values among subsequent generations in the United Kingdom since the 1970's (Fuchs, 2016).

The resulting social shift to the right has echoed into policy and, it could be said, has influenced Youth Work practice considerably. It has been suggested that youth workers increasingly contribute to models of practice where young people are regarded as problematic and deficient (Vitus, 2016). These changes in understanding and practice have influenced and also been influenced, by:

New technologies, the welfare state and mass consumption, (which) have enabled more flexible, private and individualised lifestyles that enhance the potentials for freedom (of choice, activity, mobility), but at the same time cause insecurity by the deterioration of traditional communities.
(Fuchs, 2016, p. 167)

These changes, including the deterioration of traditional notions of community which have long acted as a source of considerable support and security for young people is one example of how succeeding generations of young people are increasingly disadvantaged through neoliberal policies. In Bronfenbrenner's terms, this is a symptom visible at the chronosystem level, that is, a significant, structural change over a period of time (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 1998).

2.4. What duty does society have to children, young people and families?

Many young people in Wales are arguably at a disadvantage as a result of neoliberalism, which has created societal values which compel individuals to become entrepreneurs in their own lives:

Neoliberal societies move from national government to public-private governance and entrepreneurial citizenship. Those who cannot compete - such as the homeless, the incarcerated, or the formerly incarcerated - are excluded from full citizenship, abandoned (Bockman, 2013, p. 15).

Some young people feel this abandonment strongly, which arguably compounds their experiences of vulnerability as a result of difficult lives lacking in appropriate levels of support. The strength and diversity of social institutions, and their capacity to support parents' and young people's lives have become disposable, consistent with neoliberal social conditions. For some young people, their lack of power is experienced more acutely by those whom capital does not regard as even worthy of exploitation due to a lack of material resources (Lavalette and Pratt, 2001, p. 61). It has been stated that:

whether children spend hours in the well-stocked children's area at the library, go on a family camping trip sponsored by the parks department, or play chess and basketball at the local recreation center, what and how they learn depends on the community's commitment to supporting children and families (Koralek, 2007, p. 10).

This position represents some of the underlying questions being opened out through this study, particularly to consider the commitment civil society in Wales has to young people, in this case, through Youth Work. This includes the extent to which civil society invests in youth services. Importantly, how this commitment is experienced by young people and then how this experience impacts on their sense of subjective well-being is anticipated to be a significant factor in the study. One of the more visible manifestations of this commitment is seen in the extent of the support made available to local youth services. Evidence shows that the financial commitment of local authorities to Youth Work has

diminished by 30% as a result of fiscal austerity within local government between 2011 and 2017 (Welsh Government, 2018).

In relation to the interface between society through social welfare organisations and young people, a growing focus on self-interest and the pursuit of profit have overcome and commodified the previous inherently social relationships between organisations and individuals (Hartas, 2014, p. 14). This can be regarded as a result of the maturation of neoliberalism, into 'late neoliberalism' which has recently been noted as sustaining and reproducing familiar patterns of domination (McGimpsey, 2017). Adopting a critical stance, over recent years it can be observed how Youth Work has contributed to the continuation of ideologies of domination, responding to the climate of neoliberalism (Principal Youth Officers Group, no date; Welsh Government, 2017, 2018), rather than adopting a more radical and challenging approach to these financial cuts. A more radical approach to budget reductions would seek to champion Youth Work and at the same time respect the rights and perspectives of young people as an increasingly disregarded group within the process of local authority budget setting outside of formal education.

It has been argued that the radical tradition within Youth Work has been undermined as part of a broader system of social change, and that firstly, 'strong anti-trade union laws designed to weaken our self-confidence and to convince us that working together - collective action - would not be successful' (Jeffs, 2013, p 2) and secondly, that the:

reigning in of local democracy, so that the councils and the local elected bodies that we work with and in a sense, work against, had their powers stripped from them. The ability to set budgets, the ability to determine policy, to manage schools, to manage social services, in any real sense - these were taken from them (Jeffs, 2013, p. 2).

Results from this study support the notion that the outcomes from these social changes demonstrate a lack of regard for young people as a by-product of neoliberal processes.

There is evidence that this reduction in funding has contributed to a deterioration of the condition of many young people in Wales. For example as a direct result of a reduction in funding there were 31,000 (25%) less young people involved in the maintained youth service in 2017 than there were in 2011-12 (Welsh Government, 2012, 2018). These are 31,000 young people who are missing out on a particular form of support during a very important part of their lives. A significant minority of young people are marginalised due to the lack of resources with which they can function within an increasingly individualised society. These cuts and refocusing of services have left tens of thousands of young people experiencing lives which compound feelings of hopelessness leading to higher levels of anxiety and distress (Public Health Wales, 2017).

The fact is that the proportion of 15/16 year olds reporting that they frequently feel anxious or depressed has doubled in the last 30 years, from one in thirty to two in thirty for boys and from one in ten to two in ten for girls (Nuffield Foundation, 2012). One in five long term unemployed young people feel they have nothing to live for, one in four long term unemployed young people have been prescribed antidepressants, one in four long term unemployed young people have self-harmed, and 'Poor mental health' is positively associated with the probability of being 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET) (Cornaglia, Crivello and McNally, 2012, p. 11). It is suggested that something is happening in our society which is impacting on the lives of many young people and, that all this despite apparent material progress 'real GDP in the UK has typically increased every year, the UK economy experienced sixteen consecutive years of growth before output fell in 2008' (Office for National Statistics, 2015).

The subsequent economic downturn in the United Kingdom which began in 2008 harkened the instigation of a process of fiscal austerity which has seen young people and Youth Work disadvantaged as a result. Fiscal austerity has promoted a minimal state, which, it

has been suggested, protects private property, seeks to maintain order, and provides only limited protection for the poor (Bockman, 2015, p. 14). This process has been associated with ‘a manic drive to abandon publicly funded services’ (In Defence of Youth Work, 2011, p. 9). Neoliberalism has been described as being:

grounded in the assumption that governments cannot create economic growth or provide social welfare; rather, by trying to help, governments make the world worse for everyone, including the poor. Instead, private companies, private individuals, and, most importantly, unhindered markets are best able to generate economic growth and social welfare (Bockman, 2013, p. 15).

These financial challenges pose concerns for the youth work sector with its stated commitment to the principles and values of Youth Work (Standing Conference for Youth Work in Wales, 2014). The values which underpin Youth Work also inform the conduct of this study. These values have been arranged under the following themes: Participation and active involvement; Equity, diversity and inclusion; Partnership with young people and others, and Personal, social and political development (Learning and Skills Improvement Service, 2012, CLD Scotland, 2019). These values have had a considerable influence on the thinking underpinning this study (for a full list of these stated values See Appendix 1). While these clear values have been established at a United Kingdom level and as a result enjoy considerable support within the sector, the principles of Youth Work are distinctive within each of the home countries and Ireland. Within Wales, the characteristics underpinning Youth Work are highlighted on page 11 (above).

Youth Work and youth workers are guided by and not restricted by values and certainly not removed from the realities of everyday discourse within our society. Youth workers are subject to the very same influences as society as a whole and are subject to the effects of the dominant ideology that seeks to legitimise taken for granted assumptions about society (Kennedy, 2014, n.p.). As has been concluded – these neoliberal policies are the

politics of scaremongering and individual blaming and may be partly responsible for diverting thinking from real social problems: the creation of a generation of wasted and disposable young people on the one hand, and ‘a generation of battery children on the other, morphed and produced by hyper parenting, inequality and the havoc that neoliberalism has wrecked on society and its institutions’ (Hartas, 2014, p. 67). The social conditions created by neoliberalism are having a considerable effect on the well-being and happiness of many of young people in Wales. This study has sought to discover more about well-being and how it is experienced by young people in Wales through their involvement in Youth Work.

2.5. What is Well-being

There are two main approaches to research in the well-being of populations, these can be generally described as objective and subjective measurement (Fischer, 2009). The approach favoured in this study is that of subjective assessment (Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi, 2009), which seeks to understand the multifaceted phenomenon of well-being and how it changes over time for young people (Hicks, Newton, Haynes, and Evans, 2011). The methodology of the study has allowed for young people to give voice to their own lived experiences during the phenomenological interpretive process (Smith Flowers and Larkin, 2012). This strategy has allowed the interviewees to explore their experiences and their issues in depth and to recall examples of their early lives and of Youth Work which have been most significant to them. This approach epitomises my ontological stance in relation to well-being, in this assessment, if the form of well-being in which I have become interested actually exists, it exists in the minds of the individual subjects and in their lived experiences, an approach to understanding the phenomenon described as idealistic (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard and Snape, 2014). This very idealism has enabled the phenomenological method to draw out the lived experiences of the young people involved in the study, enabling them to explore and interpret their own experiences which are central to their experiencing of subjective well-being. While it has been proposed that both objective and subjective measures of well-being are useful (Fischer, 2009; Hicks, Newton, Haynes, and Evans, 2011), this may be the case at a macro level. However, this study has been particularly occupied in studying subjective well-being at the very local and individual level, enabling the exploration of the minutiae of individual lives. A central tenet of this interpretive approach is concerned with ‘examining how a phenomenon appears, and the analyst is implicated in facilitating and making sense of this appearance’ (Smith et al, 2009, p. 28).

In order to return to the things themselves, to draw out the essence of being a young person benefitting from Youth Work in Wales, to make sense of their experiences, I set out to look for aspects of life that the participants had in common, whether that be in their childhoods, their experiences within Youth Work and their descriptions and reflections of what and how they have benefited from Youth Work, exploring their lived experience within their natural, individual and community context.

There is much quantitative evidence of the condition of the young people of Wales (Moore et al, 2018; Welsh Government, 2008; Welsh Government, 2011; Mylona, 2015). In

Wales there are approximately:

- 97,500 lone-parent households with dependent children (out of a total of 1.34M, StatsWales, 2014)
- 28,600 children and young people providing unpaid care, of which 3,500 are providing unpaid care for more than 50 hours per week
- 70,300 pupils eligible for free school meals
- 36% of 5-14 year olds participate in activity for one hour or more each day
- 37% of 16-24 year olds undertake 30 minutes of vigorous activity five or more times a week
- Teenage conception rates in Wales are higher in those aged under 18 compared to England
- 30% of males and 27% of females aged 11-16 years report being bullied in the last couple of months (Price et. al. 2013)

However, rather than relying on these objective measures of well-being, which I have described in the literature review as proxy measures, I reiterate that I am more interested in the inherently subjective lived experiences of young people themselves. This highlights a fundamental gap in knowledge which this study has addressed, producing clear, empirical data to illustrate how young people themselves are able to understand their subjective well-being. In this study a statistical, objectivist approach to the topic of SWB is ontologically unsatisfactory. Statistics represent largely unsatisfactory attempts to describe phenomena which are beyond superficial description through numerical data. Part of the ontological

rationale underpinning this assumption is that while there are a plethora of statistics which quantify these social measures, the existence of this information has been of little benefit to young people themselves. For example, data on the extent of physical inactivity exists while increases in physical activity remains inconsistent, bullying still exists, young people are still relied on to care for others. All these statistics are known to society but the phenomena persist and as a result, these factors impact on the subjective well-being of young people.

What is apparent is that society is attempting to create responses to social problems of its own making, for example, as long as the production of food and the use of leisure time are regarded as opportunities to maximise profit for private companies, against a back drop of de-regulation, over-consumption of food (food equals calories) and insufficient physical activity as a perhaps unintended result of screen based leisure pursuits, an energy imbalance is commonly achieved (Mcaloney, Graham, Hall, Law, Platt, and Wardle, 2012). This energy imbalance can easily result in overweight and obesity among young people which can culminate in negative ideation and the establishment of an unhelpful cycle of beliefs and behaviours. Latest data on annual costs to the National Health Service in Wales in 2017 for the treatment of avoidable illnesses associated with physical inactivity are estimated at £35,000,000 per annum (Public Health Wales, 2017). As a response, the role of Youth Work can be seen to create opportunities for young people who are for example, overweight to become involved in informal physical activity programmes and incidentally, establish a more healthy energy balance.

I am of the view that what is needed to bring about this situation is a radical approach, in addition to inherently targeted programmes (reducing criminality, enhancing well-being, increasing physical activity are just some examples of targeted Youth Work programmes), Youth Work can champion the creation of ecological systems which welcome young

people to take part, to take up transformational opportunities which give hope and reduce offending, which routinely encourage young people to take more physical activity, to develop more of a disposition which encourages a sense of happiness, of life satisfaction and meaning (OECD, 2013). Rather than adopting a radical approach to youth and community work to help bolster healthy communities which are capable of enabling young people to flourish, it appears that the youth service has become more conservative during the phase of late neoliberalism and more and more regards itself as a quasi-social service, claiming a role which contributes to a Youth Engagement and Progression Framework in Wales where it has been suggested Youth Workers are ideal 'lead workers', two of the roles of this lead worker have included: identifying young people most at risk of disengagement, and secondly, enabling stronger tracking of transitions of young people through the system (Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), no date). Rather than contribute to the creation of healthy communities, this policy position contributes to the deficit view of young people and the dilution of Youth Work and its principles and values discussed in this literature review.

2.6. Pressures on the Youth Service in the 21st Century

The increasing focus on individualising services is at odds with a more traditional approach to Youth Work stemming from a commitment to a clear and defined set of values discussed above (Learning and Skills Improvement Service, 2012, CLD Scotland, 2019).

What this change of focus is at risk of achieving is perhaps unknowingly limiting a valuable form of non-formal learning with a clear history, sound purpose and principles to a superficial bureaucracy which thrives on and lives for ‘the simplistic number crunching and tick boxing’ which has lately come to dominate much of youth work (Davies, 2011, p. 24).

It has been suggested that the business of Youth Work has become almost perversely driven by profit, that ‘During the last two decades driven by an increasing desperation for income their business has become touting for business’ and that ‘gradually financial imperatives have leached out educational ones’ (Jefferies, 2011, p. 6). This view could be seen to be the result of perhaps, where Youth Work has been recently - particularly that what is needed to gain some political sway is ‘principled pragmatism’ as opposed to a reliance on technocracy or romanticism (Wylie, 2010, p. 3). What is becoming apparent is that there appears to be a pursuit underway within Youth Work policy where policy makers dictate action resulting in specific measurable outcomes. However, it must be noted that there are pockets of resistance to encroaching bureaucratisation, and that:

This (neoliberal) agenda is opposed to the values of youth work, that the social policy shift from state supported youth services is a neoliberal marketisation of provision based on competition for scarce resources in which the most vulnerable, difficult to engage and challenging will be excluded, as organisations focus on their ‘business and income generation’ rather than individuals and communities (Kennedy, 2014, np).

2.7. Youth Work policy in Wales – Organisational and Policy Context

This section of the literature review will outline the boundaries of the youth work policy context under review, from the turn of the century to the present time in Wales. This review includes the adoption of the most recent National Occupational Standards for Youth Work which apply in Wales and across the four home nations (Community Learning and Development Scotland, 2019), the review of the Extending Entitlement agenda which is particular to Wales (Jervis, 2018), the early work of the Interim Youth Work Board including the development of the latest national strategy for Youth Work in Wales (Welsh Government, 2019a).

Extending Entitlement was the key policy document for services for young people in Wales, launched by the National Assembly for Wales in 2000, its intention was to establish a joined-up framework for supporting Young People in Wales, with an understanding that youth work was regarded as having a key role (National Assembly for Wales, 2000). It was this document that set out the principles upon which future services for young people be based across Wales after devolution. It is beyond the scope of this literature review to explore the subsequent progress of this flagship policy, although a comprehensive review has recently been carried out (Jervis, 2018).

A further important policy document entitled Youth Work in Wales, Principles and Purposes has the stated intention to provide guidance on the boundaries of youth work in Wales which was developed on a collaborative basis by representatives of the voluntary and local authority youth work sectors in Wales and with the Education Workforce Council (CWVYS, 2018).

The Education Workforce Council has taken on a role of providing a registration system for youth workers and youth support workers in Wales, 'if they currently work, or intend to work as a person who provides youth development services for or on behalf of a local authority, school, Further Education institution or voluntary organisation in Wales' (Education Workforce Council, no date, no page). The Education Workforce Council (EWC) describes itself as 'the independent regulator for the education workforce in Wales, covering teachers and learning support staff in school and further education settings, qualified youth/youth support workers and work-based learning practitioners' (EWC, no date, no page). This registration system is a further example of the distinctive nature of youth work in Wales and how it differs from other nations of the UK. A timeline of the diversification of the youth services of Wales and England have been described elsewhere (Rose, 1997a, 1997b, 2017).

The purpose of youth work in Wales is further defined within a number of key strategic documents including the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work (Community Learning and Development Standards Scotland, 2019) which of course ensures a level of standardisation across the UK. Specifically, the aims and intentions of youth work in Wales are detailed within the National Youth Work Strategy for Wales (Welsh Government, 2019a).

The 2019 national youth work strategy for Wales explicitly sets out the contribution of youth work to wider means of working with young people, echoing the vision of the earlier

Extending Entitlement policy, with a vision where ‘all young people are thriving, with access to opportunities and experiences, in Welsh and English, which provide enjoyment and enrich their personal development through youth work approaches’ (Welsh Government, 2019a, p. 9). This vision is laudable but is somewhat contradicted by recent financial support for the youth service in Wales.

Welsh Government, through its Interim Youth Work Board have developed a national implementation plan for the most recent Youth Work Strategy for Wales, which sets out:

to reform youth work in Wales, with the intention to: establish a new way of working that reflects the strength of the youth work approach – empowering, educative, participative, inclusive and expressive; to establish mechanisms for capturing the sector’s voice and ensuring participation; to not lose sight of what is already good about youth work in Wales and to share and build on that; and also to ensure there are resources and a scaffolding of support to allow young people, youth workers, and organisations to participate in the development and delivery of actions that will implement the vision, aims and commitments made in the strategy (Welsh Government, 2019b, p. 2).

In addition to this broad intention, the implementation plan also suggests a widespread commitment across the youth work sector in Wales to contribute to a nation where:

- Young people are thriving
- Youth work is accessible and inclusive
- Voluntary and paid professional youth work staff are supported throughout their careers to improve their practice
- Youth work is valued and understood, built on a
- A sustainable model for youth work delivery (Welsh Government, 2019b, p. 4).

The previous national strategy for Youth Work in Wales, published by the Welsh Government in 2014 intended to ‘support young people to develop life skills and resilience’ and ‘support open access youth provision’ while also ‘supporting targeted youth provision’ and ‘supporting a strategic interface between Youth Work and formal education’ while ‘supporting effective collaboration between voluntary and statutory youth work organisations’ (Welsh Government, 2014, p. 8ff). In terms of stated policy intentions

these helped provide guidance on what work the youth service should ideally be engaging in strategically in recent times. Welsh Government have considered what it would like young people to achieve through their involvement in Youth Work, desired outcomes of Youth Work being:

- young people across Wales continue to have access to diverse informal and non-formal learning opportunities that stretch horizons, challenge their thinking, and develop their skills;
- a strengthening of the strategic relationship between Youth Work organisations and formal education on a national basis;
- a better coordinated and more consistent youth work offer to young people from youth work organisations in the statutory and voluntary sector, and lastly, the service
- must secure a robust evidence base, capturing the outcomes and impact of youth work provision.

The 2014 strategy also set out the aspiration that ‘this approach is necessary both to underpin the strategic positioning of the sector and to inform future investment decisions’ (Welsh Government, 2014, p. 3). The fieldwork was carried out and the data for this study was gathered within the policy context stemming from this 2014 national strategy.

Prior to the economic downturn the Welsh context had been regarded as being in the vanguard of policy making for children and young people, with a distinctly made in Wales approach. It was noted that:

There has been a clear emphasis on children’s rights and wellbeing in Welsh political discourse and Assembly Government policy has increasingly diverged from the approach taken by the Westminster Government as far as a rights-based agenda is concerned. Despite a commitment to ensuring that rights-based entitlements exist at a policy level, the current reality of some children’s experience falls short of what they could expect (National Assembly for Wales, 2007, p. 1).

The context for this study is therefore framed by a particular view of youth work and social change, that a shift in social policy making in Wales and the vision of creating services which are universal is fine in principle. However, the delivery of this vision of services for

all is being increasingly hampered by decision making based upon principles of fiscal austerity and increased marketization of public services which can result in increased strain on families (Hallam Centre for Community Justice, 2006; Turner, 2015), communities and young people in Wales. This approach is evident within the current National Youth Work Strategy, evidenced by a phased implementation approach, a commitment to delivery, to evidence collection and implementation (Welsh Government, 2019b).

This study has sought to complement the intention of the youth work sector to develop approaches to gathering quantitative data on the impact of youth work on the lived experience of young people (Welsh Government, 2017). Very specifically to hear young people's experiences of growing up in a society where they are faced with challenging times and uncertain futures and their first hand experiences of Youth Work and how this experience has impacted upon their subjective well-being. This concern to better understand young people's subjective well-being is at the heart of this study and is what has driven the development of the study's key research questions.

2.8. Research Questions Arising

The questions explored within the study are increasingly relevant to concerns of young people and wanting to develop new knowledge of the role of Youth Work in enhancing subjective well-being. The overarching research questions I intended to explore within the study, concerning subjective well-being of young people, were:

- What are the meanings of Youth Work to young people?
- What are the underlying themes and contexts which account for this view of Youth Work?
- What are the universal structures that precipitate feelings and thoughts about well-being through Youth Work?
- What are the invariant structural themes that facilitate a description of well-being as it is experienced by young people?

Listening to the stories of young people is important, giving them time and showing they are valued, as has been noted: ‘incorporating the perspectives of adolescents in diverse communities, is an essential component for authentic research.. especially perspectives from underrepresented and marginalized communities’ (Cunningham and Rious, 2015, p. 86).

Further exploration of the investment position in youth services in Wales, drawing on data from Statistics for Wales shows quite clearly in recent years there has been a reduction in funding to the youth service across Wales by some 27 per cent in the five years between 2011 and 2016 (Welsh Government, 2017). During this time, anecdotal evidence suggests that there has been a shift in delivery from universal, often mistakenly regarded as ‘traditional’ but universal provision to a more targeted offer. This drift has been largely driven by the national Youth Work strategy which envisages ‘targeted youth work being embedded in how partners work to support positive outcomes for young people’ (Welsh Government, 2014, p. 2), and that ‘targeted youth work provision has an important contribution to make in supporting young people to succeed’ (WG, 2014, p. 9).

Government has also stated that ‘to ensure better outcomes for young people it is imperative that targeted youth work provision is developed and delivered in ways that support strong and efficient connections’ (WG, 2014, p. 9).

The national strategy also offers local planners the opportunity to use data, to draw on the evidence to plan their offer locally, by finding ‘the appropriate balance between open access and targeted provision (which) should be determined based on the needs of young people at local level, evidence of impact, and the resources available’ (Welsh Government, 2014, p. 10). The challenge for the youth service locally and nationally remains, how best can the service use this freedom and power to draw on the strengths available in its core

work to ameliorate some of the troubling issues such as obesity and ill-being which are currently impacting upon young people in Wales.

A recent review of the national Youth Work strategy for Wales found that ‘Funding mechanisms to secure the strategy’s commitment to, and provision of, open access are weak. The strategy has therefore not prevented cuts to open access services provided by local authorities or to grant funding for the Voluntary Sector to provide such services’ and also, that ‘The strategy focuses too much on targeted provision, provision in schools and links to formal education’ (Wrexham Glyndwr University, 2017, p. 11).

The results of this study suggest that Youth Work can have a protective effect in relation to some of the issues which are impacting on the lives of young people, and that targeted work with individuals has its place and also that Youth Work based on well-established principles and values has considerable value to young people and communities.

2.9. Scant Research Concerning Youth Work and Subjective Well-Being

As indicated in the critical review of the literature, there is scant empirically based research available which addresses the role Youth Work can have in the subjective well-being of young people.

Much of the published research underpinning Youth Work is based upon theoretical and philosophical exploration rather than evidence derived from empirical research, although there are notable exceptions (Dickson, Vigurs, and Newman, 2013). This study contributes new knowledge, real and meaningful data concerning Youth Work and the subjective well-being of young people in Wales. This knowledge has been generated through empirical means to aid understanding of exactly how Youth Work can impact the subjective well-being of young people.

The study draws on what young people interviewed had to say regarding their experiences of Youth Work and how this, in their own words, impacted upon their subjective well-being. The study has used the phenomenological method, a method which understands reality as being appreciable through human understanding of the meanings subjects ascribe to phenomena (Smith, Flowers and Larkin 2012). The phenomenological method has proven an ideal method to discover what young people regard as the invariable structures which underpin subjective well-being. The next section of the thesis considers the limitations of the study.

2.10. Limitations of the research

It was apparent to the researcher that the phenomenological method adopted in this study has a number of potential limitations.

The study relies on the ability of young people to express both the thoughts and feelings associated with Youth Work and subjective well-being in some depth.

The researcher is central to the interpretive phenomenological method, the researcher at all times needs to be cognisant of bias and assumption making.

The production of statistical data is not the intention of the study. The underpinning paradigm and process of phenomenology, seeks truth in qualitative data and a subjective assessment of results. A distinctive feature of the phenomenological method is its commitment to the detailed analysis of personal experience.

The early years and lived experience of the researcher have influenced his perspective of growing up in a community associated with heavy industry, of a significant political and social struggle during his adolescence and experience of then seeing social change such as fewer employment opportunities, increasing levels of ill-health and child poverty against a backdrop of increasing inequality across the country.

The study has acknowledged a dearth of published research into the practice of Youth Work in Wales. As a result, the researcher has drawn on published research available from across the United Kingdom and in some cases, further afield.

Much of the available research sprang from a clinical, problem oriented perspective, targeted, often positivistic and not universal in its approach, focusing for example on young people in care, young people who are ill, young people who have addiction issues. There was very little research available which emerged from a strengths based, redistributive paradigm. This view is summed up effectively, that ‘Too often, embedded assumptions about childhood and the problems, needs, and interests of young people go unexamined in both research and practice regarding child welfare, juvenile justice, children's mental health, education, and youth advocacy’ (Finn, Nybell, and Shook, 2013, p. 1160).

Many of the settings in which young people were interviewed were going through a period of change as a result of policy drivers and the significant impact of years of public sector fiscal austerity. The impact of this was apparent in both the maintained and the voluntary sector, specifically, that ‘research identified that stakeholders within the voluntary sector appreciate the realities of a very difficult financial climate within the broader public sector’ (Williams, 2016, p. 6).

Invitations to take part in the research were distributed through a system of gatekeepers, while the youth service in Wales is diverse there may have been Youth Work environments which, if given the opportunity would like to have taken part but perhaps were not provided with the opportunity.

The study was limited in its scope, including interviewing young people from different types of communities consistent with the methodological positioning of the study and ontological position of the researcher.

The number of interviews were consistent with the phenomenological research frame, young people are not one lumpen mass but heterogeneous members of society.

The young people interviewed were all over 16 years of age, this will have provided them enough time to have had experience of Youth Work and arguably, to maximise the chance for them to be able to engage with the research and to reflect with maturity. Young people aged under 16 may have had alternative experiences.

However, despite these potential limitations, it is believed that the study has discovered robust evidence which will be of help to: policy makers, nationally and locally in the voluntary and maintained Youth Work sector; and youth workers and others working with young people in Wales and particularly those with a concern for the subjective well-being and happiness of young people.

The study is also underpinned by a belief that the findings will make a contribution to future practice delivered in Wales by: providing empirical evidence on the impact of Youth Work; ensuring that the practice and impact of Youth Work is better understood by practitioners and policy makers; and by providing a foundation for future research, policy and practice in relation to the role of Youth Work in enhancing the subjective well-being of young people in Wales.

The phenomenological method is an effective means of pursuing the aim of the study. Phenomenology is a qualitative research approach, qualitative approaches have been defined as ‘a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of interpretive material practices that makes the world visible’ (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p. 3). The empirical approach of this study has been used to generate evidence of what young

people themselves have said about Youth Work and how that understanding has acted on their subjective well-being.

Experience has consistently indicated there is the perception of a lack of an evidence base for the social value of Youth Work, this traditional position has been a weakness and, it could be argued, has consistently hampered what might be termed the strategic development of the youth service in Wales. It could be argued that as a result of this perceived lack of evidence, stakeholders have sought to influence Youth Work to contribute to policy initiatives which might not have been part of its core business. The recent national Youth Work strategies have attempted to set out targets for youth services in Wales (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007, Welsh Government, 2014) and despite this clear articulation of what the government and stakeholders have agreed Youth Work should contribute to, there has been a trend for the youth service to drift in to other areas. This has been described previously as ‘government preferred work’ (Rose, 2006, p. 167).

A recent metanalysis of the impact of Youth Work concluded that Youth Work requires better evidence to underpin its design and delivery and that this can be achieved by choosing appropriate study designs for assessing the impact and delivery of Youth Work (Dickson, Vigurs, and Newman, 2013). Despite this, a number of Welsh Government policies which seek to influence the sector to pursue, and evidence, outcomes which are identified in consultation with the sector (Welsh Government, 2013, 2014) have been put forward. It is hoped that the results of this study will provide policy makers and practitioners with evidence of the discrete aspects of Youth Work that have been shown to act on the subjective well-being of the wide variety of young people involved in the study. These young people hailed from diverse communities across Wales, from urban, rural and former industrial communities, their common experience was one of involvement with a particular form of work based upon a clearly articulated purpose, principle and values.

The introductory chapter sets out the topic and focus of the study, my perspective and the motivation for the research and how this is located within the broader ecological system. The thesis contains a clear illustration of the research setting and the overall data collection strategy. The critical review of the literature of Youth Work and a critical consideration of well-being and subjective well-being has provided a conceptual framework within which the research is situated. The thesis continues with chapter 3 exploring the methodology and chapter 4 setting out the methods adopted in the study. Chapter 5 presents the data which culminates in an extensive and critical discussion of the findings of the study and concludes with clear recommendations for future policy and practice. Chapter 6 contains a critical discussion and analysis of the findings of the study.

The next section of the thesis contains a critical exploration of the literature of Youth Work and well-being as it applies to the study.

2.11. Critical Review of the Literature

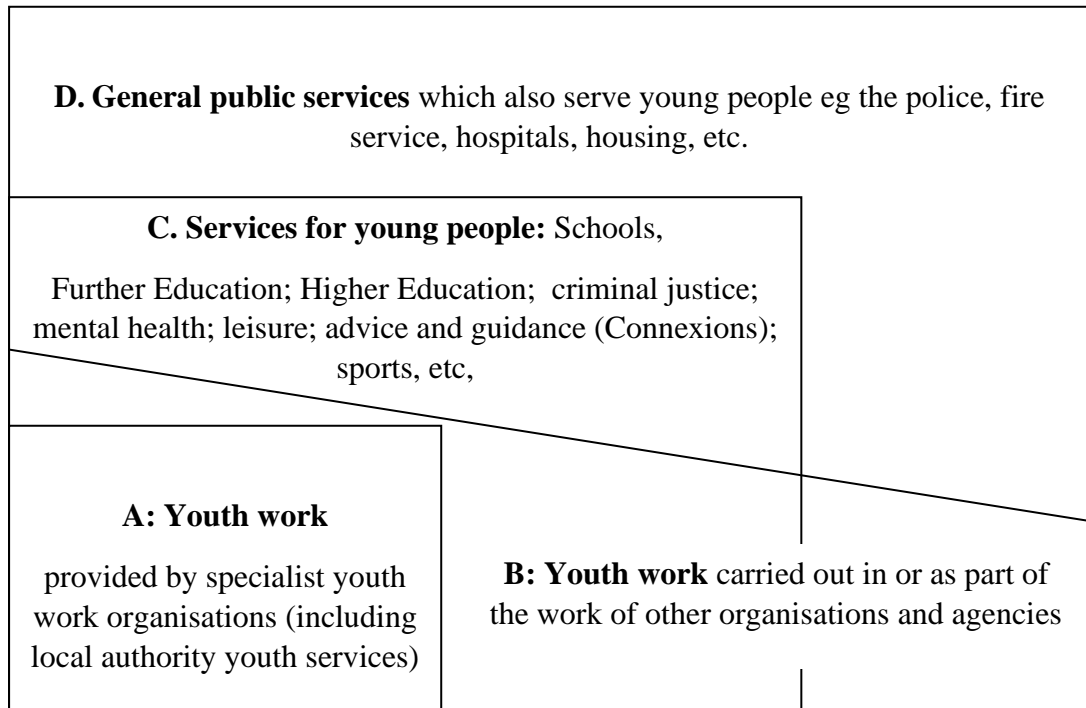
In order to appreciate the context of the research it is necessary to explore Youth Work. The meaning of the term Youth Work is contested; contested in the sense that it is subject to internal and external challenges and that Youth Work is often disputed in terms of its aims, its process and indeed the benefits it brings to young people and the communities they are members of. Questions have been raised regarding whether it is possible for those involved in the delivery of Youth Work to agree on its meaning (Davies, 2010, p. 1). This confusion may originate as a result of the stated intention of Youth Work to be universal, resulting in a situation where its proponents, those occupying the vanguard have long laid claim that it exists for all young people. If one adheres to the policy which sets out to offer something to all young people it is no wonder that differing interpretations of what might be good Youth Work have come to be championed. Arguably, this championing of the universal principle may result in an opening the floodgate of confusion challenge and dispute. This apparent confusion exists despite the production of two National Youth Service Strategies for Wales (WAG, 2007, Welsh Government, 2014) that clearly define the key characteristics of Youth Work. In addition to National Strategy there exists a range of other documents which set out the cornerstones of Youth Work and these include the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work (LSIS, 2012, CLD Scotland, 2019). Both of these policy documents identify the Youth Service as having both a defined ‘purpose’ and a set of associated ‘principles’ and ‘values’ which define its purpose.

Far from being elusive and difficult to define, Youth Work also has a history from which clarity can be gained through the identification of a range of characteristics that are readily accepted (Paulo, 2002; LLUK, 2008; LSIS, 2012). Regrettably, these characteristics have little effect in enabling the creation of an agenda upon which the Youth Work diaspora can consistently agree. These characteristics include for example an emphasis on young people taking part in the work voluntarily, the work being young person focused as opposed to

responding to contemporary moral panics, and the form of work being pursued with young people of a specific age range along with a commitment to anti discriminatory practice (WG, 2007). Another consistent is education although education contained within such difficult to define terms as social education or personal education (LSIS, 2012). These are characteristics of the work, the context within which this work is carried out is varied and exists within what is known as the voluntary sector and the maintained, or statutory sector.

It has been argued that there is often confusion between Youth Work and youth services (Payne, 2009, p. 213). For the purposes of this study I am more concerned with Youth Work as a human pursuit rather than youth services which are merely a structure built by human beings through which this pursuit is translated and delivered. Having said that I would agree with Payne when he states that in the UK Youth Work is regarded as a form of work which is identified with, or at least... embodied by, what youth services and (some) youth organisations do – typified and perhaps defined by – traditional open access forms of the work with young people in their leisure time (Payne, 2009, p. 220). This interrelationship has been illustrated, included at Figure 1 which depicts the place of Youth Work in organisations which provide specific and more general services for young people.

Figure 1. Location of Youth Work



Wylie, T (2003) *The NYA Guide to Youth Work and Youth Services*, Leicester, National Youth Agency.

Other sources have suggested that state-sponsored Youth Work has lost its way. Rather than maintaining a commitment to clear principles and values it has become bureaucratized, targeted on specific problems facing young people and complicit in the erosion of the rights of young people while at the same time seeing innovation, creativity and imaginative approaches being continuously diminished (Smith, 2007).

However the fact remains I am concerned here with an exploration of a form of work rather than organisations. If one were to use a management approach to addressing this question I would suggest I am primarily interested with questions of shared vision and strategy more than for example structures, systems or the skills (Peters and Waterman, 1982) needed to successfully carry out the work.

Any researcher exploring Youth Work must begin to question how to scope out the margins of the study. I am keen to understand further the extent to which the question ‘what is Youth Work’ can be most satisfactorily addressed. Further research is required to better understand Youth Work, for example through a discussion focusing on ethical codes, processes and standards, an exploration of defined principles or on the outcomes the work purports to achieve or a combination of these elements. The debate about Youth Work and its purpose and how this debate influences Youth Work in Wales has been explored by Rose (2006) in his work researching the maintained Youth Service in Wales. The situation in Wales is no different to that in England where it has been noted that:

The difficulty with normative definitions of youth work, whether they are contained in present day policy documents (e.g. Transforming Youth Work), policies of a golden age (e.g. Albemarle), or key principles (e.g. free association) is that they are neither theoretically or practically satisfactory (Davies, no date, p. 2).

When beginning to describe what the work consists of one is confronted with a dilemma in agreeing satisfactorily how to define parameters with any value. It has been noted (Williamson, 2010) that actors significant in Youth Work in Wales have spent lifetimes debating these boundaries. This continuing debate serves to have become embedded in Youth Work culture, confounding the development of a shared model of practice across the sector. During the time of writing this situation appears to be continuing and even escalating. One example of this escalation, where the constituency failed to grasp the importance of well-established purpose and principles of Youth Work in Wales and as a result have appeared eager to renegotiate fundamental aspects of Youth Work policy (Standing Conference for Youth Work in Wales, (SCYWW) 2007). This renegotiation has been carried out despite the purpose of Youth Work being clearly articulated within the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work (LSIS, 2012) and the principles of Youth Work being clearly articulated in a number of sources including the National Youth Service Strategy for Wales (WAG, 2007).

One of the questions which might be asked of those with a strategic responsibility for Youth Work in Wales is why they feel there is a lack of clarity of purpose or principle, this is one of a number of questions considered elsewhere (Williams, 2013). One reason could be that those with a strategic responsibility for the youth service have rather than a calling to Youth Work purpose and principles or to the good of young people rather have a stronger calling to a bureaucratising and managerialist approach. This managerialist approach is illustrated by New Public Management, which has influenced education significantly in recent years, taking management logics from the private to the public sector (Anderson and Herr, 2015). One must acknowledge though the factors which might contribute to this perspective. Davies and Merton have acknowledged that (in England) ‘For youth workers, government policies have far too readily adopted a deficit model of young people’ (Davies and Merton, 2009, p. 7).

One longstanding concern of youth service managers in Wales has been the perceived need for measurable, national standards, this concern again reflects a preoccupation with notions of professionalisation, as has been noted above, this smacks of the adoption of private sector mechanics outlined above. As state sponsored Youth Work has lost its way it has been argued that secularisation and professionalisation has cut links with many of the ideals and practices of the social and religious movements, as a result of a ‘new professionalising’ and that this has resulted in a visibly different form of practice (Hart, 2015, p. 43). It can reasonably be claimed, this new professionalising approach is clearly concerned with the management and control of young people. While on one hand measurable standards which include targets for investment of public money are a worthwhile aim within the corporate bodies charged with delivering the youth service it could be argued that the culture which promotes this approach does little to foster innovation, creativity and responsiveness to the needs of young people. This new professionalising is at risk of achieving albeit perhaps unknowingly is limiting a valuable

form of non-formal learning with a clear history, sound purpose and principles to a bureaucracy which thrives on and lives for ‘the simplistic number crunching and tick boxing’ which has lately come to dominate much of Youth Work (Davies, 2011, p. 24). It has been suggested that the business of Youth Work has become almost perversely driven by profit, and that ‘During the last two decades driven by an increasing desperation for income their business has become touting for business’ and that ‘gradually financial imperatives have leached out educational ones’ (Jeffs, 2011, p. 6). This view could be seen to be the result of perhaps where Youth Work is currently – that what is needed to gain some political sway is ‘principled pragmatism’ as opposed to technocracy or romanticism (Wylie, 2010, p. 3). What is becoming apparent is that there appears to be a pursuit underway within Youth Work policy where policy makers dictate action resulting in specific measurable outcomes.

It has been proposed that ‘social policies are not randomly created. They are guided by (albeit sometimes rather opaque) values, principles and objectives’ (Drake, 2001, p. 3). Is it fair then to revisit why policy makers appeared keen to alter the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales during the first decade of the 21st Century (SCYWW, 2007) into a more focused document beginning to articulate the potential of Youth Work to wider social policy (SCYWW, 2014). This pursuit of relevance has resulted in a policy document which proposes subtle changes in Youth Work which begins a narrative of ‘delivery’ (SCYWW, 2014, p. 4). This narrative of delivery begins to alter the purpose of Youth Work which is clearly articulated within the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work (LSIS, 2012) and the principles and values of Youth Work spelled out clearly within existing policy and literature, summarised in Table 1.

One considers the origins of this professionalising agenda, and what might underpin this changing approach. As discussed above, the stated purpose and principles of Youth Work are clear.

Policy making in Youth Work in Wales has latterly been developed in an increasingly centralised manner. At the time of writing an Interim Youth Work Board has been established by the Minister for Welsh Language and Lifelong Learning with the remit to ‘Advise on the development, implementation and monitoring of the new youth work strategy to ensure young people in Wales are able to access the services they are entitled to’ (Welsh Government, 2018, p. 5). It is worthy of note that the person specification for Board Members makes no reference to successful candidates being professionally qualified in Youth Work.

The Interim Board will consist of less than ten members, while this may aid discussion and conduct of meetings it does little to integrate the voice of the wider Youth Work sector. Another area of concern is the extent to which the Board Members are content that the principles of Youth Work and whether these are understood and appreciated by the Members.

In a context of fiscal austerity there is a view that changing times are creating a brave new world for young people and that policy developed prior to the economic downturn is now obsolete and in need of renewal. The Interim Board might give full consideration to the principles, the cornerstones of Youth Work when considering policy formation. What might be the reasons for rejecting long held principles in favour of more specific, measurable, quantifiable targets so highly regarded by the new breed of managers emerging in the youth service?

One answer could be that there may be confusion between policy and strategy – to take an example from medicine; take for example the six principles of medicine in the United Kingdom articulated by the General Medical Council (Appendix 2). These principles, including for example making the care of the patient the first concern may be turned into policy by policy makers and ultimately medical professionals but surely they would not be confused with a strategy, a target or an objective. Another reason for this concern with revision may be consistent with observations made concerning the effectiveness or rather lack of effectiveness of the ‘woefully inadequate attempts’ of key decision makers in Youth Work in England to make an adequate case for the benefits of Youth Work (Jeffs, 2011, p. 1). Jeffs has proposed that the evidence of the benefit of Youth Work is plentiful and well established but is of the sort that does not lend itself easily to analysis on a spreadsheet resulting in unsatisfactory attempts to reduce the benefits of Youth Work to a numbers game (Jeffs, 2011, pp. 2-3). On the contrary to this argument other significant actors within the youth service in the United Kingdom have aligned themselves with a ‘principled pragmatist’ approach, believing that there is a need for projects and services to be able to ‘express their contribution to the broader goals of contemporary social policy’ in order to be able to garner political and popular support (Wylie, 2010, pp. 3-4).

The youth service, has a role in holding to account those in positions of power who are seemingly intent on diluting the longstanding principles and values of Youth Work. It could be the case that similar to the position in England where those with a responsibility for strategic direction of Youth Work in Wales do not fully understand the role of principles and how they have made Youth Work what it is. As mentioned above, the Welsh Government has identified that a professional qualification in Youth Work is not a prerequisite to membership of the Interim Youth Work Board recently established to oversee the development of the new strategy for Youth Work in Wales (Welsh Government, 2018). What understanding can be drawn from the seeming lack of

importance given to professionally qualified voices in developing strategy for Youth Work. A professional qualification brings with it an in-depth understanding of the fundamentals of Youth Work, its history, its values, its principles, its complexity and nuance. It is hoped the results of this study will help inform decision makers, qualified or not, of the efficacy of Youth Work based on a distinct set of characteristics.

In addition to consideration by the interim Youth Work Board the youth service might consider its role in collectively understanding the potential impact of principles being left behind, the results of Youth Work so coveted by policy makers are at risk of being lost if these fundamental characteristics are put to one side.

It has been proposed that when Youth Work has tried to make a case for its continuance then broadly speaking three distinct approaches have been used to support the argument. These approaches being romanticism, technocracy and principled pragmatism (Wylie, 2010, p. 3). Relying on the former perspective seems to be akin to a belief in the tooth fairy, the second perspective perhaps sees the answer to the conundrum of what Youth Work is and what it achieves being defined by a target culture stemming from a New Public Management (NPM) (Anderson and Herr, 2015) approach to practice. This NPM approach relies on how information can be readily processed by new technologies as much as the progress being made by the young person taking part in Youth Work. The third perspective, one of principled pragmatism brings into sharper focus questions raised regarding the future of Youth Work, including whether Youth Work contradicts itself by putting principles before the needs of young people (Davies, no date, p. 2). Although adopting a pragmatic approach is practically expedient this brings into question the centrality of principles in Youth Work. As a result of an approach based on pragmatics, there may be an increased risk of indirectly contributing to continuing changing direction of travel of the youth service as a response to whatever concern is at the forefront of public

consciousness. There is evidence that the youth service has seen itself drawn in different directions at various times as a response to apparently pressing social problems (Davies and Merton, 2010). Young pregnancy, antisocial behaviour, unemployment, education or training can be regarded as recent examples. These public concerns and their coverage by the media may do as much to influence the common psyche which in turn has a significant influence on collective well-being (Vasterman, 2005). It is important to note that others have found that the influence of the media on political agenda setting is not as profound and is certainly more nuanced than is widely imagined (Van Aelst and Walgrave, 2011).

Bradshaw and Mayhew, (2005) produced an analysis of existing information on the lives of children across the UK, presenting and analysing data covering 12 domains of child well-being: demography, child poverty, health, lifestyle, mental health, children's time and space, child maltreatment, children in and leaving care, childcare, children and crime, education, and housing. This analysis highlighted an upward trend in child well-being but also identified that at the time of the research there were important shortcomings in the information available. The Welsh Government has established a system of increasing awareness of the quality and breadth of available information regarding the lives of children and young people and also in response to a call from the United Nations for governments to produce periodic reports on children's well-being (Thurston, 2011). This focus on national well-being is used in order to inform policy development to improve well-being outcomes for children and young people in Wales. This well-being information, first published in Wales in 2008 allows us to begin to better understand young people's well-being in Wales (WAG, 2008; Thurston, 2011) although some of the well-being indicators used appear to describe markers of various characteristics not necessarily correlated in the wider literature with well-being. On closer inspection it appears that a significant number of these 104 indicators are perhaps indicators more of ill-being rather than well-being, these indicators being perhaps markers of a deficit model of policy

making. If this was the case this would have a significant effect on both strategic and operational planning at a national and local level. Some examples of indicators of ill-being include limiting long term illness, dental caries, sexually transmitted infections, self-harm, smoking, being drunk on more than two occasions, number of children on the Child Protection Register, juvenile offending, bullying, homelessness and unfit housing (Thurston, 2011). This variety of indicators illustrate the complexity of well-being as a concept and a conflation can occur when trying to measure well-being where indicators of what is already measured can be utilised to fit into the pursuit of measurement at all costs. Another symptom of an instrumental, NPM informed approach could be regarded as knowing the cost of everything and the value of nothing. Taking these symbols (eg limiting long term illness, dental caries) as factors which then become identified as performance indicators, if one accepts the axiom that what gets measured gets managed one can see the influence this could have on planning and action within organisations delivering Youth Work in Wales.

What these well-being monitors confirm is that the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training have remained largely unchanged for ten years, that the dental health of 12 year olds has improved in recent years, a considerable minority of children, adolescents and young adults are classified as overweight or obese, fewer than one in three adolescents report eating fruit or vegetables on a daily basis and less than half of older girls report eating breakfast daily, take-up of free swims has fallen by nearly 30% in the five years to 2011, possibly due to free swimming having been given more structure, over three quarters of pupils aged 11-16 take part in extracurricular sport and physical recreation (although this is open to questioning – does the extent measure up to WHO guidelines for example). The Well-being monitor also tells us that thirty one per cent of 16-25 year olds have recently volunteered and that 60% of 15 year olds in Wales acknowledge that classmates are kind and helpful (Thurston, 2011). Some of the questions

which arise from an exploration of these characteristics include on one hand the extent to which eating breakfast or fruit and vegetables daily affects well-being. On the other hand, there is evidence that regular volunteering does have the power to improve one's sense of well-being; A longitudinal study has been carried out showing that volunteer work enhances various aspects of well-being (Thoits and Hewitt, 2001). Reilly (2010, p. 8) found that being involved recently as a volunteer has a positive impact on participant's self-esteem and confidence and sense of purpose. Volunteering is a theme which runs through the National Youth Service Strategy for Wales, driven by an approach based on Extending Entitlement with its entitlement to a wide and varied range of opportunities to participate in volunteering (NAW, 2000). This thread of volunteering appears throughout the National Youth Service strategy from young people voluntarily taking part in recruitment panels for workers to them being involved in designing programmes of work which address their needs (WAG, 2007; WG, 2014). Youth Work in Wales evidently offers activities which have been found to improve young people's well-being.

In the United Kingdom Youth Work has been in existence and been written about for more than one hundred and fifty years but its definition remains unfinished (Davies, 2008). During this relatively brief history the purpose of the work has often changed to suit the times, the result of which is that Youth Work now has many branches, including youth social work, youth welfare work, youth diversionary work (In Defence of Youth Work, 2011). If we accept that Youth Work has been seen to change its focus and purpose as a pragmatic response to regularly changing social pressures then the very purpose of Youth Work appears to remain in a seemingly continuing process of reinvention and change. This arguably demonstrates that far from being outmoded Youth Work maintains a commitment to being current, to keeping up with rapid social change.

It has been suggested (Davies, no date, p. 1) that the pursuit of a definition of the term Youth Work is essentially a philosophical task and one which can only be understood in the present by considering its trajectory through time, its tradition. Davies goes on to propose that the search for understanding of Youth Work has practical difficulties when we attempt to provide either normative definitions of Youth Work, whether they be contained in present day policy documents, in policies of a golden age (e.g. Albemarle), or within key principles (e.g. free association), the search for a ready definition of Youth Work has been neither theoretically or practically satisfactory (Davies, no date, p. 2).

Taking into account factors of pragmatism, of need, of principles and of New Public Management, it can be observed that Youth Work is riven with and possibly reinforced by a continuing contestation and debate. It is possible though to go further and to acknowledge that in addition to being a contested concept among practitioners, policy makers and academics this discourse serves to continually revisit and potentially revise the characteristics of Youth Work. There is, however, a danger that this ongoing debate can reinforce misconceptions of Youth Work, which is the very thing that contributors to the debate may want to avoid. This seeming misconception arises from policy makers having the wrong idea about Youth Work, what it is, how it should work and what it can legitimately set out to achieve. A symptom of this apparent lack of clarity has been highlighted in an analysis of the evidence given to a Parliamentary Committee by the heads of Youth Work organisations in England as ‘woefully inadequate... attempts to make the case for Youth Work (Jeffs, 2011, p. 1).

Evidence suggests that in order to make a case for Youth Work there is a need to understand it fully - ‘firstly that there is agreement that Youth Work is part of a wider community response to the perceived needs of young people’, and that ‘secondly Youth Work operates alongside formal education, work, local community activities and the

activities of family'. Thirdly Davies suggests that 'Youth Work is not of itself 'a good' whatever its purpose it is not concerned with its own perpetuation' (Davies, no date, p. 3). Youth Work within the children and young people milieu is, however, in a unique position being in driven as it is by a clear set of values (LSIS, 2012) and a commitment to the well-being of young people.

When considering well-being in the context of this study I am minded of the importance of subjective well-being (SWB) and the importance of subjectivity and the centrality of feelings in locating ones sense of well-being. Noting also that studies have found a relationship exists between well-being and the extent to which children and young people regard themselves to be satisfied with their lives (CPAG, 2009, p. 5). Now for a consideration of a range of espoused and widely acknowledged Youth Work principles.

There are a number of theoretical works which have explored the nature and purpose of Youth Work, including Davies (2010), Young (2006), Jeffs and Smith (2010), WAG (2007) and WG (2014).

Table 1 attempts to summarise how different academics and policy makers have discussed their own interpretation of characteristics of Youth Work. It could be argued that these beliefs are just as likely to be an interpretation of their own model of Youth Work as much (for reasons outlined above) as their description of characteristics that are shared more widely among practitioners and understood by young people and other parties with an interest in Youth Work.

Table 1. Espoused Characteristics of Youth Work

Bernard Davies (2010, pp. 1-5)	Kerry Young (2006, p 2) quoting Davies (2005, p. 22)	Kerry Young (2006, p. 2) quoting Smith (2002)	Welsh Assembly Government (2007, p. 3)	Jefferies and Smith (2010)
Young people choose to be involved	Young people's voluntary participation	Focusing on young people in the sense of being an age specific activity	The voluntary involvement by young people who have chosen to engage in the process	Voluntary participation, this has fundamental implications for the ways in which workers operate
Starting where young people are starting – and then seeking to go beyond these starting points into new experiences and learning	Seeking to tip balances of power in their favour	Emphasising voluntary participation and relationship in the sense that young people freely enter into relationships with workers and end those relationships when they choose; and where relationships are seen as a fundamental source of learning	Being age specific, focused on 11-25 year olds	Education and welfare based on dialogue
Developing trusting relationships with young people	Responding to their expectations that Youth Work will offer them relaxation and fun	Committing to association in the sense of joining together in companionship or to undertake some task, and the educative power of playing one's part in a group or association.	A non-formal education approach	Youth Work as an age specific activity
Tipping balances of power and control in	Responding to their expectation that Youth Work will penetrate	Being friendly and informal, and acting with integrity in the sense that	Being driven by a young-people-first approach	Association, relationships and community, enabling young

young people's favour	unstimulating environments and break cycles of boredom by offering new experiences and challenging activities	trying, themselves to live good lives. That Youth Work is driven by conversation and an evolving idea of what might make for well-being and growth.		people to relate to themselves, others and the world
Working with the diversity of young people and for equity of responses to them	Seeing and responding to them simply as young people, as untouched as possible by pre-set labels	Being concerned with the education and, more broadly, the welfare of young people.	A universal approach	Being friendly, accessible and responsive while acting with integrity, the person or character of the worker is paramount.
Promoting equality of opportunity and diversity in your area of responsibility	Working on and from their 'territory' at times defined literally but also to include their interests, their current activities and styles and their emotional concerns			
Working with and through young people's friendship groups	Respecting and working through their peer networks			
Youth Work as process				
Reflective practice				

This range of informed opinion about Youth Work might be viewed as making up pieces of a jigsaw with all the pieces fitting together to create a clear picture. However, as a result of the differences summarised in Table 1; those with the interest might try to complete the jigsaw but be using pieces from different sets. Malcolm Payne has suggested that practitioners now need to negotiate between adherence to practice principles, the local

context and prevailing social policies, promoting the notion of constructing a new model of Youth Work informed by an understanding of both welfare and education (Payne, 2009, p. 213).

This is the position in which Youth Work finds itself in the twenty first century, seemingly unable to articulate with one voice what it regards as important about itself. As well as being seemingly unclear about what it is perhaps it is of as great a concern that Youth Work per se remains unable to spell out exactly how it contributes to achieving relevant social policy of the Welsh Government in its own right. Those in positions of power appear prepared to demonstrate how Youth Work contributes to other social policy agendas (Safer Communities, Health, Community Development) when what is needed is a clear statement of the contribution it makes to achieving policy objectives for young people. Youth Work in Wales has recently begun to develop a series of clear messages about this potential contribution to social policy (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2018).

This amalgam of characteristics and varied contributions (and funding opportunities) influences Youth Work policy making. The characteristics and contributions inform policy and as a result influence managers in how they develop their own plans for Youth Work at a local level. It has suggested there may be other motives playing out and that Youth Work in Wales has in recent history suffered from political betrayal, professional infighting and practice inertia (Williamson, 2010). This suggests that Youth Work policy making in Wales has been negatively influenced by ‘professional infighting and hostile administrative arrangements’ (Williamson, 2012, p. 8). If significant thinkers within the realm of Youth Work find it difficult to agree on its uniqueness is it any wonder then that Youth Work in Wales continues to have an identity crisis, a lack of a shared vision which in turn makes it vulnerable to this policy making cherry picking. Of course it could be argued that another

view of the role and purpose of Youth Work within society is as one of a range of helping professions, contributing to safer communities, anti-poverty or citizenship agendas rather a more radical undertaking which seeks to empower young people.

The history of Youth Work in Wales has been well documented (Rose, 1997b, 2003; Jones and Rose, 2001) and anything more than a passing reference to this history would risk not paying the necessary attention that it requires. However, the potential for this legacy to be fully understood and utilised for the benefit of young people is currently underutilised. It is too easy but nonetheless accurate to say that if one ignores history one repeats its mistakes. Upon review it appears that at the time of writing the Youth Service in Wales, described by the Children's Commissioner for Wales as 'a receding service' (Towler, 2009, np) is at risk of receding into an oblivion of integration, targeting and short term funding. If this is true of the youth service – what future then for Youth Work?

In Wales the first National Youth Service Strategy for Wales (WAG, 2007), a strategy about young people, with the vision that it is for all the young people of Wales set out a clear aspiration for Youth Work. This aspiration suggested that Youth Work sets out to create an environment that can 'enable young people to gain the personal, social, emotional, intellectual and practical skills they need to get the best from their lives now and in the future' (WAG, 2007, p. 1). There is no ambiguity in that statement its intention is quite clear.

The aspiration of the Strategy is of a shared vision, a vision not only shared with stakeholders but further underpinned by a strong Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales (SCYWW, 2007). It is this national Curriculum Statement which initially set out some of the cornerstones of Youth Work practice in Wales.

Currently in Wales we have a situation where there is strong, clear policy yet Youth Work remains subject to misunderstanding, misconception, and might be subject to what has been described, albeit in a different field as many ‘alternative concepts’, with these alternative views being informed by individual’s private knowledge and experience but not necessarily based on fact (Zirbel, 2007, p. 5). In order to investigate the true nature of Youth Work, its characteristics and concepts it is now necessary to begin to review the literature which sets out some of these concepts. Davies suggests that ‘clarity will only be achieved through a review of the social structure, institutions, and activities through which a community makes resources available to young people’ (Davies, no date, p. 1). This then is the lens through which I will begin to explore the characteristics of Youth Work in Wales.

This section explores the characteristics of Youth Work in Wales, as set out in Young people, youth work, Youth Service National Youth Service Strategy for Wales. It is appropriate at this stage to explore these characteristics in more depth to gain a deeper understanding of these five characteristics (WAG, 2007) and what can be learned from them for the future.

Youth Work and The voluntary Involvement by Young People Who Have Chosen to Engage in the Process

The authors summarised in Table 1 each identify a series of characteristics which underpin their respective visions of Youth Work. One of the few characteristics cited unanimously is that young people choose to engage with the process and that they can also choose to disengage from the process if they wish, that they take part in Youth Work activities voluntarily. This is an important characteristic which influences notions of well-being. In one sense it could be argued that the degree of effectiveness of all the other characteristics depend on this most fundamental of fundamentals. Jeffs has commented on the uniqueness

of this voluntary principle, and that this has distinguished Youth Work from most other services provided for this group (Jefferies, 2001). Similarly, WAG (2007, p. 7) has recognised the pivotal nature of this principle, acknowledging that:

The Youth Service, with its positive view of young people, provides a unique learning environment built on the voluntary participation of young people and the quality of the relationship developed with the trained and skilled adult worker (WAG, 2007, p. 7).

However it appears that this most rudimentary of characteristics is currently under pressure, again perhaps subject to alternative conceptions of what Youth Work is. The Community and Youth Workers Union note that in recent years due to a move toward integrated services for young people (albeit this strategy is most explicitly being enacted in England) the voluntary relationship with young people through Youth Work has become misunderstood and challenged (CYWU: no date) indeed some authors have commented that this principle might be unnecessary (Ord, 2009). The importance of the Youth Work process has been highlighted, the process that young people go through (Davies, 2005). Perhaps this is where some of the fundamental difficulties of agreement arise; a group of young people may well go through the same Youth Work process but be experiencing that process with completely different motives and understandings. The meaning of Youth Work then, perhaps both the meaning and the potential outcomes of the process may be different for each of them even though the process they experience is ostensibly the same. In this sense then Youth Work has the potential to offer an individualised service, that aim so often espoused by politicians in recent times.

Youth Work: Being Age specific, Focused on 11-25 year olds

Extending Entitlement (NAW, 2000, p. 13) states that definitions of young people vary but that its remit, and therefore the remit of the Youth Service is to deliver work to the age group 11-25. This statement of intent is further reinforced in other policy documents including the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales which states that the Youth Service as a universal entitlement is open to all young people within the specific age range 11-25 (SCYWW, 2007, p. 5). This commitment has been renewed in subsequent iterations of this policy document, including Youth Work in Wales: Principles and Purposes (CWVYS, 2013; Youth Work in Wales Review Group 2018).

Researchers have suggested that during the early and middle part of the twentieth century the concept of adolescence emerged into the public consciousness in Wales, being regarded as both a challenge and a threat to the mainstream, the response to this changing position being an uncoordinated approach within a developing network of national voluntary organisations (Jones and Rose, 2003, pp. 163-169). Adolescence has been defined as:

the period of physical and psychological development between childhood and adulthood, the beginning of which is loosely anchored to the onset of puberty and concluded with an individual attaining a stable adult role, by which time in the United Kingdom the majority of pubertal transitions will have reached completion (Blakemore, Burnett and Dahl, 2010, np).

Social reformers have drawn on the emerging concept of adolescence to help define 'normal' and 'ideal' behaviour types for young people (Griffin, 2006, p. 12). Griffin summarises the way in which society views adolescence as a 'period of inevitable turmoil and a time of 'having a fling', *and* as a time when the path to 'normal' life must be found and followed (Griffin, 2006, p. 16). So what of this path to a normal life, is there a place for Youth Work in enabling young people to identify and follow this path, to build a good life, a normal life, a life of well-being.

It was noted in 2007 that ‘the experiences of young people growing up in the contemporary world are quite different from those encountered by earlier generations’ having the effect of increasing the protraction and diversification of transitions from school to work citing reasons such as changes in the youth labour market, the marketisation of lifestyles and changes in health related behaviours contributing to an extension of semi-dependency (Furlong and Cartmel, 2007, pp. 139ff). This acknowledgement of social change and increasing complexity is not merely an acknowledgement of changes relating to post-modern social change but echoes the findings of work from previous decades. An earlier iteration of some of these challenges have been highlighted in the Milson Fairbairn report (HMSO, 1969) which states that the increasing complexity of society brought about by the accelerating rate of change in technology and the calling into question of previously accepted attitudes and values puts an obligation on societies to better understand new and confusing circumstances confronting them (HMSO, 1969, p. 69). This begs the question: ‘what fundamentally has changed?’. One of the findings of the Milson Fairbairn report was a realisation that in 1969 the age remit of the Youth Service needed to change, from its then remit of 14-20 years of age. The report acknowledged that ‘the service has too juvenile an image’, this was further supported by an acknowledgement that ‘present Youth Service approaches are inappropriate for work with young adults, begging the question at what age should new approaches begin (HMSO, 1969, p. 82), at what stage, as opposed to what age does one become an adult in contemporary society. When comparing these notions of changing young people and changing society it is timely to consider whether this notion of change and increasing complexity remains a constant, or indeed whether social change is accelerating. Ultimately, it is perhaps incumbent on those in positions of power within Youth Work in Wales to collectively consider Youth Work in order to best consider the needs of young people in late post modernity and when this exploration has taken place how best can Youth Work be reconfigured.

It is clear from the literature – that authors regard the concept of youth as both biologically and socially constructed, and that public opinion of adolescence is informed and influenced by widespread public concerns. There is an acknowledgement that the relationship between young people’s experiences and academic research about youth and adolescence is not straightforward, a situation compounded by a blurring of the social and biological boundaries of adolescence and how this period contributes to the formation of a ‘normal’ mature adulthood (Griffin, 2006, p. 13). The author equates the onset of puberty with the onset of adolescence and suggests that the stage at which puberty occurs has become somewhat uncoupled from the socially determined moments through which ‘youth’ has been previously defined. Successes in public health, changes in social structures, improved childhood nutrition and reduction in infections have all contributed to a reduced age at onset of puberty (Bellis, Downing and Ashton, 2006). The authors also note the effect of social factors, suggesting that stress is a puberty accelerator in itself and that familial disruption also has a considerable effect on puberty acceleration (Bellis et al, 2006). In a 2004 study it has been noted that attainment of reproductive status involves both physiological and behavioural maturation and that both these processes come about through a series of brain driven events, modulated by internal and external sensory cues including lifestyle factors (Sisk and Foster, 2004).

Across Europe it has been acknowledged that society is changing and that these changes are impacting on the lives of young people with the notion of youth lasting longer and with young people reaching the various stages on the route to adulthood at later chronological ages; second there are nonlinear paths through life where previously straightforward stages are no longer so clear. Various life roles are becoming confused, and young people move between them, or hold several at the same time – for example having a job, being a student, living with parents, being a parent; third, traditional collective models are losing ground as

personal pathways become increasingly individualised (EC, 2001, p. 9). This situation offers Youth Work a potential role. For Youth Work to put forward a case for supporting the transition to adulthood it is not unreasonable to argue that due to some of the factors outlined above the transition will become more and more of a challenge for some young people.

Interestingly the White Paper clearly states that youth lasts longer (EC, 2001), with the view that the transition to adulthood is becoming more delayed, one must appreciate too that the EC definition of youth includes those young people within the member states who are between 15 and 30 years of age (EC, 2001, p. 6). This is somewhat at odds with policy in Wales whereas acknowledged previously Youth Work works with young people aged 11-25 (SCYWW, 2007). Another variation between stated policy within Europe and the UK can be seen where in the UK early transitions are associated with failed transitions which again smacks of the perceived importance of normative social standards and how these sometimes unhelpful norms are used to define the popular image of young people and their success or failure during the transition.

The Milson Fairbairn report was clear in recommending a differentiated provision based upon the age of young people taking part, suggesting a form of provision for young people under 14 to that for those aged over 14. This must lead on to a consideration of the extent to which the nature of the work should be dependent on the chronological age of those taking part. Potentially this differentiation might be based upon an understanding of local knowledge and the nature of the transition from dependence to interdependence (SCYWW, 2007). Specific literature is full of research which explores how young people progress through the transition to adulthood (Coleman and Hendry, 1991; Wheal, 2004, Furlong and Cartmel, 2007, Hine, 2009, Wetz, 2010, Pitt and Oliver, 2011).

Action for Children have noted the importance of supporting children between the ages of six and 13, a time they describe as middle childhood, a time of fundamental importance in the emotional and physical development of children but also a time of vulnerability, their research with young people demonstrating that young people identified this period as a time when they needed support (Action for Children, 2009). Acknowledging though that this period of middle childhood is a time where children and young people are becoming increasingly independent the report speaks of the need for those in this age group to receive more contact from adults (whether professionals or parents) to provide support and in a sense supervision. It could be argued that while identifying the needs of middle childhood, Action for Children are proposing a view informed from the deficit perspective, seeing young people as being in need of care, support and supervision as opposed to seeing them as individuals with rights, freedoms and potentials. This deficit perspective is at odds with characteristics of Youth Work in Wales of non-formal learning and an empowering young people first approach and also with the argument put forward by Hendry, Shucksmith, Love and Glendinning that young people go through age related phases of participation in leisure activities, these being firstly organised leisure which declines from around the age of 13 to 14, secondly the phase of casual leisure which includes hanging around the streets in friendship groups, this second phase being superseded by age 16 by forms of commercial leisure (cinema, discos and pubs are included in this category) (Hendry et. al. 1993). Although since this research was published there have been significant social changes in the lives of young people. So with an understanding of changing patterns of leisure, changing social trends brought on by the current challenging economic climate, by a changing education and jobs market, this begs the question - how might Youth Work respond at a time of rapid and unprecedented social change.

Having reviewed how and Youth Work might position itself to help young people in the 21st Century prepare for adult life, the next passage of this literature review will critically consider the educational role of Youth Work in Wales.

Youth Work: A Non-Formal Education Approach

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has noted that formal systems of education and training provide essential context when attempting to understand different approaches to learning, most notably in relation to standards and assessment methods (OECD, 2010). However this type of comparison often presents formal learning as the gold standard to which other forms of learning can be compared at the risk of continually falling short. This falling short in comparison to more formal learnings has long seen more non formal approaches deemed appropriate to deliver soft skills with the prevailing attitude that these soft skills are easier to attain and somehow less important than learning taking place in formal education. This contest has been portrayed within the literature as a competing and in some cases exclusive paradigm between formal and non-formal approaches.

The European Community (EC) have put forward a typology of approaches to learning which has broad similarities to the work of Eraut and Whiting (2008). These authors were perhaps the first to propose that non-formal learning was a term which as well as enabling the definition of the distinct informal learning, was something that was often work based. Eraut's work portrays non-formal learning as incorporating far more of the everyday milieu, perhaps in an attempt to add weight to the arguments for a greater understanding of the potential for non-formal learning to enhance individual's social capital. UNESCO offer a useful typology illustrating the potential differences between formal, informal and non-formal learning. For an illustration of this model, please see Table 2 (below).

Table 2. Approaches to Learning: synergies between formal and non-formal learning (UNESCO, 2006, p. 39).

Formal learning is usually understood to consist of intentional learning that occurs within an organised and structured context (pre-school, primary and secondary school, technical colleges and university, in-company training) and that is designed as learning. It may lead to a formal recognition (diploma, certificate).

Non formal learning consists of learning embedded in planned, organised and sustained education activities that are outside formal education institution, responding to education needs for persons of all ages. The purpose of NFE is to provide alternative learning opportunities for those who do not have access to formal schooling or need specific life skills and knowledge to overcome different obstacles. Non formal learning is also intentional from the learner's point of view, as opposed to incidental or random types of learning.

Informal learning implies the process of learning which goes on continuously and incidentally for each individual, outside the organised situation of formal or non-formal education.

This typology offers a helpful framework for analysis, permitting us to understand the important nuances between these different forms of learning. Non-formal learning is regarded as offering one of the key characteristics of Youth Work in Wales. When one begins to explore the rhetoric of non-formal learning its underpinnings become clearer, that Youth Work informed by this approach typically does not lead to a certificate for those taking part. One might ask how this relates to often quoted references to the importance of Youth Workers needing to recognise achievement (NAW, 2000). As a professional youth worker engaged in Youth Work, how can one recognise and encourage young people to appreciate their achievements as a result of taking part. Youth workers recognise achievement in any number of ways but the challenge for young people taking part is for

them to fully recognise their own achievements. If a certificate will help them realise their own achievement then it is the duty of the Youth worker to recognise that and to offer that. There are however, many ways of recognising the achievement of individual human beings. In the spirit of the National Youth Service Strategy with its stated intention of enhancing the emotional competence of young people what better way of encouraging young people to become increasingly self-aware, motivated and to improve their self-worth than encouraging them initially to understand that Youth Work does indeed offer them the chance to achieve and secondly to begin to understand how they value their achievements to be recognised; whether in public or discretely, verbally, or in writing, with incentives or with some other form of symbol with meaning. Of course such a symbol may be a certificate but it is erroneous to believe that the certificate is the only way of showing young people their achievements.

The non-formal learning with which I can identify is consistent with the model put forward by UNESCO - firstly being outside of formal learning institutions, that its participants actively intend to learn and to take part voluntarily and to engage with and practice the skills of democratic life, secondly, that its methods offer opportunities for the acquisition of cognitive, affective, and practical dimensions of learning; thirdly, that basic values underpin non-formal learning, values linked to personal development, values linked to social development and ethical values which promulgate tolerance, human rights, intercultural learning, non-violence, gender equality and inter-generational dialogue (UNESCO, 2006). The Council of Europe model of non-formal learning proposes key competences for practitioners involved in non-formal learning (youth workers in this context). These key competences are using participative methods, using diversity for positive learning, making critical and reflective links between the concrete and the abstract and knowledge about the cultures and lives of people across Europe (COE, 2007). This then defines the approach to non-formal learning I will be referring to when considering

the role of Youth Work (of which NFL is a part) in young people's subjective well-being. This approach to non-formal learning is exemplified in 'The use of Youth Work in the outdoors' and has explored the notion of its application as a form of evidence based practice which is based on individual development needs of young people has been identified. Based in northern England, sustainable programmes of work which foster a sense of social justice have been developed which offer:

a heterogeneous activity base including: outdoor activities; creative activities; group and individual work. These programmes all focus on increasing the agency of young people to attain better outcomes for themselves (Stuart and Maynard, 2015, p. 235).

The concept of working with young people to identify their own measures of success is inherent within effective Youth Work as a form of non-formal education. Thus, involving young people in designing their own programmes and therefore being exposed to opportunities which develop a sense of life satisfaction and meaning are integral to enhancing SWB. The concept of working with young people to identify and put forward their own learning needs is an aspect of this form of work which puts them at the forefront of the process of learning. This is commonly described in the policy literature as putting young people first. The following passage will go on to explore this concept in more detail.

Youth Work: Being Driven By a Young-People-First Approach

The notion of putting young people first suggests that 'the key focus of the practice be on the young person as an individual' (Davies, 2005, p. 7). In this important piece Davies goes on to clarify Youth Work's defining features. One hopes it is not too simplistic a view but on closer examination it becomes clear that a number of these defining features when combined help to spell out how Youth Work, or Davies's view of pure Youth Work described in the Manifesto helps to put young people first. For example tipping balances

of power in favour of young people; starting where young people are starting; respecting young people's peer networks; respecting community and culture; going beyond where young people start; and being concerned with how young people feel, all these defining features combine to put young people first. The next passage will consider the stated goal of youth work, as a universal entitlement for all young people.

Youth Work: A Universal Approach

The universal vision for Youth Work has been voiced for many years. Wales has a vision of entitlement of service delivery for young people. This vision has been in place for nearly two decades but has in the last ten years come under pressure due to widely acknowledged cuts in funding due to fiscal austerity. Extending Entitlement has spelled out the youth support services that young people aged 11-25 in Wales should expect.

Table 3 contains an illustration of the 10 entitlements for young people.

Table 3. Entitlements for young people aged 11-25 in Wales

Entitlement
education, training and work experience – tailored to their needs
basic skills which open doors to a full life and promote social inclusion
a wide and varied range of opportunities to participate in volunteering and active citizenship
high quality, responsive, and accessible services and facilities
personal support and advice – where and when needed and in appropriate formats – with clear ground rules on confidentiality
advice on health, housing benefits and other issues provided in accessible and warm settings
recreational and social opportunities in a safe and accessible environment
sporting, artistic, musical and outdoor experiences to develop talents, broaden horizons and promote rounded perspectives including both national and international contexts
the right to be consulted, to participate in decision-making, and to be heard, on all matters which concern them or have an impact on their lives

National Assembly for Wales, (2000) *Extending Entitlement: Support for young people in Wales, directions and guidance*. Cardiff, NAW.

In 2018 the Welsh Government commissioned a review of the impact of its flagship policy for youth support services, *Extending Entitlement*. The first recommendation from the review involved the production of a national strategy for Youth Work:

ensuring open access community-based opportunities (including street work) for young people, places where they want to go and where they can get the support, help, information and guidance when they want it (Jervis, 2018, p. 18).

The subtext of this review was that Ministers and Assembly Members at the National Assembly for Wales had become concerned regarding the erosion of the youth service, particularly in its universal guise in Wales in preceding years. This erosion has been most starkly illustrated by a reduction in funding from local authorities of some 30% since 2010 (Welsh Government, 2018). This reduction has coincided with 25% less young people

being involved in the maintained youth service (Welsh Government, 2018). At the same time, the work of the youth service has become more influenced by targeted approaches to support young people into work or to reduce their involvement in offending behaviour. Anecdotal evidence suggests that in some local authority areas, this form of provision has become the primary objective of the work of the youth service. This is in direct opposition to the principles of Extending Entitlement which sought to make youth support services available to all young people in Wales as something they were entitled to. As it stands, an evaluation of the evidence of continued reduction in funding over the preceding 10 years would suggest that the youth service is not in a position to be able to offer a universal service to young people in Wales. Considerable effort would be needed along with consistent investment to develop a strategy, structures and the skills to be able to rebuild a service which could cater for all young people in Wales. Having carried out a critical review of the characteristics of Youth Work in Wales, the next section of the literature review will explore the expected impact of Youth Work for young people.

2.12. Youth Work in Wales – what outcomes is it trying to achieve?

The National Youth Service Strategies for Wales have identified clear outcomes for young people these being: active participation; wider skills development, and enhanced emotional competence (WAG, 2007; WG, 2014).

The clear iteration of vision, output and outcome demonstrates that the Youth Service has made some progress since the mid 1990's. At that time, it was proposed that one of the major strengths of the youth service was its flexibility. This flexibility was consciously nurtured in order to cater for the divergent needs of young people in different locations and with different backgrounds (Howells, Mason and Donald, 1994, p. 2). The more recent reality of the Youth Service to be flexible, to respond readily builds on a tradition which

has at its core a desire to be of value to society, in this sense it is like a straw in the wind, shifting and moving with the latest changing policy.

It has been suggested that in a philosophic sense Youth Work demands young people's voluntary participation since moral philosophising cannot be absent minded or mechanistic, and neither can it be hidden or coerced (Young, 1999, p. 3). Youth workers are in a position to offer young people work which has a moral or philosophic underpinning, in the search to learn about life. If one accepts that youth workers should concern themselves with enabling young people to achieve the outcomes of active participation, wider skills development and enhanced emotional competence (WAG, 2007) the question could then be asked, whether these outcomes can realistically be achieved if Youth Work interventions are mechanistic, whether young people can achieve these outcomes if the learning is hidden or if young people are coerced to take part. This provides an argument for maintaining the voluntary principle and in addition, a commitment to universal provision as discussed in the previous passage.

Young people who are enabled to acquire such outcomes will be seen to have increased social capital, a concept with elements including both the structure of social relations and the quality of social relations (Stone, 2001). Cote and Healy have suggested that social capital consists of networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups' (Cote and Healy, 2001, p. 41). The literature acknowledges that human and social capital contribute both to growth and well-being (ibid, p. 65) although the concept of social capital itself has its roots in neoliberal thinking.

Moving on to the theory that deep understanding will arise from a review of the social structure, institutions, and activities through which a community makes resources available to young people' (Davies, no date, p. 1).

The activities the Youth Service offers to young people are many and varied and arguably based on the development needs of young people. The Wales Youth Agency suggested in a briefing paper that 'Youth work involves a broad range of activities, concerned with education in its widest sense (Wales Youth Agency, no date). If Youth Work can be expected to have an impact upon the SWB of young people, it may be through the activities that it offers young people. The next section of the literature review will critically explore the concept of subjective well-being.

2.13. What is Subjective Well-Being among Young People?

The literature of well-being among children and young people is developing rapidly, consistent with a growing concern for the future prospects of a considerable proportion of the young people of Wales in a time of economic decline. This concern is in part due to a growing realisation in the United Kingdom (UK) that despite public investment levels significantly higher than levels in other developed countries the outcomes for young people in the UK (and particularly in Wales) are poorer, for example, one study found that Welsh children fare worse, average, than their counterparts in England and Scotland in relation to well-being outcomes (including health) (Pedace, no date). Despite the amount of research into well-being, the field remains riven with paradox.

Subjective well-being has been variously defined, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development has defined SWB as 'good mental states, including all of the various evaluations, positive and negative, that people make of their lives, and the

affective reactions of people to their experiences’ (OECD, 2015, p. 29). While Deiner, Lucas and Oishi have defined subjective well-being (SWB) as ‘a person’s cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life’ (Deiner, Lucas and Oishi, 2002, p. 63). Suffice to say SWB is a broad term which incorporates elements of life, based (importantly) on self-reporting accounts including ‘people’s emotional responses, domain satisfaction, and global judgements of life satisfaction’ (Deiner et al, 1999, pg 277). In short, subjective well-being as a concept is concerned with how individuals think and feel their life is going at a particular time. This is the crux of what I wanted to understand more clearly, the extent to which Youth Work can enhance the ability of young people to thrive and to flourish within a given context.

It has been observed that ‘High public spending on child welfare and education in the UK is failing to produce results in many key areas’ (OECD, 2009, p. 1), specifically that:

the UK spends more on children than most OECD countries, at just over £138,000 per child from birth up to the age of 18, compared to an OECD average of just under £90,000. But the proportion of youth not in school, training or in jobs in the UK remains high, at more than one in ten 15 to 19 year-olds. This is the fourth highest rate in the OECD, ahead of Italy, Turkey and Mexico. Education results are also low relative to spending levels. (OECD, 2011, p. 1).

There is further evidence illustrating a consistent failure of recent investment strategies for young people and that,

there can be no dispute that the UK's position in the league table of child well-being in the EU is lamentable and that there is a need for more effective investment in services to support children, young people, their families and communities (Hallam Centre for Community Justice, 2006, p. 1).

It has been said that ‘since the end of World War II, maximizing Gross Domestic Product has been the primary policy goal of almost every country around the world’ (Cavaletti and Cors, 2018, p. 931). This begs further exploration to begin to understand why this

situation of poor outcomes might persist considering the perhaps unintended consequences of growing economic prosperity on other, more intangible aspects of life such as happiness and life satisfaction. Evidence suggests that as economies grow wealthier (as measured by GDP), that the population commonly become less satisfied with life and that this is also manifest through significant increases in mental ill-health among young people. The evidence of this increasing malaise afflicting states as they become collectively more wealthy could stimulate questioning whether this intention of maximizing GDP remains a worthwhile policy goal. In light of the plethora of empirical evidence of the effects associated with increasing economic prosperity this has a bearing in relation to fundamental questions of the goal of social policy.

There are alternative arguments to this position, represented for example, by one author, who has proposed that the increasing focus on measurement of SWB as a yardstick for measuring the efficacy of social policy is problematic and nothing more than a hegemony of happiness (Austin, 2016).

The fact is that as a society we are increasingly looking for new ways of comparing structural effectiveness and judging success against that of other developed countries not in terms of economics, simply comparing GDP, but in notions of well-being and happiness.

Wales periodically publishes data on well-being (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008; Thurston, 2011) although if one adopts a critical stance the findings of these assessments are limited in their value due to their over reliance on the use of somewhat objective, proxy measures to gauge well-being. These proxy measures include for example tooth decay, bodyweight, frequency of consumption of alcohol, level of watching television, household income and children's own opinions of school friends (WAG, 2008).

The next section of the literature review will consider the ingredients and importance of well-being.

2.14. What are the ingredients of well-being and why is it important?

Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury gave a speech some years ago and posed a dilemma, that:

children are not brought up, are not educated or inducted into human society just by one or two people. The whole of the social complex of which they're part makes them the persons they are. And that is true whether we like it or not, whether we notice it or not. When a culture ignores or sidelines the question of what it actually wants to produce, what kind of human beings it actually wants to nurture, when it assumes indifference, it still educates (Williams, 2005, np).

There has been much concern in Government circles about well-being and its definition.

The Department for Rural Affairs (Defra) in 2008 put forward a definition which has become widely accepted across UK Government that well-being is:

A positive, physical, social and mental state; it is not just the absence of pain, discomfort and incapacity. It requires that basic needs are met, that individuals have a sense of purpose, that they feel able to achieve important personal goals and participate in society. It is enhanced by conditions that include supportive personal relationships, strong and inclusive communities, good health, financial and personal security, rewarding employment, and a healthy and attractive environment (Defra, 2008, p. 114).

Creating a vision for young people where they possess a sense of their own subjective well-being necessitates a clear understanding of the meaning and genesis of well-being, what it is and how it appears to young people themselves. It has been claimed that the concept of well-being has different components including a happiness 'eudaemonic' component and also a hedonic 'pleasure' component (Samman, 2007). Samman's model of well-being includes four components:

1. Having meaning in life, 2 the three basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness, 3. Domain specific and overall life satisfaction; and 4, happiness. (Samman, 2007, p. 2)

It is worth considering whether well-being even exists, whether it is indeed an ‘observable fact’ (Kolakowski, 1993 p. 5). The literature suggests that well-being has different components including happiness, flourishing, agency, life satisfaction. This is what I have been interested in during this study, to better understand how young people experience Youth Work and how they make sense of their experiences.

To consider well-being it is necessary to briefly consider the human condition, it has been stated that there are six universal features of the human condition which have a profound bearing on questions concerning human well-being (Smith, no date). These features of the human condition resonate strongly and I have included a brief discussion below, Condition 1 – Embodiment, that we are physical creatures who relate and connect with the world through bodily sensations, the second condition is Finiteness, that as human beings we have boundaries and constraints, for example in our ability to have full control of our life, thirdly, the condition of Sociability, being members of social groups, having close relationships with others, the fourth condition is Cognition, that as human beings we gather information and evidence and engage in exercising imagination. The fifth condition is Evaluation, that we have goals and ambitions, or rather that we have the capacity to have these components. The sixth condition put forward by Smith is Agency, which in a sense that we become authors of our own actions and life-plans (Smith, no date, pp. 1-3).

In a recent study carried out in Wales the authors have proposed a clear definition of well-being which takes into account many of the concerns of previous researchers in the pursuit of clarity in definition of well-being, defining what they term stable well-being as a state:

when individuals have the psychological, social and physical resources they need to meet a particular psychological, social and/or physical challenge.

When individuals have more challenges than resources, the see-saw dips, along with their wellbeing, and vice-versa (Dodge, Daly, Huyton and Sanders, 2012, p. 230)

It has been assumed that our notion of the young person and their well-being depends on what we ‘know’ about them at any point in time and that our images will change as our knowledge becomes ‘better’ and more ‘accurate’ (Piper, 2008 p. 29). This notion of ‘scientism’ discussed above is underlying in much contemporary social policy.

While the concept of well-being has become well discussed in the popular media it is worth considering also the extent to which this information influences the view society has of young people, irrespective of the reality.

2.15. Well-being - A Positive Physical, Social and Mental State

Youth Work has a stated intention to enhance the well-being of young people (SCYWW, 2007; LSIS, 2012). It is necessary to consider the extent to which Youth Work can provide positive experiences, to take part in physical activities, to learn about socialising and to consider mental health and how that can be looked after. Youth Work, as part of its purpose, should seek to enhance young people’s ability to experience SWB.

One study found that adolescence is a period where choices about time use can provide important developmental experiences that in turn affect an individual’s ease of transition into adult roles (Zick, 2010, p. 569) while other studies have found that a significant number of young adults have transitional difficulties, and greatest problems come to those with least economic, intellectual and psychological resources (Côté, 2000). Research has shown that it is necessary to take into account the interaction of various elements when considering the transition to adulthood. These elements being self-agency, individual life experiences, health, relationships, economic and social changes, structural forces, and a

problematic labour market when trying to better understand how young people respond to the transition to adulthood (Hendry and Kloep, 2010).

This is the traditional heartland of Youth Work in Wales, where Youth Work as a form of non-formal learning has sought to build relationships with young people that help them to better understand themselves and their communities. If one were to take a somewhat critical perspective let us imagine that Youth Work in Wales has been a form of liberatory practice, committed to working with young people with the intention of enhancing their understanding of themselves and their world rather than as a complement for education or youth justice.

Relationships are fundamental to human flourishing and Youth Work has long prided itself on the nature of the relationships between its practitioners and young people, this relationship fundamentally influences the way that youth workers and young people behave towards each other. This behaviour frames the process of Youth Work from the outset. Phillips found that the relationships young people have with friends and family are integral to understanding themselves (Phillips, 2010, p. 490). While there is a risk that social capital theory emphasizes the importance of social networks and relationships while ignoring the inner resources, talents and resilience of young people themselves (ibid).

The rhetoric of Youth Work often espouses the importance of an empowering approach when it could be argued that in order to empower someone they must be at least marginally less powerful than the other. This view risks seeing the young person from the deficit perspective and not as Phillips suggests fully appreciating that young people do indeed possess resources, talents and resilience. It has been suggested that most people show considerable effort, agency, and commitment in their lives and that this is indeed nearer the norm than the exception and that these qualities are somewhat persistent features of human

nature (Ryan and Deci, 2000, p. 68). The authors suggest that there are three innate psychological needs which must be satisfied to enhance motivation and well-being and these are described as the need for competence, autonomy and relatedness, one of the results of which is the formation of people who are curious, vital and self-motivated (ibid). This construct may then unknowingly be a desired outcome of Youth Work, the creation of competent adults, mature people who can be competent adults, able to know the things adults should know, do the things adults should do and understand the things that adults should understand. To function as a fully formed adult includes the capacity to live autonomously, this does not mean independently, rather to have freedom of choice and action and lastly to understand and appreciate the importance of belonging, being linked to others. Youth Work in Wales provides many opportunities for young people and workers to gain these attributes through its approach of empowerment espoused within the Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales (Standing Conference for Youth Work in Wales, 2007) and the Youth Work Principles and Purposes Document (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2018).

Phillips makes some suggestions for provision with young people, with the aim of supporting young people; suggesting that initiatives should enhance personal strengths, creative talents and resilience (Phillips, 2010).

However, evidence to suggest that young people in Wales are becoming generally less happy, it has also been identified that in the more developed world, levels of happiness among young people vary widely, and the research reveals the existence of:

interesting nuances in happiness levels between different countries, with some of the world's most advanced economies achieving some of the lowest net happiness scores. Whilst young people across the majority of Europe report a similar happiness level to the global average, young people in some European countries – including the UK (57%) – report some of the lowest net happiness scores in the world (Broadbent, Gougoulis, Lui, Pota and Simons, 2017, p. 29.)

While this international comparison is not a key focus for this study, it has been suggested that other countries are much better for children than the United Kingdom, including Finland, Japan, Canada and Holland (Aynsley-Green, 2018).

For the purposes of this study, the framework of Subjective Well-being adopted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2013) has been adopted as a model within which to explore the subjective well-being of young people taking part.

This OECD model acknowledges that there are a variety of factors which affect how people experience and report on their lives and that these vary, based on such factors as resilience and cultural and linguistic influences. One key researcher in relation to well-being and its links with social policy and economics has defined SWB as ‘an umbrella term for the different valuations people make regarding their lives, the events happening to them, their bodies and minds, and the circumstances in which they live’ (Diener, 2006, p. 400). With the intention of researching the phenomenon of subjective well-being among young people, there are many questions arising, for example, how do measures of SWB which are developed for adult populations apply to young people. However, the model adopted in this study takes into account three aspects of subjective well-being which apply to all age-groups, these are:

- i. Life satisfaction
- ii. Life meaning
- iii. Happiness
(OECD, 2013)

The OECD has carried out research across nations and has identified that young people are relatively disadvantaged compared to middle aged populations, finding that:

Across the OECD young people are disadvantaged on income, wealth, jobs, earnings, and voter turnout, compared to middle-aged adults. In the United Kingdom, the youth unemployment rate is more than three times that of the middle aged. The British generational divide is also larger than in the OECD on average for outcomes such as income, adult skills, and having a say in government (OECD, 2017, p. 4).

Considering that the model of SWB adopted in this study aims to frame a critical analysis of the lives of young people, the adoption of life meaning, life satisfaction, and happiness will enable young people to consider questions of well-being which are independent of the more positivist, material issues identified above. There remains a question regarding the immunity of young people to this relative disadvantage. This is one factor which may emerge during data analysis, as evidence suggests that children and young people are commonly understood to have the highest levels of subjective well-being along with those in the retired age groups while those in adulthood and middle age are understood to have poorer levels of well-being. This is a strength of the approach of this study.

With regards to enhancing subjective well-being, the OECD state that the very purpose of their Better Life Index is partly, to ‘help inform policy making to improve quality of life; to connect policies to people’s lives, and to generate support for needed policy measures (OECD, 2017, p. 8). This study has the goal of providing evidence to inform policy development.

Adopting a phenomenological approach to critically address the question ‘can Youth Work have an impact on the subjective well-being of young people’ it is hoped that this study will go some way to help inform policy and to engender support for much needed policy responses to the data which has been identified by the OECD, but also, to utilize the data which emerges from this study to encourage discussion of the conditions in which young people in Wales are approaching adulthood in late modernity.

A critical reading of the evidence might suggest that the widespread rise in economic prosperity observed since World War II is, at the same time, linked to a slump in levels of subjective well-being. Similarly, the fact that the neoliberal doctrine that has brought about these situations is unsatisfactory and no longer fit for purpose as a sustainable socio-economic model. Rather, the vision of neoliberalism, as a predominant socio-economic system, inasmuch as it 'aims to renovate classical liberalism, by maintaining the free interplay of market forces, while accepting a certain degree of State intervention' (Pilkington, 2016, p. 266) produces consistently unsatisfactory results in SWB. For example, as while whole economies may experience growth in GDP, there are considerable numbers of young people in these societies who are not merely unable to benefit from this undoubted economic growth but are consistently and substantially disadvantaged by the system. These disadvantages are observable in relation to the social ontology of SWB, that the social context of which young people are part influences their experiences of the world, which in turn, influences their interpretations of their world. These notions of sensations of emotions have been defined as:

The study of what makes experiences and life pleasant or unpleasant. It is concerned with feelings of pleasure and pain, of interest and boredom, of joy and sorrow, and of satisfaction and dissatisfaction. It is also concerned with the whole range of circumstances, from the biological to the societal that occasion suffering and enjoyment (Kahneman, 1999, p. 9).

Pilkington suggests that it is important to differentiate between happiness as an emotion, and happiness as a cognitive evaluation of one's life (Pilkington, 2016) and suggests that these evaluations are commonly analysed based upon comparisons made in relation to cultural and social features which are engineered within a neoliberal structure which presents many young people with significant challenges in gaining fully adult status (Hendry and Kloep, 2010). It has been argued that significant numbers of young people have difficulties transitioning to adulthood, and that the greatest problems come to those with least economic, intellectual and psychological resources (Côté, 2000). The author

also argues that ‘corporate capitalism, through monopolies, transnational expansions, political leveraging, and the manipulation of consumption patterns, now prevails as a new global political system’ (Côté, 2000, p. 82). Arguably, it is this global context, which Côté wrote about 20 years ago which has created the climate for the unprecedented increases in levels of unhappiness and anxiety among young people, the reality of which they perpetually seek to assuage through their lives as consumer citizens (Miles, 2015).

This study aims to explore with young people, through a process of phenomenological reduction, their understandings of subjective well-being and the extent to which Youth Work as a distinct form of work with clearly articulated characteristics influences their experiences of living well. The next chapter will set out the methodology of the study.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The rationale for the study was to generate new knowledge regarding subjective well-being (SWB) from the perspective of young people involved in Youth Work in Wales. This chapter begins with a consideration of ethics necessary for sound research, ethics being central in respecting the rights of children and young people and therefore central to the research strategy of the study. The chapter continues explaining the centrality of ethics in Youth Work based upon clear principles and values. The chapter also considers the ethics of educational research consistent with understanding the lives of young people. In its broadest sense, the chapter considers the role of the study in producing new knowledge of Youth Work and its impact upon the subjective well-being of young people. The fact that there is very little empirical evidence regarding the practice of Youth Work reinforces the need for this study as discussed in Chapter 2. The ethical perspective of the study is that the researcher wants to better understand what is good about Youth Work and how in broad terms it is good for society. The consideration of ethical conduct clearly outlines the rationale for gathering data from a group who are commonly regarded as vulnerable in society (Munford and Sanders, 2014, PYOG, 2015), hence the importance of the presentation of an in-depth discussion of ethical conduct.

The chapter continues with an exploration of the need for minimising harm, the need for the researcher to understand the potential impact of the research in conjunction with a consideration of the research value of the published report (p. 120) in the search for depth of understanding in the natural settings associated with Youth Work.

The chapter then spells out the rationale for the choice of research strategy and the suitability of in-depth interviews in achieving meaningful results in research with young

people. Central to this research strategy is the notion of double hermeneutics and the fundamental importance of interpretation necessary for understanding the voices of participants in IPA.

The chapter next explores the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of IPA, and the suitability of IPA in uncovering the subject's world of meaning. The need to uncover personal meanings and sense-making in a particular context is central to this methodological strategy.

Quality criteria adopted in the study are next made explicit, including the four broad principles of quality put forward by Yardley (2008). These criteria include sensitivity to context, commitment and rigour, transparency and coherence and lastly, the impact and importance of the research (Yardley, 2008). In relation to this study and the noted dearth of research into Youth Work and well-being, this highlights the significance of the study in uncovering the first hand experiences of young people in Youth Work.

The chapter further explores the significance of the study, identifying that well-being research with children and adults is increasingly common, however, research with young people in the age range 16-25 is very rare. The chapter continues by providing a critique of existing well-being research with young people with its focus on policy and theory which further reinforces the need for this study to be carried out in this way.

The chapter also explores the overall philosophical position of the author with a commitment to rights based, emancipatory approach to increasing the understanding of a poorly researched but important aspect of contemporary life.

The penultimate passage of the chapter situates the author and sets out the rationale for the interpretive approach rather than the more traditional approach to phenomenology requiring the researcher to be able to bracket off their own experiences. Rather, the chapter considers the need to embrace the alternative interpretive epistemological approach of IPA.

The chapter concludes with a clear identification of the problem statement of the study which recognises that researching young people's experience of SWB in Youth Work is novel and that IPA is an appropriate research methodology which can add new knowledge to our understanding of SWB among young people involved in Youth Work.

3.2. Ethical Considerations

Research with young people, however well-intentioned must always have the welfare of the participants as its first priority. In order to ensure the welfare of the children and young people involved in the research it is necessary to explore the ethics of this study with young people.

It has been noted that, fundamentally, children and young people are now routinely asked about their views on many aspects of their lives (Alderson and Morrow, 2011, p. 1). This immediately raises questions, for someone who is interested in extending this custom. If the research was to be fruitful then one would need to engage with an exploration of the meaning of this increasing tendency to 'consult' and to explore any ethical implications that may arise from this tendency.

Youth Work as a pursuit with a clearly defined set of principles, values and characteristics (WG, 2014) has a commitment to Children's Rights including to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 12 of the Convention states that children

and young people should be involved in decision making processes about matters that affect them (UNICEF, 1989).

It has also been proposed that ethical constraints on researchers have become increasingly stringent, perhaps as a response to what has been identified as research becoming more frequent, more intrusive, pluralistic and highly computerised, and arguably with findings becoming more open to abuse than ever before. Sarantakos identified that the need for some external regulation of the research process is necessary (Sarantakos, 1994, p. 21).

However, it has since also been proposed that ‘ethical qualitative research will not be achieved by passively following one code or another’ (Webster, Lewis and Brown, 2014, p. 83). The authors rather recommend the researcher to take responsibility for the research process and to think through that process from the perspective of the participant, this attribute on the part of the researcher being absolutely central to navigating a suitable course through the research process. It is important that the researcher maintain a position which is informed by codes of ethical practice while also maintaining the understanding that ethical codes and guidelines, while useful, will never be sufficient in isolation.

The study was developed with reference to the British Educational Research Association (BERA) guidelines for ethical research (British Educational Research Association, 2018). These guidelines clearly spell out principles which guide educational researchers, having what is described as an ethic of respect for the person, for knowledge, for democratic values, for the quality of educational research and for academic freedom (British Educational Research Association, 2018, p. 4). These are principles which are entirely consistent with the values of Youth Work espoused within the National Occupational Standards for Youth Work (CLD Scotland, 2019) which state the values of Youth Work as ‘participation and active involvement of young people’, secondly the ‘value of equity,

diversity and inclusion’, thirdly the ‘value of partnership with young people and others’ and lastly of ‘personal, social and political development’ (CLD Scotland, 2019, p. 5).

What this exploration of the values of Youth Work demonstrates is that these values compel those engaged in its practice (and, by extension, its research) to better understand the lived experiences of young people. The pursuit of this aim has acted as the impetus for this particular study and these values are entirely consistent with sound practice in educational research and of Youth Work in the United Kingdom. These synergies provided a well-grounded context within which to carry out the research.

At a macro level Youth Work in Wales is a practice which is underpinned by the ‘Rights of Children and Young Persons Measure’, (WAG, 2011) which strengthens and builds on the rights-based approach to making policy for children and young people in Wales. The Act requires that Welsh Ministers must have due regard to the rights in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child whenever they use any of their legal powers or duties (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2018, p. 1). This ensures a high level of accountability for the implementation of Children’s Rights in Wales.

The Youth Service in Wales has a code of occupational ethics which clearly acknowledges that ‘evaluating the impact of the involvement of young people in Youth Service programmes is complex and involves the use of a wide range of methods’ (Education and Training Standards Wales, 2012, p. 4). This approach is consistent with the principles of social research and paves the way for research methods within this study which foster the active involvement of young people as powerful actors. This code of occupational ethics also takes note that ‘workers have a particular responsibility to maintain and enhance the physical, emotional and educational well-being of the young people they work with’ (ETS Wales, 2012, p. 5). This again reinforces the suitability of this research topic as one which

has meaning and importance in making an original contribution to knowledge, not only to the well-being of young people in Wales but to the occupation of Youth Work.

3.3. Ethics – a critical view

The vision for and conduct of social research is commonly influenced by a range of factors including the values and personal beliefs of the researcher. Understanding the role and influence of the researcher, first of all as a human being in this study is an appropriate place to begin to explore the ethics of this study.

I am committed to identifying original knowledge in Youth Work – a form of practice which is sadly under-researched or at the very least one where research is under-published. One of the values important to the researcher is of working with and understanding his role in the research process, following an approach where, like Cooper, the pursuit of accuracy and credibility is vital (Cooper, 2011, p. 55).

It is necessary for the researcher to understand the importance of accuracy in the very process of the research, ‘carefully describing things as they appear to consciousness’ (Moran, 2004, p. 5). This research concerns itself with discovering the ‘first person truths’ (Moran, 2004, p. 15) in the pursuit of well-being through a philosophical method it will be important to ‘let things manifest themselves’ (Moran, 2004, p. 21). It has been suggested that the concept of authenticity and Derrida’s notion of ‘differance’ provides a vehicle for understanding how the process of realisation one goes through in imagining wanting to write a story or speaking in for example a focus group. In this example, the subject must identify that he or she has something to contribute on the subject and must have a strong enough feeling to want to express that view. As the subject begins to speak or to write then the idea becomes articulated and can then become real (Russon, 2008, p. 95).

Bryman has suggested that values reflect either the personal beliefs or the feelings of the researcher (Bryman, 2001, p. 22), the values of the researcher have undeniably influenced the thinking behind this study. Personal values have also shaped the conduct of the study, and helped shape its vision, aims and methodology. Sound ethical values are necessary in research in Youth Work as in many related occupations for, as noted by Greig et al ‘in many professions there remains a lack of specific ethical guidance about doing research with children and young people, which is probably partially attributed to the place that children and young people have held historically in society’ (Greig et al, 2013, p. 246). In recent years there have been steps taken to guide those seeking to carry out research with children and young people (UNICEF, 2002; Schenk and Williamson, 2005). There remains, sadly, a lack of sector specific guidance for those wanting to carry out research within the youth service in Wales. Although the code of occupational ethics for the youth service in Wales states that workers are accountable to their occupation and have responsibilities to ‘share developments in theory and practice through the mechanisms within the occupation’ (ETS Wales, 2012, p. 12).

The short lived strategic group for the youth service in Wales developed a helpful document producing guidance for the stakeholders of Youth Work in Wales. The document, *Youth Work in Wales: Principles and purposes* (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2018) states clearly the principles and purposes of youth work in Wales but importantly fails to take the opportunity to revisit the role of ethics and an ethical approach to working with, or, indeed conducting research with young people in what is avowedly an educational pursuit.

The concept of ethics is a complex one, concerned with what is good for society and the individuals within it. This study is carried out to ultimately uncover worthwhile

knowledge, the pursuit of which has been identified as ‘the prime ethical responsibility of the researcher’ (Hammersley and Traianou, 2012, p. 6).

Processes of ethical approval for research with human participants are acknowledged as having become increasingly stringent (Taylor and Mackie, 2014, p. 257), over time having become more systematised with greater emphasis on accountability, performance management and quality assurance (Shaw and Barrett, 2006), these factors could be interpreted as another manifestation of the spread of neoliberalism.

My search for understanding has been driven by a critical Marxian disposition, at odds with an increasing social conservatism. For instance, in attempting to critique the all-important consideration of ethics in the research process it is necessary to explore some of the issues which underlie traditional approaches to research within organisations embedded within the social sciences. This Marxian approach is also one which works with values, rather than assuming that values are neutral and can be discounted as within orthodox social science (Jary and Jary, 1991).

Arguably, it may be the case that the agencies involved in commissioning and resourcing research are concerned with right and wrong for the purest of reasons or, on the other hand, they could be more concerned with the minimisation of reputational or financial risk to the institution if a subject were to be harmed or to be unhappy with their experience of research. Indeed there may be a third concern which is a mixture of the two positions. As a researcher approaching the research from a critical perspective these factors may be entirely understandable but to what extent can these concerns, these risks, influence research within such a context.

As has been noted, researchers adopting a critical perspective concerned for example with bringing about emancipation may feel that ethical considerations should be applied differently depending on the researcher's assessment of their social situation, their level of power or their oppression (Hammersley and Traianou, 2012, p. 6) so in a sense this suggests that research ethics be plastic, capable of being moulded by the social researcher, depending on the values, the principles, the experiences of the researcher and those with whom the research is being conducted. There exist of course risks for the researcher, the sponsor and those being researched if research were to be carried out in a careless or thoughtless manner, particularly one which failed to give sufficient weight to the ethics of each individual study.

In order to support the research community to minimise the chances of subsequent ethical dilemmas the British Educational Research Association have set out clear ethical principles for the guidance of researchers across the spectrum of educational research (British Educational Research Association, 2018). These principles include firstly minimising harm, secondly respecting autonomy, thirdly, protecting privacy, fourthly offering reciprocity and lastly, treating people with equity (Hammersley and Traianou, 2012). In addition, a sensible approach to the assessment of risk within research though is also a reasonable strategy to protect the welfare and interests of the researcher (Shaw and Barrett, 2006).

Potential concerns with this study will of course emanate as a result of the subjects of the study, arising from conducting research with young people themselves. It has been suggested that children and young people have traditionally held positions of vulnerability within society. Researchers and practitioners have as a result been instrumental in strengthening ethical codes of practice in response to protect the best interests of children and young people (Greig et al, 2013, p. 246) and that these codes of practice must shape

our behaviour as moral human beings in working with children and young people. This is an approach entirely consistent with Youth Work as Bernard Davies has proposed, Youth Work seeks to tip balances of power and control in young people's favour (Davies, 2010, p. 3).

3.4. Minimising harm

Youth Work has long had a role in child protection and safeguarding of children and young people. Understanding of the impact of the role of the Youth Worker as researcher is of paramount importance in this regard. In a sense the role of Youth Work practice in maintaining the welfare of children and young people is a form of applied ethics with the reflective practitioner (and researcher) being faced with constant questions about the greater good of young people, of how the moral reasoning of the youth worker is enacted. These questions flow from earlier times and resonate with humanist ideas concerning the dignity and worth of all people and an understanding that the lives of human beings cannot simply be reduced to components (Bugental, 1964).

Consistent with the vision for this study it is imperative that young people as subjects are respected as individuals with the capacity to make decisions in whether or not to take part in the study. The study has a democratic, emancipatory approach, and seeks to improve the lot of young people involved in the youth service in Wales. In that sense nothing could be more central to the study than supporting the SWB of the young people involved. At all stages of the study the researcher has sought to recognise situations which may have arisen that could cause young people harm and minimise the chances of young people being adversely affected by their participation in the research. A utilitarian approach, based upon ideas originally proposed by both Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill have informed the

study. Ideas of the morally 'right' action leading to the most aggregate happiness for the greatest number of people (Warburton, 2014, p. 169) help provide guidance to the research. It is certainly hoped that the publication of results from the study will contribute original knowledge to the field of Youth Work and also increase understanding of the import of SWB among Youth Work practitioners.

Youth Work encourages young people to broaden their understanding of the world. This aim is central to models of non-formal learning and as such young people involved in the study will be regarded as co-owners of it. It is hoped that, as an epistemological positioning, both the researcher and researched can collaborate to generate new knowledge and understanding of Youth Work and young people. The intention of the study is to critically explore how the SWB of young people can be maximised by communicating the results of the research and subsequently influencing policy and practice. I have been mindful of the necessity not to promise young people anything in relation to the results of the study, merely that the results may influence decision makers and may improve training for youth workers.

The preceding passages have identified numerous sources of guidance for this study. These have included a code of occupational ethics for the youth service in Wales (ETS Wales, 2012), along with another code of ethics for research in education (BERA, 2018). It has also been noted that the proliferation of these sorts of normative codes do not go far enough in informing ethical practice and that reflection, discussion and empirical study play a vital part in the development of good ethical practice (Webster, Lewis and Brown, 2014). Sound ethical conduct is imperative in all research and especially in research with special populations. In this regard, children and young people are a special population.

In order to address these complex issues impacting the lives of young people and the communities of which they are members, I have adopted a theoretical framework based on a critical theoretical approach which has enabled me to view the study through a critical lens and adopt practices which reflect that commitment to criticality and sound values.

Key concepts within the study have included the ubiquity of the concept of well-being (p. 110, p. 112, p. 114) and I have rejected the catch all approach to understanding well-being, refining my approach to focus on subjective well-being based on life satisfaction, life meaning and happiness (p. 86, p. 91). Youth work is another key concept within the study, youth work is accepted as a form of practice with very clear characteristics, intentions, principles and values (p. 15, p. 31, p. 45). The study acknowledges that human beings are influenced by and influence their communities and as such theoretical models have been utilised to aid analysis, specifically, an ecological systems approach has been utilised (p. 18-19).

In relation to the methodological underpinnings of the study, phenomenology has been invaluable. Phenomenology is another key theoretical concept within the study, I have been mindful that phenomenology is seen both as a philosophical position and a research method (p. 122). These key theoretical concepts are clear indicators of where and how I have situated myself within the study, ultimately confirming phenomenology as an appropriate framework within which to conduct the study.

Phenomenology was selected as an appropriate philosophical starting point, where interpretive phenomenological enquiry is an effective research methodology within which to carry out a critical exploration of the extent to which Youth Work can help enhance the subjective well-being of young people. Phenomenology, as a qualitative approach has the

intention of enabling the researcher to ‘strive for depth of understanding in natural settings’ (Greig, Taylor and MacKay, 2013, p. 172).

The focus for this study is an exploration of the impact of Youth Work on the subjective well-being of young people in Wales. Having explicitly discussed how I demonstrated my positionality within the research, including the theoretical framework and key concepts of the study, this methodology chapter will summarise key points from the literature review and identify key research questions. The chapter will continue by providing a clear rationale for the choice of research methods, a clear consideration of the ontology and epistemology of IPA, a discussion of ethical decisions within the study before detailing aspects of quality measures in the research process.

3.5. Rationale for the choice of research methods

In order to generate worthwhile results, appropriate research methods have been employed within this study in line with the theoretical framework detailed above. The in-depth interview strategy which has been adopted with young people is an ideal method to generate meaningful results about what young people themselves say enhances and/ or diminishes their subjective well-being. Phenomenology, as a qualitative approach has the intention of enabling the researcher to ‘strive for depth of understanding in natural settings’ (Greig, Taylor and MacKay, 2013, p. 172).

It has been suggested that ‘most researchers engaged in research on adolescence probably, in principle, agree that many phenomena are best understood within an interactionist, process oriented framework’ (Bergman, 2001). This study has worked with young people using methods based upon this interactionist approach. The in-depth interview has been described as an opportunity for the researcher to ‘facilitate an interaction which permits participants to tell their own stories in their own words’, or as a ‘conversation with a

purpose' (Smith et al. 2009, p. 57). This approach to data gathering resonates with the researcher and represents the aim of the interview process, to enable and encourage young people to speak about their experiences.

This study has adopted methods with the aim of identifying new knowledge, uncovering knowledge through the in-depth interview in this way constitutes 'building knowledge from the bottom up through observations of the world' (Ormston et. al. 2014, p. 7). The identification of new knowledge through in-depth interviews with young people is entirely respectful to the traditions of phenomenology and of the dialogical basis of youth work (see Table 1).

Phenomenology has been defined as 'the meaning people attach to a particular phenomenon, concept or idea' (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard and Snape, 2014, p. 13). It has been claimed that 'a phenomenological study describes the meaning of the lived experiences for several individuals about a concept or the phenomenon' (Creswell, 1998, p. 51). Relating phenomenology to the natural sciences, it has been suggested that natural science:

takes the world for granted and wants to understand it. Phenomenology goes a step further and doesn't even want to take the world for granted. That is, doesn't automatically want to say that something 'is', but it wants to understand what motivates a conscious creature to say something 'is' (Giorgi, 1997, p. 239).

Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) has been associated with 'capturing people's accounts and reflections to explore and interpret the meanings attached and the 'sense' that is made of them' (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard and Snape, 2014, p. 14).

Interpretive phenomenology (IPA) is

a qualitative research approach committed to the examination of how people make sense of their major life experiences. IPA is

phenomenological in that it is concerned with exploring experience in its own terms (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012, p. 1).

In relation to the interview as a research method, Kvale and Brinkman have offered two metaphors in relation to interviewing (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 49), the first relates to a miner, the miner seeking knowledge which exists and which is later analysed separately by the research. The second metaphor is of a traveller whose journey to the destination is in company with others, where knowledge is constructed with others. It is this second epistemological genre which I find myself aligned with. Kvale and Brinkman suggest that the traveller metaphor suggests 'a postmodern constructive understanding that involves a conversational approach to social research' (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 49). Further, I agree with Ritchie et al who have suggested that inductive logic has value in this context and that this involves building knowledge from the bottom up through observation of the world which provides the basis for the researcher building theories as a result of the research process (Ritchie et al, 2014, p. 7).

This research study has been carried out within a qualitative tradition. It has been noted that there is general agreement that the factors that determine whether qualitative methods should be used at all are centrally related to the objectives of the research and that these factors are whether the phenomena being studied are: ill-defined/ not well understood, deeply rooted, complex, specialist, delicate or intangible or sensitive (Ritchie and Ormston, 2014, pp. 37-38). It is extremely clear that in this study that well-being is not universally understood, that many of the issues which act on young people are deep rooted and complex. It is clear also that many of the issues which interact in relation to Youth Work and well-being are intangible. Using this model put forward by Ritchie and Ormston it becomes clear that a solely qualitative methodology, utilising in-depth interviews is an appropriate research strategy for this study.

Within the qualitative tradition this study utilises a Phenomenological approach based on 9 semi structured interviews with young people who have been involved in different forms of Youth Work in different communities across Wales. Authors claim that a ‘Semi structured life world interview attempts to understand themes of the lived everyday world from the subjects’ own perspectives’ (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 27). This approach to exploring the lived experience is entirely appropriate to this study, the aim of which is to carry out ‘a critical exploration of the extent to which Youth Work can contribute to the well-being of young people in Wales’.

For the purposes of this study the interpretive phenomenological approach is entirely suitable. This approach has enabled the researcher to generate data and to analyse and interpret that data through a hermeneutic reductionist approach after Heidegger (1927) initially explicated in his seminal work *Being and Time* (Heidegger, 1927). This interpretive approach to the research has been adopted in this study rather than the more traditional approach to the phenomenological method proposed by Husserl which necessitates the researcher bracketing himself off from the process of data generation and analysis to arrive at a state of consciousness where he is able to go beyond his own lived experience, to pursue the phenomenon in its pure, universal sense (Tymieniecka, 2003). The interpretive approach adopted here differs from the more traditional descriptive approach to phenomenological enquiry following Husserl by recognising that impartiality (as a result of ‘bracketing’) in this study was impossible and that the phenomenological researcher becomes inevitably enmeshed with the research experience (Reiners, 2012, p. 2) and cannot thus successfully bracket off his experiences.

From a purely academic perspective understanding bracketing is fundamental to the selection of methodology, with pure (Husserlian) phenomenology regarding bracketing (in

theory) as a very necessary part of the process of reduction of data to its ultimate essence. However, there are examples from the literature where even this descriptive approach contains elements of interpretation (Giorgi, 1997, pp. 243, 247).

In this sense the role of the researcher is crucial in adopting research methods which expose the real essence of the subject of interest. The role of the researcher is crucial in the interpretation of research results. In this study the descriptive approach has been rejected in favour of an interpretive methodology which more follows closely the approach of Heidegger (1927).

Hermeneutics is an important element of the interpretive approach to phenomenology and is concerned with ‘examining how a phenomenon appears, and the analyst is implicated in facilitating and making sense of this appearance’ (Smith et al, 2009, p. 28). The researcher is cognisant of the role of interpretation, both on the part of the research participant and the researcher, it is necessary to appreciate from this realisation that this study follows a process of double hermeneutics in practice where a presentation of experiential themes arising from the research are paired with the researchers own interpretation of how the phenomenon appears (Pietkiewicz and Smith, 2012).

In order to understand the lived experience of young people it is helpful for the researcher to be able to have a view of their lives, adopting an interpretive phenomenological approach enables the researcher to expose the consciousness of the individual subject, in a sense it provides ‘access to whatever is given to awareness, since nothing can be spoken about or referred to without implicitly including consciousness’ (Giorgi, 1997, p, 236).

Understanding that individuals are influenced by their communities of place, it is necessary for the study to take this influence into account as far as possible. In order to enable this

understanding, it is necessary to consider models of the analysis of community and social structures and how these may elucidate understanding of the lives of young people in Wales. Bronfenbrenner put forward the social ecology model which offers a structure within which the researcher can begin to better understand the social, cultural and structural influences acting upon participants. Bronfenbrenner suggested that there are systems which impact on the lives of (young) people, these being the microsystem (the direct environment people experience), secondly the mesosystem which involves the relationships between microsystems, thirdly, the exosystem which does not directly contain the young person (for example the parental employment and parental relationships), the macrosystem which refers to the broader cultural characteristics. Bronfenbrenner later added a further system, described as the chronosystem which includes shifts in the lifespan, for example moving home or in case of parental divorce (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). This model offers possibilities in researching the lived experience of young people, particularly as Greig et al have noted 'perception is held in community with others' (Greig et al, 2013, p. 77). An adapted model based on the work of Bronfenbrenner has aided in providing structure during the process of analysis of the data (Watling Neal and Neal, 2013).

The interview enables the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomena, to enable the analysis and expression of the structure of the phenomenon (Giorgi, 1997, p. 247) therefore, within the qualitative tradition the in-depth interview method is a highly effective research strategy.

It has been suggested that in relation to the lives of individuals rather than simply attempting to assess quality of life there should be a more nuanced assessment, not merely assessing the lived experience in terms of one or two overarching dimensions, rather to be inclined towards an approach which reflects the variety of ways in which people order their

lives (Carr-Hill, 2012, p. 39). Other researchers have also rejected the inclination of policy makers to rely on large scale and economic measures to gauge social progress, suggesting that rather than focusing on national accounts, a focus on the individual would enable a more valuable assessment of social progress. Seers suggested that:

There are virtually no statistics anywhere on most of the aspects of life that really matter – the average distance people have to carry water and food; the number without shoes; the extent of overcrowding; the prevalence of violence; how many are unable to multiply one number by another, or summarise their own country's history (Seers, 1983, pp. 5-6).

So, approaching this study from a critical, interactionist perspective it becomes clear that the qualitative methodology and the interview method adopted have enabled the researcher to critically explore the extent to which Youth Work may enable young people to enhance their subjective well-being. The interview must respect and work with the individual perspectives and experiences of young people themselves. This further reinforces the selection of the in-depth interview as an effective investigative strategy.

It has also been suggested that:

the qualitative research framework is based on assumptions about the subjective nature of children and young people, knowledge and research methods. The qualitative approach is based on the scientific activity of induction. Greig, Taylor and McKay (2013, p. 71)

3.6. The Ontology and Epistemology of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

As first set out in the introduction (pp. 4-5), this study has been conducted within a constructionist ontology. This ontological perspective works with the understanding that subjective well-being is an aspect of life which is indeed an observable phenomenon. It has been proposed that as researchers, 'the only world we can study is a semiotic world of meanings, represented in the signs and symbols that people use to think and communicate' (Stainton-Rogers, 2006, p. 79). The in depth interview approach of IPA is an ideal means

by which to uncover the meanings and real understandings of subjective well-being young people hold. The desire to really listen to young people themselves is a fundamental aspect underpinning this whole study.

The study has sought to uncover general themes which young people associate with subjective well-being. In the search to understand these meanings, the study has adopted an ontological position arising from an understanding that the social world is made up of representations constructed and shared by people in particular contexts. This approach to describing the nuances of ontology has been described as subtle or collective idealism (Ormston et al, 2013, p. 5). The participants in this study share experiences of youth work and of adolescence in Wales and the ontological position adopted within the study is a key aspect of the research strategy which has the stated aim to generate new knowledge regarding how young people experience youth work and whether and how these lived experiences impact on their subjective well-being.

The epistemological underpinnings of the IPA approach utilised within this study has involved the researcher seeking knowledge about how young people see their world. Fundamentally, to identify what new knowledge is necessary, what is the gap in knowledge that the study can address and how best can the study uncover this knowledge.

This study adopts an epistemological stance from IPA as illustrated by Smith et al when they note that one of the key features of IPA is a 'focus on personal meaning and sense-making in a particular context' (Smith et al. 2009, p. 45). The approach of interpretive phenomenology of the study is based on an understanding that young people's accounts of

their experiences reveal something about their private thoughts and feelings. It is in these private thoughts and feelings that the essence of subjective well-being lies.

IPA requires a combination of phenomenological and hermeneutic insights. It is phenomenological in attempting to get as close as possible to the personal experience of the participant, but recognizes that this inevitably becomes an interpretive endeavour for both participant and researcher. Without the phenomenology, there would be nothing to interpret; without the hermeneutics, the phenomenon would not be seen (Smith et al., 2009, p. 37).

The in-depth interview is an approach which is appropriate to enable young people to discuss and explore their experiences of youth work and how this has impacted on their subjective well-being. It has been proposed that it is implicit in the formulation of research questions that assumptions will be made about what the data can tell us. In this study, research questions have been identified which enable young people to explore their experiences of youth work, high level research questions have been identified, for a list of these, see section 4.3, for an illustration of the topics explored within the interviews themselves, see section 4.11. As recommended by Smith et al in the seminal text on IPA, questions in an IPA study should be directed towards meaning, rather than difference or causality (Smith et al, 2009, p. 47). This search for meaning has underpinned this whole study, through the process of hermeneutic reduction, the search for greater understanding of the meanings of youth work and subjective well-being has been a consistent source of motivation for the researcher through challenging times. Another motivation for the study is the provision of evidence of the potential impact of Youth Work on young people in Wales. In order to provide robust empirical data on any impact, clear quality criteria are necessary. The next section of the thesis considers quality criteria in qualitative research.

3.7. Quality Criteria in Qualitative Research

As part of the intention of the study, particularly the intention to influence policy, rigour and the application of quality criteria are important.

It has been noted that there is a growing dissatisfaction with qualitative research being evaluated according to the criteria ‘for validity and reliability’ as in quantitative research (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012, p. 180). The suitability of traditional markers of quality in human sciences research, such as validity and reliability are being called into question. Upon further examination these concepts are of limited value to a qualitative, phenomenological study of this nature. It is proposed that qualitative research should be judged by completely different success criteria (Lewis, Ritchie, Ormston and Morrell, 2014, p. 357).

The development of desirable criteria in qualitative research has been perceived as a response to policy makers viewing qualitative evidence as of ‘lower status’ than quantitative evidence (Ritchie and Ormston, 2014, p. 30), and that qualitative data has inherently less value than statistical data. A number of models for assessing quality in qualitative research have been produced (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2014, p. 179). Quality standards for qualitative research have been proposed, including the need for credibility (Cooper, 2011) rigour, accuracy, and authenticity (Lincoln and Guba, 1994). Enquiry into appropriate criteria by which to judge the quality of methodological approaches is an ongoing process. One model for judging qualitative research has been put forward, based on eight criteria, that good qualitative research has (a) worthy topic, (b) rich rigor, (c) sincerity, (d) credibility, (e) resonance, (f) a significant contribution, (g) ethics, and (h) meaningful coherence (Tracy, 2010, p. 837). According to the author these eight criteria set out a common language of qualitative best practices that can be recognized across the board as integral by a variety of audiences (Tracy, 2010, p. 837). While these characteristics have been proposed as a means of identifying quality, the proliferation of models has been described as an illustration of the creative complexity of the qualitative methodological landscape (Tracy, 2010, p. 837). The complexity of this landscape is

evident, and in order to clearly identify the criteria by which IPA studies can be judged, it is necessary to turn specifically to the key IPA literature as a means of identifying clear measures of quality in phenomenological research.

In IPA, a model of quality assessment has been suggested which offers four broad principles, the first being sensitivity to context, the second being commitment and rigour, the third broad principle is transparency and coherence and the last broad principle is impact and importance of the research (Yardley, 2008). These parameters of quality have been adopted as methodological underpinnings for this study. Phenomenological enquiry is an ideal methodology for this study, having been identified as a means of ‘exploring, describing, interpreting and situating the means by which our participants make sense of their experiences’ (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012, p. 40).

The following passage will illustrate how this study has adhered to the four broad quality principles proposed by Yardley.

Broad Principle 1. Sensitivity to context

The study demonstrated sensitivity to the location of the research, by acknowledging the existing literature on the topic of youth work (see Figure. 1) and subjective well-being (see chapter 2). The research also demonstrated sensitivity to its context by gathering the experiences of young people from different types of communities across Wales, from rural communities, to urban communities and also in former industrial areas (see Figure. 3 and Section 2.1, the limitations of the research).

Sensitivity to the context is also demonstrated in the extent and depth of the data gathered, over 32,200 words have been transcribed from the interviews, this raw data has been subjected to a rigorous process of analysis (see section 4.3). The adoption of IPA as an

approach specifically designed to expose the essence of social phenomena (see Section 5.3) means that it is an ideal tool by which to understand and work with the sensitivity of the participant's lived experience.

In addition, the identification of and subsequent communication with the gatekeepers (see section 2.10) and respondents represents a high level of sensitivity to the context of young people's experiences. Young people were identified as a result of the purposive sampling strategy adopted within the study (see section 4.1). Another example of the sensitivity to the context of the study has been demonstrated by the interactional nature of the in-depth interviews adopted within the study (see section 2.5 and section 5.3). The interviews involved close attention to detail, the interviewer being mindful of the importance of reflection in action (see section 3.4 and chapter 4, p 135). The researcher was conscious of adopting an agile stance, of remaining open to identifying key points during the interviews and making notes during the interviews themselves.

Broad Principle 2. Commitment and rigour

A commitment to the condition of the young people of Wales has been the foundation of this study. A commitment based upon an approach to anti-oppressive practice (p. 4) informal and non-formal learning (p. 158) and children's rights (p.112). This study has demonstrated a rigorous approach, inasmuch as it has been well designed (for a graphic illustration of the research design see Figure 2 and Figure 3), well-conducted, and it has generated well-founded and trustworthy evidence (see p. 135) (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard and Snape, 2014, p. 23).

The study included a highly appropriate sample group, drawn from young people in a variety of settings across Wales (p. 133). The quality of the interview approach, the transcription and thematic analysis were completed in conjunction with the model put

forward by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2012) see page 141 for a fuller exploration of the process of analysis. The analysis itself was carried out thoroughly and systematically, ensuring a consistently idiographic approach. Interviews were balanced, building on the youth work approach, approaching the participants in a way with which they would be familiar, throughout the interviews the researcher engaged thoroughly and systematically, looking for cues and digging deeper in the interviews when judged appropriate.

Broad Principle 3. Transparency and coherence

The study has sought to clearly illustrate its approach, its methodology and methods in order to ensure the interpretation of the data and conclusions are meaningful. The study has real coherence (section 3.6), in terms of the values which instigated it, through the process of identifying a suitable research approach, to the identification of participants (p. 136). The study is consistently interpretive in its approach. The process of analysis (p. 140) is consistent with established practice in IPA and has generated coherent and meaningful results. The whole study respects phenomenological and hermeneutic demands of social research, and this is apparent throughout the thesis.

Broad Principle 4. Impact and importance of the research results

It has been identified that there is a dearth of research into the practice of youth work in Wales (p. 107). It is the hope of the researcher that the results generated by the study will have a significant impact on policy and practice of youth work in Wales. With rates of well-being among young people in Wales showing no signs of improving (Jones, 2018) the findings of the study could potentially add considerably to public understanding of factors which impact positively on the subjective well-being of young people. With poor levels of subjective well-being among young people and a gradual decrease in youth service budgets across Wales (p. 12) it is the hope of the researcher that the findings of this study may be able to play a part in raising awareness of the potential for youth work to enhance SWB of

young people in Wales. This is the main contribution to knowledge generated by this study, specifically the coherent and detailed understanding of exactly how youth work and youth workers can improve the SWB of young people.

The chapter continues with a consideration of the importance of the study and why it is necessary. The following passages will consider further research questions and the perspective of the researcher and how this influences the ontological position of the study.

The chapter will further consider specific aspects of research with children and young people and how these aspects have been worked with. The chapter will also set out the rationale for participant selection and why the interpretive phenomenological method was adopted. Subsequently the chapter will explore the process of data analysis, with the aim of making clear the reasons for approaching this study in this particular way.

Looking into the work of another German philosopher, Martin Heidegger is instructive when seeking understanding of the role of the researcher in the phenomenological process, Heidegger suggests that ‘an interpretation of human existence cannot be neutral, dispassionate, theoretical contemplation, but must take into account the involvement of the enquirer (Moran, 2004, p. 197). I have come to realise that the all-important bracketing out necessary in traditional phenomenological enquiry and that a more interpretive approach will be more appropriate in this study.

Likewise, it is suggested that Heidegger was very aware that human understanding ‘grows or decays according to the kind of lives we are leading and the kind of cultural situation we inhabit’ (Moran, 2004, p. 237). This reinforces the importance of the researcher looking at Subjective Well Being (SWB) to truly understand it – the need to understand its

components and to be alert to the kind of situation which gives rise to well-being or which may conversely cover it up or conceal its essence.

Cooper, when researching evaluation in Youth Work suggested the importance of credibility, not validity (Cooper, 2011) in this study the researcher will be mindful of this recommendation. It is anticipated that adhering to the four broad principles set out by Yardley (2008) will add to the rigour and value of the study to policy makers and practitioners. Professional networks have been drawn upon to gain entry and approval to collect data. I have made contact with Youth Work providers to enable me to gain access to young people with suitable experiences to draw upon. These gatekeepers are in the best position to enable me to gain access to young people, a very rich source of data.

Data collection took place between January and August 2016; this allowed sufficient capacity for unanticipated, emergent themes to be responded to. This timescale allowed for the possibility of inclement weather, for example if data gathering were to take place during the autumn or winter period solely, this may have impacted negatively.

Child well-being sets out to measure the quality of children's lives. However, as simple as the concept may initially appear, there remains no unique, universally accepted way of measuring child well-being emerging from the literature. However, there are two broad approaches to defining and measuring child well-being. The first approach is to consider well-being as a multi-dimensional concept. In this first approach researchers decide on the important life dimensions and populate these dimensions with indicators (Thurston, 2011). Calder has suggested this approach is at risk of 'conceptual emptiness, false universality and indeterminacy of application' (Calder, 2015). The second approach is to directly ask children about how they view their well-being (Greig, Taylor and Mackay, 102; Fleming and Hudson, 2009, 115), this second approach is the one which will be utilised in this

study. The value of this approach is supported; understanding that it is indeed possible, and increasingly desirable politically, to collect meaningful and reliable data on subjective well-being (Fischer, 2009; Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi, 2009). Asking people themselves has been described as ‘the hallmark of measures of SWB, asking people to self-report, where people are asked to evaluate their lives as a whole or some aspect of it (). For example, Bradshaw and Keung tentatively concluded in their 2011 study that the subjective well-being of young people in Britain was improving, and this was potentially attributable to relationships with friends and happiness with school (Bradshaw and Keung, 2011), by exploring well-being it helps society to better understand social progress and how young people are affected. However, subsequent studies show that SWB levels are declining.

Adolescence is recognised as an important stage in the life course and in contemporary society (Griffin, 2006, 13), despite apparent material *progress*, the subjective well-being of young people in the UK in 2007 was ranked 20th out of 21 OECD countries (UNICEF, 2007). Since 2010 the United Kingdom government has taken more seriously the importance of the well-being of the population of the UK, launching a National Wellbeing Programme with the aim of ‘measuring our progress as a country, not just by our economy is growing, but by how our lives are improving; not just by our standard of living, but by our quality of life’ (Cameron, 2010). This approach to measuring national accounts of well-being does very little to illuminate the specifics of the lives of young people. This reinforces the notion that the SWB of young people at an individual level is worthy of further research.

This study has explored the meaning young people give to their involvement in Youth Work. The study has been carried out within a Youth Work context. Young people were participants in youth services, interviews were carried out within youth service buildings and young people were inevitably associate the Youth Work within this context.

Understanding Young People's Well-Being

In Wales Section 25 of the Children Act (2004) places a legal duty on local authorities to work with others to improve the well-being of children and young people, relating to physical and mental health and emotional well-being; protection from harm and neglect; education, training and recreation; the contribution made by them to society; and social and economic well-being (Children Act, 2004). In a sense the aim of this study is to explore the extent to which Youth Work has enabled, as a partner in local authority planning arrangements, local authorities and others to improve the SWB of young people.

In order to learn about the concepts of well-being and how these may be manifest in the experiences of young people there were challenges for the researcher. These challenges were epitomised in the need to identify an appropriate research design to begin to identify and draw out experiences which are essential to the essence of the topic, particularly how young people describe their experiences of subjective well-being as a result of their involvement in Youth Work. In order to pursue greater understanding of SWB among young people involved in Youth Work activities it is necessary to clarify the description of research subjects and cohort size, subsequently data collection will be discussed. To better understand SWB among young people the study explored with young people in detail their experiences of well-being and Youth Work. The purpose of this study was to explore subjective well-being and the extent to which the youth service practices Youth Work and how this practice impacts upon the SWB of young people. For the purposes of the study the youth service is defined as 'the framework by which Youth Work is delivered and is done through the local authority, major voluntary youth organisations and through independent local projects' (WLGA, no date).

It could be argued that the youth service and the relative dearth of published literature on the practice of Youth Work is increasingly rare in contemporary times when occupations are more and more concerned with notions of increasing professionalisation, sharing good practice and developing what has been described as evidence led interventions in order to ‘support children for the sake of the future health, wealth and security of the state’ (Piper, 2008, p. 163). Youth Work seems at odds with this broad movement, this may be due to a number of factors which are worthy of further research elsewhere. Anecdotally, a high proportion of Youth Work practitioners have, almost by accident rather than design found themselves working in Youth Work, often initially on a voluntary basis. I became involved in Youth Work as a volunteer myself. Youth Work is rarely a conscious career decision for young people. This is certainly the position I found myself in at the beginning of my involvement in Youth Work. Not unlike myself, many youth workers may be in a position where they are developing coping mechanisms as a result of not being particularly academic while at school. Many youth workers may, as a result of a lack of conventional academic success lack confidence in their abilities to research and to write for an academic audience.

Experience suggests that youth workers sometimes lack an enthusiasm for reading and putting this together with a lack of conventional academic success, this may go some way to suggesting reasons for a lack of engagement with formal research and writing in the occupation of Youth Work. While at a Youth Work conference for example, it can be noted that youth workers are, in general fairly confident in their abilities to discuss and debate Youth Work and are often extremely proud of describing and analysing their work, however this confidence in the debate and the dialogue rarely spills over into taking up a pen and writing about their experiences. This view commonly held by youth workers has been summarised perfectly as ‘why do people who work with children need theory?’ (Greig et al, 2013, p. 22).

There are Youth Work academics, those who have bucked this trend and who have researched and written extremely well on the topic of Youth Work (Rose, 2006, Wylie, 2003, 2010, Williamson, 2010, 2012). These efforts have been exemplary they have often been too little to alter the perception of Youth Work by those in positions of power over resources. This publishing for an influential audience has been identified as one of the main reasons for building a case for Youth Work, one which is at risk of being subsumed by other professions rather than complementing them (Wylie, 2010, p. 2). There are a number of notable studies of Youth Work including an evaluation of the Impact of Youth Work in England (Merton et al, 2004) which look in detail at outcomes and impact and many other influences on what the report describes as the impact of Youth Work. Another report prepared by the Youth Affairs Unit which evaluated young people's engagement in public services (Hoggarth, Boeck, Cartwright, Comfort, Payne, Tyler and Wood, 2009), a study which used a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods to examine the benefits from young people's involvement in volunteering in community contexts. Hoggarth and Smith carried out an evaluation of the impact of Connexions on Young People at Risk (Hoggarth and Smith, 2004), using a realist evaluation methodology based upon ideas of being of use to decision makers, rather than simply identifying what works to go further and explore what works in which circumstances and for whom (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). This approach of young people at risk can be regarded as a symptom of the social climate created as a result of the deficit perspective discussed above (p. 12). More recently the Irish Government commissioned the Institute of Education at the University of London to carry out an international review of the impact of Youth Work activities which looked at 175 studies which provided empirical evidence on the impact of Youth Work. The review concluded that 'better evidence' is needed to underpin the design and delivery of Youth Work and that Youth Work should seek to develop a far more participatory ethos to include children, young people and their families and communities in the design and

conduct of Youth Work research (Dickson, Vigurs and Newman, 2013). This recommendation is entirely consistent with the philosophy, principles and values of Youth Work as identified by the sector (LLUK, 2008, LSIS, 2012, CLD Scotland, 2019).

I do feel though that Youth Work is in many ways a philosophical activity and that submitting to the challenge of 'better evidence' for such an activity does not recognise its complexities. For example, there is no evidence that prison works to prevent crime or to rehabilitate, yet the state still invests in a prison service (Moore, 2015).

So, quite simply, in comparison to other forms of work in the sphere of education and social welfare research into and subsequent publication of the actual face to face practice of Youth Work is limited. There are some notable exceptions most commonly identified within the journal Youth and Policy but as an illustration of the six articles within one particular edition of the journal there are two articles analysing work in Scandinavia, four from an English context and none from Wales. This is not an unexpected finding but one which highlights the importance of this study in generating new knowledge about the practice and outcomes of Youth Work, specifically in a Welsh context.

3.8. Research with children and young people

Working with and engaging in research with children and young people brings particular challenges, some of which have been summarised by Greig, Taylor and MacKay who propose that to help the researcher better understand research with children and young people the researcher must appreciate that 'the nature of the child/ young person is subjective, not objectively knowable or measurable' and that 'the child/ young person has their own perspective but are also socially determined' and, indeed, 'that theories are inextricable from context and culture' (Greig, Taylor and MacKay, 2013, p. 66). The considerable experience of the researcher in working with children and young people

would support the challenges identified by Greig and colleagues which are also consistent with the period of youth being a phenomenon in and of itself, neither child or adult.

Promising approaches have however, been suggested in researching the lives of children and young people; bearing in mind the complexity of children and young people's lived experiences. It is recommended that researchers be mindful of pluralism, that the researcher needs to be flexible and adaptable, constructively managing conflicting views, respecting and tolerating diversity and uncertainty, secondly that all those involved in research have a valuable contribution to make in participating in the decision making process if results are to be creative, the third point offered by Howe is that as researchers we need to be considerate to the needs and perspectives of young people and remain aware of the power held by the researcher over the lives of the young people involved. Lastly, Howe suggests that the researcher should be open to an exploration of how power is used and particularly regarding the consequences of their power for children and young people (Howe, 1994).

In regard to the theoretical underpinning informing this study the researcher has adopted a critical perspective informed by ideas of members of the Frankfurt School of Critical Theory (Mosleh and Golyar, 2009). The critical sociological perspective appreciates that the contexts of young people are complex and that this necessitates questions which have been addressed within this chapter 'how do we begin to research with young people', 'do we focus on their individual characteristics', 'their relationships with friends', (Greig et al, 2013, p. 55) in summary, how this research can capture the meanings young people ascribe to the Youth Work which they have been involved in.

It has been stated that children and young people who are willing participants in research enjoy the interview process and that this very enjoyment may enable the researcher access

to dimensions of information not otherwise available, such as non-verbal cues on feelings (Greig, Taylor and McKay, 2013, p. 160).

These themes within the research process resonate with those of the humanism of Jean Paul Sartre who emphasises the dignity of humanity, the centrality of human choice and the realisation that human beings create what they are (Priest, 2001). This concept of humanism has further similarities with the characteristics of Youth Work identified within the literature review but which are worth restating here, and these characteristics help provide an appropriate context for this study:

1. The voluntary involvement by young people who have chosen to engage in the process
 2. Being age specific, focused on 11-25 year olds
 3. A non-formal education approach
 4. Being driven by a young-people-first approach
 5. A universal approach
- (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007, p. 3)

Furthermore, the policy of Youth Work states clearly it is concerned with the whole young person, enabling young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development' (CLD Scotland, 2019). In addition, Youth Work in Wales has at its core a principle of recognising that young people have rights and Youth Work seeks to work in a rights based way (YWWRG, 2012, p. 4).

I have been mindful during the research process that some of the young people I was seeking information from may not always have had very positive dealings with establishment and authority. I remained conscious of this and sought wherever possible to minimise the potential power differentials between the young people and myself working with them as an adult (See Table 1). I adopted an informal approach with the young people, dressing informally and using informal language while working with them.

Another element of the research I felt important was that prior to the interview process I took time to speak to young people as a youth worker would, in an attempt to settle them in, to settle myself down and not to appear threatening in any way. Part of this approach required me to provide the young people with some information about myself, this was one way of seeking to tip balances of power in favour of young people (Davies, 2005, p. 9).

The following passage explores some specific elements of the methodology which take into account young people as a special group.

Children are special people, it has been noted that children are different from adults who control and describe the world (Greig et al, 2013, p. 5). Legislation exists in the United Kingdom, including the Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and also the charter of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (United Nations Children's Fund, 1989) setting out the rights all children and young people can expect including as participants within the research process.

The research process was developed and carried out in a way which anticipated young people were keen to have a say on the topic of well-being. Indeed, I anticipated this would be the case in light of much work having taken place in Wales on Children's Rights. Young people are becoming used to having a say on matters which impact on their lives and that this message has increasingly permeated society as a result of a commitment to a Children's Rights approach in Wales as a result of the nation being at the forefront of implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The right to have a say on matters affecting young people is one of the Articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (UNICEF, 1989).

To identify young people who had experience of Youth Work and of enhanced well-being I drew on a network of gatekeepers. Working through gatekeepers meant that ‘a sensitive and non-coercive approach is made’ (Ritchie et al, 2014, p. 93), respecting that young people have the right to freedom of choice and expression. I made it clear through speaking to the young people and also in the cover letter for the informed consent form for the study that participation in the research was completely voluntary. In only one case did a participant choose to withdraw during an interview session. It was reassuring to observe that he felt completely comfortable with that. Upon reflection it appeared he may have regarded the session as an extension of Youth Work and that reinforced my belief that the informal approach was a suitable strategy for this research project.

It has been suggested that an informal tone can help make research more accessible and can overcome the effect of a formal or distant relationship between researcher and participants, especially when participants are children or young people (Ritchie et al, 2014).

Another theme I was cognisant of, in working with young people, was that of the need to ask age-appropriate questions, for example avoiding the use of long and complex questions or posing more than one question at a time (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 146).

It can be seen that there are consistent themes building within this study of democracy, of self-determination, of a rights based approach, of experiences of the world being culturally informed, of Youth Work which all provide a robust and consistent context for the execution of this study using a phenomenological approach.

This study has critically explored the extent to which young people ascribe meaning to their involvement in Youth Work with the characteristics set out above and what this

means for them. By exploring any impacts on the subjective well-being of young people it is hoped the study will make an original contribution to knowledge in the field of Youth Work. It is anticipated that the study will enable better understanding of the subjective well-being of young people aged 11-25 in Wales at a time of considerable and widely acknowledged challenge (Institute for Fiscal Studies, 2014). After all, ‘young people are complex beings in a complex world. How, then, do we begin to do research with them?’ (Greig et al, 2013, p. 55).

There has recently become an apparent increase in understanding on the part of policy makers that measures other than those which are purely economic, and possibly more sustainable ways of assessing social progress are needed, for example the intention of Cameron (p. 25) demonstrates this. It has been identified in a European Union wide study that Gross Domestic Product per capita is not a good proxy for wider well-being within a country (Stewart, 2005). The United Kingdom Office for National Statistics have suggested that ‘the progress of a country should not be measured by looking just at growth in GDP, and that wider measures of social progress are needed (Office for National Statistics, no date). This view has, in principle, been cemented at the highest levels of social policy making being summarised in the Istanbul declaration which recommended that communities consider for themselves what progress means and these discourses should influence the culture of evidence-based decision making to increase the welfare of societies (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, (OECD) 2007).

This study will critically explore the relevance and impact of this approach on the lives of young people and the extent to which well-being policy in Wales is achieving results for young people not yet eligible to vote. Two visible means by which the government of Wales is showing a commitment to enhancing the well-being of the population is in the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Wellbeing of Future

Generations (Wales) Act (Welsh Government, 2015), this commitment to legislation demonstrates a significant attempt to put well-being as central tenets of life in Wales.

Within this promising policy climate, it is hoped the findings of this study will be of use to practitioners and to policy makers and will contribute original knowledge to the debate concerning the well-being of young people in Wales. As understanding around well-being develops, it is becoming more widely acknowledged that both objective and subjective measures are required to better understand well-being (Fischer, 2009; Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi, 2009). Benefits could accrue from this study in both financial and social terms. One of the criticisms of existing literature within the field of well-being research is that there are frameworks and models of well-being in existence for children and for adults (ONS, 2014), for communities (Wiseman and Brasher, 2008), for nations (OECD, 2015). What is lacking is a widely recognised framework which helps us conceptualise the well-being needs of young people aged 11-25, this is a fundamental gap in knowledge.

However, one qualitative study researching well-being among children and young people in Wales in 2010 found that young people value access to friends, feeling safe and secure and that good quality relationships were valued more highly than material possessions.

The study also found that young people understand how their behaviour impacts on their own health and that treating others with respect is important, as is having a sense of identity, along with the importance of champions in their lives to help them filter the non-important issues raised by other young people (Parry, Warren, Madoc-Jones, Baker and Hughes, 2010, p. 6).

Combined with the methodological issues involved in research with young people which can bring in 'intervening variables' (Greig et. al. 2013, p. 116) and the lack of a widely accepted framework for young people's well-being means adopting Interpretive

Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) is a suitable methodology for the study (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012). It is hoped that the investigation will inform policy makers in decision making about resource allocation to better meet the well-being needs of young people in Wales.

Howard and Sharp (1983) define research as ‘seeking through methodological processes to add to one’s own body of knowledge and, hopefully, to that of others, by the discovery of non-trivial facts and insights’ (Howard and Sharp, 1983, p. 6). A review of the literature has proven useful; ensuring that this research does not replicate what has gone before and includes relevant questions that connect with previous research on the topic (Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls, 2014, p. 51). The study has followed an approach which is systematic and methodical, building on existing research in an attempt to enlighten the researcher but also to enable the findings to be valuable in the realms of policy making and in practice.

In recent years there has been an increasing interest in monitoring well-being as a means of assessing social progress (Dolan, Layard and Metcalfe, 2010; Ereaut and Whiting, 2008; Fischer, 2009a; Harvey, 2013) and there is a growing acknowledgement that there may be important differences in well-being between adults and children and young people (Hicks, Newton, Haynes and Evans, 2011). Also, despite Youth Work having a stated value of promoting young people’s well-being (LSIS, 2012, p. 6) there appears very little in the Youth Work literature about how this promotion might be best achieved, although there are resources available for youth workers planning face to face work with young people around issues of the health of young people and this can often be conflated with well-being (Borsden, Fry, Pageant, Poiner, O’Neill, Rooney and Williams, 2012).

The lack of empirical evidence for the role of Youth Work and its influence on the well-being of young people demonstrates a significant gap in knowledge. As a result, this study is necessary and there are a number of reasons for this. Firstly, in general, in Wales, Youth Work as a practice is under researched and thus a study of this nature adds considerably to existing knowledge. Secondly, a better understanding of the well-being of young people in Wales is necessary to enhance Youth Work policy and practice so that it can more effectively promote the well-being of young people (LSIS, 2012) based upon robust research findings.

3.9. Critique of existing well-being research with young people

This section will deliver an analysis of the work of others in the field of research in Youth Work. There are some fundamental concerns with research among children and young people, initially stemming from the purpose(s) of that research. It has been argued that social policy for children and young people in the UK is becoming increasingly based upon evidence of its social value and that ‘the current investment and inclusion agenda has antecedents in earlier policies supporting children for the sake of future health, wealth and security of the state’ (Piper, 2008, p. 163). Piper goes on to argue that within this policy context ‘investment in children not only saves money in the future but is carried out in a rigorously frugal and scientific way’ (ibid, p. 164). This agenda of scientism appears to skew the type of research being carried out with young people, focusing on deficiencies of young people at risk or young people in difficulty.

As stated on page 122 there is a dearth of published research concerning Youth Work in Wales. Research with young people in Youth Work in Wales is extremely limited. Much of the research carried out in relation to Youth Work in Wales has been concerned with policy (Arad, 2015; Williamson, 1999, 2010), other recent research studies have adopted desk based approaches and interviews with leaders and managers (Wylie, 2016).

Much, but not all of the research into the well-being of young people in Wales has been conducted outside of the scope of the youth service and stems from what might be regarded as a positivist paradigm, commonly adopting a quantitative methodology. For example Welsh Government have attempted to build a picture of the well-being of children and young people with its 'Wellbeing Monitor for Wales' (Thurston, 2011) which relies on a raft of proxy measures of well-being garnered from data which is, in the main gathered for existing purposes and which is combined to build a picture of the well-being of young people in Wales. Arguably, most of the proxy measures used by Thurston do little if anything to aid understanding of the phenomenon of SWB from the perspective of young people themselves, to help enhance social understanding of the meanings or indeed explanations behind the crude figures offered by such proxy measures. One of the consequences of this approach may be that, as a result, what is measured is potentially a proxy of well-being itself and in that sense is not a true measure of the phenomenon which is central to so much contemporary social policy in Wales.

Rejecting such a positivist paradigm (which may arguably spring from a deficit perspective) which is so highly regarded by some within the polity, again as a result of the pervasive neoliberal climate, there are researchers who have chosen another way of exploring childhood and adolescence, by choosing to work in a way which is informed by a rights based approach.

Peterson and Seligman have rejected negative concerns with childhood and adolescence and have developed a model of well-being based upon ideas of strength and virtues that are found in people who are happy and fulfilled; their research with children and young people has focused on their strengths, skills and potential rather than on difficulties and weaknesses (Peterson and Seligman, 2004). Likewise Schoon and Bartley have found that

the interplay between persons and particular situations enable individuals and communities to thrive, it is crucial to acknowledge these contextual dependencies (Schoon and Bartley, 2008). This notion of understanding the social context of young people's lives is an important influence to my epistemological stance. It is my opinion that young people are products of both their genes but also of their communities and families, views informed by both Marx and Aristotle, inasmuch as well-being demands the kind of social and political conditions in which people are free to exercise their creative powers (Eagleton, 2007) and that if freedoms, or capabilities are limited then well-being will inevitably be compromised.

Another critique of the predominant approach to researching well-being in Wales involves the common focus on rather narrow conceptions of well-being for example on 'mental' well-being, physical well-being or conflating the terms well-being and health into the somewhat pervasive 'health and well-being'. This narrow disciplinarity does very little to aid the youth worker to build a holistic model of practice based on research which is in turn based upon evidence of the perspectives of young people themselves. This narrow focus on disciplinarity rather outsources the thought and analysis of the lives of young people to the centre rather than entrusting it to the head, heart and hands of the practitioner (Eischsteller, 2016). The drift towards standardisation in service delivery, exemplified by the narrative of quality standards can be regarded as a facet of neoliberalism. This notion is summed up in a comment from a front line social worker 'I feel so deskilled because there are so many restrictions over what I can do' (Ferguson, 2007, p. 8). This resultant lack of autonomy is arguably due to a reliance on measures flowing from the deficit perspective and how even public sector organisations have adopted neoliberal ideals. The Welsh Government may have recently gone some way to identifying this shortcoming and as a result commissioned supplementary research into well-being among young people using a qualitative methodology drawing on focus groups and face-to-face interviews with

children and young people (Anderson, 2010). This study involved focus groups and face-to-face interview methodology with children and young people, an approach which works with their particular ways of being.

In relation to research into Youth Work and particularly the ‘effectiveness’ of Youth Work interventions among young people there are a number of shortfalls which can be identified, particularly in Wales stemming from a lack of robust research concerning the subjective well-being of young people involved in Youth Work. This lack of rigorous data is not an unexpected observation.

This chapter has so far introduced the ontological underpinnings and the epistemological position of the researcher, relevant aspects of Children’s Rights in relation to a study of this nature, followed by a consideration of some of the ethics of the study.

3.10. Overall philosophical position

The philosophical basis to a research framework largely relates to the researcher’s position regarding the nature of science and knowledge, that epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge and justification, what knowledge is and how it is obtained (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 47). I identify with a critical perspective where ‘our own understanding of what is real and true is a complex and relative process. That is, one’s truth or reality is relative rather than universal’ (Greig et. al. 2013, p. 61), where ‘reality is.. constructed by the individuals involved in the research situation’ (Cresswell, 1994, p. 4).

I have chosen to reject a positivist paradigm for this study, positivism suggested as being a slippery and emotive term (Silverman, 2011, p. 11). I have rejected this approach primarily due to the positivist perspective that suggests reality is unaffected by the research process

and also that the methods used in the natural sciences are appropriate for studying the social world (Willis, 2007). Within a positivist paradigm it is suggested that reality is 'out there, independent of human consciousness' (Sarantakos, 1998, p. 36). I regard this epistemological position as inadequate in exploring the lived experience of young people. I am more in favour of an interpretive, bordering on critical paradigm, where 'reality and the social world is created by the actors through assigning meaning to events' (Sarantakos, 1998, p. 37), and where knowledge is produced by exploring and understanding the social world of the people being studied, focusing on their meanings and interpretations (Willis, 2007). It may be of value here to reiterate a commitment to work with young people in carrying out the research, to fully involve them in the construction of knowledge, for research has shown that young people involved in Youth Work learn more effectively where they feel safe, valued, supported and involved in decision-making processes about issues that affect their lives (Harland, Morgan and Muldoon, 2005) and that by extension, their involvement in the research process can bring benefits in its own right.

By utilising a participative, interpretive epistemological position as an appropriate system within which to explore the phenomenon of well-being it becomes apparent that SWB itself is a socially constructed phenomenon. The individual interpretations of SWB make an off the shelf definition difficult. This elusiveness can be worked with by putting the lived experience of the subjects as the main priority. This study has explored how young people experience Youth Work and has enabled young people to explore their experiences of SWB through Youth Work, drilling down to the essence of their experiences of subjective well-being. Researchers have recently proposed that studies should adopt an eclectic approach to the assessment of well-being, this system working with individual's being (their knowledge and their health), having (the basic necessities they have access to), doing (the activities they take part in), relating (their social environment), and their survival (their environment, their safety) (Carr-Hill, 2012, p. 47). Gathering information

on the social context of the participants is crucial to this study. The importance of being able to situate the subjects is necessary to the study, in the main, to be able to fully consider the stated function of Youth Work to promote interdependence, one of the core principles of Youth Work in the United Kingdom (Learning and Skills Improvement Service, 2012). This notion of interdependence, of leaning on others is somewhat at odds with the neoliberal ideal of individual responsibility for ones actions (Ferguson, 2007).

One of the tasks for the researcher is to search beyond the various layers of understanding and meaning constructed by subjects, in pursuit of the essence of well-being, the essential structure of their consciousness is central to the phenomenological method (Jary and Jary, 2000).

The researcher has taken great care in investigating the lived experience of young people and how they experience Youth Work and at every stage to interpret his own expectations, experiences and preconceptions as he interprets the views of young people in a double hermeneutic process.

This quest for understanding the individual subjectivity of lived experience has been described as ‘relativism’ and is concerned with a methodology addressing the preoccupation to understand specific, local, personal and community forms of truth that are not quantifiable (Greig, Taylor and Mackay, 2013, p. 61). Further, the authors argue that the rise of the qualitative tradition has resulted in the qualitative approach now existing alongside, and not subordinate to, the quantitative methodology (ibid, p. 61).

Ultimately, it has been proposed that any researcher using phenomenology needs to understand the philosophical perspectives underpinning the approach, ‘especially the concept of studying how people experience a phenomenon’ (Cresswell, 1998, p. 55). It is

vitaly important that the researcher appreciates the difficulties that young people may experience in verbalising, in describing these feelings and experiences. There are risks here inasmuch that as a critical researcher there is a tendency to believe that due to the oppression of young people there is a widespread coercion into what has been labelled as a 'false consciousness' (Sarantakos, 1998, p. 37) and that many social factors impact on young people and their taken for granted perceptions of life and that these will not easily be identified and put into words. I correctly anticipated that the methodology would be an ongoing, developing approach throughout the study. The research process began with in-depth, semi structured interviews, and for a number of reasons progressed to group interviews with groups of two or three young people in each.

The study of well-being is ideally suited to research using a qualitative approach. This is the case when subjects are 'ill-defined/ not well understood, or deeply rooted in participant's personal knowledge, are complex in nature, where the phenomena are delicate or intangible (Ritchie and Ormston, 2014 pp. 37-38). Within the qualitative tradition it has been recognised that the phenomenological method, is useful in helping the researcher understand participants experience (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012), as described by Moran (2004) phenomenology may be best understood:

as a radical, anti-traditional style of philosophising, emphasising the attempt to get to the truth of matters to describe phenomena, in the broadest sense as whatever appears in the manner in which it appears, that is as it manifests itself to consciousness, to the experiencer. (Moran, 2004, p. 4)

Phenomenology has been described as a significant tradition in qualitative, naturalistic research (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). Smith and Osborn (2008) note that phenomenology involves a detailed examination of the participant's lived experience as

opposed to an attempt to produce an objective statement of the object and the event itself (Smith and Osborn, 2008, p. 53).

Moran goes on to suggest that the important role of phenomenology is to interrogate the supposedly objective view of science, what has been described as the ‘God’s eye’ perspective, or the ‘view from nowhere’ (Moran, 2004, p. 12).

Central to phenomenology and part of its continuing appeal is its attempt to provide a rigorous defence of the fundamental and inextricable role of subjectivity and consciousness in all knowledge and in descriptions of the world (Moran, 2004, p. 15).

Having said this and made a case for the use of the phenomenological method it is also crucial to understand that involving young people as participants raises ethical issues – it has been proposed that ‘one cannot assume their (children’s) capacity to comprehend the nature of the research and therefore to freely volunteer as a participant’ Zwozdiak-Myers (2007, p. 142). Greig, Taylor and Mackay (2013, p. 4) have noted that ‘children are very special people’ and that ‘children are different from the adults who control and describe the world as we know it’ (ibid, p. 5). Similarly, the ideological predisposition of the researcher toward a subjective, critical and reflexive orientation must be accounted for in the pursuit of understanding true meaning arising from the results of this study, this concern will be addressed through a robust process of reflection in, and on action.

The intention of this study is to make an original contribution to knowledge, starting from a principled viewpoint consistent with critical practice; values underpinning this approach are health, caring and compassion, self-determination and participation, the need to understand human diversity and a concern for social justice (Prilleltensky and Nelson, 1997). My own interpretation of the modern conceptualisation of well-being is shaped by a critical perspective, I feel the widespread and growing concern in what has been

described as the developed world (United Nations, 2005) that despite recent developments in economic prosperity this has not seen the citizenry become more happy or indeed more satisfied with their lot (Burkhauser, DeNeve and Powdthavee, 2015). Fundamentally this situation raises questions of happiness and satisfaction with life and whether the current widespread materialist concerns might be the most important goals of human existence and what this means for young people in Wales.

In some cases quite the reverse is true, for example, happiness and success being commonly, but erroneously associated with increasing economic growth (Burkhauser, DeNeve and Powdthavee, 2015). Despite this evidence wealth generation has in recent years become the predominant measure of success in social life in the developed world or 'advanced economies' (International Monetary Fund, 2008). It has however also been argued that the strong focus on consumption as a determinant of success was influenced by the historical societal circumstances prevailing at the time the foundations of modern economic theory were being developed (Sorrell, 2006). Thomas Hobbes in his influential *Leviathan*, published in 1651 argues in his State of Nature, where there were no law or organised state that life was characterised by low life expectancy, no education, high infant mortality, and poor working conditions. Hobbes put forward the need for social structures, proposing that under these conditions the result would be a connection between greater income and a higher quality of life. Within that historical context one can easily understand that a certain level of wealth would dramatically increase one's standard of living and that as a direct result one's well-being would improve. It could be argued that in the intervening period this perspective has become widely accepted and has come to be epitomised by the pursuit of material wealth which is readily measured by the commodities and services one is able to consume (Fischer, 2009, p. 3).

In a form of quiet opposition to this narrow, predominantly economic discourse, this study has drawn on age old philosophical questions posed by Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics* such as ‘How should we live’, and the concept of the eudaimonian life, ‘a successful life, a kind of life that if we could achieve it we would all choose, the kind of life we would want for those we love’ (Warburton, 2014). The study also considers how Youth Work can on one hand enable young people to consider some of these questions and then to begin to build what they might regard as a successful life as a result of robust SWB.

Methodology has been defined as ‘the philosophical stance or worldview that underlies and informs a style of research. Methodology is the philosophy of methods’ (Sapsford, 2006, p. 175). It is important at this stage to explain and offer an overview of the research methodology and overarching philosophy of the study, initially – why a qualitative approach and why phenomenology, these are key questions for the researcher to address and an understanding of one’s orientation, ontologically and epistemologically are necessary.

3.11. Situating oneself

First of all, it is necessary to be able to identify ones perspective as a researcher. Also one can appreciate that as the primary researcher one must remain vigilant throughout the research process, by acting as a mediator, taking in information, processing (as Giorgi states, the phenomenological approach is holistic, and so I have read through all of the data before beginning any analysis) filtering and condensing results (a process of phenomenological reduction) (Giorgi, 1997, pp. 239 ff).

The influence of the researcher’s values and principles must be appreciated and that is another reason for adopting the interpretive phenomenological approach rather than a more traditional descriptive approach with its reliance on the centrality of the researcher seeking

to bracket off his or her own influence. The traditional, descriptive approach to the phenomenological method involves bracketing, however, a more interpretive application of the method recognises the importance of the researcher in interpreting data. Bracketing, in the traditional descriptive method has been defined as ‘putting to one side, the taken-for-granted world in order to concentrate on our perception of that world’ (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012, p.13).

In a sense wider sociological theory helps provide a more holistic view of the lives of young people, where as a researcher one must acknowledge that ‘attitudes, perceptions and beliefs about children and adolescents are – like all our attitudes – socially constructed’ and that our knowledge about children and young people, ‘how they think, feel and behave, are not actually objective realities; rather they are a construction of the machinery of human meaning making’ (Greig, Taylor and MacKay, 2013, p. 51). This approach to the researcher constructing meaning has similarities to the interpretive approach put forward by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2012).

Policy makers influence and are in turn influenced by these different perspectives, for example Fischer, in a 2009 study exploring concepts and methodological issues in the measurement of well-being proposed that the focus of policy makers and decision making processes is predominantly concerned with economic productivity and economic growth (Fischer, 2009a). It can be argued that this remains the case despite the seminal work of Easterlin (1974) and further work by Fischer (2009b) and indeed, the work of member States within the OECD summarised within the Istanbul declaration (OECD, 2007). The current situation within the developed world with overt concerns for material wealth is, arguably, at odds with the stated aims of the Istanbul declaration cited above, that citizens should be actively involved in defining and contributing to measures of development and progress. More commonly, in relation to the development of public policy making and

subsequent resource allocation for children and young people the dominant paradigm which guides investment is one of risk assessment and risk management, where investment is put in place if results are judged to be potentially worth that investment (Piper, 2008).

This situation may partially be perpetuated by the power of rationality in modern discourse, becoming what has been described as the dominant epistemology of practice, the pursuit of an approach based on nineteenth century positivism, where experts have had a key role in producing systematic, preferably scientific knowledge. This approach to the knowledge held by experts has helped shape scientific theory and technique (Schön, 1992), arguably contributing to the creation of a culture in the developed world which outsources knowledge to the expert and in turn the policy maker refers to the expert to inform judgement making and the vision and intention of public policy. This might arguably result in a focus on measurement of social progress, of discerning knowable facts and the pursuit of objectivity and this concern for objectivity is echoed generally in what Creswell suggests has been experienced by researchers as a growing pursuit, even within phenomenology, of an empirical approach, called 'scientism' (Creswell, 1998, p. 52). This positivist discourse is certainly one which broadly influences social policy and practice in Wales in the pursuit of narrow, specific, pre-defined measures of success through social programmes which include Youth Work (Welsh Government, 2014). This study with its phenomenological approach will seek to gather data from young people themselves about their own subjective well-being and not rely on pursuing knowledge influenced by narrow or shallow concerns with positivist agendas associated with neoliberal philosophies. Rather, this study has enabled the voices of young people to be respected, to be heard and to be listened to.

With reference to the study of subjective well-being I agree with Creswell's view, that the phenomenological study should adopt a methodology with which to return to the

traditional tasks of philosophy, focusing on the phenomenon as having a single focus in the pursuit of deep understanding (Cresswell, 2014, p. 311) and not narrow assessments of human life.

Creswell, in his thoughtful analysis goes on to propose three other discernible themes which are necessary within a phenomenological approach, that it is ‘a philosophy without presuppositions’ that the researcher must initially suspend all judgements about what is ‘real’ although acknowledging the role of the researcher in interpreting the data, secondly, the ‘intentionality of consciousness’, where the reality of an object is inextricably linked to an individual’s consciousness of it and that, lastly, that the reality of an object is dependent on what meaning the individual experiencing it ascribes to it (Creswell, 1998, p. 53).

These are three principles which have guided this study in its search to better understand the SWB of young people involved in the youth service in Wales, rejecting narrow, proxy, or objective measures of well-being, instead seeking out the views of young people themselves regarding how they experience their lives and Youth Work and how they make sense of those experiences. The following section contains the study’s key problem statement.

3.12. Problem Statement - Uncovering the meaning of Subjective Well-Being to Young People

Phenomenology is concerned with understanding the constructs people use in everyday life to make sense of their world, their lived experience, uncovering meanings contained within conversation (Ormston, Spencer, Barnard and Snape, 2014, p. 18). In order for the researcher to adequately frame research and to provide an overall direction of work a purpose statement is required to provide a road map for the study (Creswell, 2014, p. 74).

Using the approach put forward by Creswell the following passage contains the problem statement for this study:

Given the intricacies involved in the research of subjective well-being among young people in Wales, what have young people themselves got to say about youth work and subjective well-being? There are very few studies exploring young people's experiences of youth work in Wales, therefore, an interpretive phenomenological study devoted to better understanding the lived experiences of young people involved in youth work is crucial to better understand the phenomenon.

Phenomenology is an appropriate methodology for this study, for, it is an approach which 'points to an interest in understanding social phenomena from the actors' own perspective and describing the world as experienced by the subjects, with the assumption that the important reality is what people perceive it to be' (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 63).

This methodology chapter has set out the rationale for the research strategy of the study, the ethical considerations necessary to ensure the safeguarding of participants and the choice of research methods, the ontological and epistemological approach of the study. The chapter has explored quality criteria in qualitative research, provided a critique of existing research well-being research with young people and concluded with a clear problem statement for the study. The next chapter will detail the research methods adopted.

4. RESEARCH METHODS

4.1 Introduction

In order to pinpoint research methods it is important to recap on the topic, the area of interest and the overarching methodology of the study which will in turn shape initial ambitions for the conduct of the research.

This study begins in a context which values young people as fundamental agents within a process of Youth Work based on clear principles, one of which is that Youth Work is driven by a young-people-first approach (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007). I agree with the concept put forward that all young people are 'to be seen as worthy of investment, sufficiently dependent and innocent to garner support, and certainly to become the focus of investment for the future' (Piper, 2008, p. 51). This statement reiterates that all young people in a developed nation such as Wales are worthy of support during their leisure time. Youth Work has long been a source of support for young people outside of school (Rose, 1997b).

Youth Work sees all young people as worthy of investment and sets out to enable them to pursue their full potential, the key purpose of Youth Work being to:

Enable young people to develop holistically, working with them to facilitate their personal, social and educational development, to enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential (LSIS, 2012, pg 4).

Despite this clear explanation of the purpose of the work, as has been identified in the literature review, there remains a dearth of empirical research into the practice of Youth Work and its benefits for young people. As a result of this lack of research, it has been suggested that it is difficult to set a research agenda in Youth Work if we are unclear as to the subject of the research (Davies, no date). However, if the principles of Youth Work are to be adhered to, it is clear that a strategic approach to research stemming from a concern for young people is necessary. Research with the aim of better understanding the motivations, desires and experiences of young people in Wales is greatly needed.

It has also been suggested that further research should pursue greater understanding of the causes of happiness, how individuals adapt and to better understand how different circumstances influence aspects of SWB (Deiner, Suh, Lucas and Smith, 1999). This study clearly continues this strategy, aiming to discover new knowledge about the possible impact Youth Work can have on the lives of young people who experience it through a greater sense of life meaning, life satisfaction and happiness (OECD, 2013).

In a study carried out in South Wales as part of the national dialogue on well-being it has been identified that ‘young people’s well-being is a multi-faceted concept that needs to take into account the many areas that affect their well-being at different stages of their lives’ (Hicks, Newton, Haynes, and Evans, 2011, p. 2). The authors challenged subsequent researchers to use a mixture of measures of objective and SWB to develop a robust picture of well-being, and particularly that:

a key challenge for measurement strategy will be how to incorporate the views of children and young people themselves about what is important

to their well-being and self-reported subjective well-being measures of how they feel about their own well-being (Hicks, Newton, Haynes, and Evans, 2011, p. 2).

Bearing these factors in mind, that one of the main objectives of the phenomenological method involves pursuing greater understanding of the life-world of the participants, where the life-world is 'the horizon within which all of the other worlds, the worlds of scientific objectivity, of perceptual objectivity, and of pre-scientific interests, are constituted and given' (Zelic, 2007, p. 11). This has been one of the tasks central to this study, to work together with participants to better understand conceptions of SWB among young people in Wales. It has been noted that:

There is also likely to be a need for bespoke indicators that relate specifically to children and young people (that are sensitive to the diversity within this sub-group) in order to capture the unique aspects of well-being that matter to them (Hicks et al, 2011, p. 3).

For example in a study in 2009 researchers found that the incidence of research into the happiness of children and young people at that time was relatively low. As a result, this situation was counteracted with an empirical study of 300 children and young people and what made them happy. The researchers grouped the findings into five categories including people and pets, sports, academic achievements, material possessions (not their own, but parental possessions), and their hobbies (Chaplin, 2009). These findings suggest that research methods need to be sensitive to the perspectives of young people and not to be dictated by an adult agenda.

It has been noted by that evidence led practice is currently immensely important in relation to interventions into the lives of children and young people (Piper, 2008, p. 164).

Although, it could be argued that concerns with an agenda of evidence are arguably of as much importance in the lives of our politicians as they are to the lives of young people.

There is, as a result, a situation where investment is seen as needing to be effective and to

be carried out in a 'frugal and scientific way' (ibid, p. 164). These are real concerns which occupy my thinking in wanting to identify themes young people highlight themselves in their exploration of SWB.

In carrying out this study the characteristics of qualitative research grouped by Creswell (2014, p. 311) are helpful in providing structure. Creswell has suggested that the characteristics of qualitative research should include: using natural settings as sources of data; the researcher being the key instrument of data collection; data being collected as words or pictures; outcome as process rather than product; the analysis of data carried out inductively; a focus on participants' perspectives, their meaning; and the use of expressive language' (Creswell, 2014, p. 311).

It has been said that the primary aim of phenomenological research is to describe (Giorgi, 1970), and that the aim of the researcher is to describe as accurately as possible the phenomenon, refraining from any pre-given framework, but remaining true to the facts (Groenewald, 2004, p. 5). Young people describing in their own words how their SWB can be enhanced provides evidence of the essence of SWB and how Youth Work can impact upon it.

I have latterly become aware that researchers who use phenomenology are often reluctant to prescribe techniques (Holloway, 1997), going one step further, Hycner has proposed that the researcher indeed cannot impose method on a phenomenon 'since this would do a great injustice to the integrity of that phenomenon' (Hycner, 1999, p. 144). I reject this stance though and have identified a number of important ideas which have guided me in developing my thinking in relation to the research methods and the process of data analysis utilised within this study.

The phenomenological method distinguishes phenomena (the perceptions or appearances from the point of view of a human), from noumena (what things really are) (Willis, 2007, p. 53). I have examined the phenomena of SWB in order to gain a better understanding of what the experiencing of Youth Work and well-being means to young people involved in Youth Work. This extended understanding of the impact of Youth Work will contribute new knowledge about the role and purpose of Youth Work from the perspectives of young people who are the primary consumers of the work.

My initial thoughts in relation to the phenomenological method involved adopting a rigorous descriptive approach proposed by Husserl (Giorgi, 1997, p. 238) where the researcher brackets off their own experiences. Despite my best efforts at bracketing off my own experiences and perceptions, I came increasingly to understand that my ability to successfully engage with the bracketing method would be compromised. For example through unwanted stimuli there would undoubtedly be issues arising from effects of a white middle aged man researching the lived experience of young women and men. Another of the major challenges involves responding to the evolving and developmental nature of the research methods adopted, the extent to which research methods are or should be reflexive in nature.

The methods and questions adopted within this study have aimed to enhance understanding of the purpose of the research and the fact that the majority of the participants are young people aged 16-20 years. Phenomenology builds up results using individual storytelling and, through ongoing analysis to identify important themes and textural descriptions drawing out the conditions, situations or context of the lived experience (Creswell, 2007, p. 60). Using this approach has enabled the development of deeper understanding of SWB and the meaning of Youth Work to young people in an age seemingly more concerned with quantitative assessments of the role and importance of Youth Work. This study provides

an opportunity to look anew at Youth Work and how it is experienced by young people and how specifically it makes them think and how it makes them feel. These are elements which are currently very poorly understood and are therefore rich areas to be explored and within which a contribution to the discovery of new knowledge can be justifiably expected.

These questions allow the building of a picture of the lived experience of young people involved in Youth Work, gaining a more informed understanding of their lived experience, enabling an understanding of consciousness according to Merleau-Ponty, who proposes consciousness as a spectrum of consciousness: consciousness of oneself, consciousness of others, and consciousness of the world (Merleau-Ponty, 1968).

In order to gain a greater understanding of the phenomenon of SWB among young people involved in Youth Work it was decided in consultation with the supervisory team to use a purposive sampling strategy. In particular a strategy of stratified purposive sampling, the aim of which was to select groups that display variation on a particular phenomenon but each of which is fairly homogeneous (Bryman, 2012). Although it has also been noted that as the research process continues that different sampling strategies could have been adopted, becoming increasingly purposive in order to maximise opportunities for comparative analysis (Ritchie, Lewis, McNaughton Nicholls and Ormston, 2014). When young people were identified they were invited to take part in an interview process, further discussed on page 122.

It has been noted that the interview,

‘as a research method is nothing mysterious: An interview is a conversation that has a structure and a purpose. It goes beyond the spontaneous exchange of views in everyday conversations, and becomes a careful questioning and listening approach with the purpose of obtaining thoroughly tested knowledge’ (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 3)

The identification of a purposive sampling strategy is an example of a practical ethical decision necessary for the successful conduct of the study. The following section contains further examples of practical ethical decisions which have been taken during the conduct of the study.

4.1. Practical Examples of Ethical Decisions

Smith and colleagues have proposed that neither research governance nor ethical codes and guidelines should be relied on to shape ethical practice, rather, constant reflection nor previous experience must be seen as a rich resource for the researcher (Smith et al, 2009, p. 107). This commitment to reflective practice is a necessary aspect of youth work and as such was an approach with which I had a great deal of experience.

Reflection is an aspect of sound ethical practice which is imperative in research with children and young people. It is clear that this study has used interview techniques as a suitable method of research. I am mindful also of the requirement for researchers to exhibit honesty and integrity within research, these values are central to ethical conduct.

These values have been important within this study due to the nature of the context of much of the research, being based within the context of the youth service. It is important if the results of this study are to be drawn upon in future, that results are regarded as credible and are capable of informing thinking and policy for young people. One definition of research with humans as ‘an activity that aims to generate knowledge that can be trusted and valued by the researcher and others’ Oates (2006, p. 207) shows the importance of integrity and the demonstration of sound values within the research process, demanding of the researcher that the study is carried out with rigour.

Practical ethical considerations are at the heart of high-quality research practice, some of these considerations include understanding that participation be based upon informed consent, that no unreasonable demands are made on participants, that involvement be voluntary and not based on coercion and that adverse consequences should be avoided, and that confidentiality and anonymity be preserved (Smith et al, 2009).

In addition to gaining informed consent from the participants I also ensured their anonymity by not using their names or other identifying characteristics within the process of data analysis or in writing up the research. Similarly, in discussions with supervisors, no participant names were used.

As the study involved the exploration of the personal experiences of young people, it was possible that interviews may have created situations where young people could feel uncomfortable, even perhaps resulting in them feeling upset or distressed. It was useful to anticipate this state of affairs and to plan an appropriate response. The risk to participants becoming upset was very small due to their age and their level of experience of youth work and the nature of their involvement with youth work being positive. However, I shared the aims of the research with the gatekeepers prior to the interviews to make them aware of the nature of the interview process.

I was able to anticipate having to be aware of looking and listening for signs of respondents becoming upset and I endeavoured to take a stance of reflecting in

action while carrying out the interviews. I anticipated that if any of the respondents became anxious or upset that I would adopt a tactful approach and respond sensitively, taking into account the need to prioritise how to act, thinking in the short term and also how to respond in the medium term if any difficulties arose. It was necessary to respect the demands of the study, in gathering sufficient data but most importantly, to respect the needs of respondents and if difficulties did arise that the researcher would draw on his experience and previous training to respond appropriately.

I was aware of the need to be sensitive to what young people were saying and how they were saying it during the interviews, understanding that I needed to balance building trust and rapport with the young people as far as possible, while avoiding undue intrusion. This was a potential tension with the need, where appropriate, to use in-depth probing and investigation. It was necessary to remain aware of the need for balance and proportionality while questioning.

In preparing young people for the interviews, I ensured a staged approach, where I first of all contacted the local gatekeepers, provided them with basic information about the study and asking for their support in identifying young people. After receiving a response, I spoke to the gatekeepers, attempting to build rapport and some mutual understanding, clarifying their understanding of my requirements. When we had agreed on a particular approach I forwarded the gatekeeper the informed consent information for them to share with young people. The gatekeeper consulted with young people who were interested in speaking to me and we arranged a time for the interviews which was mutually convenient. When I arrived at the respective centre where the interviews were to take place, I took the opportunity to

Speak informally to the gatekeeper and to the young people, often we sat down and spoke briefly about the projects the young people were involved in. It was at this point that I reiterated the purpose of the research, thanked them for meeting me and I ensured they had read and understood the informed consent information. We spoke about their right to withdraw at any time and when they were happy I asked them to sign the informed consent form.

In only one case did a participant choose to withdraw during an interview. It was reassuring to observe that he felt completely comfortable with that. Upon reflection it appeared he may have regarded the session as an extension of Youth Work and that reinforced my belief that the informal approach was a suitable strategy for this research project.

I adopted an informal tone and approach when with the young people, this can help make research more accessible and can overcome the effect of a formal or distant relationship between researcher and participants, especially when participants are children or young people (Ritchie et al, 2014).

Another theme I was cognisant of, in working with young people, was that of the need to ask age-appropriate questions, for example avoiding the use of long and complex questions or posing more than one question at a time (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 146). I approached this as an ethical issue, being committed to paying attention to young people's perspectives of the world, in youth work terms, of starting where they are (See Table 1) and ethically paying attention to their right to be heard (Smith et al, 2009, p. 109).

As for the main elements of the fieldwork I have conducted one pilot interview and nine in depth interviews with young people aged 16-25 years who are involved in the youth service in Wales. I have conducted the research with young people from across South Wales. I have successfully focused on selecting young people from diverse backgrounds, four from rural areas, three from urban areas and five from former industrial areas, described elsewhere as collapsed industrial areas (Phillips and Skinner, 1994).

Data collection procedures were appropriate for a study of this nature, initially using in-depth interviews before progressing on to small group discussions, this development is entirely appropriate and has allowed for the generation of in-depth accounts of examples of well-being, and allowed issues to be explored in depth and detail, small groups provided young people with a sense of security and confidence of being among friends. This appeared to increase the confidence of some young people to speak out. In the initial pilot interview it was apparent that for some young people an individual interview with an adult researcher could be a source of anxiety and intimidation. This developing approach has also respected that SWB in Youth Work is shaped by group interaction and is also the result of a social, group process. This approach also enabled the sharing of creative thinking and will importantly enable the sharing of differences within groups (Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls, 2014, p. 59). This again highlights the importance of mutuality and interdependence to young people in Youth Work.

Accurate recording of information has been important and to this end audio recording of group discussions and interviews was used as this method provides an accurate, verbatim account of what was said, capturing the language used including hesitations and pauses, interactions and off the cuff comments (Arthur et al, 2014). Having these systems in place allowed the researcher to focus completely on the process of the interview or the discussion, using active listening techniques and being responsive to participants.

In relation to the Interpretive Phenomenological approach it has been suggested that 'IPA interviews attempt to come at the research question 'sideways' and at a level of abstraction, not simply asking the desired question out right, rather,

'the researcher should aim to structure the interview as an event which facilitates the discussion of relevant topics, and which will allow the research question to be answered subsequently, via analysis' (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009, p. 58).

In order to pursue the aim of the study, 'a critical exploration of the extent to which Youth Work can contribute to the SWB of young people in Wales' it was necessary to pose questions for young people which allowed them to tell stories about their involvement in Youth Work. This approach to in-depth interviewing is one of a number of common means of gathering data.

Creswell (1998, pp. 112-113) identifies phenomenology as one of the five traditions of qualitative research. This typology offers a useful model with which to structure a discussion of the process of data gathering within this study. In his model Creswell asks what is traditionally studied – within this study nine individuals were interviewed. These nine individual young people were selected as, in the assessment of a youth worker; their involvement in the process of Youth Work had enhanced their experience of the phenomenon of interest, namely - well-being. According to Creswell, finding people who have experienced the phenomenon can be problematic. In this instance although open to interpretation, the young people had all experienced Youth Work which had visibly benefitted their well-being in some way. This selection of young people involved in youth work was always part of the purposeful sampling strategy of the study. Purposive sampling is regarded as an effective form of sampling 'where the researcher selects participants who could not be identified through other sampling strategies, employing

judgement to ensure that the sample is selected on the basis of the information required (Greig et al, 2013, p. 92).

Due to the nature of the study a random sampling approach would not be an effective approach. Necessarily, it is for the participants to have experience of at least two phenomena, that is, to have experience of Youth Work, and a largely positive experience at that, and secondly, in the assessment of a youth worker to have benefited from that Youth Work in some way. The benefit to be in relation to the SWB of the young person. This approach to identifying subjects, Silverman proposes, as purposive sampling, where ‘purposive sampling demands that we think critically about the parameters of the population we are interested in and choose our sample carefully on this basis’ (Silverman, 2014, p. 61).

In order to highlight the thought which has gone into the purposive sampling strategy a typology of Youth Work organisations and contexts (Table 4) has proven useful.

Table 4 A typology of Youth Work organisations and contexts.

Type of Community			
Type of provision	Urban	Rural	Collapsed Industrial
Voluntary			3
Maintained	3	3	

Note: For a further explanation of the urban rural collapsed industrial typology see Phillips and Skinner (1994).

The combination of careful thought and the nature of the phenomenon reinforces the effectiveness of the purposive sampling approach utilised within this study.

An interview protocol was identified as an appropriate method of data gathering. The literature supports the use of the interview within IPA (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009; Smith et al, 2009,) and the use of the interview as a common element of much research with children and young people (Greig et al, 2013; Groundwater-Smith et al, 2015). Interviews differ in their level of structure from structured, to semi-structured and unstructured. In this study the semi-structured interview has been identified as being the optimum method to achieve the desired outcome. A semi-structured approach allows for the researcher to cover set topics while allowing considerable scope for the interviewee's own ideas to develop, enabling the interviewee to explore their authentic, lived experience (Greig, Taylor and McKay, 2013, p. 160). Within this semi-structured interview protocol it proved useful to use an interview guide to map broad areas to be covered in interviews. During the interviews I was mindful of the order of questions being important, that the interview flows well and that 'the interviewee is allowed to add other relevant detail' and that interview questions are best open ended (Groundwater-Smith, Dockett, and Bottrell, 2015, p. 119).

The interview was recorded electronically and notes were taken during the interviews themselves of apparent key points, as researcher I was always mindful to pursue an approach during the time I spent with the young people before, during and after the interviews of reflection (Schön, 1992), to ensure that I remained open to the reality of what was being said and endeavouring to avoid overly interpreting what was being said into what I wanted to hear.

Before setting out on the data gathering phase of the study it was anticipated each of the three categories or types of communities from which we wished to interview young people (urban, rural, former industrial) would prove equally straightforward to make contact and

to be able to gain access to young people. This proved overly optimistic and delays in one particular area delayed data gathering by eight weeks.

I have made contact with gatekeepers (Groundwater-Smith et al, 2015, p. 49). Gatekeepers are acknowledged as playing a 'particularly important role in studies involving children and young people' (Ritchie et al, 2014, p. 91). These key individuals have been invaluable in identifying young people with experience of Youth Work and who were assumed to have experienced enhanced well-being through their involvement in Youth Work. Having the support of these individuals helped a great deal in establishing my credibility with the young people.

My contact with the settings happened in a variety of ways; initially I made contact with the settings through email communication. I adopted an approach of sending out an email to potential gatekeepers, enquiring whether they were aware of any young people who might wish to take part in the study, young people who had experience of enhanced well-being through Youth Work. I followed the suggestions of Creswell when drawing up the email to gatekeepers, these suggestions including a consideration of why the site was chosen for the study, what will be done at the site during the study, will it be disruptive, how will results be reported, and what will the gatekeeper gain from the study (Creswell, 2014, p. 233). In some instances I would visit settings before making contact with young people, to meet with youth workers. I have been mindful of maintaining a commitment to the values and principles of youth and community work throughout the research, one of the values I feel is very important is that of building and maintaining relationships with people. In one of the research settings an opportunity arose to take part in a fundraising activity after the data gathering, one of the young people I interviewed asked if I could help them raise funds for their project. Being mindful of sound values and also of a commitment to wider ethical conduct I agreed to take part in a sponsored walk taking place a month later.

I see this as not merely talking about ethics but maintaining a commitment to demonstrating ethical conduct, for example as suggested by Groundwater-Smith et al 'issues of trust, respect and reciprocity'.. 'clearly apply to our relationships with participants' (Groundwater-Smith et al, 2015, p. 49).

Each of the settings or projects where I interviewed young people offered appropriate spaces within which to interview the young people. It has been suggested that potential barriers between young people and adult researchers can be overcome by carrying out interviews in surroundings which are natural to the young people (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 146). In this sense all the interviews were carried out in surroundings natural to the young people.

Creswell suggests in his typology that 'bracketing ones experiences' could be an issue (Creswell, 1998, p. 113); within this interpretive approach this bracketing issue becomes redundant. Creswell also questions how the researcher stores data; within this study data is stored in a journal, in transcripts and in computer files.

This approach of data storage enabled the researcher to explore and analyse interview data following the modes of interview analysis of looking for meaning through thematic analysis, of 'meaning condensation' and meaning interpretation' (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 197) in order to establish the essence of experiences of well-being among the young people taking part in the study. The process of data analysis followed the model of Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009)

4.2 Identifying Research Questions

Research questions for this study include issue questions, including 'what are the meanings of Youth Work to young people'. In the process of the research I aim to draw out 'what are

the underlying themes and contexts which account for this view of Youth Work'? Thirdly I will consider 'what are the universal structures that precipitate feelings and thoughts about well-being through Youth Work'? I also want to listen to young people and to learn 'what are the invariant structural themes that facilitate a description of subjective well-being as it is experienced by young people'. Providing the young people with opportunity to consider these questions will enable the generation of data rich in detail about their experiences of Youth Work.

In order to better understand the essence of young people's experiences of Youth Work and well-being it was felt important to set out to also gain an understanding of the lives of the young people themselves. The intention was, through initially questioning the earlier lives of young people and their experiences of Youth Work the last phase of the research would enable young people to explore and analyse their experiences of Youth Work. Thus, the intention of the interview process consisted of three overlapping phases, phase one was an exploration of the earlier family and social lives of the young people, phase two involved a description and exploration of young people's experiences of Youth Work while phase three involved an exploration and evaluation of their experiences of Youth Work.

4.3 Key Research Questions

The development of appropriate research questions is widely acknowledged as being of 'key importance' (Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls, 2014, p. 49) in the research process.

Within a qualitative study of this nature:

'questions are open-ended, evolving, and non-directional; restate the purpose of the study in more specific terms; start with words such as 'what' or 'how' rather than 'why' and are few in number (five to seven) (Creswell, 1998, p. 9).

Further, Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls (2014) suggest particular features for good research questions and that these features are clarity, focus, and that they be capable of being researched and feasible within existing resources (Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls, 2014, p. 49). With these characteristics in mind the following questions are the focus of this study:

- What are the meanings of Youth Work to young people
- What are the underlying themes and contexts which account for this view of Youth Work?
- What are the universal structures that precipitate feelings and thoughts about well-being through Youth Work?
- What are the invariant structural themes that facilitate a description of well-being as it is experienced by young people?

In order to ensure the research is robust, is meaningful and has value the study has been designed well in accordance with guidance from the literature and from supervisors.

It has been suggested that in qualitative research, investigators do not need to demonstrate validity but rather methodological excellence, which is, doing research in a professional, accurate, and systematic manner (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Likewise it has been proposed that validity per se is a construct in its literal sense underpinning positivist approaches. For qualitative researchers the pursuit of validity is the pursuit of truth, and Kvale and Brinkman propose that in the postmodern era, truth, and therefore, validity are constituted through 'quality of craftsmanship, as communication, and as pragmatic action' (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 247).

This commitment to a systematic approach in the research process is supported by Ormston et al (2014), who suggest that research should be rigorous and systematic, well-designed and well-conducted, and generate well-founded and trustworthy evidence (Ormston et al, 2014, p. 23). Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls (2014, p. 48) put forward a number of aspects of research design which offer a systematic approach which have been followed in

this study. These aspects include 1. the development of research questions, 2. choosing the data collection method or methods, 3. the time frame for the research, 4. particular design considerations, 5. resourcing and timetabling (Ormston et al, 2014, p. 48).

The study has adopted an approach based upon interpretive phenomenological analysis and as a result has utilised research questions which are designed to draw out the essence of meaning of lived experiences of individuals (Creswell, 1998, p. 53). Creswell suggested that, in phenomenology, the investigator writes research questions that ‘explore the meaning of that experience for individuals and asks individuals to describe their everyday lived experiences’ (Creswell, 1998, p. 54). Following on from this and using the interpretive approach results in the researcher ‘explicating’ through a process of analysis which enables the context of the phenomena and its constituent parts to be reduced to pure subjectivity (Groenewald, 2004). Creswell suggests that the phenomenological investigator should propose overarching research questions which seek out meaning and in this study the central research question is ‘from the perspective of young people, what are the essential aspects of Youth Work necessary to promote the subjective well-being of young people?’.

It is acknowledged that the view of well-being within the study is influenced by the realisation that elements of the concept are fundamentally philosophical in nature and that may be why ready definitions of the concept can prove elusive and at this relatively early stage in its adoption as a frame for social good, that widespread agreement around the concept of subjective well-being remains elusive.

The following passages contain a clear, step by step illustration of the process of data analysis adopted within the study including an example of transcription and exploratory

comments and the extent of recurrent themes before moving on to explore ethical considerations of research with young people.

4.4 An overview of the Process of Analysis

Interpretive phenomenology can be used when the research question asks for the meaning of the phenomenon and does not bracket biases and any prior engagement (Reiners, 2012, p. 2). The process of data analysis enables the researcher to begin exploring the data, initially identifying categories within the data and ending with the identification of emerging themes, and subsequently key themes.

The process of analysis in phenomenology is broadly linear and demonstrates how analytical thinking informs different stages of the research process (Spencer et al, 2014, p. 276). It is important that the process of analysis enables identification and drawing out of interpretations and not merely descriptions of themes within the data. This study has not used a coding approach during analysis as can be seen below, rather an approach which identifies structural invariants in the patterns which have emerged through a process of hermeneutic reduction, through use of matrices and reduction to themes and categories allowing for comparison and further exploration.

Criteria for involvement in the study include ensuring that the young people taking part have experience of youth work and of well-being. By adopting a purposive sampling strategy, ensuring participants have experience of these phenomena and also of identifying young people from diverse communities has enabled different perspectives from different communities to be explored (Ritchie et. al. 2014, p. 113). The process of data analysis allows the researcher to unpack meanings, to develop explanations and to generate ideas (Ritchie et. al. 2014, p. 113). Key authors in interpretive phenomenology have stated that

within analysis our focus must be towards the participants in making sense of their experiences (Smith, Flowers, Larkin, 2012, p. 80).

There has been a tension within the study in relation to the process of analysis, between the need for structure while also respecting the philosophical context of phenomenology and what has been described as a ‘reluctance on the part of phenomenologists to focus too much on specific steps’ (Hycner, 1999, p. 143). The next section of the thesis sets out clearly the analytic process including the identification of themes and schematic representation of data analysis. This includes an example table (Table 5) of exploratory comments and identification of key themes from one participant. Table 6 includes key themes and their recurrence within the data.

Kvale and Brinkman (2009) suggest that phenomenologists are concerned with identifying how people experience their life world, *interpreting* (my emphasis) this meaning making (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 14), it is my hope that I created an opportunity for young people to engage in a process of social research, generating data which allowed for structure with flexibility in data analysis (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 183). It is the intention to generate results which are valuable and meaningful in the wider world, making a new contribution to human knowledge. This contribution to human knowledge will relate to the impact of youth work on the well-being of young people.

In order to fine tune the quality of available data, to ensure that it was as rich as possible, I carried out a pilot interview, transcription and analysis. The purpose of this process was to be able to refine data gathering and analysis. This process being acknowledged as a necessarily iterative and inductive cycle (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012, p. 81).

The Process of Analysis – in detail

The process of analysis followed that proposed by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2014, pp. 82 ff.). Following a broadly linear, iterative process.

Step 1. Involved immersing oneself in the data, by reading and re-reading the transcriptions, this ensures that the participant becomes the focus of analysis. This step enables the researcher to enter the participant's world. This engagement with the lived experience of the subjects was made all the more powerful when listening to the interview recordings.

Step 2. Initial noting, as suggested by Smith et. al. the most detailed and time consuming part of the analysis process. This involved semantic content and language analysis on a very exploratory level. This is where the importance of phenomena and their significance to the young people began to be identified. Table 5 contains a short extract from an interview with one of the participants which includes initial exploratory comments.

Table 5. Exploratory comments young man K

Emergent themes	Original transcript	Exploratory comments
	<p>D: It's okay, I'll um, okay, can you can you um, what what what felt good for you when you were kind of growing up, what was good about it?</p> <p>K: Um, family have always been quite um, family orientated really, we've always done and it was nice even though my parents were divorced, it was always nice to sort of have two families</p> <p>D: Yeah</p>	<p>The notion of family being significant, one family despite doing two of everything..</p>

	<p>K: I mean doing two of everything, but yeah I've I've always done stuff as a family and getting involved with the local community you know, it was only a little village but there was always quite a lot going on. I played rugby, my mum was rowing, I rowed for a bit, so um, it was quite um, it was quite fun you know, living in the little village and um, it was nice like, I like that I lived in a village and um, you know, everyone knows you, you walk down the street and everyone will speak to you. Um, but obviously with my mum, we moved around quite a bit so, towards you know, sort of I think we first moved out of the village when we, when I was ten or eleven, so it was a bit different then, not so much involvement in the community really. But um, yeah and, just generally, I had a lot of, a lot of people cause' my mum obviously with the rowing, she was quite sociable, so I grew up with a lot of people a similar age to me, so we were always you know, going on holiday with them.</p> <p>D: Yeah K: Always keeping busy D: Okay, there we are. Okay, what, what wasn't so good then? About growing up? Tell me some more about that. K: Um, well, my, I suppose a bit of, I I, my my step-dad um, although he was you know, he was never mean to me, I know I was quite conscious, not so much when I was younger, but as I was getting older, I was quite conscious of what had happened between him and my dad.</p>	<p>Community safety, security, physical and social activity</p> <p>Importance of relationships with neighbours/ community</p> <p>Moving a lot as a significant aspect of childhood and growing up</p> <p>What is the meaning, the significance of friends and family? Friends of a similar age noteworthy.</p> <p>Being busy and challenges..</p> <p>With growing maturity comes growing social awareness, how does this impact on well-being?</p>
--	---	--

	<p>So, towards later years, It was always a bit a bit difficult sort of</p> <p>D: yeah</p> <p>K: After I knew what had happened with my dad, looking at</p> <p>D: yeah</p> <p>K: My step- dad the same way and, and similar with my dad, you know what happened with him and my mum. Looking at them both, but I've always been lucky really because they've both always got on and um, obviously you know, um, as much as it was nice to be in the village, there wasn't as much opportunity to make new friends.</p> <p>D: Yeah</p> <p>K: To get out and about, although obviously <u>I did go out in with the people I knew it was never really, the people you knew in the village were the people you knew.</u> You didn't know other people, and obviously when I went into secondary school, I started getting bullied and uh, when I was <u>in year, year 9,</u> um, quite a close friend of mine who she, she ran off previously, she had quite a tough upbringing. She um, she killed herself, so I took, that was that was a pretty tough time for me at the time, then I put on even more weight and tried not to show it, not to show it to anybody that I was upset, so, that was my way of coping really. Um, I was acting up in school and eating and eating and eating. And um yeah, so, by the best part a pretty good, a pretty good sort of so far, I've had a pretty good life, there was a few tough times.</p>	<p>Regards self as lucky because the families get on with each other. How does that compare to experience of friends? What is regarded as normal in families after break-up?</p> <p>Not having the opportunity to make friends..</p> <p>How are relationships understood, quite a close friend? What do they mean to young people?</p> <p>What does this mean, the putting on weight but trying not to show it? What is being concealed? To what extent does increased weight equate to upset?</p> <p>Demonstrating an understanding of challenges in early life and the ability to continue, to carry on even in times of real adversity.</p>
--	---	--

Subsequent to making initial exploratory comments, I went through the transcripts and voice recordings again, looking for linguistic nuances, for example pauses, laughter, functional aspects of language, repetition and tone (Smith et al, 2009). After initial exploratory comments, I began to identify conceptual comments, for example, identifying the concept of moving house. This was a recurring theme in many of the interviews and conceptually I came to understand the significance of moving even a small distance can have a huge disruptive impact on the life of a child and that this impact may go unnoticed by the adults in their lives. Listening to the lived experiences of young people, over and over again made me feel very fortunate to be in such a position. Smith Flowers and Larkin have suggested that the process of engaging with the data is almost as important as the actual physical task of writing on the transcript itself (Smith et. al. 2014, p. 90).

Step 3. Developing emergent themes - emergent themes have been identified, through exploratory commenting, the transcripts became very familiar, this familiarity enabled me to begin to reduce the volume of detail and beginning to see interrelationships, connections and patterns emerging within the exploratory notes. This was carried out by breaking up the whole interview into sections, into a set of parts. This is where I felt I began the interpretation of the data, to really understand what sense the young people were making of their lived experiences, Smith et al describe this as the researcher giving themselves a more central role in organising and interpreting at this stage. This is acknowledged by Smith et. al. as taking the researcher further away from the participant and to include more of themselves. At the conclusion of this stage it is suggested the main task is to produce a concise and pithy statement of what has been important within the transcript.

Step 4. Searching for connections across emergent themes - this step builds on previous work of exploring the transcript and recordings in depth, the themes have been highlighted

chronologically. At this stage, some emergent themes were drawn out (eg meaning of friends and family, physical activity) while others were discarded (putting others first, youth work should be more widely available and publicised more effectively). These became more or less of a focus due to their relevance to my research question.

A process of abstraction was then adopted, a form of identifying patterns between emergent themes, linking like with like and developing a new name for the cluster of meaning (Smith et. al. 2014, p. 96.). I transferred the emergent themes into a spreadsheet in columns by interview and examined and re-examined these emergent themes, continuing the process of hermeneutic reduction to arrive at these cluster of meanings. I chose to avoid numeration as it has been described in the literature (Smith et. al. 2014, p. 98) as the number of times a phenomena was mentioned was not the most important aspect of the reduction for me, rather my interpretation of the importance of phenomena to the individual participants.

Step 5. Moving to the next case - in relation to bringing together these superordinate themes, I grouped these clusters of meanings in relation to each interview before moving on to the next transcript. This system ensured the vision of interpretive analysis was rigorously and systematically followed.

Step 6. Looking for patterns across cases - at this stage I drew together the emergent themes in a spreadsheet and began to examine the themes and checking back to the voice recordings to check my understanding and interpretation of what was being said and how it was being said. This enabled the identification of recurrent themes.

Table 6. Identifying recurrent themes

	Participants										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Consistency	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
People	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Places	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Experiences	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y

The study identified four key themes integral to the link between Youth Work and subjective well-being (OECD, 2013) of young people. These key themes are: firstly, the significance of consistency while growing up; secondly, the significance of key people; thirdly, the importance of place; fourthly, the significance of diverse experiences in Youth Work. The study further identified 18 sub-themes which detail distinct elements of Youth Work and its contribution to the enhancement of subjective well-being. These key themes and sub themes enhance SWB by acting on the life satisfaction, life meaning and happiness of young people.

It is the intention of this study to identify new knowledge of the impact of youth work on the well-being of young people. It is clear from this process of analysis of the rich interview data that there are common impacts arising from youth work across a broad and diverse range of communities and contexts.

4.5 A Commitment to Children's Rights

Current thinking in relation to research with children and young people adopts a rights based approach which regards children and young people as sentient individuals who make and understand their own existence. Greig et al suggest that children and young people are

in a ‘dialectical relationship with other people and also with cultural and historical contexts’ (Greig et al, 2013, p. 63).

In identifying the phenomenological methodology as being an appropriate one to address the key questions outlined above, the researcher has appreciated the need, as suggested by Greig et al that ‘research that involves children and young people and the social worlds in which they live needs to be seen from as many angles as possible’ (Greig et al, 2013, p. 62).

This study has adopted an empowering approach to the rights of young people. This approach to children’s rights is synonymous with social justice and an entitlement based approach to the delivery of public services. Children’s rights have been defined as ‘all the things that children and young people need to make sure that they are safe, have the things they need to survive and develop, and have a say in decisions that affect their lives’ (Children’s Commissioner for Wales, no date, np). These characteristics are regarded as being necessary for human flourishing. The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has acknowledged that ‘as a moral imperative, the need to promote the well-being of children is now widely accepted’ (Adamson, 2013, p. 6).

Furthermore, in an attempt to continue to embed a rights based approach the members of the National Assembly for Wales unanimously supported the ‘Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure’ in 2011. The measure builds on the rights based approach of the Welsh Government to create a culture where young people are at the forefront of the minds of policy makers. Social policy for children and young people in Wales has subsequently been shaped by the Welsh Government Children’s Rights Scheme (2014), with the intention of ensuring Welsh Government ministers ‘put children and young people at the heart of our work’ to ultimately improve the elusive ‘outcomes for

children and young people' in Wales (Welsh Government, no date, p. 3). It appears that there is a political commitment to recognising the rights of children and young people in Wales at a legislative level in addition to a pursuit of outcomes however these may be assessed.

As stated above, the Youth Work in Wales Review Group have produced a document which clearly outlines the principles and purposes of Youth Work in Wales and these include the voluntary engagement of young people, of empowerment, of equality and inclusion, of respect for self and others and importantly, that Youth Work adheres to the principles of informal and non-formal activity, where, it is suggested informal activity 'seizes opportunities that are not necessarily planned' and non-formal activity provides planned opportunities which lie outside formal systems of education' (YWIWRG, 2012, p. 4). This study follows further the purposes of Youth Work in Wales, to promote and encourage opportunities for young people to enhance their empowerment and participation as members of groups and communities (YWIWRG, 2012). The group which developed the principles and purposes document also considers the importance of well-being explicitly, that youth workers should seek to implement a form of work which ensures the health, well-being and safety of young people (YWIWRG, 2013).

Ultimately, it is hoped that the results of the study will make an original contribution to understanding of Youth Work and whether being involved in the process of Youth Work as a young person has a discernible effect on subjective well-being. This has been achieved by the researcher exploring the question 'does Youth Work help young people enhance their subjective well-being?' and through a generative process, defined as 'a process concerned with producing new ideas as a contribution to the development of social theory or to the refinement or stimulus of policy solutions' (Ritchie and Ormston, 2014, p. 35). It

is hoped that ultimately, robust evidence will be provided for the enhancement of social policy relating to young people involved in Youth Work in Wales.

This chapter has clearly outlined the context of the study, including the philosophical stance or worldview of the researcher that underlies and informs styles of research (Sapsford, 2006, p. 175). The chapter has brought out some of the lived experiences of the researcher, making clear the reasons for approaching the topic in this particular way and has also explored key underpinnings of the phenomenological approach, ‘seeking through methodological processes to add to one’s own body of knowledge, and, hopefully, to that of others, by the discovery of non-trivial facts and insights’ (Howard and Sharp, 1983, p. 6). This chapter has identified a comparative lack of published research into the practice of Youth Work in Wales, despite a political commitment to a children’s rights approach in Wales. As a result it is hoped the study will make an original contribution to knowledge in the field.

This thesis outlines concerns with the current neoliberal social context acting in Wales and the current widespread preoccupation with a narrow consideration of well-being. In contrast to this narrow agenda, this study reinforces the importance of exploring some of the fundamental questions which have occupied philosophers for centuries such as ‘how should we live’ and ‘what kind of life we would choose’. The study considers SWB as a holistic concept, drawing on questions about modern life and sustainability. This approach to living resonates with the ancient Greek conception of research as a search for wisdom (Creswell, 1998, p. 52).

The study involves research with young people and has been developed from a position of recognising that they are special and that their best interests are paramount and that ‘the nature of the child/ young person is subjective, not objectively knowable or measurable

(Greig et al, 2013, p. 66). The unpredictability of young people means that the researcher has needed to be flexible, adaptable, respecting and tolerating diversity and uncertainty (Howe, 1994).

The themes which have emerged within this critical exploration of the methodology shaping the study resonate with those of humanism, emphasising the dignity of humanity, the centrality of human choice and the realisation that human beings create what they are (Priest, 2001). The task for the researcher has been to adopt and/ or adapt research methods which have been sufficiently nuanced to gather meaningful information about the variety of ways in which people order their lives (Carr-Hill, 2012, p. 39). This pragmatic intention helps to provide further direction and detail in making real the philosophical questions which have arisen so far in this study, the study must further seek to describe and analyse the meanings people attach to subjective well-being in their own contexts (Creswell, 1998), acknowledging that human understanding is influenced by the kind of social worlds that people inhabit (Moran, 2004).

The researcher has put into action a form of social research which will enable better understanding of the social significance of SWB and to enable the pursuit of original knowledge regarding whether Youth Work as a form of non-formal learning has an influence on young people's thoughts and feelings of well-being.

This is a study which has involved young people aged 16-20. The participants were chosen based upon their involvement in Youth Work. This selection criteria was central to the study as the young people needed to have been involved in Youth Work and for their involvement to have somehow come to the attention of a youth worker. Young people were chosen because of their involvement with Youth Work in the maintained and voluntary Youth Work sector. A mixture of (six) male and (five) female young people

were identified and the young people selected came from areas across Wales, from areas previously classified as urban, rural and from collapsed industrial areas (Phillips and Skinner, 1994).

4.4 Research Methods

Children are very special people, being different from the adults who control and commonly describe the world as we know it (Greif, Taylor and MacKay, 2013). The previous methodology chapter identified challenges within phenomenological research with young people. This methods chapter illustrates how these challenges have been accounted for and overcome. This methods chapter illustrates an appropriate research process which responds adequately to the fact that indeed, children are very special people. This study springs from a context which values young people as fundamental agents within a process of Youth Work based on clear principles, one of the key principles being that Youth Work is driven by a young-people-first approach (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007). I see young people as worthy people who are ‘sufficiently responsible to be seen as worthy of investment, sufficiently dependent and innocent to garner support, and certainly to become the focus of investment for the future’ (Piper, 2008, p. 51).

Youth Work sees all young people as worthy of investment and sets out to enable them to pursue their full potential, the key purpose of the work being defined on page 130.

A further element of Youth Work which shapes this study is that young people should be productively involved in their communities, in this sense it is imperative that the perspectives of the young people are fundamental to the design of the research process, being involved as active participants within the research and that the research process unfolds accordingly.

Subjective well-being (SWB) has been variously defined, see page 83, and it has been suggested that further research should pursue greater understanding of the causes of happiness, how individuals adapt and to better understand how different circumstances influence aspects of SWB (life satisfaction, pleasant affect, and unpleasant affect) (Deiner, Suh, Lucas and Smith, 1999). This study clearly continues this approach, aiming to discover new knowledge about the possible impact Youth Work can have on the lives of young people who experience it.

This has been one of the tasks for the researcher, to work together with participants to better understand their conceptions of SWB as young people in Wales. It has also been noted that:

There is also likely to be a need for bespoke indicators that relate specifically to children and young people (that are sensitive to the diversity within this sub-group) in order to capture the unique aspects of well-being that matter to them (Hicks et al, 2011, p. 3).

It has been noted that evidence led practice is currently immensely important in relation to interventions into the lives of children and young people (Piper, 2008, p. 164), although, these concerns with an agenda of evidence are arguably of as much importance in the lives of our politicians as they are to the lives of young people. There is resultantly a situation where investment is seen as needing to be effective and to be carried out in a ‘frugal and scientific way’ (ibid, p. 164). These are real concerns which demonstrate the potential significance of this study - to identify themes and indicators young people highlight themselves in their exploration of SWB in the research process.

As stated on page 125, In Wales Section 25 of the Children Act (2004) places a legal duty on local authorities to work with others to improve the well-being of children and young people. It is hoped that by carrying out this study the characteristics of qualitative

research grouped by Creswell (2014, p. 313) are helpful in providing evidence of how SWB can be enhanced.

It has been said that the primary aim of phenomenological research is to describe (Giorgi, 1970), and that the aim of the researcher is to describe as accurately as possible the phenomenon, refraining from any pre-given framework, but remaining true to the facts (Groenewald, 2004, p. 5). It is hoped this study can interpret the data and develop suitable evidence which can support the enhancement of SWB among young people.

I have latterly become somewhat reassured in my approach, realising that this questioning of identifying appropriate research method is a natural feeling in the conduct of phenomenological research, and that researchers who use phenomenology are reluctant to prescribe techniques (Holloway, 1997). Going a step further, it has been proposed that the researcher indeed cannot impose method on a phenomenon 'since this would do a great injustice to the integrity of that phenomenon' (Hycner, 1999, p. 144).

Increasing understanding has helped me identify further challenges which needed to be overcome in the study. The following section explores some of the challenges.

4.5 Research challenges

There are several challenges which exist and must therefore be acknowledged in the development of appropriate research methods with young people within a phenomenological approach. In response the research methods adopted within this study are consistent with a Youth Work approach, that those involved in the research are viewed as being active participants, working together to construct knowledge and not merely passive research subjects. There will undoubtedly be issues arising from effects of a white

middle aged man researching the lived experience of young women and men. Another of the major challenges involves responding to the evolving and developmental nature of the research methods adopted, the extent to which research methods are or should be reflexive in nature.

The methods and questions adopted have been developed with an understanding of the purpose of the research and the fact that the participants are young people aged 11-25 years.

Phenomenology builds up results using individual storytelling and, through ongoing analysis to identify important themes and textural descriptions drawing out the conditions, situations or context of the experience (Creswell, 2007, p. 60). Using this approach has enabled the development of deeper understanding of SWB and the meaning of Youth Work to young people in an age seemingly more concerned with quantitative assessments of the role and importance of Youth Work on the lives of young people. This study provides an opportunity to look anew at Youth Work and how it is experienced by young people and how specifically it makes them think and how it makes them feel. These are elements which are currently very poorly understood and are therefore rich areas to be explored and within which a contribution to the discovery of new knowledge can be justifiably expected. These questions will allow the building of a picture of the lived experience of young people involved in Youth Work, gaining a more informed understanding of their lived experience, enabling an understanding of consciousness, according to Merleau-Ponty, who proposed that consciousness exist as a spectrum of consciousness: consciousness of oneself, consciousness of others, and consciousness of the world (Merleau-Ponty, 1968).

I am interested in exploring the social context of Youth Work, and the young people involved. In order to gain a greater understanding of the phenomenon of SWB among young people involved in Youth Work I have decided to use a purposive sampling strategy, particularly a strategy of stratified purposive sampling, the aim of which is to select groups that display variation on a particular phenomenon but each of which is fairly homogeneous (Bryman, 2012) although it has also been noted that as the research process continues that different sampling strategies could be adopted, becoming increasingly purposive in order to maximise opportunities for comparative analysis (Ritchie, Lewis, McNaughton Nicholls and Ormston, 2014).

As for the main elements of the fieldwork I have conducted 9 in depth interviews with young people aged 16-20 years who are involved in Youth Work in Wales. I have conducted the research with young people from across South Wales. I focused on selecting young people from diverse backgrounds, four from rural areas, four from urban areas and four from former industrial areas, described elsewhere as collapsed industrial areas (Phillips and Skinner, 1994).

In order to pursue the aim of the study, ‘a critical exploration of the extent to which Youth Work can contribute to the well-being of young people in Wales’ it has been necessary to pose questions for young people which will allow them to tell stories about their involvement in Youth Work. The following passage sets out key research questions for young people.

4.6 Topics for questions in semi-structured interviews

After some initial questions encouraging young people to settle in, during the first section of the interview, topics explored what it was like growing up in their home, family, community (See Figure. 3 for a schematic representation of the interview process and

topics). Exploring good days, days which weren't so good. Exploring what was important to the young people while they grew up and how they spend their spare time. Further topics included an exploration of the duration of their involvement in Youth Work, about how they became involved and what they expected Youth Work to be and how reality compared to their initial expectations. Lastly, the interviews encouraged young people to explore what was special about Youth Work, how did Youth Work make them feel, how did they feel Youth Work had worked for them and if they could imagine the best possible Youth Work, how would that look. Lastly, I encouraged young people to explore the extent to which Youth Work had done anything for their well-being. These topic areas provided plenty of opportunity for young people to discuss their lives and tell stories of their experiences of Youth Work.

It is important if the results of this study are to be drawn upon in future to inform thinking and policy for young people that this issue is understood and worked with. After all the very purpose of research with humans has been defined as 'an activity that aims to generate knowledge that can be trusted and valued by the researcher and other' (Oates, 2006, p. 207). This issue of trust is crucial within the research process. Having explicitly detailed the data gathering strategy and illustrated the process of data analysis adopted in the study, the next chapter will present key data.

5 PRESENTATION OF DATA

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the data which has emerged during the study. The purpose of this phenomenological study has been to critically explore the extent to which Youth Work impacts on the subjective well-being of young people as defined by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2013). The phenomenological method in this study offers the opportunity for individual young people to express how well-being appears to them (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012, p. 28), allowing in the process an examination of subjective experience (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012, p. 33) of Youth Work. Twelve young people have taken part in this study, purposive sampling ensured the population have all had diverse experiences of Youth Work, between two and 12 years. Extracts from interviews have been used to enable the voice of young people themselves to be heard.

This chapter presents the main findings emerging from interviews with 12 young people aged between 16 and 20 years of age. The study used stratified purposive sampling to target participants. The criteria for selection were that young people needed to have had experience of two phenomena, that is, both Youth Work and, in the assessment of a youth worker, well-being, through their involvement in Youth Work; two characteristics central to the study. The result of this strategy was that the sample is robust, well thought-out and adequate in scale within the resources available.

The study explores a number of issue questions, including ‘what are the meanings of Youth Work to young people’. In the process of the research I also aimed to draw out ‘what are the underlying themes and contexts which account for this view of Youth

Work’? Further, the study has also considered ‘what are the universal structures that precipitate feelings and thoughts about well-being through Youth Work’? I sought to listen to young people and to learn ‘what are the invariant structural themes that facilitate a description of SWB as it is experienced by young people involved in Youth Work’. At the time of the interviews the young people lived in a range of communities, in rural areas, in urban communities and in former industrial areas (Phillips and Skinner, 1994). This sampling approach was used to enable the research to gather data from young people with diverse experiences of Youth Work, and in the process, to identify universal aspects of Youth Work.

The results of the study are instructive in demonstrating how young people themselves ascribe importance to their experiences of Youth Work, and what they consistently regard as being important in those experiences. The results of the study show young people value consistency, that the people who are involved in the Youth Work can play a significant role in their lives, that they feel strongly that the places where Youth Work happens are important, and the experiences which Youth Work makes available to them can have a positive effect on their subjective well-being.

5.2 Key Research Questions

The development of appropriate research questions is widely acknowledged as being of ‘key importance’ (Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls, 2014, p. 49). Within a qualitative study of this nature, questions have been open-ended, evolving, and non-directional; restate the purpose of the study in more specific terms; start with words such as ‘what’ or ‘how’ rather than ‘why’ (Creswell, 1998, p. 9).

Further, it has been suggested that appropriate research questions have particular features. These features are clarity, focus, and that the questions be capable of being researched and

feasible within existing resources (Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls, 2014, p. 49). With these characteristics in mind the following questions make up the focus of this study:

- What are the meanings of Youth Work to young people
- What are the underlying themes and contexts which account for this view of Youth Work?
- What are the universal structures that precipitate feelings and thoughts about well-being through Youth Work?
- What are the invariant structural themes that facilitate a description of well-being as it is experienced by young people?

5.3 A brief description of the research design

Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) enquiry has been utilised in this study. The design is based on in-depth, phenomenological interviews and has enabled the exploration of subjective well-being, enabling participants to explore, describe, interpret and situate the means by which they make sense of their experiences (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012). The primary focus of this study, using IPA, has been a critical exploration of the extent to which Youth Work can contribute to the SWB of young people in Wales. This IPA approach works with an understanding that:

components of subjective well-being have in common not only that their points of reference are internal, which makes them subjective (in terms of comparison used), but also that they cannot be directly and objectively observed by an outsider (Fischer, 2009, p. 7).

The IPA approach offers the researcher a unique opportunity to really listen to young people making sense of what Youth Work means to them, in this case, exploring how Youth Work has been of benefit to their subjective well-being. The chapter will discuss the results of the study and the themes which have emerged through the process of analysis (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012).

Analysis followed the model put forward by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2012) (See page 166-172 for a detailed account of the process). After carrying out the interviews this analysis involved listening to the voice recordings twice before making any notes. This

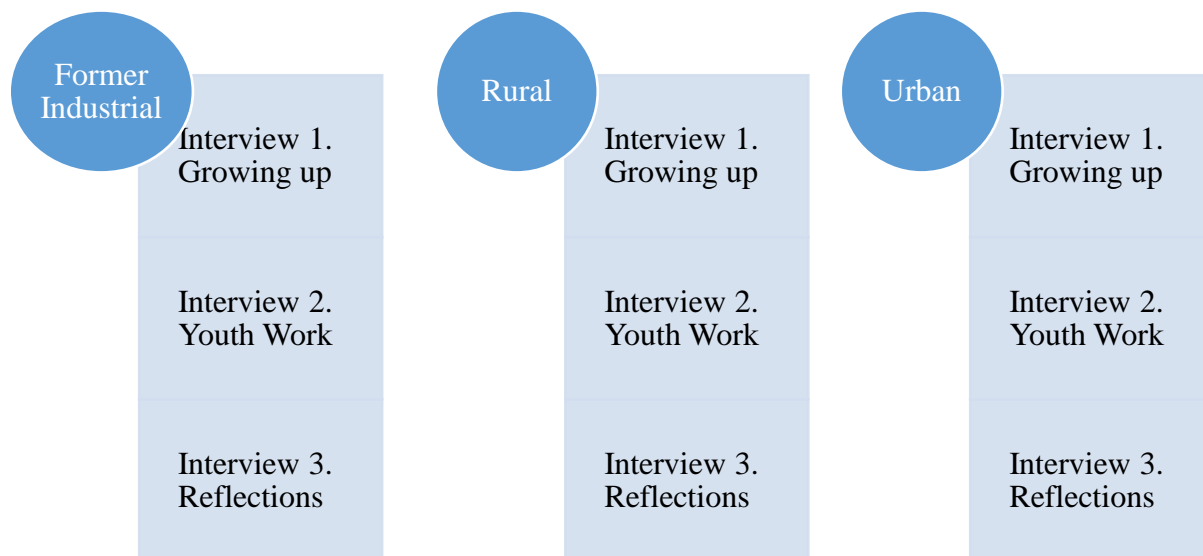
was to ensure I was comfortable with the accents and individual differences in tone and nuance of the participants. Next, the voice recordings were transcribed which provided another opportunity to hear the voices once again. When the transcription was completed I went through each of the transcripts, line by line, making a note of themes (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012), as described in the methods chapter - filtering and condensing results, a process of phenomenological reduction (Giorgi, 1997). I took the opportunity to cross reference these by again listening back to the voice recordings to gain greater understanding of the context linked to each theme. I then grouped the emergent themes (Smith Flowers and Larkin, 2012) which are set out in Table 5 below.

To ensure a robust research frame, the study adopted a typology of Youth Work, that communities may be grouped into different categories based on their geographic location and socio-economic status, these communities are: former industrial areas; urban areas, and rural areas (Figure 2). The purpose of using this structure was to pursue a level of diversity of lived experience among the sample group (Phillips and Skinner, 1994) while also ensuring the sample has a level of homogeneity, e.g. that participants are similar ages and are involved in similar activities and broadly similar cultures (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012, p. 50). The motivation behind this approach was to pursue any aspects of Youth Work which may be regarded as being present in all situations, in that sense, any ever-present elements may be interpreted as being universal.

To develop a deeper understanding of the participants lived experiences, I originally set out to interview each on three occasions, with a different primary focus during each phase of the interview, the primary focus during the first phase was 'growing up', during the second, the focus was to be their 'experiences of Youth Work' being brought out and the focus of the final phase was an exploration of 'the young people's reflection and evaluation

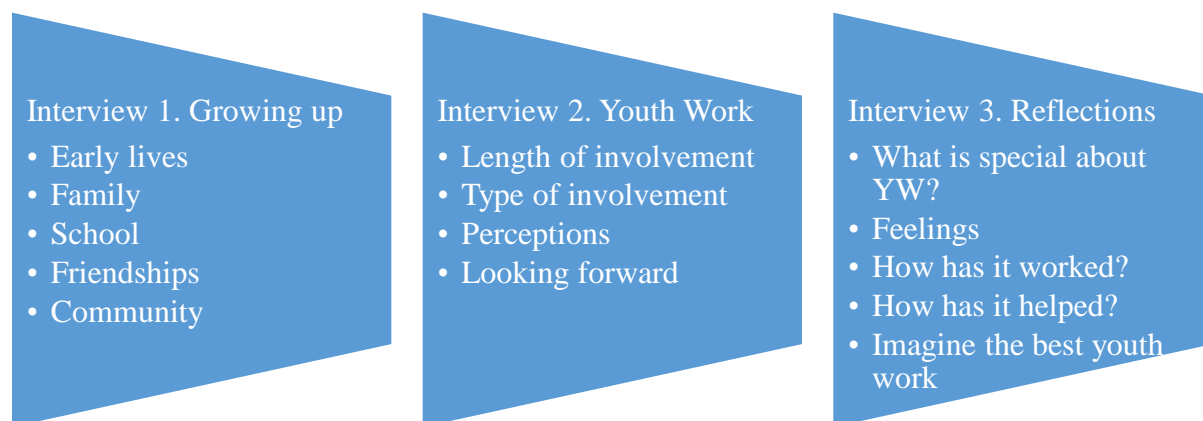
of their Youth Work experiences'. Figure 2 contains a graphical representation of this interview process.

Figure 2. A geographic/ thematic representation of the research frame



Data collection procedures were appropriate for a study of this nature, initially using in-depth interviews before progressing on to small group discussions, this is an entirely appropriate strategy, as it allows for the generation of in-depth accounts (Anderson, 2010) of examples of SWB, and allowed issues to be explored in depth and detail. It has been claimed that a 'Semi structured life world interview attempts to understand themes of the lived everyday world from the subjects' own perspectives' (Kvale and Brinkman, 2009, p. 27). The approach has also respected that SWB in Youth Work is shaped by group interaction and is also the result of a social, group process. This group approach also enabled the sharing of creative thinking and, importantly, enabled the sharing of differences within groups (Lewis and McNaughton Nicholls, 2014, p. 59). Figure 3 contains an illustration of the topics explored within each interview.

Figure 3. Illustration of interview topics carried out in each type of community (urban, rural and former industrial).



The structure clearly outlined in figure 3 enabled the young people to consider the issues that were important to them, to help the researcher gain an in-depth understanding of a number of factors: 1. what some young people in Wales have in common regarding growing up; 2. their experiences of the Youth Work they have been involved in, and 3. while their experiences of Youth Work will be individual as will the essence of their reflections of Youth Work, the intention of this study has been to explore what participants have in common in their reflections of how their participation in Youth Work has acted on their sense of subjective well-being.

5.4 Analysis and emergent themes

Analysis of the interview results show Youth Work provides young people with feelings of connectedness, the term commonly used by young people was ‘family’. In many cases it was clear that this sense of family was mainly provided by young people’s involvement in Youth Work. Young people identified the significance of consistency in their lives, for some this consistency was identified as a facet of home life, again, for others, this regard for consistency emerged as a function of their involvement in Youth Work, often against a background of upheaval in their home lives.

All the young people spoke about the importance of Youth Work offering them something in times of need, of consistently being there for them in difficult times. The majority of young people noted the importance of Youth Work in providing a sense of freedom and choice. A significant majority of the participants noted that some form of trauma in their lives had enabled them to identify true friends as opposed to acquaintances and that subsequently, these friendships were very important. Participants also identified that Youth Work allowed them to be themselves, to be authentically themselves, to also practice being a young person in a safe environment. Youth workers were regarded as being very resourceful, in some cases young people noted the huge significance youth workers had had in their lives.

Table 5 contains a list of themes which have emerged from a process of thematic analysis of the interviews. These represent the results of a consistently applied process of phenomenological reduction and are not merely a description of what participants described in the interview process. The term emergent themes has been used by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2012) in an attempt to aid analysis, encouraging researchers, through the analysis process to search for the true and authentic meanings participants ascribe to the phenomena in their speech. Table 5. Contains an illustration of emergent and key themes which have arisen during the process of analysis.

Table 5. Emergent and Key themes

	Key Themes			
	Consistency	People	Places	Experiences
Emergent Themes	Being there	The connected worker	Familiarity	New experiences
	Feeling valued	The moral educator	Community	Movement/ physical experiences
	Being dependable, offering practical help	Having expectations	Sense of belonging	Sense of freedom to experiment
	Friendships	Being friendly		Having fun
		The unique relationship		Adversity and trauma
		Giving hope		

The Organisations for Economic Cooperation and Development has identified that subjective well-being has three components, life satisfaction (LS), life meaning (LM), and happiness (H) (OECD, 2013). Taking these three components as a framework for analysis has enabled me to identify exactly how what young people themselves have spoken about regarding Youth Work demonstrates how they feel it has impacted upon their SWB, according to the OECD definition (OECD, 2013).

Table 6. illustrates the extent to which the experiences and reflections young people spoke about have been analysed and condensed into themes and how these correspond with the qualities the OECD have identified as characteristics of subjective well-being. This is part of the analysis and represents an aspect of the double hermeneutic cycle (Pietkiewicz and Smith, p. 2012), within which the researcher makes sense of the participants making sense of their experiences. This process is fundamental, enabling the researcher to ‘draw out’ or

to ‘disclose’ the *meaning* (my emphasis) of the experience of the phenomenon (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012, p. 36).

The process of data analysis within IPA is concerned with identification of themes, and subsequent key themes, in this case enabling the researcher to draw out the essence of youth work as it is experienced by young people. In order to illustrate the links between the key themes, emergent themes and their impact on subjective well-being the following passage contains a vignette of a subject’s experience of youth work. This passage illustrates, by taking into account young people’s voices that their experiences of youth work including the ways in which youth work, consistency, its people, where it happens and the experiences it offers can enhance young people’s subjective well-being.

The following passage illustrates how one young person was able to describe her experiences of youth work in her own terms and how she was able to articulate the influence that the youth work she had experienced had impacted upon her subjective well-being. This description illustrates the young woman’s experience of being involved with youth work in a former industrial area for a year. This example clearly shows the centrality of the key themes identified in Table 6, of consistency, of people, of places and of experiences as being integral to the enhancement of subjective well-being through youth work. The emergent themes identified in Table 6 have been highlighted in bold below, evidencing youth work’s impact on subjective well-being as identified through the process of interpretive phenomenological analysis.

‘For someone like me with dyslexia. I left school with pants GCSEs, and then I went to learning for life and I got my qualifications there’. The young woman noted that ‘I started coming here because of my past and my background, it actually gave me a place where I

felt secure enough to actually get the support I needed' (**New experiences, Community, Being friendly, Being there**). The young woman was able to articulate her feelings of youth work, that 'It's a positive thing', and 'it makes me feel positive and valued and proud (**Feeling valued**). I often reflect, this year to last year, I am such a different person, I did naughty stuff, I was on naughty stuff, as well like drugs and stuff. I was on cocaine and suffering with mental health issues in and out of hospital every week (**Adversity and trauma**). Getting involved in this place and how it's helped me overcome all those barriers, it's about big steps in a year Where I've come in a year, they've helped me set up my future goals, my future plans and to the point now (**Giving hope**). I'm not on my own in the hostel, they will let me come down in the days and let me sit and do work, my course work which is actually going to benefit my future (**Giving hope**).

When asked what youth work had done for her, she said 'Those qualifications, I would not have gained if it wasn't for this centre motivating us. They don't only give us support, they tell us, you can do it We know you can do it. We have every faith in you' (**Having expectations**). When asked if she could imagine the best possible youth work the young woman replied 'I would think the project I would, somewhere structured, where you know you can trust the people there (**Being dependable**).

When discussing how the youth workers at the centre go over and above what might be expected, the young woman said 'Even where I live if I come down here, they will buy me lunch because they understand the situations and the circumstances people come from (**The unique relationship**). For me, I would regard the people here as my family (**Familiarity**) so, this is why I rely on this place a lot more than I should. I mean, I'm 20 years old, still attending a youth centre'.

When asked what youth work means to her, the young woman said ‘Everything, it’s what I’ve grown up with. If this wasn’t here, I couldn’t guarantee I would be here today. I don’t think I’d have the GCSEs that I have. I would be regretting tomorrow, I would lash out. It’s not that I’m not looking negatively, if I fail I know there are things I can do (**Sense of freedom to experiment**). This centre has taught me that. Last year, sitting my maths GCSE early I would have freaked out, I’ve developed a lot more than I used to’ (**Being dependable, offering practical help**).

The young woman identified the contribution youth work had made to her well-being, ‘If I hadn’t found this place a year ago. I probably wouldn’t have been here. I wouldn’t have had the support networks. But probably I wouldn’t have had the support I have had. If it wasn’t for this place (**Sense of belonging**), I’m not gonna lie, I would be probably be down the docks on the roundabout. I just thought I’d be honest like. So, from that to the place I am in now where I don’t regret nothing, I just laugh at everything’ (**Happiness**). This ability to feel good about life from day to day, to laugh at adversity rather than to be brought down by that is a marker of enhanced subjective well-being, to laugh is to be happy, a key plank of subjective well-being.

While all themes are not present in this one vignette, the process of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis has clearly enabled the identification of key themes, of the importance of young people receiving a consistent experience from youth work, that people are integral to the process of youth work and how it enhances subjective well-being and that the places youth work takes place are important. It is also apparent that the type of experiences on offer through youth work can enhance SWB and that the types of experience will be dependent on many aspects of the ecological system of which the young

person finds themselves a part. This illustration supports the finding that Youth Work enhances subjective well-being among young people.

The following section begins with Table 6, illustrating key themes and emergent themes before subsequently presenting key data with narrative examples from the interviews.

Table 6. Emergent themes, Key themes and how these link to components of subjective well-being as suggested by the OECD (2013).

	Key Themes			
	Consistency	People	Places	Experiences
Emergent Themes	Being there (LM)	The connected worker (LM)	Familiarity (H)	New experiences (LS)
	Feeling valued (LS)	The moral educator (LM)	Community (LS, LM, H)	Movement/ physical experiences (LS, LM, H)
	Being dependable, offering practical help (LS)	Having expectations (LM)	Sense of belonging (LM)	Sense of freedom to experiment (LM)
	Friendships (LS, LM, H)	Being friendly (H)		Having fun (LS, LM, H)
		The unique relationship (LS)		Adversity and trauma (LM)
		Giving hope (LS, LM)		

Key: life satisfaction (LS), life meaning (LM), and happiness (H).

Table 6 illustrates how the researcher has been able to analyse the extent to which, for a number of young people in Wales, experiences of Youth Work has contributed to enhancing their SWB. What has become apparent is that IPA has been a suitable methodology for the study, which fundamentally relies on a process of hermeneutic

reduction, enabling the data to be processed through different levels of interpretation. This process of reduction has helped in pursuing understanding of the meanings young people attached to their words, additionally, listening to the voice recordings of the interviews also proved helpful, helping me tune in to the underlying meanings young people attached to their making sense of the world.

The characteristics of Youth Work which young people have taken part in are, largely, those stated within the National Youth Service Strategy for Wales, namely the voluntary engagement of young people, an informal/ non formal education approach and a focus on the participation of young people (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007; Welsh Government, 2014, Welsh Government, 2019). The environment and culture created by these characteristics is a significant aspect of the research context. These characteristics offer structure and a level of consistency in this aspect of the lived experience for the young people involved.

From transcription, chronological, line by line thematic analysis, key themes have emerged from the interviews. The results demonstrate a number of themes (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012, p. 96) have emerged from the interviews. Young people discussed many and varied topics, including growing up, family life, their communities, their experiences of Youth Work and ultimately, the ways in which they felt Youth Work had impacted upon their subjective well-being.

The following section of the chapter will identify key themes before going on to present extracts from the data.

5.5 Key themes emerging from the data

Key Theme 1. The significance of a consistent environment while growing up

Participants noted consistency was found to include the importance of Youth Work being there for them, often giving them a sense of meaning in their lives; that Youth Work has consistently made them feel valued. This enhances feelings of life satisfaction, secondly, it was noted that the young people value the dependability of Youth Work, again this provides a sense of life satisfaction. Lastly, young people noted that they appreciated the opportunities Youth Work provides for friendships. Results show that friendships bolster life satisfaction, life meaning and happiness. Friendships appear to be a powerful ingredient both for good Youth Work and subjective well-being.

Young people evidently appreciated consistency in different aspects of their lives:

when we went away they (the youth workers) were the same people, but they obviously had to make sure we were all there and all ok and everything was fine. (Participant 3)

Unsurprisingly, consistency within the family was identified as important:

the knowing stems from consistency, you know where you stood for example! (Participant 10)

Reliability, consistency, family are important. (Participant 10)

Likewise, friends and friendship was regarded as important:

Consistency and reliability, being sure! Having no doubts about positive friends. (Participant 11)

Consistency and regularity, knowing where you were. (Participant 4)

For one participant though, looking back, childhood was a stage in his life which he just wanted to get through, despite having considerable upheaval in his childhood consistency wasn't as significant for him:

It was interesting, I don't think, I, for me, it was just get through this (childhood) and get to being old but I don't think I took any time to consider what was happening. (Participant 1)

More usually, participants were clear that family was very important. When asked about the most important things present while growing up, one respondent noted the importance of family:

the importance of being around my family really, and having 5p for a freddo (Participant 3)

In addition to a sense of family, that there should be someone during childhood and adolescence with expectations of them:

Family was important, good sibling relationships and making my parents proud of me, that was important. Parents were really important while growing up, they gave me good role models to follow and that helped me to realise what was important. (Participant 9)

I had a very good upbringing in terms of my family and my parents (Participant 11)

Understanding what the family wants of young people, caring people around who want good things for you as a young person. (Participant 11)

I felt secure, people knew my parents in the community, gives a sense of who you are. (Participant 2)

However, it became apparent that many participants had encountered significant upheaval in their lives. It was significant that childhood upheaval was clearly an emergent theme, eight out of the 12 young people interviewed were in a situation where they had either moved to a new community or country and/or did not live with at least one of their birth parents.

I enjoyed growing up in the community, it was a different story when I moved to Caerphilly. I couldn't find, I didn't know anyone, it's horrible growing up when you don't know anyone. (Participant 6)

It was a big shock moving from England to Wales, such a different atmosphere and everything. In England the atmosphere was a bit more thuggish, and gangs and everything. Down here it's a quiet little old town. (Participant 3)

We moved house every couple of years but we (participant and mother) were always involved in the community. (Participant 2)

For one participant, he noted the impact even of moving from one neighbouring street to another in an urban area. As adults we might regard that as no distance at all but his comment suggests otherwise for children:

*Growing up was tough, moving house, I didn't know anyone in the street.
(Participant 4)*

In some cases it became apparent that young people really valued the sense of consistency and security they felt in Youth Work. Occasionally, young people with difficult family lives acknowledged that Youth Work, youth workers and other young people had been regarded as family:

Bringing people together in youth club, it was just nice to have a nice family evening, and it was. (Participant 4)

Four young people noted their youth setting functioned for them as a surrogate home, this is summed up in the comment:

I would regard the people, the people here as my family so this is why I rely on this place a lot more than I should. (Participant 6)

The importance of community has surfaced as a theme within the interviews. Living in a particular community of place, whether urban, rural or in a former industrial area. All the participants demonstrated a curiosity about and desire for understanding of their own communities while growing up. The notion that growing up in a community also makes young people visible, in rural areas, that:

It's such a small place, everyone knows everyone else's business, that's a bad thing. (Participant 2)

I knew the way the area was perceived, what others think about where you live and making judgements about you. (Participant 1)

A recognition of even in their own, relatively recent childhoods, the majority of the young men looked back with a sense of nostalgia on the freedom that they were allowed:

I loved growing up, where I did to be honest. I was in a generation where you could actually still get a bike for Christmas, also, like, actually be able to use social media as well, so it was a bit of both going on. (Participant 10)
Freedom growing up - what your friends think of you - like a boss you know, he can do anything he likes. (Participant 1)

This notion of freedom and choice about the use of time was common across communities, even in urban areas:

It wasn't as if we were crammed into one street or one estate, we did have the freedom to play and be young people. (Participant 11)

There was a realisation that young people represent and are represented by their community and that this representation influences what people outside of the community think of those within it, giving a sense of community identity. This brought out more positive and less positive emotions, young people felt:

The need for a comfort zone as a child – feeling part of something is important. (Participant 5)

Felt secure, people knew my parents in the community, gives a sense of who you are. (Participant 2)

This positivity was exemplified in a sense of emotion evident in a young person from a former industrial area with a strong industrial heritage:

A pride in people in the community, unlike most other areas who haven't got like a women's group, the feminists in the area, we've still got radical people around. (Participant 5)

And also about the impact of social change on former industrial communities, where previously neighbours had known each other but this wasn't the case now:

There are changes stemming from industries closing, before, we had to know each other. (Participant 6)

Within and across all the communities, in all areas the idea of having other children/ young people around to socialise with was pervasive, every participant identified this as a factor.

Participant 10 said:

A very good childhood equates to having lots of friends (Participant 10)

However, in many cases it became clear that, as young people thought and reflected in depth about their relationships they became increasingly aware that friendship might not be

as simple as they might have previously thought. A statement from one young man in a former industrial area summed up this concept very well:

You have acquaintances while you are a child and you develop real friendships later. (Participant 5)

This sentiment was supported by another young person from an urban area:

Friendship means someone you can have a laugh with, a bit of banter with. Just someone who's there. (Participant 4)

I asked 'how many of these (friends) have you got, do you think?'

Now? One true friend, friends for years. I've got others who I could speak to if I needed something. (Participant 4)

The issue of differences between acquaintances and friends arose in many of the interviews:

I've only got two best friends like, I would say 95% of my friends are associates. (Participant 6)

Friends have been so important for me, I have the same group of friends as I've always had, we haven't grown apart. They are really good friends, I've needed friends, they were there for me. (Participant 9)

The proving ground for friendships was often a traumatic situation or series of events and that if acquaintances remained true and available throughout these challenges that they then seemed to pass through a rite of passage to become true friends. Adversity often acted as a crucible where true friendships could be formed. This became apparent in the interviews:

I am able to differentiate between friends and people you know like. It's not just who your friends are but who else is in your corner. (Participant 5)

What I look for in a friend has changed since it was about having the best time, I have, what I call now, real friends, you know, the guys who are there for me. But back then, it was purely, it was looking for a good time. I think following my accident and everything, it has better informed my opinion of people. (Participant 1)

One young person who had moved from an urban area to a rural area as a child reflected upon the difficulties she had faced as a result of separation of a sibling:

Having my sister with me all the time was important. I had a step sister and she was only 3 months younger than me. She was like my best friend and she moved away to live with her mum. And a lot of things changed when she moved away. (Participant 3)

In such circumstances children and young people commonly have little choice. However, the participants were very positive about the notion of wanting to be able to have a choice or exhibit some form of agency, this occurred over and over again.

Key Theme 2. The significance of key people

Young people unanimously spoke of the significance of the youth worker in their experiences of Youth Work. The fact that the youth worker is resourceful, that they have access to opportunities, knowledge, resources not otherwise available to the young people, that they are connected to a wider world, this enabled the Youth Worker to offer young people resources which gave their lives more meaning. Youth workers were also regarded as being a source of moral education, this was a quality which enabled young people to engage with their own moral development, enhancing their life meaning. Youth workers (and others) having expectations of young people, that emerged as a theme, young people regarded it important that they knew people had expectations of them that they might not have of themselves. Friendliness emerged, the notion that the youth worker should be friendly, that this impacted upon their sense of happiness. The sense of friendliness as a theme lends itself to the significance of the unique relationship between the young person and the youth worker. Young people also realised that Youth Work gives a sense of hope.

The young people had all been involved in Youth Work for a considerable period of time, ranging from two years to 12 years, this period of time allows for the development and maintenance of good quality relationships.

It's important, everyone should have, you know, a youth worker, well every young person. Youth workers provide good quality advice and information. (Participant 9)

One young person summarised how she initially regarded Youth Work but also how she had come to understand the importance of the youth worker:

Principles are important, I used to think youth work was table tennis or pool but now I understand young people would struggle without youth workers. (Participant 9)

I explored with young people how they felt about Youth Work, both before they had experienced it and in the early days of their involvement.

I expected fun and games, I just didn't realise about how youth workers can help young people with issues. It goes deeper than that. It works really well to tackle issues. (Participant 9)

You learn a lot from youth workers, learning right from wrong. (Participant 9)

Youth work has helped me grow up and understand things more (Participant 9).

Youth work teaches you things school doesn't, it's really important, Youth Work helps you grow as a person. (Participant 9)

Youth Work has given me confidence, built my resilience. (Participant 4)
Youth Work improves well-being, it helps you to understand others more, to realise that not everyone has the same sort of life as you. Youth Work helps open your eyes. (Participant 9)

The National Occupational Standards for Youth Work (LSIS, 2012) are well established and set out clear expectations of what youth workers should know and be able to do.

Young people had clear impressions of the qualities that they valued in their youth workers:

Workers are dependable. (Participant 10)

The tone of their voice, the content of what they said, youth workers are normal, give you something to identify with, they are accessible adults. (Participant 10).

Youth workers need to be stubborn, resourceful, survivors. (Participant 11).

Being an adult, voice, having a say - having a say is important - the workers, they wanted our input, they wanted to make sure that was what we wanted to

do and we were ok with doing it. They just wanted to make sure we were enjoying what we were doing. (Participant 3)

The workers get to know a lot of people, they get to know not every young person is the same. The relationship with the worker is really important, the fact that they care about you. (Participant 3)

I think about what the workers wore, that was really important, they were dressed really relaxed, really chilled. (Participant 10)

Workers showing themselves to be interested, this motivates young people. (Participant 11)

The majority of the participants noted the role of youth workers as providers of information, three examples:

Youth workers are like google. (Participant 10)

It's important, everyone should have, you know, a youth worker, well every young person. Youth workers provide good quality advice and information. (Participant 4)

They work out plans with you, whatever they think will help you get through what you need to do. (Participant 7)

Further, the notion of the worker being connected to the wider world:

It can be boring but you've got to have connections. (Participant 6)

We do a lot of things with the community and it helps to change your perception on things. (Participant 3)

Another emerging theme within the significance of people was that of consistency.

Consistency and someone being there for the young person emerged as important. The

concept of consistency surfaced in relation to Youth Work and the youth workers.

Youth work is regular, every week they'd (the youth workers) be keeping in touch with me. (Participant 1)

Consistency on the part of the workers is important - no, when we went away they were the same people, but they obviously had to make sure we were all there and all ok and everything was fine. (Participant 3)

One young man spoke very eloquently about the importance of Youth Work not simply being available but about the qualities of the youth worker. The youth worker for example, demonstrating consistency and showing the young people they are cared for.

The knowing stems from consistency, knowing is a result of showing, you knew where you stood for example. (Participant 10)

The relationships in Youth Work emerged as so important, the quality of the relationships with others in Youth Work being family like:

Relationships of respect, like feelings of family here. (Participant 10)

Participants were clear that the Youth Worker plays a significant part in the process. Another important aspect of the Youth Work experience is that of 'place'.

Key Theme 3. The importance of place to young people

It became increasingly apparent that the places where Youth Work happens were significant. The first emergent theme within the importance of place, is that of familiarity. I interviewed 9 of the young people in buildings where they had been involved in Youth Work. It was apparent that they felt very comfortable in these buildings, even though to the visitor those buildings may appear somewhat cold and unwelcoming. Prior to the interviews, young people were keen to show me around the buildings, they would recall specific incidents that had taken place in different rooms. It was clear there was a sense of familiarity. In three interviews the young people were given keys by the Youth Worker present to open up the room where the interview would take place. In one of these interviews, one young man noted:

In relation to the significance of the place - I came here when I was 11 with one of my friends who had been here before. I really enjoyed coming here and so I kept coming and I really got to know everyone here. I thought this is a really nice, homely, place to be. i just kept on coming back. I don't know, it's like my second family here now (Participant 3).

Another young person noted about their feelings of familiarity associated with the building:

We have things in common, speaking, language, just speaking, comfortable surroundings (Participant 10).

Another young person commented:

Just coming in here, it made me feel happy. Doing the music, that is the best I've felt as a young person (Participant 11).

One young man was able to identify that the centre he attended responded to:

The need for a comfort zone as a child, feeling part of something (Participant 5).

Participants noted that feelings of familiarity enhanced their subjective well-being.

Another aspect of the key theme of 'place' was that of community. Many of the young people discussed their views on community. The following section contains an exploration of what young people had to say on the subject.

Community emerged as a theme for the young people involved in the study. One of the participants living in an urban area spoke about the cul de sac he lived in being a place of isolation for him.

Growing up was tough, moving house, I didn't know anyone in the street.
(Participant 4).

Another young person from a former industrial area noted that family and community was important:

Family and community support, enhances stability, doing my own thing has been important too. (Participant 9)

One young man commented:

Being of a community is significant to identity formation. (Participant 1).

Another noted that:

You felt secure, people knew my parents in the community, gives a sense of who you are. (Participant 2)

Another young person commented that:

Yeah, ok, all my family lives on one road really. All my aunties, all on the same road. In a way it's quite nice and obviously sometimes you have family arguments but mostly it's nice having my family in one place. If you need something or, you just go down the road. (Participant 4)

Participant 2 also noted the importance of not just being part of the community but to being active within the community:

I've always done things as a family and getting involved with the community you know, it was only a little village but there was a lot going on. (Participant 2)

One element of community which was significant across the rural and former industrial areas was the necessity for leaders in the communities and for the community to organise itself to maintain its infrastructure. One young person commented on the potential of being involved and taking action and how this can enhance feelings of well-being:

I organised a massive community event and I'm quite proud of that. And then it turned into like a massive event, everybody was there, like 400 people, we raised £1,500 for Ty Hafan. (Participant 4)

In a former industrial area, young people noted that in their community, there remained:

Pride in people in the community, unlike most other areas who haven't got like a women's group, the feminists in the area, we've still got radical people around. (Participant 6).

It was clear that community gave your people a sense of pride and that it gave them a sense of belonging but also that belonging to a certain community meant that you were different to others. It was noted:

Like our club is in Ely, say when we play teams from other areas or from the valleys you know we've got a reputation, oh it's the Ely boys, they get a bit, wow, we don't want to play you or that they want to get stuck into you and batter you. I would say the area is quite well known, people will sometimes back off. I prefer to say I'm from Ely, now its quite cool to know you have a sense of belonging. (Participant 10).

Participants felt there were negative things about community, including that as young people they were visible within their communities and that they could often feel that they were portrayed in a negative light by older people within the community.

I think there's the whole thing about being demonised because you're with a group of young people. Feeling judged, its been going around for years. (Participant 11).

Another participant commented that:

I can understand where people are coming from but I can understand if ten of us are standing outside the shops and people are crossing the road when we're not doing anything. But if you do see a group of young people wearing hoodies, that can be frightening I suppose. I used to see it and they are obviously frightened by us and that's not what we wanted to do. It's just what they thought. We were there just to hang around with friends, people might misunderstand us, judging us before they knew us. (Participant 10).

This notion of community was also important in the former industrial areas:

I enjoyed growing up there, most of the people I grew up in and was in school with in, it was a different story when I moved to Caerphilly. I couldn't find, didn't know anyone, it's horrible growing up when you don't know anyone. Hopefully I will move back to the village one day but perhaps not any time soon. (Participant 6)

One young woman commented that in the Youth Work she is involved with:

We do a lot of things with the community and it helps to change your perception on things. (Participant 3)

This young woman also noted that, for her, community was less important than her family.

It (community) wasn't that important, it wasn't very important. (Participant 3)

However, for the majority of the participants, they were clear how important their communities had been to them. This importance was summarised by one young man:

To me, it's just that everyone in Townhill is so, like, close knit and um, that was the same in the club. Everyone in the club knew each other. Everyone in Townhill knows each other. So, it's like everybody in the community coming together in one place, it was brilliant I suppose. (Participant 4)

In relation to community, the last theme which emerged from the data was that of a sense of belonging. Youth Work has been shown to be significant to these young people. It appears that they are often proud to be linked with the organisations with which they are associated.

Yeah it was important, coming here, building relationships, just because, for me, I didn't have the sort of relationships as a young person aged 11, 12, 13, I didn't have any apart from the workers before we started building relationships with the young people, my social network. Expanding on my experiences and my friendship groups. (Participant 4)

One young woman was clear about what Youth Work meant to her, providing a sense of belonging:

I really enjoyed coming here and so I kept coming and I really got to know everyone here. I thought this is a really nice, homely place to be. I just kept on coming back. I don't know, it's like my second family here now. (Participant 3)

This young woman noted the effect of belonging to a community while away from the place normally associated with Youth Work. Reflecting on a residential activity, she recalled:

And being with all the guys from here. Like I said, they are like my second family to me cos I've been here for so long. Usually I wouldn't be able to stay overnight in an area that I wasn't familiar with but because I was with them all it felt like home really. It was so calm and it was a really nice time. (Participant 3)

In a former industrial area, one young person noted:

I started coming here because of my past and my background, it actually gave me a place where I felt secure enough to actually get the support I needed. So I actually came here and I worked up to volunteer. (Participant 6)

Another young person was able to reflect on the importance of the sense of belonging offered by the centre she was involved with in a former valleys community:

Even where I live if I come down here, they will buy me lunch because they understand the situations and the circumstances people come from. For me, I would regard the people here as my family so, this is why I rely on this place a

lot more than I should. I mean, I'm 20 years old, still attending a youth centre.
(Participant 5)

One young man, when asked what would happen if the centre wasn't there, noted:

Being in this centre, you need people you can rely on. Everyone is family to you in this place. As you start as a young person, the volunteers come and go but the more time you spend here the more you can trust them. And the more they mean to you. It's an emotional process. (Participant 8)

Another comment highlighted the practical activities that go on in Youth Work which engage young people and further a sense of belonging:

If this wasn't here, I couldn't guarantee I would be here today. I don't think I'd have the GCSEs that I have. I would be regretting tomorrow, I would lash out. It's not that I'm not looking negatively, if I fail I know there are things I can do. This centre has taught me that. Last year, sitting my maths GCSE early I would have freaked out, I've developed a lot more than I used to. (Participant 6)

This young person was able to identify how the Youth Work at the centre has acted upon her sense of resilience:

If it wasn't for this place, I'm not gonna lie, I would be probably be down the docks on the roundabout. I just thought I'd be honest like. So, from that to the place I am in now where I don't regret nothing, I just laugh at everything.
(Participant 5).

Perhaps unsurprisingly the young people spoke at length about why they had learned through Youth Work. Some of the participants made real comparisons about Youth Work and school and how the experiences offered to them through Youth Work had been important to them. The next section sets out data which evidences the importance of the experiences young people gain through Youth Work.

Key Theme 4. The significance of Youth Work experiences

One of the key principles of Youth Work is that of education through experience. This is one of the aspects of Youth Work that is stated repeatedly in the literature (CWVYS, 2013; Learning and Skills Improvement Service, 2012; Welsh Government, 2014). It is

significant that young people are able to appreciate and speak about how taking part in Youth Work has acted upon their sense of subjective well-being.

One young person summarised the importance of experiences while growing up:

Erm, as I said before its having those experiences, I think. Just having as many experiences as possible because you learn from your mistakes and experience. So, yeah, to me, its not about, you know your parents want you to be safe and so on, but I don't think its right to just wrap you in a bubble and keep you indoors. You've got to go out and hang around with your friends and make mistakes. (Participant 11)

This young person discussed the importance of experiencing something he was passionate about. Youth Work had given him the opportunity to try something:

Again, I would go back to the music experiences. I went to one centre with my mate and we had never been there before but within a out half an hour we were friends, we had all experienced the same things, we were on the same page. That's why, I was on the microphone, meeting people of different age groups. You had that interests in common. As soon as you walk in they give you evils and then after half an hour they hear you on the mike, then you pass them the mike and hear them and you develop that respect. (Participant 11)

Another young person from an urban environment noted that:

I can honestly say I've never finished a Youth Work session or left a Youth Work environment thinking oh I've not enjoyed that, I've never had a bad experience. The best was probably a youth exchange, living with people from different countries, actually living with people. (Participant 10)

This young person was also able to consider that:

From our experiences it's given us opportunities to explore so many new things, meet so many new people, go to new places. Yeah, think of so many of the young people who have used this centre over the years. (Participant 11)

A young person from a rural area commented that:

It was good, they would take us out to do something for the day and it would be nicer than being in school. It gave me the confidence to try new things like abseiling off a cliff. That was something I had never done before. It has given me a lot of good experiences I would never have had without the youth workers. (Participant 3)

The young person also noted:

This is probably the only thing around here for teenagers to do. Cos not many teenagers have money for things, and, come here and chill and have a nice time. (Participant 3)

Further, this young person was able to comment about some of the experiences she had gained through her experiences of Youth Work:

oof, yes, (I have taken part in) lots of things, lots of trips, we went to Cornwall for the weekend, that was really nice. We went camping in the summer. I've only ever been on one holiday in my life, nice that we went away together as a group. It was a nice weekend and I would do it again any time. (Participant 3)

Another theme which emerged from the research was that of the importance of movement, of physical experiences for young people while they were growing up.

This enhances feelings of life satisfaction, life meaning and happiness (OECD, 2013).

One young man in a rural community commented on the importance of spending time in the outdoors, that:

I had a really fun time growing up, fishing or riding a bike, so it was always really fun; growing up. Yeah, that's what I seem to remember, it was always fun, always doing something, always out, I used to go out with my uncles a lot and doing a lot of stuff, so. Whereas, compared to my brothers, they weren't doing so much, I think I was having more of a good time, yeah. (Participant 1)

Another young man living in a rural area reflected on how being active impacted on him:

I played rugby, my mum was rowing, I rowed for a bit, so um, it was quite um, it was quite fun you know, living in the little village and um, it was nice like, I like that I lived in a village and um, you know, everyone knows you, you walk down the street and everyone will speak to you. (Participant 2)

This theme of physical activity was not limited to young people in rural areas – one young man from an urban area commented how:

Because, in some areas all you see is houses and flats and even though our area did have some of those and again, we did have a lot of air time as well a lot of fields, a lot of space to play in, we weren't just crammed into an estate. (Participant 11)

He went on to comment:

It depends on how you look at it, if you're out on the streets with your mates, hanging around and not causing any trouble then it's a real positive, if you're out on the streets causing trouble. Obviously it's a negative but if you're out on the streets exploring in the woods or playing rugby then that's a good thing. (Participant 11).

The comments above relate to participants reflection on their spare time, outside of Youth Work. In relation to Youth Work activities, it was noted that, in the best Youth Work there would:

Just be a wicked buzz, always trips, discos, normal chill nights. Resources to play football, girls with makeup, and it was free. (Participant 10)

One young man in an urban area had recently gained employment as a youth worker and reflected upon his observations of other youth workers:

A lot of staff are trying to work out what we can do and how we can work with them over the next few months, structuring activities and we're not doing that much wrong. Still got to keep them active, thinking outside the box, stopping them getting bored. (Participant 11)

A comment from a young woman in a rural area reinforced the notion of the impact of physical activities:

The youth service is more physical, getting us out doing things, here is like that but there's also a lot of caring side of it as well. Being active, doing things helped my confidence.. A LOT! (my emphasis) (Participant 3)

This young person also noted some activities she had taken part in through Youth Work:

I use the park, I play football in the park and I'm involved in the gardening project. (Participant 3)

In the summer we went camping in Pembrey, it was so amazing. We all helped to build up the tents, then we had gone down the beach. We made a MASSIVE (my emphasis) fire.. Er, do you know them, toboggans, we went on them. I hadn't done that before. (Participant 3)

The following passage illustrates how young people were all able to reflect upon the importance sense of freedom to experiment while growing up:

Youth Work has helped me establish who I am and what I can do. I would be a different person, I would be a lot more angry. I would have a lot more fights. (Participant 5)

Youth Work creates a safe environment to change or to be yourself. (Participant 10)

Youth club was a chance to relax, it was different, we thought we could do what we wanted. (Participant 4)

Youth Work always makes things fun, making things interesting keeps young people listening and taking it all in. (Participant 9)

Even though this is a city the young people are still limited in what they have access to, Youth Work gives options. (Participant 10)

A young person in an urban area noted that, compared to school:

It (the youth club he was involved with) was more relaxed, we could come here and think we could do what we want, but obviously we couldn't. We could just come here and obviously there were boundaries in place, but it had a relaxed atmosphere and it was more lenient in relation to school, don't do this, don't do that. Less dictatorship. I enjoyed the youth club, as a young person. (Participant 4)

One young man living in a rural area reflected upon how he had a considerable amount of freedom in his home life, and, how it made him feel:

Like a boss, you know, like he can do anything he likes, my friends at the time who didn't have, say, have that they made me feel like I could do what I wanted. But my school work went way downhill. I got a moped and I was just doing what I wanted I suppose. It didn't play out too well. I think I did alright. Looking back, I think the whole, I was just off gallivanting, and staying up til silly times, you shouldn't be out til those times with school. (Participant 1)

This young man commented on the Youth Work he had been involved with, which had helped him:

Um, I think it was more, more, them, than me. I think if I'd had the choice I would have left it (Youth Work) alone. I think their proactiveness has helped massively to get me in, kind of knowing people as well helps. You know they can see by knowing you, who needs help so they can, yeah, so definitely think it was on their back, they have made the transformation. (Participant 1)

This young man realised that his youth workers had to initially almost pursue him to be involved. This highlighted that if youth workers rely on the principle of voluntary

participation, young people who do not initially want to take part voluntarily may be losing out. The fact that these youth workers had sought out this young person and that he went on to gain a great deal from youth work points out that strict adherence to principles may be to the detriment of the individual young person's well-being. Having noted that some young people may not initially be attracted to youth work, it was commonly noted by participants that an important aspect of Youth Work is that it can appeal to young people by offering activities which promote a sense of fun.

Fun was universally regarded as an important aspect of Youth Work. When asked to recount their best days in Youth Work, young people commented on the significance of having fun. One young man from a rural area commented how his youth worker had made what might have been quite a dry topic into something enjoyable and fun:

But, drove down there (to the Senedd), yeah, never seen a bus that big yeah. Drove down there and when we got there they all went on a speedboat trip round the bay cos, you know, everyone had a laugh at that, being in the paper. Getting the fun part out of the way first. (Participant 1)

In an urban area outdoor activities were regarded as fun. Another young man commented how:

As a young person, when we went to do outdoor pursuits for a day. It was over a couple of days it was, over a half term, I never had a chance to do outdoor pursuits, ever. So, it was good, it was fun, we went surfing, mountain biking, all that stuff. Probably won't get the chance to do again. (Participant 4)

In a former industrial area, one young woman noted how:

Youth Work always makes things fun, making things interesting keeps young people listening and taking it all in. (Participant 9)

This young woman had come to Youth Work in her late teens at a time when she felt she needed to be helping others:

I expected fun and games, I just didn't realise about school or how youth workers can help young people with issues. It goes deeper than that. It works really well to tackle issues (Participant 9).

Young people often spoke of challenges they had faced, accidents, bereavement, family breakdown, mental ill-health. Experience of significant adversities were common.

It was surprising to listen to young people's stories of adversity and trauma in their lives.

Bereavement was an issue for all the young people involved in the study.

When I was younger, there were no problems, there was my gran, she's passed away now, in 2006, but she sort of kept everyone together, my nan and my grandfather. (Participant 4)

One young man was able to reflect on how the issue of alcohol misuse had impacted upon him:

there's always been a, I don't know, a thing about alcohol in my family. Not, it's, the males in my family and alcohol there's always been a big problem. Well, it killed my dad in the end. And, er, my brother's following, two of them are following. (Participant 1)

Many of the participants had moved home, sometimes over very long distances.

Well, the area I grew up in years ago, its changed over the years. I enjoyed growing up in the village, most of the people I grew up in and was in school with in the village, it was a different story when I moved to Caerphilly. I couldn't find, didn't know anyone, its horrible growing up when you don't know anyone. Hopefully I will move back to the village one day but perhaps not any time soon. You grow up with certain people, I don't like being out of my comfort zone. (Participant 8).

However, what an adult might consider to be a very local move, with little upheaval clearly affected one young man. Moving from one street to the next:

My parents though, were quite strict, so I was sort of confined to the cul de sac I lived in. Um, and yeah, I moved from the cul de sac then at the age of 10, just round the corner mind, nearer to the primary school. But again that was difficult cos I didn't know anyone in the street so growing up was tough, without contact with anyone really. Until the age of 14 I didn't have much contact with anyone outside town. (Participant 4)

Many of the young people also discussed experiences of being young carers, of being bullied, of mental health difficulties, of exam pressures and family breakup as being sources of adversity and trauma while growing up. I have included a range of comments

below which exemplify the sentiments of the participants regarding Youth Work. These comments illustrate some of the positive impacts of Youth Work:

Youth Work has made me more confident, confident to deal with people I thought I'd never have to deal with. (Participant 7)

It was great, we met people not just from the community but from other youth clubs, we linked up with. Not many young people know there are other clubs out there. (Participant 4)

The young people come back, shows Youth Work, young people enjoy Youth Work. There isn't enough going on perhaps but we are doing something right to bring the young people back in. (Participant 4)

It (Youth Work) was the only thing I could look forward to as a young person. (Participant 4)

Youth Work makes me feel happy, it's a happy place to be and a really comforting place. (Participant 3)

I'm childish see and Youth Work is too, sometimes you have to stay young. (Participant 6)

The data above clearly demonstrates the importance of Youth Work to young people, the following section contains an exploration specifically exploring how these experiences impacted upon their subjective well-being.

Listening to young people – specifically on their subjective well-being

With respect to young people and their voices, the next section of the thesis relates specifically to well-being. All of the young people interviewed had been involved in a variety of forms of Youth Work. The majority, although not all had become involved in Youth Work at an early age and had accessed a local youth club in their area. One young person had first become involved in Youth Work at the age of 17. The following comments are representative of the wider group of participants.

I have had a variety of experiences of Youth Work, Youth Work in schools, detached Youth Work, school work, outreach work, 1 to 1 work, youth clubs, Neets, residential. (Participant 9)

A variety of experiences - youth club, Prince's Trust, work based training, international exchange. (Participant 1)

The young people all differentiated between what might be considered different levels of

Youth Work:

The basic forms of Youth Work, playing pool, table tennis. (Participant 10)

I thought it was initially about playing pool, somewhere to chill, its free. (Participant 11)

Youth Work has been much more than I expected it to be to be honest, cos I thought it was like, ooh lets go out and do some activities but there is so much more to it than that. (Participant 3)

Most of the young people noted that Youth Work was unique in their experiences, other areas of their social lives were seemingly becoming more commodified, it was widely noted that financial difficulties were commonplace for young people:

Cost, spare time things cost money in town. (Participant 3)

In one former industrial area it was noted that there were feelings of isolation and that even the cost of transport to buy food, let alone buying the food was a significant issue:

I feel isolated, the costs of transport to buy food. (Participant 7)

Youth Work appears distinctive to the young people, it is special, it provides young people with experiences unavailable elsewhere in their lives:

Youth Work is different to other things, it's not as serious, as other things. (Participant 9)

Youth Work is something unique for young people, it was the only thing as a young person I could look forward to. (Participant 4)

Even though this is a city the young people are still limited in what they have access to, Youth Work gives options. (Participant 11)

Youth club is the highlight of the week for some young people. (Participant 4)

Youth Work gives hope. (Participant 9)

Youth Work makes me feel happy, it's obvious, it's a happy environment, in Youth Work there's always a solution. Youth Work offers a different way of looking at things. (Participant 9)

The fact that Youth Work is mainly free, its confidential, you can trust a Youth Worker. Just the fact there is someone to talk to, there is no pressure in Youth Work. (Participant 9)

I used to think youth workers don't do nothing but actually there are a lot of windows they have to cover over a long period of time. (Participant 4)

The next section of this chapter explores what young people had to say about Youth Work and their subjective well-being. All the young people noted the effects of experiences. Many of these experiences were new to them and often involved a level of physical activity.

Ideal Youth Work experiences should be safe, structured, and varied. (Participant 6)

We went to Cardiff bay, to go on a boat trip, to visit the Senedd, to see an MP (Sic) I think that was one of the best days. (Participant 1)

Looking back I think there were purposes I wasn't picking up on, I just don't think I had the capacity to gauge, to see the underlying benefits, yeah? You're just seeing everything for face value. (Participant 1)

When you get a bit older you realise there's a greater purpose (Participant 1)
Youth Work has been much more than I expected it to be to be honest, cos I thought it was like, ooh lets go out and do some activities but there is so much more to it than that. (Participant 2)

A significant minority of participants talked about their experiences of loneliness, summarised by the following comment:

Having no friends makes for a difficult life. (Participant 10)

The following passage explores some of their views about the impacts of Youth Work on their well-being:

(Youth Work) enables young people to look forward, to have hope for the future, I dunno, it just gave me some direction, something to look forward to and enjoy, like the exchanges which was such a great time. (Participant 1)

Youth Work can change people's outlook - from being 11, I used to be so angry, the world was such a terrible place and the government was nothing to me and now its I dunno, you see the world as a much better place than I thought it was. (Participant 3)

Youth Work makes young people feel positive, valued and proud. (Participant 5)

I remember, thinking wow, you want me? I wasn't the brightest tool in the box school wise, I thought wow, I can do something different, rare. (Participant 11)

Youth Work allows you to be a human. (Participant 10)

My best involvement is doing the participation work, when they are actually, really, making a difference, having an impact, taking action. (Participant 10)

A theme which emerged from discussions was that of young people in Youth Work as consumers and/or creators. Young people spoke about the impacts as different for young people who remain as consumers of Youth Work rather than becoming perhaps more involved as creators of Youth Work experiences for themselves and others.

For some young people they are dropped off at Youth Work. (Participant 1)

Youth Work makes us all better off, it stops young people wanting to cause trouble (Participant 7).

Spending ten minutes in Youth Work can benefit your life. (Participant 8)

Youth Work gives you a space to practice being grown up. (Participant 10)

Youth Work – it's an emotional process, the more time you spend in Youth Work the more you can trust people and the more they mean to you. It's an emotional process. (Participant 8)

For many of the participants they were clear about the importance of Youth Work in their lives and also of the impact that this involvement had had on them to date.

Youth Work means everything to me, it's what I've grown up with. (Participant 8)

If I didn't have Youth Work I would be regretting my results tomorrow, I would lash out, it's not that I'm not looking negatively, if I fail I know there are things I can do. (Participant 5)

I come here to escape, to escape and help others at the same time. (Participant 6)

I think Youth Work is a chance for you to just sit down and have a chat with other young people, their parents might be too busy chasing money to listen to them. (Participant 10)

Yeah, it was a mix, the young people, the workers, the things that went on here. (Participant 4)

We went to Cornwall for the weekend, that was really nice. We went camping in the summer. I've only ever been on one holiday in my life, nice that we went away together as a group. It was a nice weekend and I would do it again any time. (Participant 3)

5.6 Summary of the Data

This study has identified original knowledge about young people's experience of Youth Work in Wales. The study has explored the extent to which young people recognise their involvement in Youth Work has impacted upon their SWB. It is clear that some young people involved in Youth Work have significant challenges in their lives including coping with the effects of economic poverty, the legacy of industrial decline, having caring responsibilities, bereavement, illness, substance misuse, family breakdown, mental health and bullying.

It is clear that the young people involved in this study feel there are factors which can mitigate these disadvantages and that these factors are present in their experiences of Youth Work.

Key theme 1: consistency, reliability and caring is important for young people, both at home and within Youth Work.

You need to know what to expect like. (Participant 8)

Key theme 2: youth workers offer young people a unique relationship which is valuable to young people

I remember, thinking wow, you want me? I wasn't the brightest tool in the box school wise, I thought wow, I can do something different, rare, special. (Participant 10)

Youth Work makes me feel happy, it's obvious, it's a happy environment, in Youth Work there's always a solution. Youth Work offers a different way of looking at things. (Participant 9)

Key theme 3: the places in which Youth Work takes place are special to young people

Yeah, it was a mix, the young people, the workers, the things that went on here. (Participant 4)

The trip was like being on holiday with my friends, we all helped to build the tents, we made a massive fire. Do you know them toboggans? We went on them, I hadn't done that before (Participant 3)

Ideal (Youth Work)places and experiences should be safe, structured and have variety. (Participant 4)

It is just such a beautiful place, the people that I was with, just everything we did. It was nice to be somewhere new. It is quite important, cos you see how different places are. Cos like in a community in Cornwall, not like here, it's a really happy place and everyone is friendly and everyone talks to each other and down here not many people do that. (Participant 3)

Key theme 4: the experiences Youth Work offers young people impact positively on their subjective well-being.

This young person had become interested in gardening as a result of her involvement with a Youth Work project.

I do quite a lot of gardening, I love gardening. At the moment im in the middle of turning over my mum's garden and levelling it all. Last night I put in some runner beans and some potatoes. (Participant 3)

This chapter has presented the data which has emerged in the study as a result of interviews with 12 young people who have been involved in Youth Work. The key themes which have emerged are, the importance of consistency, the significance of youth workers, the value that young people see in the places where Youth Work happens and lastly, on the experiences young people have access to through Youth Work.

The following critical discussion and analysis chapter brings together the underpinning theories, contexts and evidence arising from the study.

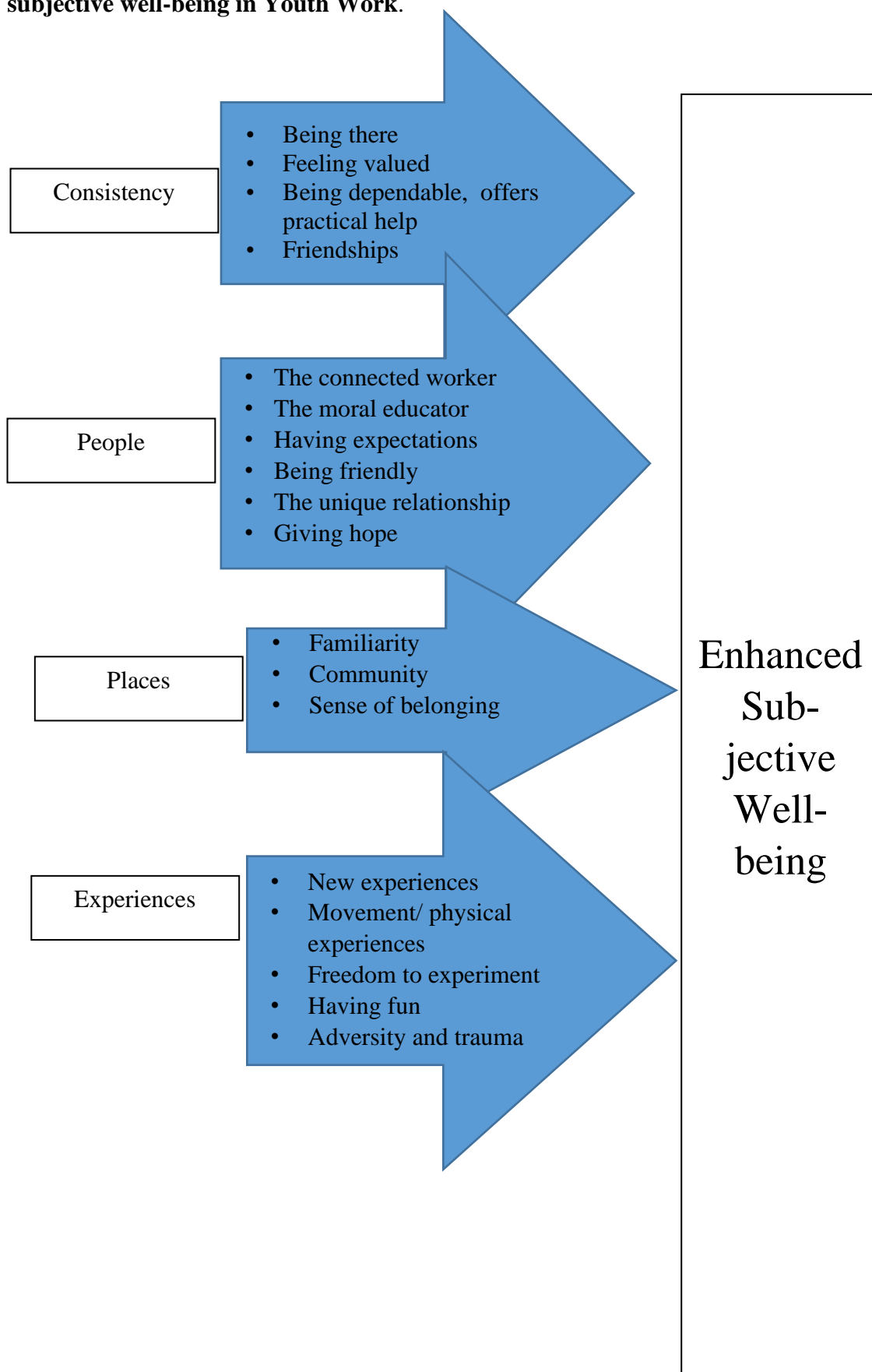
6 CRITICAL DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to critically explore the extent to which Youth Work may impact on the subjective well-being of young people. The model of SWB adopted in this study is that of The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which has identified that subjective well-being is made up of three components. These components are:

- iv. Life satisfaction
 - v. Life meaning
 - vi. Happiness
- (OECD, 2013)

This study has identified four significant key themes which young people involved in Youth Work associate with these three components of SWB. These key themes are: consistency; people; places and experiences. The discovery of these themes has added new knowledge of the practice of Youth Work set out in relevant Welsh Youth Work policy (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007, Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2018, Welsh Government, 2014). The contribution to new understanding being the discovery that, very clearly, Youth Work acts positively on the subjective well-being (OECD, 2013) of young people, irrespective of the type of community in which they live, be that urban, rural or former industrial (Phillips and Skinner, 1994). Figure 4. provides a schematic representation of the interaction of these themes and the fact that their overlap acts to enhance the subjective well-being of young people involved in Youth Work.

Figure 4. Schematic representation of the characteristics acting on young people's subjective well-being in Youth Work.



With the current evidence of a widespread diminution in well-being among young people (Layard, 2013; Office for National Statistics, 2017), the findings of this study illustrate the

potential power of Youth Work in enhancing the lived experiences of young people, improving their feelings of satisfaction with life; their sense of their lives having meaning and their sense of happiness. Figure 4. Illustrates how results show clearly that Youth Work enhances young people's sense of life satisfaction, it acts on their interpretation of how they identify their lives have meaning and it also acts to increase their sense of happiness. In the emerging field of well-being research, these are components of subjective well-being as defined by to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2013).

At a time when young people in so called developed nations are among the unhappiest in the World (Broadbent, Gougoulis, Lui, Pota and Simons, 2017), the new knowledge emerging from this study provides evidence of a rationale for investment in Youth Work in Wales, rather than the slew of financial cuts which have been passed on to local youth services in Wales. It has been noted that local authorities have imposed cuts to youth services in Wales amounting to £13,000,000 between 2010 and 2017 (Welsh Government, 2018). These cuts have resulted in a reduction of young people in contact with the youth service of 23%, from a high of 120,000 young people between 2011-2013 (Welsh Government, 2018).

Research shows that many young people in Wales are increasingly under pressure with poor levels of happiness and well-being (Pitchford, Viner, and Hargreaves, 2016; ONS, 2017; Mylona, 2015; Moore, Cox, Evans, Hawkins, Litlecott, Long, and Murphy, 2018). The results of this study show very clearly that Youth Work based upon a clearly articulated set of characteristics: the voluntary involvement by young people who have chosen to engage in the process, Youth Work being age specific, focused on 11-25 year olds, a non-formal education approach, being driven by a young-people-first approach and based upon a universal approach (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007, p. 3; Welsh

Government, 2014) impacts strongly on how young people perceive their life satisfaction, the meaning of their life and also their happiness. These characteristics of subjective well-being have been highlighted within the literature review chapter are a well-established approach to defining a subjective phenomenon and which remain integral to the espoused theory (Argyris and Schön, 1974; 1996) of the policy and practice of Youth Work in Wales.

The policy of Youth Work in Wales, and across the United Kingdom has, increasingly, acknowledged and re-stated a desire to enhance the health and well-being of young people taking part (Borsden et al 2012; Lifelong Learning UK, 2008; Learning and Skills Improvement Service, 2012, CLD Scotland, 2019). However, while well-being has become part of the Youth Work argot there has been very little empirical research critically exploring how Youth Work impacts upon the SWB of the young people who take part in it. This study has been significant in responding to this dearth of empirical research which has been identified as a significant gap in knowledge, addressed with the study.

As outlined within the methodology chapter, this study aimed to draw out ‘what are the underlying themes and contexts which account for this view of Youth Work’? Considering ‘what are the universal structures that precipitate feelings and thoughts about well-being through Youth Work’? The intention was also, to listen to young people and to learn ‘what are the invariant structural themes that facilitate a description of subjective well-being as it is experienced by young people’. Providing the young people with the opportunity to consider these questions has enabled the generation of data rich in detail about their experiences of growing up and of their participation in, and views of, Youth Work. The interpretive phenomenological process (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012) of the study has presented rich data of young people’s experiences of Youth Work and an accurate description of how involvement in this distinct form of work enhances subjective well-

being (OECD, 2015; Deiner, Lucas and Oishi, 2002.) This primary data, gathered through a process of empirical, qualitative research has generated greater understanding of the interaction of different elements of Youth Work, and how this subtle mix influences the subjective well-being of young people in Wales.

The interviews with young people were recorded, transcribed, ordered and analysed following the interpretive, phenomenological model of Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2012). This process involved listening to all of the voice recordings, then transcribing each of them in turn. Subsequently, the transcripts were examined in detail, line by line. Next, the data were subject to a process involving ‘compiling transcript extracts to make files of emergent themes’ (Smith, Flower and Larkin, 2012, p. 99). This enabled a process of exploration, the authors suggest this process also helps ‘develop the local analysis of particular themes’ (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012, p. 99). These emergent themes were then grouped further, following the model of Smith et al (2012), being described as key themes (adapted from Smith Flowers and Larkin, 2012).

The phenomenological method was an ideal approach by which to study the following four, overarching research questions:

- What are the meanings of Youth Work to young people?
- What are the underlying themes and contexts which account for this view of Youth Work?
- What are the universal structures that precipitate feelings and thoughts about well-being through Youth Work?
- What are the invariant structural themes that facilitate a description of well-being as it is experienced by young people?

Analysing the data from these four overarching research questions revealed that young people involved in Youth Work expressed that this distinct form of work has positive impacts on their subjective well-being.

The data shows that the young people involved in this study were clear that Youth Work means a great deal to them. One of the young people from an urban area noted that 'it's important, everyone should have, you know, a youth worker, well every young person'. A young woman from a rural area, speaking about Youth Work said 'the relationship with the worker is really important, the fact that they care about you'. It was also said that 'Youth Work teaches you things school doesn't, it's really important, Youth Work helps you grow as a person'. These comments illustrate some of the very important aspects of the Youth Work mix and how important Youth Work is to young people who are involved in it.

Moving on to consider the underlying themes and contexts which have emerged from the data there are a number which have proven significant in the analysis. Firstly: consistency, reliability and caring has been identified as important by young people themselves, both at home and within Youth Work. Secondly, that youth workers offer young people a unique relationship which is extremely valuable to them. The third theme shows that the places in which Youth Work takes place are special to young people. The final theme to emerge from the data was that the experiences Youth Work offers young people impact positively on their subjective well-being. These are the main findings of the study, that this Youth Work mix, how elements of the work interact; has a powerful positive influence on the subjective well-being of young people.

The chapter continues with a discussion and critical analysis of these results and how the findings are supported by the data. The chapter also includes a critical exploration of how the results link with the existing body of knowledge of Youth Work policy and practice in addition to aspects of the SWB of young people.

Key Theme 1. Consistency, reliability and caring

Key Theme 2. Youth workers and the unique relationship they offer young people

Key Theme 3. The places in which Youth Work takes place are special to young people

Key Theme 4. Youth Work offers young people experiences which impact positively on their well-being.

The following passages consider each of the key findings in turn. Within each of the sections on key findings there will be a discussion of subordinate themes which underpin the key themes, exploring the data in greater and more specific detail. This is evidence of the impact of the youth work process on the subjective well-being of young people in Wales.

6.1 Key theme 1: Consistency, Reliability and Caring is Important for Young People, Both at Home and Within Youth Work.

One young man commented on Youth Work, that ‘Youth Work being regular, every week they’d be keeping in touch with me’. This demonstrates that, in the initial stages of their involvement at least, youth workers can help young people by being proactive in keeping in touch with them. There are sometimes tensions in this regard as a result of the voluntary principle (Welsh Government, 2007). The voluntary principle, that young people choose to engage in the process (Welsh Government, 2007), has been described as one of the most fundamental issues in contemporary Youth Work, and one which continues to cause controversies in many Youth Work localities (Ord, 2009). Data suggests though that in some cases, working with young people in a more proactive manner may be worthwhile in the early stages of their involvement. This persistence on the part of the worker, in some situations, may enable the development of the unique relationship which is a cornerstone of the espoused theory (Argyris and Schön, 1974, 1996) of Youth Work and which this study has found to be integral in the enhancement of the subjective well-being of young people.

Young people were unanimous in identifying the importance of consistency, this unanimity emerged from the data. Young people expressed the importance of them knowing that

somewhere in their lives there was something they could rely on. One young man noted that 'It's important to know where your bed is, to know where you're having your meal'. Another young man commented that 'it's important, knowing you have someone who cares'. Another participant commented on the importance of consistency over a long period of time by saying of the Youth Work setting she was involved in 'I don't know where I would be now if I hadn't been coming here all these years'. These comments demonstrate that Youth Work can contribute to enhancing subjective well-being irrespective of young people's home environment.

It has been acknowledged elsewhere that consistency is important for young people, it has been found that from children's and young people's perspectives and experiences, more face to face work and consistent relationships are valued (Ridley, Larkins, Farrelly, Hussein, Austerberry, Manthorpe, and Stanley, 2016). The current study has identified that young people valued the consistency of Youth Work. Consistency has also been found to be important, in relationships between parents and children (Hanson, Deere, Lee, Lewin and Seval, 2001). A study in Southern California with 14,931 participants found that for young people, relationships with parents, teachers and other 'community adults' were all significantly positively associated with well-being and significantly negatively associated with depression among relationships (Capp, Berkowitz, Sullivan, Astor, De Pedro, Gilreath, Benbenishty, and Rice, 2016). A study of 7,978 young people in the USA has found that having a trusted adult in the community (outside of school and family) were associated with fewer suicide attempts in models that controlled for demographic factors (Pisani, Wyman, Petrova, Schmeelk-Cone, Goldston, Xia and Gould, 2013). In this study, young people identified the significance of their Youth Work to the wider community, noting that:

Yeah, if old people are around and they see a group of young people hanging around they, like, judge you. But if they see you coming out the youth centre they're thinking, oh, they're ok, they're out of the way causing

no harm. Maybe they are being a bit loud but perhaps that's because they have had a fun night.

Another study has found that, conversely, negative relationships with adults can have real and lasting impacts on the health of young people, finding that

adverse relationship experiences predicted increases in poorer general health and depressive symptoms from adolescence to early adulthood.. the more types of adverse relationship a youth experienced, the worse were their young adult health outcomes (Adam, Chyu, Hoyt, Doane, Boisjoly, Duncan, Chase-Lansdale and McDade, 2011, p. 282).

In relation to school dropout, it has been established that significance of positive associations with adults, not family members is highly correlated with sustaining involvement in education, irrespective of socio-economic context of the family (Winding and Andersen, 2015). This study is the first to identify that Youth Work based upon a clear set of characteristics can have similar impacts to many of the interventions mentioned in the studies above, in relation to young people's SWB through offering opportunities which are available, accessible, reliable, and consistent.

The notion of care in Youth Work is a controversial one, throughout the recent history of Youth Work there has been a steady assertion of Youth Work being a predominantly educational pursuit, recently re-stated (Learning and Skills Improvement Service, 2012; Welsh Government, 2007, 2014; Batsleer, 2013), despite, however, as has been suggested,

the reality for some.. is an organisation which has treated its history in a cavalier manner and in doing so distorted its identity to a point where it is neither clearly understood by those whom it employs or by those who pay for it or those young people who are potential beneficiaries' (Rose, 2006, p. 6).

What is apparent in the field is a situation where Youth Work, and Youth Workers have become subject to pressures to change, adapt, respond to the changing social policy which

has often resulted in targeting specific groups of young people, of youth workers increasingly having a case load and where:

Professionals within targeted services are likely to now have a referral process, through an assessment document, perhaps a Common Assessment Framework (CAF), Early Help Assessment (EHA) or a Single Assessment from Social Care. Whatever the paperwork, it is an insight into a professionals' view of a young person or family's strengths, weaknesses and needs for support (Burgess, 2018).

Just one of the young people interviewed in the study discussed being contacted in a targeted manner and initially having a key worker. All the other young people interviewed in the study spoke of their involvement in a more universal, associative form of Youth Work based in their community rather than one which was focused on them as an individual being in receipt of a service and being in need of employment for example.

Table 1. Contains a list of the subordinate themes that have emerged from the data, that consistency, reliability and caring is important for young people, both at home and within Youth Work. These subordinate themes underpin the first key theme.

In a valleys community it was said by a young man, that:

Being in this centre, you need people you can rely on. Everyone is family to you in this place. As you start as a young person, the volunteers come and go but the more time you spend here the more you can trust them. And the more they mean to you. It's an emotional process.

This quote demonstrates the importance of Youth Work being available for young people to take part in readily. The significance of young people feeling valued recurred consistently as a theme. How the youth workers create an atmosphere where young people are valued. Youth workers have created opportunities for young people to feel listened to, to be actively involved in decision making about their provision. One young woman said 'having a say is important - the workers, they wanted our input, they wanted to make sure

that was what we wanted to do and we were ok with doing it'. Elsewhere, it was said that 'being significant, others wanting to know what you thought about things' was important.

Another young person said 'the relationship with the worker is really important, the fact that they care about you'. This notion of knowing, of appreciating what significant people think about you was important to young people.

A young man from a rural area commented that 'It means a lot to me, what they've (the youth workers) done for me and I really appreciate everything they do for me and everyone else who comes here'.

One young man reflecting on his involvement with Youth Work comments that 'the main involvement I'd see as recognising why I was there and I was receiving a service off them, I was being helped'.

A young woman in a rural community discussed how her understanding of Youth Work had changed as a result of her ongoing involvement:

I didn't really understand it then. Now, I don't know where I would be without these guys. They've helped me get housing, they've helped me when I've been really down, I dunno, this is just the place I come when I need a shoulder to cry on or a chat. To feel better. And they're all about helping and giving, and..

Young people feeling a sense of being valued is significant to well-being, one young man in an urban context illustrated how he felt when recalling being asked by a youth worker to volunteer in the youth club 'With the volunteering, when I was asked, I remember thinking, wow, you want me? I wasn't the brightest tool in the box school wise. I thought that wow, I can do something a bit different. Me, I'm going to do something different'. It

was evident from his reactions that this had made a significant impression on him at the time which had also had a lasting effect.

One young man commented about the impact of the worker and the meaning of their role in building and maintaining a relationships with him, making him feel valued within the centre.

Yeah it was important, coming here, building relationships, just because, for me, I didn't have the sort of relationships as a young person aged 11, 12, 13, I didn't have any apart from the workers before we started building relationships with the young people, my social network.

These findings resonate with the results of a study of 605 vulnerable young people, which found three key themes emerged as being significant in contributing to positive identity development among young people: seeking safe and secure connections; finding opportunities to test out identities; and building a sense of agency (Munford and Sanders, 2014).

Further, the findings of this study resonate with the work of Noble-Carr et al (2014), who found the existence of five critical domains for building positive identity and meaning in work with young people, these domains include the importance of caring relationships; participation and contribution within their communities; achieving a sense of belonging; competence; and hope (Noble-Carr, Baker, McArthur, and Woodman, 2014). This is the first time that empirical research has been carried out into Youth Work in Wales and SWB, the findings complement studies which have taken place elsewhere and in other settings.

Youth workers and dependability and practical help

Research is demonstrating the importance of relationships for sustained well-being (Vaillant, 2012), Youth Work provides young people with the opportunity to build on the unique relationships with a youth worker and one of the benefits of this relationships is that

young people learn they can depend on others. One young man noted ‘workers showing themselves to be interested in you, this motivates young people’. Youth workers were universally highly regarded, one young woman said ‘the tone of their voice, the content of what they said, youth workers are normal, give you something to identify with, they are accessible adults’. In an urban area it was noted that ‘youth workers need to be stubborn’. A young woman in a former industrial area implied that youth workers can be trusted, that they are able to help by saying ‘Youth workers provide good quality advice and information’. One young woman, when discussing a trip away from the centre spoke about how it made her feel and the role that the workers played in that. I wrongly assumed during the interview that being away from the usual place of work would alter how the workers presented themselves. The young person was quick to correct my misunderstanding, saying that ‘no, when we went away they were the same people, but they obviously had to make sure we were all there and all ok and everything was fine’. This correction on the part of the young person took some courage but this demonstrates how strongly she felt about the workers and that they could be depended upon. In an urban area, one young man commented that ‘The youth workers we worked with, if they made a promise, they would actually do it, they have been very dependable’.

In relation to being dependable, in addition to youth workers being dependable, the whole culture in some areas promoted interdependence, it was noted:

Having support, with me reaching my potential and finding what I was good at. When I was in year 8, whereas I would speak to the year 7s in youth club. I would help them feel welcome and introduce them to people. My youth worker offered to help me after seeing me doing that early volunteering. They spotted and approached me to help.

In relation to young people knowing and understanding dependability, it was noted by a young man that ‘youth workers say to keep in touch and you know they mean it’. This knowing for young people occurs in the data time and again. Drawing out this

understanding is a part of the phenomenological approach, of getting to the real impressions people hold.

One young man in an urban area who had become involved as a Youth Work volunteer was able to reflect on offering a dependable service from the other side of the young person youth worker relationship, noting that:

Cos if you're going to be wacky with young people, you know with your young cousins, if the shit did hit the fan you know they could speak to you. It's good to be able to have that role within the club. It's helped me to challenge myself'.

One young man was able to reflect on how the youth workers he had been involved with were able to offer practical help to him at a time of difficulty. He said:

Yeah, I struggled badly with debt, debt was my thing. And so they helped me to break down and understand it as I was being sent everything and helped me turn a big bag of letters into a very small bag of letters and helped me find a way, you know, just gave me some direction, something to look forward to and enjoy, like the exchanges which was such a great time. I dunno, it just allowed, allowed for a more open, fun, look on things I suppose.

This passage has demonstrated that youth workers need to be mindful of being dependable for young people. Youth Workers need to be thoughtful, to be skilled and knowledgeable educators, to be able to work with their head, their heart, and their hands

The phenomena of friendships emerged consistently in the data. Youth Work, universal, open access Youth Work based in communities which is accessible offers young people opportunities to maintain and bolster friendships but also to make new friendships.

Accessible youth provision, based in communities which young people can access during their leisure time is helpful in relation to tackling isolation and the potentially harmful effects of loneliness. In a social context with higher levels of SWB than Wales, one study proposed that:

A person who is lost, left behind or marginalised, is a cost for psychiatric care, prison, lawyers or police. You can count in even suicide, as emergency care and different kinds of services and facilities for this kind of person should also be taken into consideration. Actually, it's possible to count in Euros how expensive an excluded person is for society (Takkunen, 2014, p. 373).

One young man spoke of his take on friendship 'You need friends who are going to be there for more than a year. If you're moving year after year and keeping in touch, you don't want to be the only person in town who hasn't got friends. That would make life very difficult, you'd imagine'.

That friendships are important to young people is undoubted, and that relationships are also central to moderating disadvantage (Cho, 2018), this finding was borne out in this study, summarised by a young man in a rural area, who commented that 'even though we lived in a rough area it did give us a lot of experience of the issues our friends were experiencing'. It is positive that these findings reinforce the importance of friendships for young people in an increasingly online world where relationships are not always built and maintained face to face. Findings confirm that Youth Work has a function in enabling young people to develop skills and dispositions which foster their abilities to foster sound relationships:

I didn't get on with many people in school, I had select friends. The group I had were like outcasts, no one would really bother with us. I was the idiot, and.. couldn't didn't have the thing to make new friends like, the people I knew were the ones I wanted to hang around with. I didn't want to talk to anyone else you know?

Research has found that the number of real-life friends is positively correlated with increases in SWB, and also that, for single people, the effect of friendships is even more significant than for people in a relationship (Helliwell and Huang, 2013). In this study, data clearly demonstrates the importance of friendships for young people, this is highlighted by one young woman in a rural area who noted 'friends equate to happiness' and that 'friends need to be reliable, to be there for people'. In an urban area, one of the

participants discussed how he thought 'friendship equals fun'. In a rural area, it was said that 'freedom was important, freedom of time, friends, numbers, space, sheer numbers of friends or associates'. It became apparent through the data that as children, there were often a myriad of friends and that during adolescence, as the social circle of young people became wider and they began to move away from family and engage in new and sometimes what have been regarded as more risky behaviours such as driving, consuming alcohol and spending more time on the streets, this could lead to significantly more challenging events. Young people spoke about these challenging events and they were often the proving ground for what became regarded as true friendships. One young man commented 'I just loved messing around until I realised I needed to get on with it'. Another young man in a rural area said that 'significant events can mean you naturally re-think friends and what impact does this have'. It became clear that a significantly challenging event or trauma often spurred young people to reflect on friends and friendship, one of the markers of true friendship was identified as selflessness, that true friends put others before themselves. It was noted that 'consistency and reliability is important, being sure! Having no doubts about positive friends'. In a former industrial area it was noted that 'there's a difference between friends and people you know like. It's not just who your friends are but who else is in your corner'. Young people also commented that friendship groups are a means of differentiating between friends and acquaintances and that 'the group I had were like outcasts, no one would really bother with us, I spend most of my time with my 3 best friends'. In an urban area, it was noted that 'Youth Work can provide activities, confidence, socialising, knowing each other well, being with friends, increasing confidence and a space for enjoyment'. Youth work can create opportunities for young people to make new friends, to change, to become more than they were when they arrived, a young man from an urban community commented 'I was bullied quite badly by my year group in school. I was struggling. In Youth Work I met new people, did new activities'.

In an urban community it was apparent that young people, looking back on their early teens were satisfied that they had savoured that time and not rushed it, commenting that ‘it wasn’t as if we were crammed into one street or one estate, we did have the freedom to play and be young people’. In a former industrial area, it was noted ‘I’ve only got two best friends like, I would say 95% of my friends are associates’.

Data suggests that, for this group of young people involved in Youth Work that consistency is important for them while growing up. There is a robust evidence base to support this and that while Youth Work and youth workers should offer young people opportunities to feel valued, young people should be able to depend on Youth Work and youth workers being able to offer practical support and the opportunities to develop friendships. These opportunities can enhance the SWB of young people and also mitigate the effects of loneliness which can arise for young people’s lived experience of a society where they are disadvantaged, not being able to benefit from or take part in many of the activities which other young people may routinely benefit from as a result of the relative capacity of their community or family structures.

6.2 Key theme 2: Youth Workers Offer Young People a Unique Relationship which is Valuable to Young People

As discussed in the literature review, there has been much written from a theoretical position regarding the nature of the relationship between the youth worker and young person (Davies, 2010; Jeffs and Smith, 2010; WAG, 2007), and that in recent times the nature of the relationship has become less of a focus for youth workers (CYWU, no date).

However, it has also been argued that the relationship is of the utmost importance and cannot reach its zenith if the relationship is mechanistic or misunderstood (Young, 1999).

Within this key theme, a number of sub-themes have been identified, these are: the connected worker; the moral educator; having expectations; being friendly; the unique relationship, and giving hope. The unique relationship between the youth worker and young person has long been acknowledged in the Youth Work literature. It has been said that a relationship-centered philosophy or approach is a fundamental value to Youth Work practice (Zubulake, 2017, p. 11). One study has found that supportive relationships between adults and young people in Youth Work are associated with an increase in pro-social attitudes and behaviour (Anderson-Butcher, Cash, Saltzburg, Midle, and Pace, 2004). It has been widely acknowledged in Youth Work that due to its young people first approach (Welsh Government, 2007; 2014), its practitioners have very different relationships with young people when compared to other helping professions. Arguably, practitioners in other professions will develop a relationship in order to help them do their job. It has been argued that for youth workers, the relationship is their job (Martin, 2003).

The Connected Worker

The notion of the connected worker, the worker being linked in to wider networks and institutions arose frequently in the analysis. It has been noted that ‘institutional agents – specifically high-status, non-kin, agents who occupy relatively high positions in the multiple dimensional stratification system, are well positioned to provide key forms of social and institutional support’ (Stanton-Salazar, 2011, p 1067). Analysis additionally shows that, in this study, young people commonly regarded their youth workers as possessing the capacity to connect them to a wider world – this notion of connectedness can be defined as social capital – ‘consisting of resources and key forms of social support embedded in one’s network or associations, and accessible through direct or indirect ties with institutional agents’ (Stanton-Salazar, 2004). One study based in America found that

youth programs could result in meaningful connections, providing young people access to adult resources, such as information, assistance, exposure to adult worlds, support and encouragement (Jarrett, Sullivan, and Watkins, 2005). Participants noted that youth workers are like google, and that ‘it’s important, everyone should have, you know, a youth worker, well every young person. Youth workers provide good quality advice and information.’ In relation to linking with other young people one participant from an urban area noted that ‘it was great, we met people not just from the community but from other youth clubs, we linked up with. Not many young people know there are other clubs out there.’ This young man was able to reflect on his experiences of a changing youth service, acknowledging that:

Starting off it was good, then as the youth service changed over the years it’s well, it’s gone rubbish, yeah. To me, in my opinion, the way it is now it doesn’t seem to be about young people, it is just about ticking boxes and I hate that. It should be about young people. Building their skills and working with them instead of ticking boxes really.

This reflects a wider shift within the youth service in Wales, that in many settings the provision has become more focused on processing young people, getting them ready for work or formal education, and that an approach to building meaningful relationships with young people has somehow become less important.

In relation to the activities of Youth Work, the connection with developing cultural capital, one young man from an urban area reported at length about what he had been able to take part in at the youth club he was involved with during his school lunch hour, he said ‘just coming in here, it made me feel happy. Doing the music, that is the best I’ve felt as a young person.’ Analysis shows that young people, during the interviews were able to divide their lives almost into chapters, it was noted as part of this process of reflection on chapters of life that there was often a rush to get into adulthood, desiring the privileges largely reserved for adults. Young people commented about the role and function of

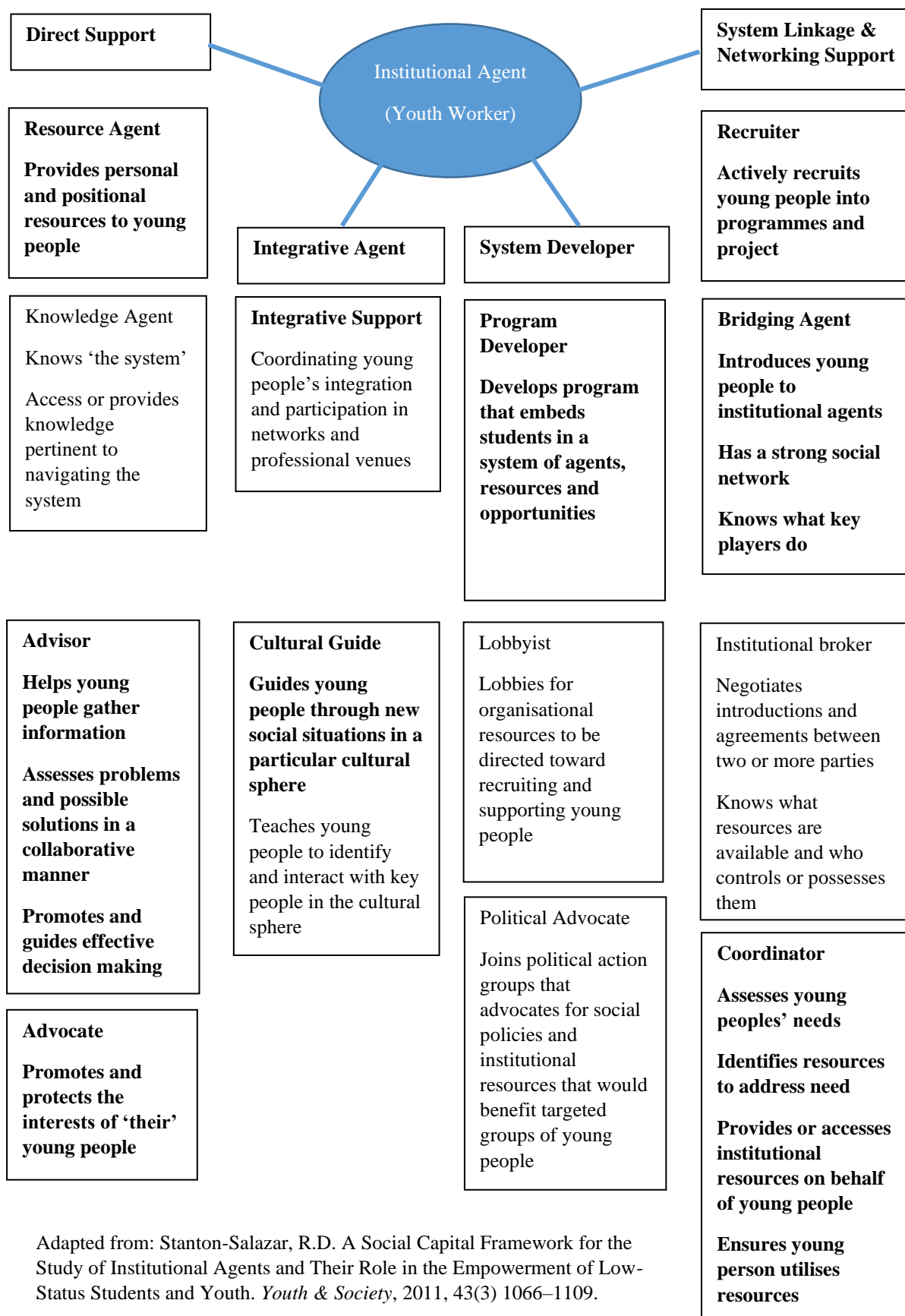
Youth Work being the first opportunity they have to practice being adults, that often, being asked their opinion was regarded as being treated like an adult, ‘having a say is important - the workers, they wanted our input, they wanted to make sure that was what we wanted to do and we were ok with doing it. They just wanted to make sure we were enjoying what we were doing.’ This idea of how youth workers work, pursuing the development of social capital relates to Youth Work in Wales, it has been suggested that any assessment of the ability of Youth Work to assure itself of any impact in relation to the social capital of young people would be very difficult to assess (Norris, 2013).

Results of this study suggest that young people are certainly clear that Youth Work and youth workers act on their levels of social capital, ‘the tone of their voice, the content of what they said, youth workers are normal, give you something to identify with, they are accessible adults’ this notion of accessibility to young people is one of the characteristics put forward by the model of social capital put forward in his paper of 2011 (Stanton-Salazar, 2011).

It has been suggested though that the very concept of social capital theory has more use as a means of political discourse as opposed to an academic discipline (Ferragina and Arrigoni, 2017). In this study, this notion of social capital offers a pragmatic mechanism with which to encourage a public discourse concerning the findings, for the good of young people as human beings. These findings put the lived experience of the person at the centre of the discussion, avoiding the risk of presenting a partial, diminished representation of the human being as only having social value as a potential economic unit as suggested by Gillies (2011). I have adapted in Figure 5 a model which explores how social capital can be enhanced in a systematic and strategic manner. I have drawn on observations from the literature to illustrate how the youth service can develop its capacity to foster social

capital to improve outcomes for young people involved in its work. I have boldened the areas which research suggests are less well developed within the youth service.

Figure 5. The roles of Institutional Agents are each manifested through a specific set of actions



Adapted from: Stanton-Salazar, R.D. A Social Capital Framework for the Study of Institutional Agents and Their Role in the Empowerment of Low-Status Students and Youth. *Youth & Society*, 2011, 43(3) 1066–1109.

Figure 5 is an illustration of the actions adopted by ‘institutional agents’ in this instance, that is the youth worker, developing social capital. Young people have noted the role of the youth worker in relation to ‘being connected’ and thus enhancing their social capital. The model has been adapted from the figure put forward by Stanton-Salazar (2011). More emphasis has been given (the tasks in bold font) to the roles which were more apparent in the data. One young person noted:

it is just such a beautiful place, the people that I was with, just everything we did. It was nice to be somewhere new. It is quite important, cos you see how different places are. Cos like in a community in Cornwall, not like here, it’s a really happy place and everyone is friendly and everyone talks to each other and down here not many people do that.

Another young person noted, in relation to the style of the worker ‘the tone of their voice, the content of what they said, youth workers are normal, give you something to identify with, they are accessible adults’. One young person demonstrated a high level of reflection on their involvement in Youth Work, noting that ‘principles are important, I used to think Youth Work was table tennis or pool but now I understand young people would struggle without youth workers’. In relation to the Advisor role, one young person noted that ‘having a say is important - the workers, they wanted our input, they wanted to make sure that was what we wanted to do and we were ok with doing it. They just wanted to make sure we were enjoying what we were doing’. In relation to the cultural guide and coordinator task, one young person commented that ‘new things can be a problem or they can give you a sense of freedom’, this illustrates the role of the worker in enabling young people to view challenges from a position of coping and strength. The schematic in Figure 6. enables an appreciation of how young people see Youth Work and the youth worker. This gives the perspective of the young person, very often, of their local community context. What Stanton-Salazar’s model shows is that the role of the youth worker, as perceived by young people could be developed further, the youth worker is regarded as

resource agent, advisor, advocate, as cultural guide, as programme developer, recruiter, bridging agent and coordinator. However, the youth worker role, when compared to the ideal model put forward by Stanton-Salazar, at least from the perspective of the young people appears to be less developed in certain key tasks. These tasks which appear to be less developed are knowledge agent, integrative supporter, lobbyist, institutional broker, and political advocate. This demonstrates that the young people facing aspects of the Youth Work practice are more developed in comparison to the more outward looking, arguably more strategic functions of the youth worker as a complete 'institutional agent' as conceptualised by Stanton-Salazar (2011). Within a context where Youth Work is in need of long-term strategic direction (Jervis, 2018, p. 7), any new strategy is recommended to take these deficits into account in order that the capacity of Youth Work and the youth service be developed to bolster its position nationally.

The moral educator

A young woman in a former industrial area commented about the function of Youth Work and youth workers in relation to the formation of individual morality, saying that 'Youth Work always does support you, you learn a lot through youth workers, learning right from wrong. I would like to do Youth Work as a career. Youth Work has helped me realise, well, you know how to deal with things'. This endorses the view of Youth Work proposed by Young (1999) who suggests that 'it is in the nature of Youth Work to engage with young people in the process of moral philosophising through which they make sense of themselves and the world (Young, 1999, p. 57).

Youth Work in the United Kingdom has a stated intention of working with young people to explore ethical, moral and cultural values, addressing the need to respect the beliefs and values of others. It includes exploring where young people are on their journeys through

life and encouraging them to see themselves in terms of their relationships with others and the environment around them (LSIS, 2012, p. 15; Young, 1999, p. 57). One important aspect of Youth Work is its focus to ‘assist young people to develop a sense of their own spiritual beliefs, values, ethics and morals by which they live’ (LSIS, 2012, p. 16). The aim of Youth Work is to offer young people both planned and spontaneous programmes of personal and social education (LLUK, 2008; LSIS, 2012, CLD Scotland, 2019).

In order to achieve this aim, youth workers should provide opportunities for young people to ‘explore with young people their ethical, moral and cultural beliefs and values’ (LSIS, 2012, p. 15).

Data demonstrates that young people recognise the outcomes of these opportunities for moral exploration. This quote highlights the stages of awareness that young people can go through while involved with the youth service:

yeah, well, as going as a youngster and what not, I mean I had no idea, what it (Youth Work) was, for me it was just an activity that parents put you at and you’d get to see your friends. And then, once I’d grown up a little bit and done a few things, you realise what it is you’re getting, and, you know, how it’s helping you, you know? looking back I think there were purposes I wasn’t picking up on, I just don’t think I had the capacity to gauge, to see the underlying benefits, yeah? You’re just seeing everything for face value.

The type of education associated with Youth Work, informal or nonformal learning, appealed to many participants in the study, one quote illustrates the difficulty some young people expressed with formal education ‘having ADHD and being in school it’s hard to concentrate on doing things and being in school all day, it’s just my idea of hell’.

Conversely, youth workers have taken advantage of the opportunity for planned or spontaneous education opportunities set out within Youth Work policy (LSIS, 2012) to create opportunities for learning which are engaging for young people. Young people were clear that Youth Work offers opportunities to learn about morality, a young woman in a

rural area commented that ‘I didn’t really understand it then. Now I don’t know where I would be without these guys. To be honest I think I’d be a completely different person’. This young person went on to say ‘Youth Work can change people's outlook - from being 11, I used to be so angry, the world was such a terrible place and the government was nothing to me and now it’s I dunno, you see the world as a much better place than I thought it was’. The young woman went on – ‘we do a lot of things with the community and it helps to change your perception on things’, and concluded the interview by demonstrating a high level of empathy, wanting to put on record her thanks to the project with which she was involved and also by showing her ability to take the opportunity to represent other young people not involved in the research with the comment ‘it means a lot to me, what they’ve done for me and I really appreciate everything they do for me and everyone else who comes here’.

In an urban area, one young man demonstrated considerable empathy, wanting to help others through Youth Work, saying ‘I think for me, it was because as a young person I was isolated I think, I didn’t leave the community, I wanted others to experience leaving their community’. ‘Youth Work gives young people a sense of purpose’. ‘I used to be really angry til I found this project’.

Looking at the means of teaching morals, one young woman in a former industrial area was able to associate formal education with a particular approach, where:

they (teachers) were only considering the students who wanted to take part in the subject and not the ones who wasn’t interested to go and mess around, and that they should have adapted how they tried to teach the sport. Shouting and screaming in your face is no way to teach it, negotiating with you. I ended up compromising with most of the teachers.

In a former industrial area in the valleys, a young person commented very powerfully, ‘Youth Work has helped me establish who I am and what I can do. I would be a different

person, I would be a lot more angry. I would have a lot more fights'. While another noted 'young people grow and develop inni'. Speaking about the outcomes of the Youth Work she had been involved in, one young woman was able to express that 'Youth Work makes us all better off, it stops young people wanting to cause trouble'. While not a primary purpose of Youth Work, she was able to identify that there was a risk that 'some young people who hang around on street corners have a name in the community'. This feeling was achieved as a result of the youth workers at the project showing this young woman that they supported her, had faith in her and that this investment served to motivate her to be more stable and work towards her goals. The youth workers had enabled this young woman to develop a sense of resilience, she discussed that 'if I didn't have Youth Work I would be regretting my results tomorrow, I would lash out, it's not that I'm not looking negatively, if I fail I know there are things I can do'. Studies have shown though that there can be longer term benefits from young people taking part in what have been described as risky behaviours and that the risky behaviours may be related to later positive peer relationships (Engels and ter Bogt, 2001).

A young woman in an urban area noted that 'you learn a lot from youth workers, learning right from wrong'. She continued by confirming that 'Youth Work has helped me grow up and understand things more', and that 'Youth Work teaches you things school doesn't, it's really important, Youth Work helps you grow as a person'. This young woman went on to speak eloquently regarding her experiences of Youth Work, and that before being involved in Youth Work 'I expected fun and games, I just didn't realise about school or how youth workers can help young people with issues. It (Youth Work) goes deeper than that. It works really well to tackle issues'. Concluding with the comment that 'Youth Work improves well-being, it helps you to understand others more, to realise that not everyone has the same sort of life as you. Youth Work helps open your eyes'.

In an urban area, it became clear that young people regarded themselves as fortunate to have what they regarded as easy access to services and facilities, this appeared different to the young people in former industrial areas who had a feeling of isolation and separateness, they were very conscious of how they were excluded from many mainstream goods and services, for example as a result of funding cuts, of having an us and them attitude comparing their position to the local town, also being aware of the impact of housing development in their communities and the impact this was having on the physical space children and young people had to play and explore while growing up in the community. The young people in this group were aware, and proud, of the strength of their community in what they regarded as fighting to maintain community facilities in the face of financial cuts. Social change in the urban areas appeared to be impacting on young people in different ways, more closely linked to technology and social media.

Having expectations

In an urban area, one young man commented in relation to youth workers having expectations of him, that 'I remember, thinking wow, you want me? I wasn't the brightest tool in the box school wise, I thought wow, I can do something'. These feelings implied a sense of Youth Work making this young man feel different, rare, special, at a significant time in his life. These are the quality of opportunities and events that can be imparted through Youth Work, these realisations have the power to transform lives.

Another young man noted how significant it felt, at a time when 'workers showing themselves to be interested, this motivates young people'. This quote from a young woman hints at some of the subtlety within the role of the youth worker, that 'the fact that Youth Work is mainly free, it's confidential, you can trust your youth worker. Just the fact there is someone to talk to, there is no pressure in Youth Work'.

The youth worker can demonstrate to young people that there are expectations on them, but doing so without young people feeling unduly pressured. In a rural area, it was noted that youth workers treated young people as adults, that ‘being an adult, voice, having a say - having a say is important - the workers, they wanted our input, they wanted to make sure that was what we wanted to do and we were ok with doing it. They just wanted to make sure we were enjoying what we were doing’. This chimes with what has been said in the Youth Work literature, that workers should tilt the balance of power in favour of the young person (Davies, 2010). In a sense, this demonstrates that sharing expectations are significant for young people, that, unlike many relationships young people have with adults, there is a mutuality, with expectations on both sides. One young woman noted that ‘the relationship with the worker is really important, the fact that they care about you’. Sharing, having a shared interest, commented on by a young person from a rural area, ‘having a shared purpose, all wanting to be there’.

The worker having an investment in the young person, and the young person understanding that, but also understanding that the youth worker genuinely wants the best for the young person, data shows this is also significant. This is summarised by a young man in an urban area who said ‘being significant, others wanting to know what you thought about things, that’s important’. This notion of reciprocity was highlighted by a young man in an urban area ‘Youth Work built my confidence, and self-esteem, I became interested after seeing the work they had done for me, I wanted to give something back’. This hints at the importance of moral development, of young people having expectations of themselves as a result of the work. This demonstrates how Youth Work can impact on the young people’s expectations of themselves, of what becomes possible through this process of reasoning. There is considerable power in this dynamic, as commonly, the development trajectory of young people is defined by their family expectations, that ‘the ingredients with which

young people concoct their futures are in many ways grounded in their families' attempts to provide the most favourable support they can manage within the structural constraints and on the basis of the affordances that are available to them (Aaltonen and Karvonen, 2016, p. 726), Youth Work has the capacity for young people to progress along a different trajectory to that, overcoming the potential inevitabilities and possible constraints of the reproduction of their family expectations.

A study in Scandinavia found that different forms of social capital, outside the family explains a significant part of the variance in students' educational expectations in addition to the conventional predictors of expectations such as parental resources and demographic characteristics (Behtoui, 2017). A study in Germany found that schools are powerful actors in shaping occupational aspirations by transmitting socially formed expectations (Wicht, and Ludwig-Mayerhofer, 2014), it is clear from the data that Youth Work can complement this finding. One young man who had done very well at school and was choosing a career in Youth Work as a preferred option was able to identify the important effect of Youth Work on his aspirations 'Youth Work built my confidence, and self-esteem, I became interested after seeing the work they had done for me, I wanted to give something back'. This intentionality of wanting to contribute, of wanting to do something for others give life meaning and, in this analysis is a factor in enhancing subjective well-being.

Being Friendly

It was said by one of the young people interviews, that: 'having no friends makes for a difficult life'. Youth Work offers young people something which is friendly and appealing. A young man commented that the work 'enables young people to look forward, to have hope for the future, I dunno, it just gave me some direction, something to look forward to and enjoy, like the exchanges which was such a great time'.

A young woman commented on a residential activity she had been involved with, that

The trip was like being on holiday with my friends, we all helped to build the tents, we made a massive fire, do you remember Steve? He fell off a log. Do you know them toboggans? We went on them, I hadn't done that before.

The fact that this was so memorable, so significant says a great deal about how the youth workers involved create atmospheres in the work which are unique. A young man reflected upon a trip to Cardiff, that 'going on a speedboat, everyone had a laugh, being together, just being together, everything running so smoothly'.

A young woman commented that 'friends need to be reliable, to be there for people' and this again demonstrates the way that these themes are interlinked, it is clear that being reliable is a key aspect of youth workers being friendly. The youth worker should appreciate the young people's uniqueness and individuality. As recalled by one young woman 'the workers get to know a lot of people, they get to know not every young person is the same'. This suggests that youth workers create a bespoke service, that the service offered by a youth worker might well differ as a result of being based on the individual differences of young people, the youth worker and their surroundings. This is certainly something that has emerged from the research, that Youth Work has the capacity to be extremely diverse and supremely responsive.

If one were to consider the McKinsey 7 'S' model which illustrates aspects of organisations and how they may develop, it has been described as a model for analysing organisations and their effectiveness. It looks at the seven key elements that make organisations successful: strategy, structure, systems, shared values, style, staff and skills (Singh, 2013). This provides a framework within which to explore aspects of Youth Work which influence the fact that young people see it as a friendly environment.

In comparison to other institutions, Youth Work has an informality to it, this is highlighted within various strategy documents (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007; Welsh Government; 2014; Learning and Skills Improvement Service, 2012). In this regard, the worker is in a pivotal context with the young people involved, many, but certainly not all of the young people commented on how they had not really thrived in school for example and had found relationships with school and teachers difficult. This is summarised by one young woman in a former industrial area who said ‘I hated the teachers. They were only considering the students who wanted to take part in the subject and not the ones who wanted to go and mess around’. She went on to say, particularly in relation to how sport was taught ‘they should have adapted how they tried to teach the sport. Shouting and screaming in your face is no way to teach it’. In an urban area it was said that ‘you can be lucky or unlucky with teachers’.

Some of the young people discussed their experiences of bullying at school, in a rural area ‘I started to go to secondary school in town, the bullying started, I was bullied because of my weight’, while in an urban area one young man also commented on his experiences of bullying ‘I was bullied quite badly by my year group in school. I was struggling’. In a rural area, a young woman noted ‘having ADHD and being in school it’s hard to concentrate on doing things and being in school all day, it’s just my idea of hell’. In a former industrial area, the comment of one young man illustrates the need for education in its broadest sense to better understand and respond to individuals ‘I wasn’t really in school much, I didn’t grow up in time for school, most didn’t enjoy or thrive in school’. These comments have been drawn out to illustrate some of the challenges faced by young people. Data confirms that Youth Work can be an antidote to many of the problems young people are currently experiencing.

Youth workers, through this strategic approach to working *with* and not *to* young people, can offer something different to the norm, additional to the everyday. In a former industrial area ‘they work out plans with you, whatever they think will help you get through what you need to do’, this highlights the importance of working *with*. In an urban area it was noted that ‘I think about what the workers wore, that was really important, they were dressed really relaxed, really chilled’. Adopting the McKinsey framework, this allows an exploration of the strategy of the organisation, but also its style, another significant aspect of Youth Work is its commitment to a set of shared values, because of its fundamental importance, it is this element of the McKinsey model which is at the very centre of the model, influencing all the other elements.

Being interested in young people, this also emerged as being important in creating a friendly environment, ‘workers showing themselves to be interested, this motivates young people’. It was also noted that there were differences between youth workers and other professionals who might work with young people, that youth workers were regarded as normal and approachable, it was said ‘the tone of their voice, the content of what they said, youth workers are normal, give you something to identify with, they are accessible adults’. Similarly, ‘Principles are important, I used to think Youth Work was table tennis or pool but now I understand young people would struggle without youth workers’. One young woman identified her initial expectations of Youth Work, that, for her, she expected a focus on fun and games ‘I expected fun and games, I just didn’t realise about school or how youth workers can help young people with issues’.

Youth Work offers young people a rare opportunity to be with friends, as one young man put it ‘the importance of socialising with friends’ is significant. The opportunities afforded by Youth Work to engage in fun and games, where fun and happiness are actively encouraged is of real significance to young people at a time when affordable opportunities

for socialising and association are diminishing. One young man summarised his feelings about what Youth Work should be, that ‘friendship equals fun’. In an urban area, another young person summed up what Youth Work meant to him by saying ‘Youth Work is like the weekend during the week! These feelings of Youth Work being special are created partly through the Youth Worker developing a professional, unique relationship with the young person.

The Unique Relationship

Young people are, of course, members of many different relationships, both virtual (Wilson, 2016), and in the physical world. These relationships can, at different times, be positive and also more negative. One young man noted that in relation to his parents, ‘splitting up was a big thing, there were lots of changes’, these relationship can be for the good or the opposite for young people. It has been noted that ‘relationships are, an always have been, at the heart of youth work’ (Young, 1999, p. 62).

There has been a great deal written regarding the unique, almost mythologised, *professional* relationship between the young person and youth worker (Rodd and Stewart, 2016; Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2018; Young, 1999). Indeed, it has been suggested that youth workers have multidimensional relationships with young people that have an educative component and therapeutic value (Rodd and Stewart, 2016). Data showed that consistency of relationships is significant to young people, that ‘being settled, needing to feel settled somewhere, with friends or family, knowing someone is in your corner’, was important. It was noted by a young man in an urban area that he was fortunate to becoming involved in Youth Work, that ‘in Youth Work, there are significant people and relationships, Youth Work gives control in a chaotic world’.

The importance of speaking, of dialogue was identified as being significant, through dialogue, young people acknowledged coming to understand themselves and believe in themselves more ‘Youth Work gives a feeling of safety, relationships of respect, like family’. The notion of Youth Work creating environments where young people feel safe appeared consistently in the data, when young people feel safe, they become more able to think of their futures rather than the immediate, this capacity to consider their future lives is associated with the ability to look forward with a sense of possibilities and a sense of hope.

Giving Hope

In a former industrial area, a young man living in hostel accommodation said ‘a day is a day, it’s about seeing the same things day in day out, doing the same things day in day out’. This context which some marginalised young people find themselves in has associations with hopelessness. As youth service budgets reduce, data shows that there has been a reduction of 30% in funding for the youth service in Wales between 2010 and 2017, the direct result of these cuts have included a reduction of 27% in the number of young people involved in the youth service in Wales over the same period (Welsh Government, 2017). This strategy has resulted in a rapid and wide scale diminution in universal, open access provision within communities. This has been noted by the National Assembly for Wales which found in a recent inquiry that ‘Over recent years, there has been an increasing emphasis on provision targeted at specific groups of people, such as young people who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET)’ and that ‘targeted provision has been prioritised at the expense of open access provision. A balance needs to be struck - the extension of targeted provision should not be at the expense of open access provision’ (National Assembly for Wales, 2016, p. 5).

It is difficult to avoid associating the lives of young people in difficult situations in Wales as the results of widespread industrial decline and fiscal austerity. The evidence from this study shows that some young people are, through no fault of their own, becoming increasingly disadvantaged within a society which is growing richer overall.

In a rural area, a young man commented on how Youth Work had influenced his view of the world, that Youth Work 'enables young people to look forward, to have hope for the future, I dunno, it just gave me some direction, something to look forward to and enjoy, like the exchanges which was such a great time'. It appears that Youth Work is encouraging young people to become more resilient, to withstand the limitations of austerity.

The traditions of radical youth and community work however, suggests that youth workers can do more. Rather than adopting a stance which encourages young people to adapt and absorb the ravages of fiscal austerity, this radical tradition in youth and community work supports young people to become aware of the sources of their oppression and to challenge this taken for grantedness within the system. The New Public Management approach to the delivery of public services has driven an approach toward what might be regarded as a passive Youth Work which perpetuates the discourse where young people and their communities are deficient, where they need a job, need intervention, need treatment, need broader horizons. In contrast, what is required is for youth workers and the youth service to develop a far more radical, pragmatic transformational approach to youth and community work where the sector enables young people to understand the oppression which they are experiencing and to develop appropriate responses. These responses should be consistent with the principles of SWB, at the same time enabling young people to develop a sense of life satisfaction, of giving their lives meaning and as result, to be increasingly happy. This approach is linked to principles of Youth Work identified within

the literature review which seek to tip balances of power in favour of young people as identified by Davies (Davies, 2005).

In an urban community, one young man commented that Youth Work is something unique for young people - 'it was the only thing as a young person I could look forward to', and that 'I've gone from this person who had no friends to someone who you know, speaking to anyone and everyone. I could speak to anyone. By year 11 I became head boy, so, it was quite nice yeah. It was a nice change'.

When asked the question 'how has Youth Work worked for you?' A young man in an urban area said 'Err, there's always the next thing, it never falls flat. There's always an opportunity to look forward and learn something new. Even if it's not in a classroom, youth workers know how to identify learning, even if it's not in the class room'.

It was also noted that 'Youth Work just means being yourself, being part of something what is not school, not going to get you major qualifications but will give you skills in how you speak to people, how you can progress, there's always something to look forward to, there's always a way of adding to your skills'. This confirms that Youth Work is a vehicle to encourage young people to look forward, to have hope that things can change with the correct approach. In many ways the vision put forward by Paulo Freire in 1970, of young people in rebellion, of them holding consumer civilization in judgement, of bureaucracies being denounced and the old orders being challenged holds true (Freire, 1993). However, there has been a broadening out of neoliberal social policies globally, which has arguable created a world where, as a result of neoliberal social policy, governments are seen as being incompetent at providing many services integral to the development of the Welfare State as it was originally conceived. Rather, within the dominant neoliberal agenda it has become accepted that 'governments cannot create economic growth or provide social

welfare; rather, by trying to help, governments make the world worse for everyone' (Bockman, no date, p. 15). And also, that neoliberalism has spread to a broad range of areas of modern life including the 'shift of welfare policy toward philanthropy and entrepreneurship, the spread of intensive mothering, the privatisation of state companies and the expansion of low-wage service work' (Bockman, no date, p. 15).

Evidence confirms that 'exponential growth has been the liberal standard for evaluating economies, societies and the effectiveness of political leaders' (Antonio, 2013, p. 18). It is apparent that while economic growth, measured by gross domestic product has increased steadily, it has also become clear that alongside this economic growth there are other outcomes which are more unwelcome. Indicators which can be associated with increased economic growth include some of the unwelcome outcomes (Sparke, 2017) which are being experienced by many young people in the United Kingdom, for example, in relation to health (Nielsen Jones et. al. 2013) and formal political participation (Hart and Henn, 2017, p. 33).

Youth Work has a stated intention to work with young people to improve their health and also to encourage their involvement in decision making (Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2018). Data shows that on an individual level, Youth Work is capable of enhancing the SWB of young people, however, where it appears that Youth Work and the youth service fails is to fully engage in the decision making mesosphere at a local authority and Welsh Government level.

In order to support young people in their aspirations of hope, to deliver on the social contract between young people and the Welsh nation, the youth service must be more radical in its approach in speaking truth to power rather and advocate strongly for young

people, rather than coalescing with the neoliberal schema which is contributing to widespread ill-health and unhappiness of the very people they exist to work for.

6.3 Key theme 3: The Places in which Youth Work Takes Place are Special To Young People

A quote from a young woman in a rural area reinforces the importance of place to the young people who were interviewed:

I came here when I was 11 with one of my friends who had been here before. I really enjoyed coming here and so I kept coming and I really got to know everyone here. I thought this is a really nice, homely, place to be. I just kept on coming back. I don't know, it's like my second family here now.

One young man in an urban area commented on the significance of his youth club to him while he came through a difficult adolescence, saying that 'it was the only thing as a young person I could look forward to'. His involvement in Youth Work acted to increase his self-confidence, the outcome of which was that, over a relatively short period of time he changed roles within his community, from victim of bullying, through a process of increased resilience to a role where, in his own words he had 'gone from this person who had no friends to someone who you know, speaking to any-one and everyone'. An example of the efficacy of Youth Work in increasing this young man's self-confidence which had wider outcomes experienced by the whole community.

Data shows how crucially important a sense of place was for young people involved in this study. While it has been suggested that there is a risk of the lack of conceptual coherence in place research (Morgan 2010), nevertheless, it is clear from the data that the places where Youth Work takes place hold tremendous importance for young people. Youth Work happens in a wide variety of contexts, on the streets, in projects, in schools, in community facilities (Wylie, 2003). The national Youth Work audit for Wales has found

that ‘most numerous in terms of settings, and with the highest membership were youth clubs (270) and school and college projects (262), followed by youth centres (107), with respective total membership across Wales of 60,000, 35,100 and 52,300. There are 56 detached/outreach teams with 10,600 registered members’ (Welsh Government, 2017, np). This tremendous variety of settings for Youth Work brings with it considerable potential benefits, in terms of its ability to adapt and respond to changing social priorities; for example with an increasing shift to school based delivery of Youth Work (Welsh Government, 2017). This flexibility however, means the youth service has, at the same time, been subject to considerable influence which have impacted on its ability to deliver its core business in a manner which is driven by clearly articulated principles and values (Welsh Government, 2013). Clarity about the purpose of Youth Work and its core business and the relationship of values and principles can help youth workers to develop and carry out professional Youth Work practice (Sapin, 2013, p. 3). There is a risk in that, Youth Work may be compromised by a shift away from its foundations, moving away from these principles and values which risks diluting the potency of Youth Work.

Data from this study provides rigorous, meaningful evidence of the absolute necessity to maintain a real commitment to continuing with a principled and values driven philosophy of Youth Work in Wales. Despite a clear articulation of their importance and a commitment to their absolute centrality to sound Youth Work practice, there is a risk that the principles and values are paid lip service to, are regarded as what is said of Youth Work rather than what it is. This approach to work has real risks and smacks of an unconscious approach to strategy development among the youth service in Wales. For example, the widespread adoption of the Youth Engagement and Progression framework (Welsh Government, 2015) with its person centred, tiered approach to assessing young people’s involvement with services has had a considerable influence on the youth service in Wales, youth workers being deployed to seek out young people in their own home,

knock on doors, often finding no-one will answer the door (Personal communication, 2018). The willingness of the youth service to adapt to this approach is in conflict with a position committed to working in a manner which is informed by well-established principles and values (PAULO, 2002; LLUK, 2008; LSIS, 2012). This is a situation which is not uncommon and has been the subject of considerable scholarly activity.

It has been suggested that the best results in service delivery arrive from linking theory-in-use and espoused theory. Argyris and Schön provide guidance for those wishing to design and implement a superior, praxiological form of practice, not merely a series of person centred interaction rituals which appear to be the focus of considerable amounts of Youth Work practice in Wales at the present time.

The Welsh Government states on its website that Youth Work is primarily based on a voluntary relationships between young people and youth workers (Welsh Government, no date), and that:

The youth service is a universal entitlement open to all young people aged 11-25 and has a basis in informal education, where youth workers work with young people to help them make sense of themselves and the world around them. Workers adapt their methods to the needs and interests of the young people they work with. (Welsh Government, 2014, p. 4)

However, in relation to organisational development and what the youth service does, as opposed to what it says it does, and if one accepts the seminal model of espoused theory and theory in use (Argyris and Schön, 1974; 1996) and that in relation to the different actors within the youth service, Welsh Government, voluntary sector providers and local authorities, it could be argued that as a major policy driver, Welsh Government acts in a way which leads on policy development and then cedes control to local decision makers. These decision makers then formulate local policy, translating national policy but

ultimately, making decisions which are locally desirable and largely shaped by the rhetoric and reality of fiscal austerity. It appears that Welsh Government have adopted a Mutual Learning Model in policy development, which has an underlying assumption that this approach will unearth new information and insights, and further assumes that at an individual level, parties are able to make free and informed choices as contributors to policy development and as a result, that these individuals and organisations will adopt a deep commitment to action and change. However, individuals and organisations within the maintained youth service remain committed to a process of unilateral control which seeks consistency and to maintain control. As a result, the theory of Youth Work and its policy, and the process of policy development (espoused theory) remains a process which seemingly runs in parallel to practice (theory in use).

This situation ultimately does a disservice to the young people of Wales who would benefit considerably from the delivery of Youth Work which effectively integrates an approach based on sound principles and values as evidenced and supported by this study. The current situation of policy development and service delivery has more to do with neoliberal ideals than a commitment to principles and values. As has been noted:

The social professions are particularly susceptible to social policy influences, which, while not determining the shape and direction of training, create a context that is often regarded as constraining but that, in reality, represents an inalienable part of the identity-shaping and purpose-defining process of this profession. (Lorenz, 2008, p. 626)

This further hints that policy drivers have an impact on Youth Work which is keenly and inevitably felt by young people and that while a substantial amount of Youth Work policy is developed and implemented at a local level, this local decision making, in effect, makes Youth Work what it is. Just one of the young people interviewed in this study reflected upon the importance of being 'targeted' by the Youth Work organisation with which he was associated, rather than the more universal approach of open access, universal services

which put young people first as summarised by a second young man in an urban context who said youth ‘work should be for all young people to just come and let loose about their lives’. The former young man said of his initial involvement in Youth Work, that it ‘enables young people to look forward, to have hope for the future, I dunno, it just gave me some direction, something to look forward to and enjoy’. So, despite becoming involved in Youth Work as a result of being targeted, this led on to many other opportunities for him which ultimately improved his sense of SWB. Of the process of increasing involvement he noted the importance of ‘Youth Work being regular, every week they’d be keeping in touch with me’, and ‘their proactiveness helped’, and that initially:

yeah, well, as going as a youngster and what not, I mean I had no idea, what it (Youth Work) was, for me it was just an activity that parents put you at and you’d get to see your friends. And then, once I’d grown up a little bit and done a few things, you realise what it is you’re getting, and, you know, how it’s helping you, you know?

This young man spoke articulately, and reflected very well about his involvement with Youth Work, noting that ‘looking back I think there were purposes I wasn’t picking up on, I just don’t think I had the capacity to gauge, to see the underlying benefits, yeah? You’re just seeing everything for face value’. It is crucial for the youth service to maintain a commitment to physical places where Youth Work happens, it is these community based facilities which are the catalyst for so many activities which have a positive impact on the subjective well-being of young people.

Evidence from this study demonstrates that the places Youth Work happens are integral to the subjective well-being of young people because they enable young people to readily access affordable social activities when many other social activities are less and less affordable for many young people. A study carried out in the United States noted that:

‘neoliberal ideology and policy favour a market-based governance approach that 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 (Finn, Nybell and Shook, 2013, p. 1161)

I would extend this argument in relation to the increased focus on the social individual within the context of neoliberalism. In addition to the increased marketization of the welfare state and other forms of social support, it could be argued that there has been a simultaneous burgeoning in the marketization of leisure provision. It has been noted that the philosophy of neoliberalism ‘etches itself into the economic, political, and social landscape, studying its effects on those least capable of protecting themselves must become a focal concern’ (Turner, 2015, p. np). In this regard, Youth Work, and young people; in Wales must be worthy of further study due to being least capable of protecting themselves from the creeping pressures of managerialism, consumerism and neoliberalism in order to position Youth Work and young people in a more sustainable position which puts greater value on happiness.

One young woman said ‘for me, I would regard the people the people here as my family so this is why I rely on this place a lot more than I should’, the significance of this place meant so much to her, she noted further:

I came here when I was 11 with one of my friends who had been here before. I really enjoyed coming here and so I kept coming and I really got to know everyone here. I thought this is a really nice, homely, place to be. I just kept on coming back. I don’t know, it’s like my second family here now..

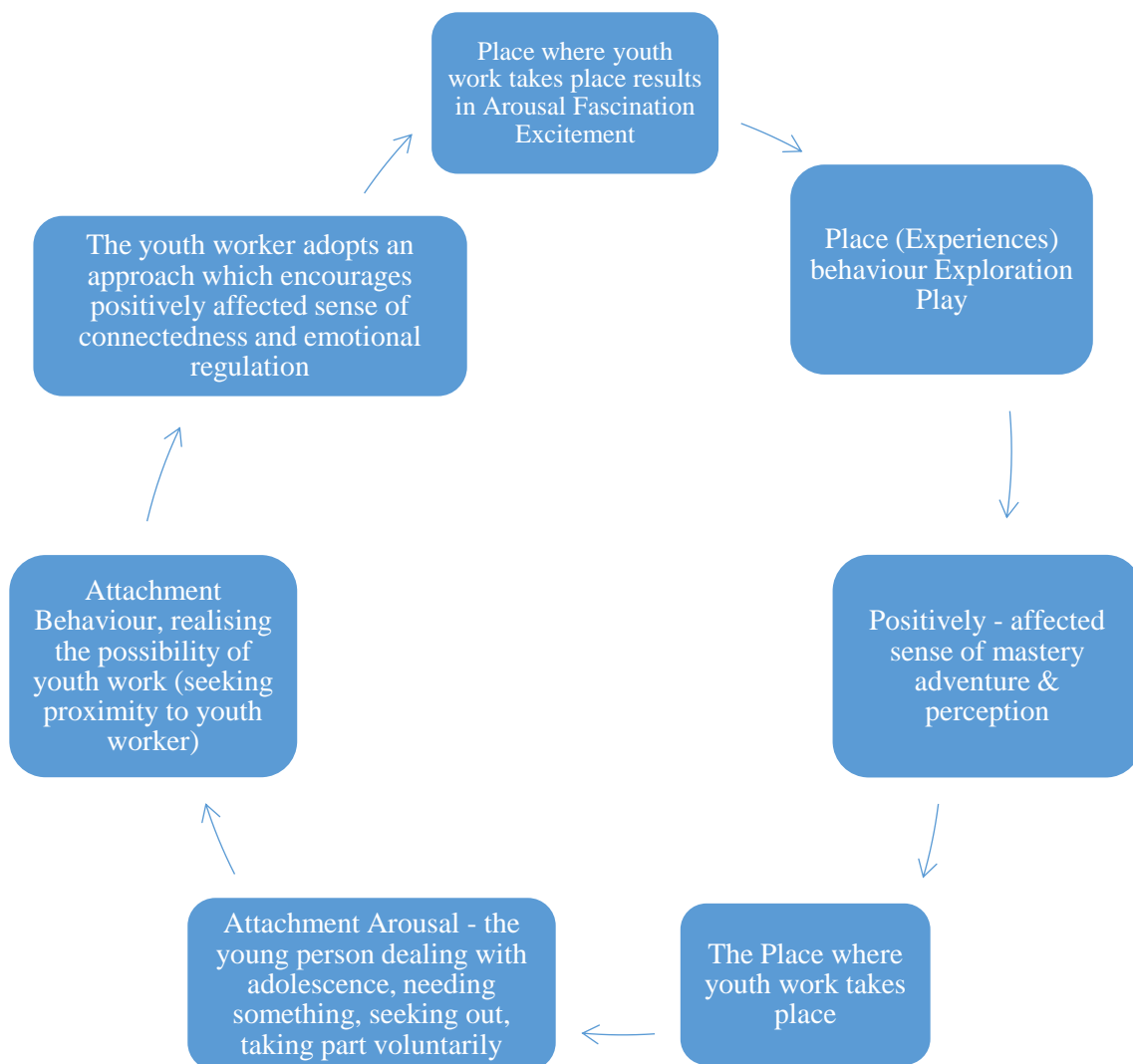
Another young person, from a former industrial area commented that ‘the youth centre is a good place to be, the old people like to see us there and coming out of there’, showing a real appreciation of others, a high level of empathy and identification with the community. This is an illustration of place and how it enables people to considering the thoughts and feelings of another generation by being part of a community.

One young man in an urban area was clear about the value of the place where Youth Work happens, he talked about the importance of ‘not wanting to go home but coming here to the studio and have other young people watching us’. It has been suggested that there is an ‘emotional or affective component in the concept of place attachment. But the word emotion, like place, has an easy-to-understand, hard-to-define quality making place attachment if anything, more conceptually elusive than place itself’ (Morgan, 2010, p. 11).

This study has identified that, indeed, young people do become attached to the places where Youth Work happens. In times which are difficult for young people, this possibility of attachment to something secure, which involves socialising with others is a worthwhile undertaking. In collaboration, through a process of non-formal learning, the potential within each young person to become more than they are presently, ‘and even perhaps – if we can break the constraining bonds of material or social circumstances – more than we have ever envisaged ourselves becoming’ (Davies, 2015, p. 106). This is an aspect of the potential of Youth Work in enabling young people to feel valued and safe, wherever and however their Youth Work happens.

Figure 6. illustrates one model which demonstrates how young people can become attached to people and places which are judged to be significant in their lives. The model has been adapted from the work of Morgan (2010, p. 15), gathered by a process of phenomenology and provides an exploration of the development process by which an attachment to place can arise. This provides a partial explanation of how individuals become attached to place as children and young people, the author argued that ‘explanation of differences in the formative process responsible for the different strengths and categories of place attachment are vague (Morgan, 2010, p. 11).

Figure 6. Integrated model of human attachment and place attachment
 MOTIVATIONAL SYSTEM (Adapted to the Youth Work context)



Adapted from: Morgan, P. Towards a developmental theory of place attachment. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*. 30(2010) 11-22.

In relation to familiarity and where Youth Work happens, one young man from an urban area noted that ‘we have things in common, speaking, language, just speaking, comfortable surroundings’ a young woman in a former industrial area commented of the youth centre she was a member of, that there is ‘the need for a comfort zone as a child, feeling part of something’. These sentiments were shared by a young woman in a rural community who said ‘Youth Work makes me feel happy, it’s a happy place to be and a really comforting place’.

Drawing on the integrated model of human attachment and place attachment proposed by Morgan, this study shows that Youth Work, through offering young people a sense of familiarity, at a time of challenge and difficulty, during a period in life when family becomes less and less significant, Youth Work provides the opportunity to feel part of a community and through developing a sense of belonging, and young people can feel very strongly about where Youth Work happens.

In relation to feelings of community, it is clear that young people feel strongly, one young man in a rural community who's family had undergone significant upheaval with relationship breakdown and moving from place to place said that he 'felt secure, people knew my parents in the community, community gives a sense of who you are'. A young man in an urban area has worked with the support of his youth worker 'I organised a massive community event and I'm quite proud of that'. Community is a complex matter for young people who have to negotiate their roles in communities. A young man in a rural area who was a member of a very visible group within his community noted that 'there are stages and steps as you grow older and become more aware of things', he felt 'I knew the way the area was perceived, what others think about where you live and making judgements about you'. In addition, like many of the participants, as a result of family breakdown, moving into a new community, the young man discussed the impact this had on him. He commented on 'the importance of boundaries, if I wanted to go out and do this or that you was just allowed, which although it's helped me to develop into who I am. It probably wasn't the best'.

Youth Work can offer young people a space to experiment safely, a young man commented 'you can find out, experiment with who you are' and also, that Youth Work creates 'a safe environment to change or to be yourself'.

Finally, in this section, in relation to awareness of a sense of belonging, in an urban area, one young man noted in Youth Work there are ‘relationships of respect, like feelings of family’. He went on to comment ‘I was fortunate to get involved in Youth Work, there are significant people, relationships, Youth Work gives control in a chaotic world’. A young woman in an urban area commented on the importance of Youth Work in her life, saying ‘Youth Work makes me feel happy, it’s obvious, it’s a happy environment, in Youth Work there’s always a solution. Youth Work offers a different way of looking at things’. She went on to contribute that ‘the fact that Youth Work is mainly free, it’s confidential, you can trust a youth worker. Just the fact there is someone to talk to, there is no pressure in Youth Work’, and that ‘Youth Work can provide activities, confidence, socialising, knowing each other well, being with friends, increasing confidence and a space for enjoyment’.

This section has considered the significance of the places in which Youth Work takes place, and how these places are special to young people, drawing on the work of Morgan (2010) to help illustrate how components of Youth Work are relevant to understandings of community, of familiarity, community and sense of belonging, and how these phenomena interact to make Youth Work places special for young people.

6.4 Key theme 4: The Experiences Youth Work Offers Young People Impact Positively on their Subjective Well-Being.

New experiences

Participants spoke about the types of activities they had been offered through Youth Work, one young woman recollected ‘there are lots of variety of things I’ve been involved with, fundraising, bag packing, pamper evenings, there’s been lots of things and I can’t remember them all’. The young woman was almost apologetic in her manner, she also

spoke about her initial thoughts about Youth Work, that ‘Youth Work has been much more than I expected it to be to be honest, cos I thought it was like, ooh lets go out and do some activities but there is so much more to it than that’. She moved on to talk about the value of the Youth Work process, and that she initially thought ‘it was just to do activities with people and to chill. I didn’t really understand it then. Now I don’t know where I would be without these guys’.

There is considerable potential for Youth Work to enable access for young people to what may be regarded as mainstream activities. In one sense, to combat the social exclusion of young people. However, it has been recognised that the focus on social exclusion as a policy intention and a subject for academic research has decreased in recent years (Sealey, 2015). Social exclusion has been defined as:

a complex and multi-dimensional process. It involves the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities, available to the majority of people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political arenas. It affects both the quality of life of individuals and the equity and cohesion of society as a whole (Levitas, Pantazis, Fahmy, Gordon, Lloyd, and Patzios, 2007, p. 9)

Evidence from this study has demonstrated that some young people have limited life experiences and that Youth Work can enrich the lives of young people by making available opportunities to travel, to meet new people and experience new places. These activities can then impact positively on their life satisfaction, life meaning, and happiness, as a result bolstering feelings of subjective well-being.

It also became apparent during the study that many young people interviewed were living in areas experiencing considerable economic difficulty. Across the OECD, the risks of poverty have been shifting from the elderly towards young people since the 1980’s (UNICEF, 2016). These developments accentuate the need to monitor the well-being of the

most disadvantaged children, but income inequality also has far-reaching consequences for society, harming educational attainment, key health outcomes and even economic growth (Cingano, 2014; UNICEF, 2016).

One young woman, living in a rural area noted that: ‘we went to Cornwall for the weekend, that was really nice. We went camping in the summer. I’ve only ever been on one holiday in my life, nice that we went away together as a group. It was a nice weekend and I would do it again any time’. This demonstrates that some young people involved in Youth Work do not have the capacity, within their home lives, to take part in what might be regarded as a normal social and cultural life, despite living in the world’s fifth largest economy (World Economic Forum, 2017).

Young people were consistent in how they discussed the importance of the experience that Youth Work offers them. One young person from an urban area reflected on some of the tensions that exist in his culture as a young man approaching adulthood. This young man was able to discern the importance of physical experiences over activities more commonly associated with his generation, commenting that ‘we all love having a pint but (climbing the local peak in the Brecon Beacons) Pen y Fan was excellent!’ One young person noted the desired nature of experiences, that they should be ‘safe, structured and different’. The comments of one young man from a rural area underpinned the Youth Work principle of their participation in decision making, noting that ‘the experiences are not good when things are organised for young people, even when effort is put in for them, when young people are treated as consumers’. This shows the efficacy of working with young people, rather than working for young people, rather, more effective practice involves tipping balances of power in favour of young people (Davies, 2010). A young person in an urban area noted that ‘I look back and I just think that was wicked, the memories of practical activities, I am grateful for them’. Another young man in an urban context commented

that, through Youth Work ‘I’ve gone from this person who had no friends to someone who you know, speaking to any-one and everyone’. A young woman in an urban area who had come to Youth Work in her late teens had made the link between Youth Work activities and commented that ‘Youth Work can provide activities, confidence, socialising, knowing each other well, being with friends, increasing confidence and a space for enjoyment’.

The phenomenon of young people and how they engage with physical experiences has been researched with findings which acknowledged that ‘when we consider that it is only through accessing the voices of young people that those attempting to promote physical activity can ensure that the range of opportunities being created are matched to the preferences of youth’ (Mcevoy, Macphail, and Enright, 2016, p. 1172). The authors appear surprised with the realisation that academics and planners should involve young people in a meaningful way in designing physical activity programmes, stating that ‘The elicitation of the voices of young people to inform policies and practices which affect their lives has been a growing focus in recent years’ (ibid p. 1161). This lack of a widespread awareness of what could be regarded as basic understandings in Youth Work is somewhat surprising. The fact that children and young people have a right to have a say on matters that are important to them has been explicitly set out within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1989). Authors have noted that:

‘Despite society’s current preoccupation with interrelated issues such as obesity, increasingly sedentary lifestyles and children’s health, there has until now been little published research that directly addresses the place and meaning of physical activity in young people’s lives’ Wright and Macdonald (2010, p. 1).

In carrying out a review of literature in relation to many of the themes which have emerged from the data, it is clear that a considerable proportion of published research studies are carried out from a particular, disciplinary perspective. For example, research into young

people with ‘mental health problems’ (Staal and Jespersen, 2015), physical disabilities (Curtin and Clark, 2005), and homelessness (Kidd and Evans, 2011). Youth Work, with its focus on universality (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007) and a strengths based approach identified by the Welsh Assembly Government looks at the young person as a whole. The Youth Work policy reiterates that ‘the Youth Service, with its positive view of young people, provides a unique learning environment’ (WAG, 2007, p. 7). The subsequent discussion of this key theme, that the experiences Youth Work offers young people impacts positively on their SWB, comes from this perspective; that young people have rights, strengths and interests in being regarded and worked with as competent human beings, capable of transformational change (Checkoway, Richards-Shuster, Abdullah, Aragon, Facio, Figuero, Reddy, Welsh, and White, 2003).

Movement/ Physical experiences

In a rural area, one young woman who had been involved in a gardening project was able to reflect on using the skills and knowledge she had gained through the project, she said ‘I do quite a lot of gardening, I love gardening. At the moment I’m in the middle of turning over my mum's garden and levelling it all. Last night I put in some runner beans and some potatoes’. This was said with a great deal of pride and an evident sense of achievement.

The versatility of Youth Work and how it can exist at different times for young people emerged, for this young woman, she was involved in Youth Work as a result of being educated outside of school, she noted:

Yes, the youth service, done lots of things, used to go on trips instead of being in school? It was good, they would take us out to do something for the day and it would be nicer than being in school. It gave me the confidence to try new things like abseiling off a cliff. That was something I had never done before. It has given me a lot of good experiences I would never have had without the youth workers.

Many of the young people recalled childhood experiences, often remembering very positive experiences, two young people in an urban area talked about, during their

childhoods that they were of a generation which had a mix of technology with the outdoors, one young woman talked about the importance of playing outdoors, a young man in an urban area spoke about being outside or away from parents being important, reflecting on the importance of fishing, a young man in a former industrial area spoke about the significance of fishing and shooting while growing up.

In an urban area, one young man commented that:

‘I had never had a chance to do outdoor pursuits so as a young person, when we went to do outdoor pursuits for a day, it was over a couple of days it was, over a half term, so it was good, it was fun, we went surfing, mountain biking, all that stuff. Probably won’t get the chance to do that again’.

Despite the fact that this young man lived no more than a mile from the sea, he had never been surfing, Youth Work made this experience possible and helped him overcome issues of social exclusion discussed above. Because of a change in strategy of the organisation of which he was a member, this young man was able to critique how the organisation was changing, stating that ‘Youth Work (at that time), in my opinion it doesn’t seem to be about young people, it’s about ticking boxes and I hate that. It should be about young people. Building their skills and working with them instead of ticking boxes really’. What he had done with this quote was to reflect on his experience of Youth Work and how it has changed in his experience. In analysing this quote, it might be possible to critique what he meant by Youth Work was more about his experience of the local youth service. The distinctions between Youth Work and the youth service have been critically discussed above.

Another young man discussed his experience of the best days in Youth Work, he said in relation to a trip to the capital that:

everyone was just so up for it, happy to be there, you know? Wanted to be there. I think they’d helped organise the trip. They were a little bit left

down by that said MP not being there, but it was still a really good day, asking all of the questions. And intelligent questions as well, relating to the renewableness of the building and where the money goes and this like that, so. I mean it was just such an intelligent, informed day, everyone had prepared and was ready for it so, it was good.

This excerpt illustrates many of the characteristics of experiences which make the difference between young people being really engaged in the work and merely functioning as consumers of Youth Work activities. The fact that young people were happy, they wanted to be present, they had helped to organise the activity, they were curious, wanted to learn, the learning was intentional on their part, and there was a high level of preparedness on the part of the workers and the young people. These components of the event made it both meaningful and memorable. While preparedness may be associated with a high level of satisfaction with Youth Work experiences, this does not mean that preparation is separate to freedom to experiment. Contrary to that, Youth Work can provide young people with the very opportunities to experiment which are so lacking for many young people. The next passage will explore the role of Youth Work in enabling young people to experiment with their lives.

Freedom to experiment

One young man commented of his life in an urban area: 'it wasn't as if we were crammed into one street or one estate, we did have the freedom to play and be young people'.

Similarly, feelings of freedom with friends, a young man from a rural area commented that for some, what others thought of you was important, he noted: 'what your friends think of you - like a boss you know, he can do anything he likes, being outside, or away from my parents was important'.

It is clear that freedom to experiment in different areas of life was significant for young people, that a sense of agency was integral to identity formation, a sense of freedom allowed young people to experiment, one young man commented that 'It was something

yeah, it was different to normal school life, going to school and being shouted at. It was just like the freedom to do stuff may be we couldn't do in school. The opportunities here (in the youth centre), like arts and crafts, like curriculum based stuff'.

Freedom was important, freedom of time, to have time that they could decide how to use, freedom to mix with friends, freedom to go where they wanted. These opportunities were all important to the young people. There is the caveat though, that young people appeared to become increasingly discerning of the differences between acquaintances and friends, often as a result of testing friendships through increased freedom. 'There are differences, friends and people you know like, it's not just who your friends are but who else is in your corner' said one young man. Another young man in a former industrial area commented that 'I've only got two best friends like, I would say 95% of my friends are associates'.

While in a rural area, it was noted by a young man that friends were associated with experimenting, 'having a good time, being active, fishing, parties'. This notion of experimentation has links to formation of desirable qualities of adults. Youth Work provides opportunities for young people to experiment, as one young man said 'find out, experiment with who you are', 'you can be yourself or find out more about yourself'.

In an urban youth club, it was noted that Youth Work 'creates a safe environment to change or to be yourself'. To understand why adolescents engage in potential risk behaviours, it is important to look at the functions of these behaviours for adolescents' social and personal functioning. It has been found that experimenting, and taking part in what might be regarded as risky behaviours has benefits for young people's social skills (Engels, and ter Bogt, 2001). Specifically, that 'It is also possible that young people who continuously refrain from the majority of adolescents relevant socially imbedded behaviours, experience problems with social and psychological adjustment as a young adult' (Engels and ter Bogt, 2001, p. 692). In a repeated cross-section study carried out in

the United Kingdom over nearly twenty years it was found that while the mental health of children had remained relatively steady, the most noticeable trend was in the mental health and well-being of young people, specifically, with more mental health problems, and decreased well-being experienced by young adults (Pitchford, Viner, and Hargreaves, 2016). Does the wide ranging concern for children's safety and welfare, which may be manifest in minimising risk and risk aversion mean that they are ill-prepared for risk taking during adolescence. By extension, is this lack of preparedness influence the mental health and well-being of young people, as identified in the literature (Pitchford and Hargreaves, 2016). With levels of unhappiness and ill-being on the rise among young people, the next section explores the potential for activities which promote fun and enjoyment.

Having Fun

Fun and enjoyment appear strongly in the data as important findings. In an urban area, a young man reflected upon the importance of outdoor activities for him, when asked about some of his best days in Youth Work, he said 'when we went to do outdoor pursuits for a day. It was over a couple of days it was, over a half term, I never had a chance to do outdoor pursuits, ever. So, it was good, it was fun, we went surfing, mountain biking, all that stuff. Probably won't get the chance to do again'. This feeling of enjoyment was also present when he reflected upon his experience of being in the youth club 'I enjoyed the youth club. On behalf of the young people who come to the youth club, the ones who do lack confidence and don't go out much, they enjoy coming just because it gives them a sense of purpose'. As a volunteer youth worker, this young man noted 'for me, I just love Youth Work, I couldn't see myself in any other field of work. I enjoy seeing young people being happy through the Youth Work and the work we do with them'. This comment demonstrates a sense of reciprocity in Youth Work, in a sense a democratic approach to the work where those involved share the experience.

In a former industrial area a young woman discussed her expectations of Youth Work, that 'I expected fun and games, I just didn't realise about school or how youth workers can help young people with issues. It goes deeper than that. It works really well to tackle issues. Youth Work is a really good resource. It always makes things fun'. When asked to look forward to the future of Youth Work, this young woman said 'Youth Work is an excellent way to support young people through transitions in their lives. Youth Work can provide activities, confidence, interacting (socialising) knowing each other well, being with friends, increasing confidence and a space for enjoyment'.

A young woman in a rural area commented that 'Youth Work makes me feel happy, it's a happy place to be and a really comforting place'. This sentiment was shared by a young man in a former industrial area, 'the project makes me feel happy, it gives you a sense of enjoyment, you might have made their life a little bit better with a 20 minute conversation'. In an urban community, a young man commented that 'just coming in here (to the youth centre), it made me feel happy. Doing the music, that is the best I've felt as a young person'. In an urban community, a young woman commented that 'Youth Work makes me feel happy, it's obvious, it's a happy environment, in Youth Work there's always a solution. Youth Work offers a different way of looking at things'.

Travelling was what made a young woman from a rural area feel very happy, commenting on a residential trip she had taken part in with her project, she said:

it is just such a beautiful place, the people that I was with, just everything we did. It was nice to be somewhere new. It is quite important, cos you see how different places are. Cos like in a community in Cornwall, not like here, it's a really happy place and everyone is friendly and everyone talks to each other and down here not many people do that.

The interplay of these different key themes from the data demonstrate the holistic nature of young people's understanding of Youth Work and how its impacts defy easy quantification. It is clear from the data that this subtle Youth Work mix creates an environment which enhances the SWB of young people.

Benefits of recreation

It has been noted in Youth Work policy that Youth Work has a role to play in the holistic development of young people and that social and educational development can also include, for example, physical, political and spiritual development (LSIS, 2012). This notion of recreation has both a physical and spiritual component. One young woman commented that, for her, her school days were the worst days of her life but that 'I do quite a lot of gardening, I love gardening. At the moment I'm in the middle of turning over my mum's garden and levelling it all. Last night I put in some runner beans and some potatoes'. This demonstrates the value of being able to find and partake in activities which they feel strongly about. This young woman acknowledged loving gardening. This was an activity which was introduced to the young woman through Youth Work, which she had chosen to involve herself in in her spare time. This is a demonstration of the potential of Youth Work to introduce young people to activities which they would be deprived of without Youth Work. At times young people were able to talk about how Youth Work made them feel, a young woman in a former industrial area noted that 'Youth Work makes me feel happy, it's obvious, it's a happy environment, in Youth Work there's always a solution. Youth Work offers a different way of looking at things'. This suggests that Youth Work does can encourage young people to look at things from new perspectives, enabling greater understanding and being able to identify previously unseen approaches.

A young woman in a rural community commented that she took part in Youth Work to help her cope with her life. It was said that 'I don't know where I would be without these guys. They've helped me get housing, they've helped me when I've been really down, I dunno, this is just the place I come when I need a shoulder to cry on or a chat. To feel better. And they're all about helping and giving, and..' This young woman went on to suggest that having this consistent support available had helped her to become more independent, stating that 'because I think I'm growing out of it now. I've had the support when I've needed it but I'm getting to the stage where I'm not needing it any more'.

One young man in a former industrial area spoke at length about his context, living in hostel accommodation, and that there was a level of boredom for him. 'A day is a day, it's not about feeling different each day, it's about seeing the same things day in day out, doing the same things day in and day out'. This young man reflected on growing up and lamented some of the changes he had observed of the diminishing opportunities for easily accessible physical and social recreation in his community:

When I was growing up, well, twice a week down that park there were garden per se, where you could rent bikes, plant stuff, rent land and plant more stuff. Down there, there's like, a building, sort of, underneath there is all the sewage and that drags the smell toward the park and that makes it not very nice. Makes you not want to go there. By the town, every, twice a week we used to go down there and plant vegetables and trees, it was good.

This demonstrates a missed opportunity for this young man, he acknowledges an interest in gardening, this may provide opportunities for the youth workers around him to work with him to develop this interest. This opportunity could provide him with further challenges, enhancing a sense of recreation as opposed to the monotony of living in a hostel. This young man acknowledged having few family ties in Wales and noted he had moved home a great deal during his childhood, saying that 'my mother has decided to move to Norwich, my brother and sister have decided to move as well. I have my uncle and they are the only

family I have in Wales’ and that ‘I’ve lived all over the place, I’ve been really mobile. I’ve lived in Cardiff, Risca, Cross Keys, Wattsville and Fairwater’. The Youth Work project this young man was involved in was in a precarious situation with its funding, it was perhaps the most consistent element in his life at a pivotal time for him. This is an example of the potential of Youth Work to offer young people something that can improve their SWB when other areas of life are challenging.

Youth Work’s potential social and economic value goes largely ignored by many in positions of power, despite the tremendous potential it holds for helping to create a more just and fair society in which all young people can flourish. It has been suggested that ‘Youth Work focuses on young people at that particular moment in their lives when they are developing their awareness, seeking answers and crucially, beginning to explore their beliefs, values and choices’ (Young, 1999, p. 28). At a time when what is known about the general well-being young people in Wales is limited (Mylona, 2015), this study demonstrates that Youth Work has an important role in enhancing the subjective well-being of young people.

Physical activity

It is widely acknowledged that physical activity is a good thing. Data reinforces that young people involved in the youth service in Wales acknowledge the value of physical activity for their SWB.

For the majority of young people interviewed, they commented on the importance of physical activity to a sense of fun while growing up. Whether playing outdoors, gardening, canoeing, fishing, camping, being physical was closely associated with benefits to well-being. In addition to physical benefits, it has become clear that there

are also psychological benefits for young people. One young woman identified that ‘physical activity helped my confidence, a lot!’ Conversely, in a former industrial area, the young people spoke of the impact of what they regarded as funding cuts on the amount of physical space they, and others, could use to play in their community. Across the data set, it became apparent that being physically active may be associated with being fully human, developing a sense of control over self and the environment. This ability to feel a level of control may be linked to SWB, promoting well-being through a sense of giving one’s life meaning.

Data supports the importance of movement, of physical experiences for young people while they are growing up. This enhances feelings of life satisfaction, life meaning and happiness (OECD, 2013). Studies have argued that physical activity is a necessary component of a good life, and further, that certain sections of society are deprived of opportunities to engage in sport and physical activity, or are offered diminished provision, they can, thereby, suffer a deficit in well-being (Bloodworth, Mcnamee and Bailey, 2012). As the field of neuroscience develops, it is also being identified that there are measurable increases in brain activity as a result of physical exercise (Basso et. al., 2015).

There are other examples of the impact of social change on the lived experiences of young people. For example, that participation in physical activity among young people in Wales consistently falls below levels recommended by the Chief Medical Officer and, even more worryingly, levels continue to decline further, and most rapidly among those in lower socio-economic groups, and teenage girls (Reid and Foster, 2017).

Universal Youth Work, available in communities is a mechanism whereby young people are able to engage in regular physical activity which is affordable. These activities are financially accessible and respondent to the needs and wants of young people. Youth Work offers opportunities to enhance both physical and psychological outcomes for young people. One young man commented on the value of being able to take part in physical activity in the community, noting that ‘I’ve always done things as a family and getting involved with the community you know, it was only a little village but there was a lot going on’.

The accessibility of community sport was well regarded by young people and this contrasted with the way that formal education offers sport for young people. It was noted that, in school, ‘they should have adapted how they tried to teach the sport. Shouting and screaming in your face is no way to teach it, negotiating with you. I ended up compromising with most of the teachers’. This demonstrates how the nature of the offer made to young people can support or undermine their participation in physical activity.

The value of sport was further identified by a young man in a rural area, who said that ‘I do think everything was beneficial, you’d end up at competitions or water sports’. For the majority of young people taking part in the study, physical activity during childhood was important. Sometimes these were organised activities, sometimes as structured sport, but also through playing outdoors. Also, in the countryside or on the streets, this strongly equated to fun. National and local investment decisions can enhance this potential by placing of children and young people in contemporary society and how their needs for being physically active are taken into account. Failure to capitalise on community based physical activity will ensure continually increasing financial costs to the public purse due to diseases associated with physical inactivity.

Freedom to experiment

A young man in an urban area commented that Youth Work offers ‘opportunities to be yourself, but also to find out, to experiment with who you are’. It was noted in a former industrial area, that ‘every time you come here there are new challenges, something different, it could be there’s a young person coming here, he’s got a disability, it’s a challenge taking on a new role’.

Opportunities for experimentation have been regarded as both positive and negative, with the risk that it becomes overly idealised (Bowring, 2015). This sociological analysis is helpful in furthering understanding of the concept of freedom and its application in an academic sense, however, in common with other literature searches, it appears that academia adopts a certain stance in relation to topics. For example in relation to a search for academic sources on individual freedom, the majority of articles explore individual freedom from an economic perspective. Rather than exploring freedom to explore what it is to be human, to develop greater understanding of the human condition, contemporary agendas PREDOMINANTLY promote the understanding of freedom within a financial context. It could be argued that this predominant focus on economics is another example of the reality of neoliberalism.

Youth Work, however naïve or idealistic a view this may be, can offer young people opportunities to experiment, to work out who they are in a rapidly changing social context. This notion of freedom to experiment, of individual freedom has been described as ‘an ethical value of paramount importance in a well ordered and open society’ (Alcalde-Unzu, Ballaster and Nieto, 2012, p. 298). The fact that open access, universal Youth Work, based on a clearly articulated set of values as set out above, offers young people a rare opportunity to pursue the nature of their lives as more than economic units. Good Youth Work offers young people the opportunity to explore spiritual questions, opportunities for

which are at risk of becoming increasingly marginalised in a society where values of economic individualism can easily dominate. One young man in an urban context set out the importance of freedom for him, saying that ‘freedom was important, freedom of time, friends, numbers, space, sheer numbers of friends or associates’. The economic pressures being experienced by young people are considerable. The very affordability of building a good life, the ideal type of which is conceptualised as having a university education, marriage, home ownership, secure and satisfying employment are becoming increasingly unrealistic for many young people. Traditional rites of passage which have been held up for young people, rather than being a source of motivation for young people are increasingly having the effect of creating anxiety among the young (Varkey Foundation, 2017).

Physical Activity and Gross Motor Activities

It is generally widely accepted that evidence broadly supports the hypothesis that physical activity has the potential to improve mental wellbeing in young people (Whitelaw, Teuton, Swift, and Scobie, 2010). Unfortunately many children and young people exercise insufficiently to benefit from positive factors like well-being (Smedegard et. al. 2016).

One young woman commented on her involvement in a Youth Work residential activity, that ‘we went for an Indian meal as well as lots of long walks. It was just, an amazing time’. In another context this young woman commented about how the youth worker she worked with regularly worked with her school, saying ‘they would take us out (of school) to do something for the day and it would be nicer than being in school’. A young man in a rural area noted how he felt regarding physical activity while growing up, his close associations between activity and happiness and how he felt others being less active would be naturally having less fun..

I had a really fun time growing up, fishing or riding a bike, so it was always really fun; growing up. Yeah, that's what I seem to remember, it was always fun, always doing something, always out, I used to go out with my uncles a lot and doing a lot of stuff, so. Whereas, compared to my brothers, they weren't doing so much, I think I was having more of a good time, yeah.

In Youth Work there also exist opportunities for physical activity, for practicing gross motor skills, it was noted in one centre that 'we go swimming three times a year' and that 'Every Thursday we go down to the astroturf to the MUGA to play either rounders or dodgeball'. These opportunities to take part in physical activity can be seen as a metaphor for the wider argument about the focus on success and well-being. The project that these young people are involved with is under threat of closure due to local authority funding cuts and austerity more generally. These weekly and regular opportunities for physical activity will be removed from the community if the provision comes to an end. In an area and at a time when young people generally are not achieving the target of an hour or more of physical activity every day, as obesity levels somewhat inevitably increase, as the unhappiness levels of young people increase, society would be required to develop new opportunities, new responses to these social conditions.

A young woman provided an example of the widespread nature of austerity and how opportunities can be lost quite easily, 'Yea but we almost lost the splash park didn't we. We nearly lost all of that down there. Especially where our centre is located we are just outside funding zones'. This goes some way to demonstrate the compound nature and impact of fiscal austerity and the impacts it can have in communities and on the lives of young people and other residents. These impacts can build up and contribute to experiences of adversity for young people. The final sub theme to consider from the data is that of adversity and trauma experienced by young people.

Adversity and trauma

Having gathered data across a diverse range of communities in Wales, it became apparent that young people, during their childhood and adolescence are commonly confronted with adversity and trauma. This was something of an unexpected finding. The extent and the range of these adversity and challenges was also unexpected. The majority of the young people involved in the study had experienced their parent's relationship breaking down, others had experienced bereavement of a close family member and others, homelessness. Other adversities included bullying, mental and physical health issues, loneliness, obesity and economic poverty. Many of the young people had experienced more than one of these adversities. In relation to family breakdown, this often involved a significant geographic relocation, including sometimes, moving to another country. One young man was able to describe the upheaval he, and his family, had experienced as a result of such a breakdown:

My parents were together until I was about, er, god, 12, 13. So that's when we were living on this estate, that's all about that part of my life. And then they, er, split up, it led to my three brothers going to Scotland. Or, two of them are in the army but they moved to Scotland to live with my dad and I came down here with my mum.

Another young person, when asked to talk about his family, recounted that:

I don't know, there's always been a, I don't know, a thing about alcohol in my family. Not, it's, the males in my family and alcohol there's always been a big problem. Well, it killed my dad in the end. And, er, my brother's following, two of them are following. So that's a big, key player, in my life.

Despite initially doing very well in school, this situation resulted in this young man saying 'I was doing really well, I was getting pupil awards, and year 8, when I moved down here I went out of control'. This situation escalated, had more of an effect on this young man's circumstances, which resulted in further upheaval 'I've moved again now to an area of deprivation. Through homelessness I was housed by the local authority'.

This young man was able to reflect on, and analyse his situation, saying that:

It's a bit of an insult, it's not where I wanted to be, it's a one shot deal by the council. You move here or that's it. And because my parents no longer live in the area so it's that or I leave altogether. It annoys me a bit because my friends are from the other area, the other end of the county. It's a bit of a distance but there's nothing I can do about it. I just put up with it.

It was as a result of his homelessness that this young man became involved with the local youth service. In this situation, one can acknowledge the need for the youth service to engage more effectively with Youth Work policy, to move beyond a preoccupation with principles and values. In this situation the voluntary principle and putting young people first, rather than perhaps a preoccupation with the voluntary principle (Davies, no date) may be more important for Youth Work and the young person involved. There are also other tensions at play here in relation to the role, purpose and function of Youth Work in responding to young people in very challenging circumstances.

Challenging circumstances were a feature of most young people's lives, one young woman when asked how Youth Work had made her feel about herself was very vocal about the impact it had had on her life. From a situation where she had acknowledged previous substance misuse and also being a victim of sexual exploitation, she commented that the project made her feel:

Positive and valued and proud. I often reflect, this year to last year, I am such a different person, I did naughty stuff, I was on naughty stuff, as well like drugs and stuff. I was on cocaine and suffering with mental health issues in and out of hospital every week. Getting involved in this place and how it's helped me overcome all those barriers, it's about big steps in a year. Where I've come in a year, they've helped me set up my future goals, my future plans and to the point now, I'm not on my own in the hostel, they will let me come down in the days and let me sit and do work, my course work which is actually going to benefit my future.

In an urban area it was noted by one young man the importance of stability and security, against a background of moving home growing up within a lone parent family:

I've been brought up by a single mother most of my life. Erm, she's done literally everything for me. I think it was easier in some ways, having one

parent, only one person to answer to. Erm, she's not from the area I live, we've lived in three different places, since I was born, but yeah, definitely settled in the place I've grown up in, where we're living now. She's never earned a massive amount of cash but we've always been able to do things any normal young person would do growing up. So I haven't been disadvantaged at all.

Exploring the notion of consistency and security with this young man, he commented Oh 'yeah, it makes such a difference and makes your life a lot easier. I wasn't the brightest in school, I couldn't have got to where I am now, without that settleness (*sic*). Friends, and having that support'.

A young person commented on moving from a town in England to a small rural community in Wales, 'it was a big shock moving from England to Wales, such a different atmosphere and everything. In England the atmosphere was a bit thuggish, and gangs and everything. Down here, it's a quiet little old town'.

When asked to discuss her education, this young woman commented, laughing:

I wasn't really very good in school, er, by the time I was in year 8 I was on a course like for a year and a half. I've never liked the school, having ADHD and being in school it's hard to concentrate on doing things and being in school all day, it's just my idea of hell.

Exploring the roles that she took up within the family, this young woman commented on the extent to which she was integral to the continual functioning of the family unit:

Cleaning, cleaning my own clothes, cleaning around the house and um, it's quite hard to answer these questions. (DW They are quite adult roles are they) Yeah, I've been quite grown up all my life really, living with my mum. I used to cook meals for all my siblings and stuff and I used to get them ready for school every morning and everything. It was because my mum had quite bad mental health issues. I grew up in my head a lot quicker than most people.

Another young woman commented about her childhood, recognising ‘I was really lucky as a child – we had four holidays a year, my family and friends were so supportive, I have nothing bad to say about my childhood, it was all good’! When asked to comment further on her family, she said ‘my parents are divorced but they are still really supportive. I have been through bereavement, illness, my dad is really supportive. We get on really well, get on well.’

This young woman made a comment, when discussing her evaluation of the Youth Work she had been involved in, that:

Youth workers are just someone to talk to, the fact that young people take part voluntarily is so important, it’s up to the young people. Youth Work is less threatening than other things young people are faced with. I used to think Youth Work was table tennis or pool but now I understand young people would struggle without youth workers. Youth workers are not recognised as much as they should be. Youth workers give hope and youth workers don’t realise how good they actually are. They also help with pastoral stuff as well.

The preceding chapter has critically explored what young people have said about their lives, their experiences of Youth Work and how this has impacted upon their sense of subjective well-being. The subsequent passages provide a conclusion which it is hoped, will make available new knowledge concerning the evidence of the impact of Youth Work on the subjective well-being of young people.

7 CONCLUSION

This study has utilised an interpretive phenomenological strategy to critically analyse the extent to which Youth Work impacts on the Subjective Well-being of young people. SWB has been identified by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development as having three components, Life satisfaction, Life meaning, and Happiness (OECD, 2013). These components have been used within this study to provide a framework by which subjective well-being can be explored. This is the fundamental gap in knowledge addressed within the study. This study is significant as it provides evidence that Youth Work clearly contributes to the subjective well-being of young people in Wales.

This empirical research has generated data which shows that Youth Work offers young people opportunities which can have positive impacts upon their SWB. At a time when levels of anxiety and unhappiness among young people are at record levels this study has identified that Youth Work can have a protective function against these influences, that it can enhance young people's subjective well-being. The study has identified four significant key themes which young people involved in Youth Work associate with these three components of SWB. These key themes are: consistency; people; places and experiences.

As a result of immersion in the processing and analysis of the empirical data collected it has become clear that many of the previously described characteristics of Youth Work which were critically discussed in the literature review chapter have been identified by young people as being important to them during this study. This study is significant as it provides clear, unambiguous empirical evidence that Youth Work strengthens subjective well-being in young people. Specifically, this study has provided evidence of distinct

elements of Youth Work and unique detail of how these elements act on subjective well-being. For example, the importance of the relationship between the youth worker and the young person, as well as being a common theme in the theoretical Youth Work literature (Davies, 2010; Learning and Skills Improvement Service, 2012; Smith, 2002; Young, 2006), has been identified by the young people in this study as being one of the factors which has contributed to an enhanced sense of SWB. The quality and nature of the relationships young people have with youth workers is significant, again there is an extract which captures the essence of that, ‘the workers get to know a lot of people, they get to know not every young person is the same’. This relationship building is so important, enabling the young people to understand that the youth worker is genuinely interested in them. This might be the most significant adult relationship many of them have at this pivotal time in their lives. It is also clear from the empirical data collected that many of the characteristics which have emerged in the policy literature such as the importance of principles and values in Youth Work (Council for Wales of Voluntary Services, 2013) have been borne out in this study. The unique contribution of this study is in its ability to generate empirical data which proves the impact of the work which has previously been speculative.

Understanding that the interplay between individual ↔ context, including the institutions of society, culture, the designed and natural environment and history (Lerner, Bowers, Geldhof, Gestsdottir, and Desouza, 2012) has a significant impact on the lives of young people, an adapted model of ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, Watling Neal and Neal, 2013) provides a model for analysis. It has been found that a development of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems model which enables a more local and individual analysis (Watling Neal and Neal, 2013) is a valid means of analysing the social context of young people.

An analysis of the data from the young people involved in this study has enabled a far more in-depth exploration of how their lived experiences and particularly their experiences of Youth Work have enhanced their experiences of SWB. Overlaying this data with the model of Watling Neal and Neal has enabled me to illustrate the impact of social context on the lives of young people (See Figure 8 and 9 below). This synthesis of ideas enables greater understanding of the importance of the context of the young people and also of the holistic nature of youth work and its potential influence on subjective well-being.

Additionally, the model represents the significant of Youth Work in bolstering SWB in situations where the family or community may be compromised in its ability to do so.

Participants have noted the importance of feeling wanted, by individuals, as a member of a family and also that feeling of being wanted and significant within institutions such as schools and Youth Work settings. To summarise this idea, one of the participants from an urban area said 'knowing and realising that people care is important'. The places where Youth Work happens, these are significant to the majority of young people in this study, summarised by one young person who said 'I come here to escape, to escape'. When the place is combined with positive relationships with youth workers, and appealing activities, that proves very attractive to young people, summarised by one young man who noted 'just coming in here, it made me feel happy. Doing the music, that is the best I've felt as a young person'.

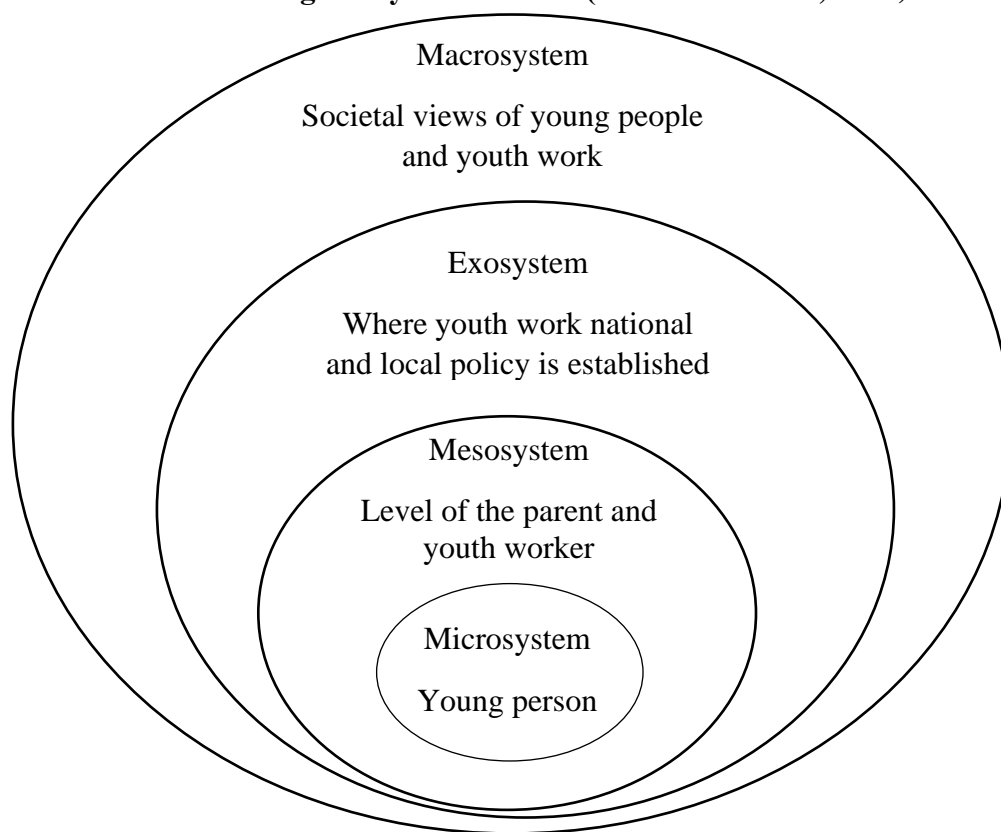
This study makes an original contribution to our knowledge and understanding of the potential role of Youth Work in the lives of young people, specifically how it enhances the subjective well-being of young people.

It is intended that the findings from this study will provide evidence to the field, ultimately, aiding a more thorough understanding of how Youth Work can impact on the SWB of

young people in Wales. More widely than Youth Work, at a time when young people are experiencing unprecedented levels of unhappiness and mental ill-health, it is clear from this study that Youth Work has a positive impact on the SWB of young people. Evidence from this study demonstrates that Youth Work should be available to more young people to aid their transition from dependence to interdependence, and also as a demonstration of support from the society of which they are a part.

The following passage contains an exploration of the view of ecological systems models (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, Watling Neal and Neal, 2013) exploring how the different levels of systems interact with each other. Taking this model at face value could lead one to make inaccurate interpretations in relation to ecological systems and how these impact on the lives of individuals. This can lead to errors of interpretation through an assumption that aggregate analysis is a valid model within which to analyse the lived experience of individuals. Data shows that ecological systems offer a promising approach to analysis of social phenomena, page 16-20 contains a critical exploration of ecological systems and their efficacy as a key model within the study.

Figure 7. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979)



This one size fits all approach however, does little to enable either the researcher or the practitioner to explore local or individual circumstances. This grouping, aggregating young people contributes to a paternalistic view of young people. This paternal view has contributed to the adoption, by the youth service, of a passive position in relation to young people. This has been influenced by macrosystem and chronosystem factors, controlled by a predominant model of neoliberalism which has become widely accepted during late modernity. These neoliberal values have, as a result, exerted considerable influence over public policy and the delivery of public services including in the youth service which has become concerned with the creation of 'good' young people. These 'good' young people are characterised as young people who 'work hard and then get a job, have a good relationship with his or her parents and have strong commitments to friends and the local community' (Piper, 2008, p. 49). It is further argued that when created, this 'good' young person is one who is 'sufficiently responsible to be seen as being worthy of investment, is

sufficiently dependent and innocent to garner support and becomes the focus of investment for the future in a risk-based society' (Piper, 2008, p. 51).

The youth service as a result of its stated policy intentions has contributed to the perpetuation of this situation, has sought to make young people 'good' citizens. The Principal Youth Officers Group, the leaders and managers of the maintained youth service in Wales have stated that:

Youth Work is widely recognised as having a crucial role to play in developing young peoples' ability to transition successfully to adulthood, in becoming positive contributors to their local communities and recognising their place in and contribution to the global community (PYOG, 2015, p. 3).

This position acknowledges the contribution the service can make to fostering good young people, the current and future contributors to the maintenance of the global behaviours associated with neoliberalism.

The primary intention of this study has been to investigate the impact of Youth Work on the SWB of young people. Findings suggest that the service, unknowingly, and with the best of intentions, is contributing to the perpetuation of a social system which could be viewed as being unfavourable for the well-being of some young people in Wales and that rather than adopt a targeted approach based upon a paternalistic view of young people, the youth service could enhance subjective well-being with a commitment to values as stated in many of its governing documents (LSIS, 2012; Youth Work in Wales Review Group, 2018; WG, 2014, 2019a).

What has been found is that the characteristics of Youth Work, namely that young people take part of their own volition, that it is based upon the democratic values underpinning non-formal learning, that it works with young people aged between 11 and 25, and that it

makes an offer to be available to all the young people of Wales, because they are young people, and not because they are deemed deficient based on the assessment of an adult. As stated by the PYOG, as a ‘targeted provision for vulnerable young people, including teenage pregnancy advice, youth justice teams, drug and alcohol misuse services and homelessness support each have its place’ (PYOG, 2015, p. 2). Rather, the youth service should be more cognisant of its stated intention to put young people first (WAG, 2007, WG, 2014, 2019a), offering all young people opportunities, regardless of their background, abilities and circumstances, to develop their personal and social wellbeing (PYOG, 2015, p.2).

Based on the findings of this study, it is clear that Youth Work in Wales can have a positive impact upon the SWB of young people. Youth Work enhances SWB through a combination of the interaction of consistency, people, places, and experiences. The interaction of these factors acts to enhance the life satisfaction, life meaning and happiness of young people. The factors which have emerged from the data are illustrated in the key themes contained in Table 7.

Table 7. Key Themes From the Data

Key Theme 1	Consistency, reliability and caring
Key Theme 2	Youth workers and the unique relationship they offer young people
Key Theme 3	The places in which Youth Work takes place are special to young people
Key Theme 4	Youth Work offers young people experiences which impact positively on their well-being.

Whilst the capacity of the sector continues to be affected by ongoing austerity measures, the Youth Service in Wales maintains a commitment to young people and is keen to continue to play a positive role in their education and general development (PYOG, 2015, p.4). The Principal Youth Officers spell out quite clearly the contribution Youth Work makes to the delivery of social policy in Wales but despite this, the youth service has seen

significant disinvestment across Wales in recent times (Welsh Government, 2018), largely due to cuts at the local authority level. The youth service must adopt a more radical stance, taking into account the work of Stanton-Salazar in analysing the role of institutional broker, the service needs to become more effective as a ‘knowledge agent’, being able to know and understand the system and where the power lies within it. Secondly, evidence suggests that the youth service needs to enhance its effectiveness at lobbying, at political advocacy, and also as institutional broker, adept at negotiating agreements which ultimately better serve the young people of Wales (Stainton-Salazar, 2011). It is clear that there are important roles not being adopted within the current Youth Work exosystem and macrosystem level in Wales (See Figure 8). A rethinking of the role and function of youth and community work in enhancing SWB is timely. Rather than encouraging a narrow agenda focusing on the formation of good young people, which minimises social risk, Youth Work should look to more radical approaches, which challenges society to reshape and to further prioritise subjective well-being as a goal of human development.

Youth Work must be mindful of the ecological context of young people at the same time encouraging young people to reflect upon the particularities of their respective settings and to develop authentic opportunities to reflect on ‘what’ and ‘how’ they are being in the world (Freire, 1993, p.25), in order to be able to consider, evaluate and seek to enhance their own subjective well-being.

Figure 8 illustrates how ecological systems interact, and how Youth Work contributes to the subjective well-being of young people by offering them consistency, people, places and experiences.

Figure 9 focuses in on a hypothetical model which incorporates the factors identified within this study.

Figure 8. A hypothetical networked Ecological Systems Model

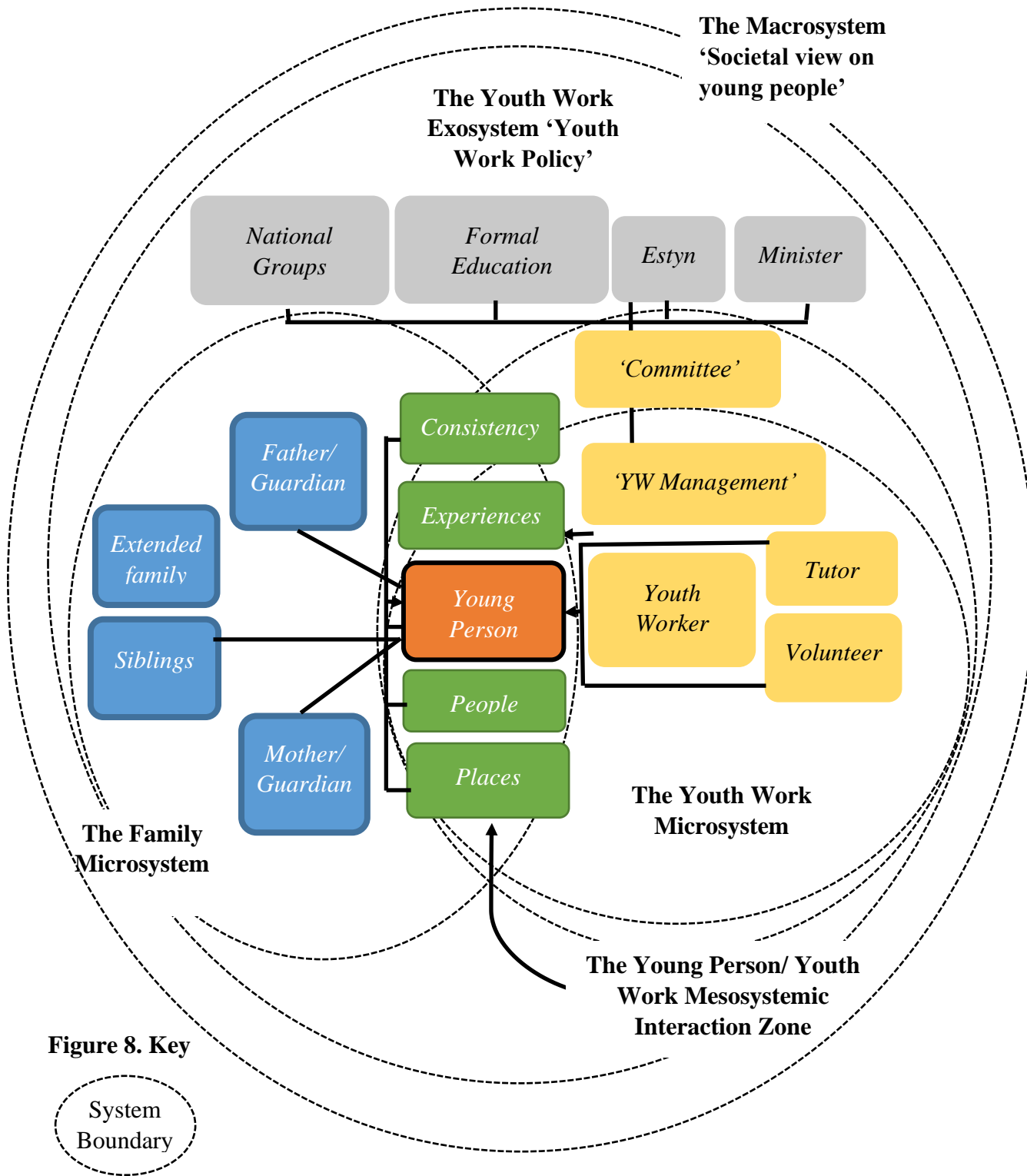


Figure 8. Key

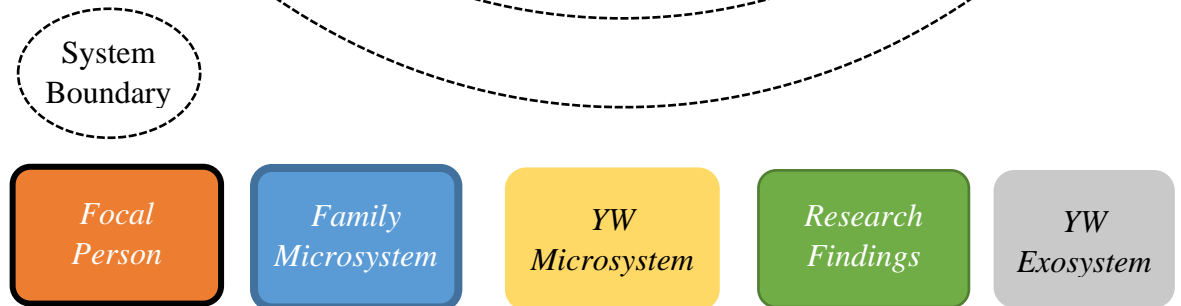


Figure 8 sets out in detail a representation of the findings of the study located within the social landscape provided by the hypothetical networked model proposed by Watling Neal and Neal (2013). Specifically, how the research findings, namely: consistency; people; places and experiences can be located within the social context of the individual.

Specifically, figure 8 illustrates how the different ecological systems overlap, creating the capacity for the germination of opportunities which the study has demonstrated enhance the subjective well-being of young people.

Figure 8 shows how the macrosystem, the exosystem, the family and youth work microsystem can act upon the young person, how the components of the systems can interact. This system interaction creates overlaps, offering young people opportunities for the enhancement of subjective well-being through consistency, through the qualities of the people around them, through their feelings about the places they frequent and through the experiences they take part in. Figure 8 provides an illustration at the mesosystem level, how the family and the local youth work organisations can together create the crucible for a lived experience which enhances subjective well-being among young people. The findings of the study have generated new knowledge regarding the detail of these interactions and how, specifically the family and local youth work organisations can create opportunities for subjective well-being.

Figure 9 contains further detail of how the findings of the study can be illustrated graphically, specifically, to zoom in to this young person/ youth work mesosystemic interaction zone. By zooming in on Figure 9, three interaction zones can be clearly identified, zone A, zone B, and zone C. It can be seen that zone A can be understood as being where the family and community act on young people. The results of this study show that young people, when interviewed identified that community was important to them, that community was significant to their interpretation of their lived experience.

In Figure 9, zone B represents what young people said about the components of youth work which impact upon their subjective well-being. That movement and physical experiences, the fact that youth work is regarded as being a friendly environment, that the workers are seen as being connected to the wider world, that youth work offers friendships and that young people have unique relationships with their youth workers are all evidence of how youth work itself impacts on the subjective well-being of young people.

The third zone, zone c demonstrates where the family and youth work mesosystems overlap. It can be seen here that the components in this zone can be experienced in either the family or youth work environment. For example, having fun, a sense of familiarity, moral education, these components along with the others in zone c can all be experienced in the context of either or both the family and youth work.

The fundamental point is that in a society where many young people (the focal person in Figure 9) are experiencing significant upheaval in their lives impacting negatively on their subjective well-being, youth work, through the qualities identified in zone c has a positive impact upon young people's subjective well-being. Another important finding of the study is that youth work itself can offer these components identified by young people, in contexts where families may be unable to offer these components, youth work itself can. Youth work based upon sound principles and values demonstrably enhances the subjective well-being of young people in Wales.

Figure 9. A hypothetical networked Ecological Systems Model – Youth Work/ Family Mesosystem Level including Favourable Adolescent and Childhood Experiences

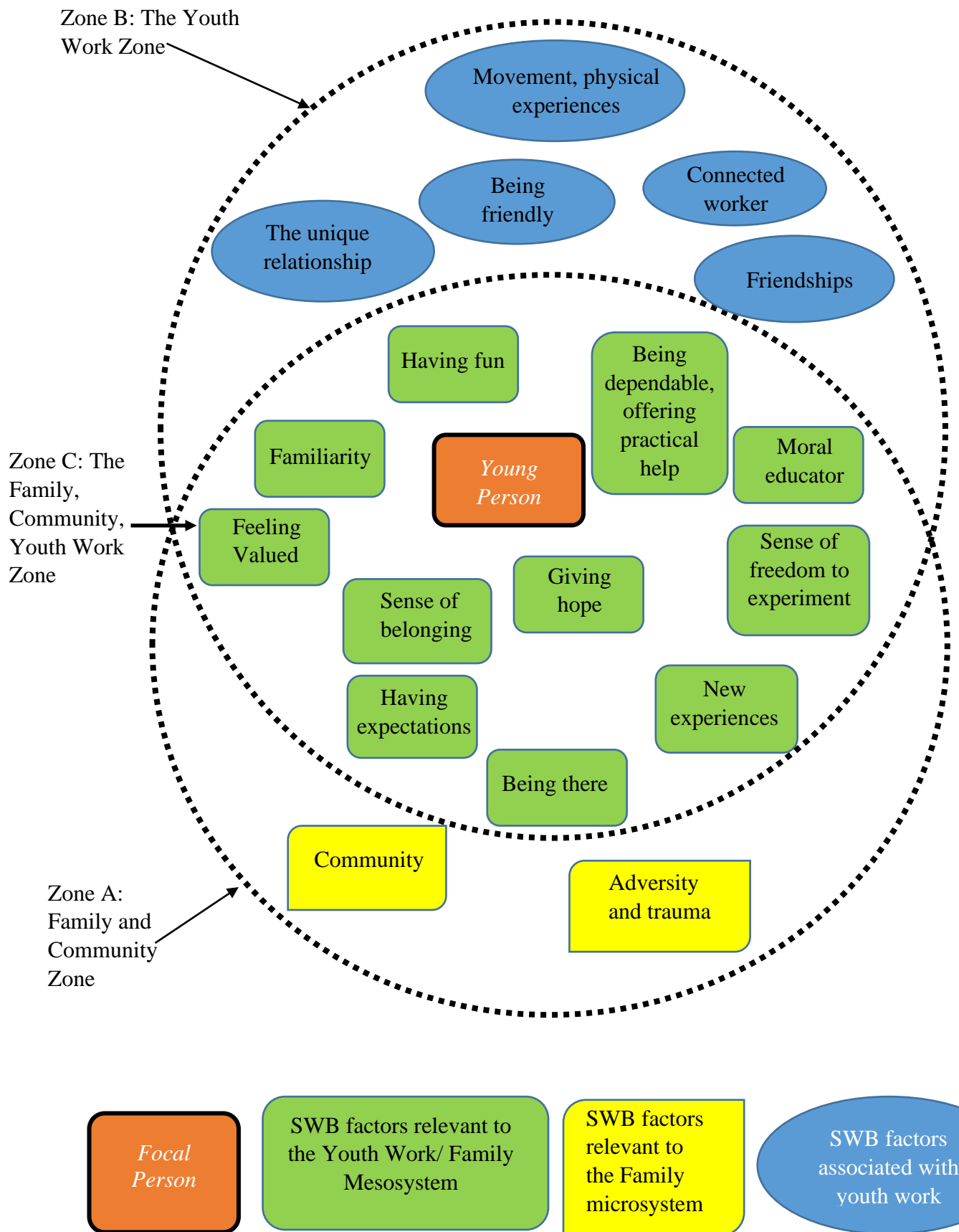


Figure 9 (above) illustrates the complex interaction of young person, their family and community context and their experiences of Youth Work. The young person is illustrated as the focal person with the model. Zone A illustrates the subjective well-being factors relating to the family microsystem around the young person. Zone B contains an illustration of the subjective well-being factors as they appear to young people involved in Youth Work. Zone C contains factors which interact between the Youth Work/ family mesosystem. It is apparent from the data that in some cases the family and community of young people is able to buffer the effects of adversity and trauma and the symptoms of an increasingly individualised world.

What this study continues to show is that Youth Work can also have a considerable effect upon the subjective well-being of young people through a complex mix of factors. Data shows that these factors are: 1. Consistency, reliability and caring are important for young people; 2. Youth workers and the unique relationship they offer young people is valuable to young people; 3. Despite considerable and long-term disinvestment in Youth Work buildings, the places in which Youth Work takes place are special to young people as they go through adolescence, and lastly, that Youth Work offers young people experiences which impact positively on their subjective well-being.

It is clear from the study that the interplay between the factors highlighted above has a positive impact upon the subjective well-being of young people. The study demonstrates that these Favourable Adolescent and Childhood Experiences (FACES) can have a considerable strengthening effect on the subjective well-being of young people. FACES have a powerful effect upon life satisfaction, life meaning and happiness of young people. The study concludes that Youth Work based upon clear principles and values, available universally within communities can impact positively upon the subjective well-being of young people in Wales.

In conclusion, the findings of this study demonstrate that youth work clearly has a role to play in enhancing the subjective well-being of young people. At a time when levels of anxiety, unhappiness and ill-being are high, youth work, delivered through the youth service can play a significant role in enabling young people to develop a stronger sense of subjective well-being.

The findings of this empirical study have provided clear evidence that youth work acts on the subjective well-being of young people. Generating this new knowledge is important in and of itself but, a significant intention of the study has been to seek to influence youth work policy and practice.

The results of the study provide a unique opportunity for the youth work sector in Wales to draw on much needed evidence of its impact on the subjective well-being of young people. This study is significant and it is hoped that the findings of will be utilised by policy makers, by practitioners and by training providers.

The key themes which have emerged from the data, firstly, that is consistency, reliability and caring, these have implications for policy makers and practitioners. Within both the youth work exosystem and the youth work microsystem, SWB can be enhanced if these themes are prioritised. The results of the study will be communicated to policy makers, to relevant groups including the Council for Wales of Voluntary Services, the Wales Training Agencies Group, the Principal Youth Officers Group and appropriate units within Welsh Government.

Secondly, the key theme of the unique relationship between young people and youth worker, this important aspect of the dynamic remains a key ingredient in youth work and must be maintained and further developed at all costs, again, the focus on this theme can

become the focus of both policy and practice. In light of the current coronavirus pandemic there are many pressures on the places where youth work happens. Many have been closed to young people for many weeks, the potential role for the reopening of premises is considerable. Youth work policy makers have an opportunity to appreciate the huge assets they have in their buildings, a network for contacting young people across Wales which can enhance their subjective well-being. This asset can be maximised through further investment to enhance the all-important places where youth work happens.

Lastly, the study has demonstrated that youth work experiences impact positively on the subjective well-being of young people. These experiences if implemented can offer opportunities where young people develop enhanced SWB. Policy makers, training providers and practitioners can all benefit from increased understanding of the importance of such activities. The results of the study show that young people in developed countries are experiencing increased levels of anxiety and unhappiness. The study has confirmed that Youth Work as a form of non-formal education offers young people opportunities to counter this situation, that Youth Work can bolster life meaning, life satisfaction and well-being among young people without recourse to medicalised social responses.

All-together, this mix of consistency, of the unique relationship, of youth work places and activities is a very powerful mix which has been proven to enhance the subjective well-being of young people in Wales. This is an opportunity for the sector to make the most of the findings from this empirical study into the practice of youth work. When seen in combination, the findings of the research clearly show that youth work can provide favourable adolescent and childhood experiences which support subjective well-being. This is the contribution of the study to the generation of new knowledge of the impact of Youth Work on the subjective well-being of young people.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aaltonen, S. and Karvonen, S. Floating Downstream? 'Parental Support and Future Expectations of Young People from Less Privileged Backgrounds', *Sociology*, 2016, Vol.50(4), pp. 714-730.
- Action for Children (2009) *Stuck in the Middle: The Importance of Supporting Six to 13 year olds*. London: Action for Children. [Online] Available at: http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/media/848579/stuck_in_the_middle.pdf (Accessed 22 July 2011).
- Adam, E.K, Chyu, L, Hoy, L.T, Doane, L.D, Boisjoly, J, Duncan, J, Chase-Lansdale, L, and McDade, W.M. 'Adverse Adolescent Relationship Histories and Young Adult Health: Cumulative Effects of Loneliness, Low Parental Support, Relationship Instability, Intimate Partner Violence, and Loss', *Journal of Adolescent Health*, Vol.49, Issue 3. September 2011, p278-286.
- Adamson, P. (2013) *Child well-being in rich countries, A comparative overview*. Florence: UNICEF.
- Aked, J. Marks, N. Cordon, C. and Thompson, S. (no date) *Five Ways to well-being: A report presented to the Foresight Project on communicating the evidence for improving people's well-being*. Centre for well-being: New Economics Foundation.
- Alcalde-Unzu, J., Ballaster, M.A., and Nieto, J. Freedom of choice: John Stuart Mill and the tree of life. *SERIEs*, March 2012, Vol.3, Issue 1-2, pp298-226.
- Anderson, L. (2010) *Voices of Children and Young People in Wales Study: A qualitative study of Wellbeing among children and young people under 25 years old*. Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government.
- Anderson, L. (Ed.) (2011) *2011 Children and Young People's Wellbeing Monitor for Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.
- Anderson, G., and Herr, K. (2015) New Public Management and the New Professionalism in Education: Framing the Issue. *Education, Policy and Analysis Archives*. Vol. 23(84), pp. 17.
- Anderson-Butcher, D., Cash, S.J., Saltzburg, S., Midle, T. and Pace, D. (2004) 'Institutions of Youth Development: The significance of supportive staff-youth relationships', *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, Vol. 9, No. 1-2, pp. 83-99.
- Antonio, R. Plundering the commons: the growth imperative in neoliberal times, *The Sociological Review*, Dec 2013, Vol.61, p.18.

- Arad Research (2015) *Youth work in in schools in Wales: Full report*. Cardiff: Arad Research.
- Argyris, C. and Schön, D. (1974) *Theory in Practice: Increasing Professional Effectiveness*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco: CA.
- Argyris, C. and Schön, D. (1996) *Organizational Learning II: Theory, Method, Practice*, Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Reading: MA.
- Arthur, S. Mitchell, M. Lewis, J. and McNaughton Nicholls, C. Designing Fieldwork, in Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., McNaughton Nicholls, C. and Ormston, R. (2014) *QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PRACTICE* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Austin, A. On Well-Being and Public Policy: Are We Capable of Questioning the Hegemony of Happiness? *Social Indicators Research*, 2016, Vol.127(1), pp. 123-128.
- Aynsley-Green, A. (2018) *THE BRITISH BETRAYAL OF CHILDHOOD, CHALLENGING UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTHS AND BRINING ABOUT CHANGE*. London: Routledge.
- Barrance, R. (2018) *The Human Rights of Children in Wales: An Evidence Review*. Cardiff: Children's Commissioner for Wales.
- Basso, J, Shang, A, Elman, M, Karmouta, R, and Suzuki, W. Acute Exercise Improves Prefrontal Cortex but not Hippocampal Function in Healthy Adults. *Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society: JINS*, Nov 2015, Vol.21(10), pp791-801.
- Batsleer, J. 'Youth work, social education, democratic practice and the challenge of difference: A contribution to debate' *Oxford Review of Education*, 2013, Vol. 39(3) p287.
- Behtoui, A. 'Social Capital and the Educational Expectations of Young People. *European Educational Research Journal*', 2017, Vol.16(4), pp. 487-503.
- Bellis, M.A. Downing, J. and Ashton, J.R. (2006) 'Adults at 12? Trends in puberty and their public health consequences', *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, (60), pp 910-911.
- Bergman, L.R. (2001) A Person Approach in Research on Adolescence: Some Methodological Challenges. *Journal of Adolescent Research*. Vol 16. (1) 28-53.
- Blaikie, N. (2007) *approaches to Social Inquiry*, 2nd ed. Polity, Cambridge.
- Blakemore, S.J. Burnett, S. and Dahl, R. (2010) The role of puberty in the developing adolescent brain, *Neuroscience*, 31(6), [Online]. Available at:

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/hbm.21052/full> (Accessed: 16 July 2011).

Bloodworth, A. McNamee, M. and Bailey, R. Sport, Physical Activity and Well-Being: An Objectivist Account, in *Sport, Education and Society*, 2012, Vol.17(4), p497-514.

Bockman, J. 'Neoliberalism', in *Contexts*, Vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 14-15. [Online] Available at American Sociological Association. <http://contexts.sagepub.com> Accessed 18.02.18.

Borsden, A. Fry, C. Pageant, B. Poiner, G. O'Neill, P. Rooney, J. and Williams, A. (2012) *HEALTH AND WELL BEING IN YOUTH WORK METHOD and RESOURCE HANDBOOK*. Cardiff: CWVYS.

Bourne, R. (no date) *Hayek and Thatcher*. [Online] <http://www.cps.org.uk/blog/q/date/2012/09/11/hayek-and-thatcher/> accessed 11.06.2017.

Bowring, F. Negative and Positive Freedom: Lessons from, and to, Sociology. *Sociology*, Vol 49, Issue 1, 2015, p156.

Bradshaw, J. and Mayhew, E. (Eds.) (2005). *The Well-being of Children in the UK (2nd Ed.)*, London: Save the Children, 2005.

Bradshaw, J. and Keung, A. (2011) Trends in child subjective well-being in the UK. In *Journal of Children's Services*, Vol 6 (1) 4-17.

British Educational Research Association (2018) *ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH*. 4th edn. BERA.

Broadbent, E, Gougoulis, J, Lui, N, Pota, V, and Simons, J. (2017) *Generation Z: GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP SURVEY*. Varkey Foundation, London: England.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979) *The Ecology of Human Development*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge: Mass.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1992) 'Ecological systems theory', in R. Vasta (ed.), *Six Theories of child development: Revised formulations and Current Issues*, London: Jessica Kingsley.

Bronfenbrenner, U. Systems vs associations: Its not either/or. *Families in Society*, Mar/Apr 1997, Vol.78(2) p.124.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. (1998). The ecology of developmental processes. In W. Damon & R. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of child psychology: Theoretical models of human development* (Vol. 1, pp. 993–1028). New York: John Wiley.

- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2005). Bioecological theory of human development. In U. Bronfenbrenner (Ed.) *Making human being human: Bioecological perspectives on human development* (pp. 3-15). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Brown, S., Shoveller, J., Chabot, C., and Lamontagne, A. Risk, resistance and the neoliberal agenda: young people, health and well-being in the UK, Canada and Australia. *Health, Risk & Society*, 2013, Vol.15(4), p333.
- Bryman, A. (2012) *Social Research Methods (4th Ed.)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Burger, K, and Samuel, R. ‘The Role of Perceived Stress and Self-Efficacy in Young People’s Life Satisfaction; A Longitudinal Study’. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 2017. Vol. 46(1) 78-90.
- Burgess, L. Reframing professional views of complex work with young people in care, IN Youth And Policy, [Online] Available at: <http://www.youthandpolicy.org/articles/reframing-professional-views-of-complex-work-with-young-people-in-care/> (Accessed 30 April 2018).
- Bryman, A. (2001) *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Open University Press.
- Bugental, J.F.T. (1964) The third force in psychology, *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 4 (1): 19-26.
- Burkhauser, R.V. DeNeve, J.E. and Powdthavee, N. Top incomes and well-being around the world (December 28, 2015). Said Business School WP 2015-25. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2714405> (Accessed 25 August 2016).
- Calder, G. (2015) Relating well-being to civil society. Paper presented at WISERD Conference 16 June 2015.
- Cameron, D. (2010) *PM Speech on wellbeing*. A speech delivered by The Rt Hon. David Cameron MP on 25 November 2010. (online) www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-speech-on-wellbeing accessed 28.12.15.
- Capp, G, Berkowitz, R, Sullivan, K, Astor, R.A, De Pedro, K, Gilreath, T.D, Benbenishty, R, and Rice, E. ‘Adult Relationships in Multiple Contexts and Associations with Adolescent Mental Health’, *Research on Social Work Practice*, 2016, Vol.26(6), p622-629.
- Carr-Hill, R. (2012) *Measuring Well-being*. (online) www.radstats.org.uk/no107/carr-hill107.pdf accessed 21.10.14
- Cavaletti, B. and Cors, M. ‘Beyond GDP’ Effects on National Subjective Well-Being of OECS Countries. *Social Indicators Research*. April 2018, Vol.136, Issue 3, pp931-966.

- Cavalier, S. (2005) The legacy of the Miner's Strike. *Capital & Class*, Autumn 2005, Issue 87, pp65-6.
- Chaplin, L.N. (2009) Please may I have a bike? Better yet, may I have a hug? An examination of children's and adolescent's happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies*. 10(5), 541-562.
- Checkoway, B. Richards-Schuster, K. Abdullah, S, Aragon, M, Facio, E. Figuero, L, Reddy, E, Welsh, M, White, A. 'Young people as competent citizens', *Community Development Journal*, Volume 38(4), October 2003, p. 298-309.
- Child Poverty Action Group, (2009) *Child wellbeing and child poverty Where the UK stands in the European Table*, London, CPAG.
- Children Act 1989, Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41> (Accessed 01 January 2019).
- Children Act 2004, Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents> (Accessed 01 January 2019).
- Cho, E.Y.N. 'Links between Poverty and Children's Subjective Wellbeing: Examining the Mediating and Moderating Role of Relationships', *Child Indicators Research* (2018) 11:585–607.
- Christensen, J. A CRITICAL REFLECTION OF BRONFENBRENNER'S DEVELOPMENT ECOLOGY MODEL. *PROBLEMS OF EDUCATION IN THE 21st CENTURY* Vol. 69, 2016 23, pp2-28.
- Cingano, F. (2014) 'Trends in Income Inequality and its Impact on Economic Growth', *OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers*, No. 163, OECD.
- Cohen, L, Manion, L, and Morrison, K. (2011) *Research Methods in Education* (7th ed.). Abingdon: Routledge.
- Cohen, S. (2002) *Folk devils and moral panics: the creation of the Mods and Rockers*. (2nd ed.) Abingdon: Routledge.
- Cooper, S. (2011) Reconnecting with evaluation, the benefit of using a participatory approach to assess impact. *Youth and Policy*.
- Council for Wales of Voluntary Services (No date) *Youth Work Reference Group Key Messages July 2018*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.cwvys.org.uk/youth-work-reference-group-key-messages-july-2018/> Accessed 30.07.18.
- Côté, J.E. (2000) *Arrested adulthood: the changing nature of maturity and identity*. New York, New York Press.
- Council for Wales of Voluntary Services (2013) *Youth Work in Wales, Principles and Purposes*. Cardiff: CWVYS.

- Cornaglia, F, Crivello, E., and McNally, S. (2012) *Mental Health and Education Decisions*. Centre for the Economics of Education (Online). Available at <http://cee.lse.ac.uk/ceedps/ceedp136.pdf> Accessed 13th January 2017.
- Coleman, J.C., and Hendry, L. (1991) *The Nature of Adolescence*, London: Routledge.
- Community Learning and Development Standards Scotland (2019) *Youth Work National Occupational Standards* [Online]. Available at <http://cldstandardscouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/YouthWorkNOS2019Intro.pdf> (Accessed 1st May 2020).
- Community and Youth Workers Union (no date) *In defence briefing paper* [Online]. Available at http://www.cywu.org.uk/index.php?id=8&type_id=12&article_id=487 (Accessed 24 April 2011)
- Cooper, T. 'Models of youth work: a framework for positive sceptical reflection', *Youth and Policy*, No. 109, September 2012, 98-117.
- Council of Europe, (2007) *Portfolio for youth leaders and youth workers* [Online]. Available at http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/youth/resources/portfolio/portfolio_EN.asp (Accessed 02 October 2011).
- Cote, S., and Healy, T. (2001) *The Well Being of nations. The role of human and social capital*. Paris, Organisation for economic Co-operation and Development.
- Creswell, J.W. (1994) *Research Design Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J.W. (1998) *QUALITATIVE INQUIRY AND RESEARCH DESIGN Choosing Among Five Traditions*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J.W. (1998) *QUALITATIVE INQUIRY AND RESEARCH DESIGN Choosing Among Five Traditions*. London: SAGE.
- Creswell, J. (2007) *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches, 2ND Ed*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J.W. (2007) *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Creswell, J. (2014) *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. (4th edn.), Harlow, Pearson Education.
- Cunningham, M. and Rious, J. 'Listening to the voices of young people; Implications for working in diverse communities', *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, Nov 2015, Vol 85, P.S86-S92.
- Curtin, M. and Clarke, G. 'Listening to Young People with Physical Disabilities' Experiences of Education', *International Journal of Disability, Development & Education*, Sept. 2005, Vol. 52 (3) p. 195-214.

- Dalrymple J, and Burke B, (2001) *Anti Oppressive Practice: Social Care and the Law*, Buckingham: Open University Press.
- David, M., Rohloff, A., Petley J, et. al. (2011) the idea of moral panic: ten dimensions of dispute. *Crime, Media, Culture: An international Journal*. Volume 7(3), pp 215-228.
- Davies, B. (2005) Youth Work: A Manifesto For Our Times. *Youth and Policy*, (88) Leicester, National Youth Agency.
- Davies, B. (2008) DEFINED BY HISTORY: YOUTH WORK IN THE UK. [Online] Available at <http://www.indefenceofyouthwork.org.uk> (Accessed 8th November 2013).
- Davies, B., and Merton, B. (2009) The state of Youth Work in Some Children and Young People's Services, in *Youth and Policy* (103) Leicester: National Youth Agency.
- Davies, B., and Merton, B. (2010) *Straws in the Wind, The State of Youth Work Practice in a Changing Policy Environment*. (Online) Available at: <http://www.dmu.ac.uk/documents/health-and-life-sciences-documents/research/strawsinthewind-finalreport-october2010.pdf> Accessed 18.11.18
- Davies, R. (no date) *After Youth Work: the problem of defining the youth worker's role in the 21st Century* [Online]. Available at http://dmu.academia.edu/RichardDavies/Papers/79579/After_Youth_Work (Accessed 15 April 24 2011).
- Davies, B. (2010) 'What do we mean by youth work?' in Batsleer, J. and Davies, B. (eds.) *What is Youth Work?* Exeter: Learning Matters, pp1-6.
- Davies, B. (2011) 'Youth work stories: in search of qualitative evidence on process and impact', in *Youth and Policy* (106) 23-42.
- Davies, B. (2015) 'Youth Work: A Manifesto for our Times – Revisited', *Youth and Policy*. 114. May 2015, 96-117.
- Davies, R. (no date) *After Youth Work: the problem of defining the youth worker's role in the 21st Century* [Online]. Available at http://dmu.academia.edu/RichardDavies/Papers/79579/After_Youth_Work (Accessed 15 April 24 2011).
- DEFRA (2008) *Sustainable development indicators in your pocket 2007*. London, HMSO.
- Deiner, E. Lucas, R.E. and Oishi, S. (2002) Subjective well-being. The Science of Happiness and Life Satisfaction, in Snyder, C.R. Wright, E. (Eds.) *Handbook of Positive Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Diener, E. Suh, E. M. Lucas, R. E. Smith, H. L. Subjective well-being: Three decades of progress. *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol 125 (2), Mar 1999, 276-302.
- Diener, E. Guidelines for National Indicators of Subjective Well-Being and Ill-Being. *Journal of Well-Being and Ill-Being*. Vol.7, Issue 4, (Nov 2006), pp397-404.
- Deiner, E. Suh, E. M. Lucas, R. E. Smith, H. L. Subjective well-being: Three decades of progress. *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol 125 (2), Mar 1999, 276-302.
- Deiner, E. Lucas, R.E. and Oishi, S. (2002) Subjective wellbeing. The Science of Happiness and Life Satisfaction, in Snyder, C.R. Wright, E. (Eds.) *Handbook of Positive Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (eds) (2000) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2nd edition, Thousand Oaks, Ca: Sage.
- Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2009) *Sustainable development indicators in your pocket 2009*. London: HMSO.
- Department of Education and Science (1969) *Youth and Community Work in the 70s. Proposals by the Youth Service Development Council* (The 'Fairbairn-Milson Report'), London: HMSO.
- Department of Education and Science (1982) *Experience and Participation. Review Group on the Youth Service in England* ('The Thompson Report'), London, HMSO.
[Online]. Available at:
<http://www.youthworkwales.co.uk/data/thompsonsummaryrecommendations.pdf>
(Accessed 13 July 2011).
- Dickson, K. Vigurs, C.A. and Newman, M, (2013) *YOUTH WORK: A SYSTEMATIC MAP OF THE RESEARCH LITERATURE*. Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Dublin: Ireland.
- Dodge, R, Daly, A, Huyton, J, Sanders, L. (2012). The challenge of defining wellbeing. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 2(3), 222-235.
- Dolan, P. Layard, R. and Metcalfe, R. (2010) *Measuring Subjective Wellbeing for Public Policy: Recommendations on Measures*. Special Paper No. 23. London: Centre for Economic Performance.
- Drake, R.F. (2001) *The Principles of Social Policy*, Hampshire, Palgrave.
- Eagleton, T. (2007) *The Meaning of Life*. Oxford University Press.
- Easterlin, R. (1974) Does Economic Growth Improve the Human Lot? Some Empirical
- Education Workforce Council (no date) Registration information for employers [Online]
Available at: <https://www.ewc.wales/site/index.php/en/registration/registration-information-for-employers.html#youth-worker> Accessed 25.05.20.

- Eichsteller, G. (2016) *Celebrating Head, Heart, Hands*. Available at: <http://www.thempra.org.uk/news/celebrating-head-heart-hands/> Accessed 01 January 2019.
- Education and Training Standards Wales (2012) *CODE OF OCCUPATIONAL ETHICS FOR THE YOUTH SERVICE IN WALES*. Cardiff: ETS.
- Elliot, S. and Davis, J. (2018) Challenging taken for granted ideas in early childhood education: A critique of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory in the age of post-humanism. In Malone, K, Barratt Hacking, E, and Cutter-Mackenzie, A (Eds) *Research handbook on childhood nature: Assemblages of childhood and nature research*. Springer, Switzerland, pp. 1-36.
- Engels, R., and ter Bogt, T. 'Influences of Risk Behaviours on the Quality of Peer Relations in Adolescence', *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 2001, Vol.30(6), pp. 675-695.
- Englander, M. (2010) 'The Interview: Data Collection in Descriptive Phenomenological Human Scientific Research', *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, (43) pp. 13-35.
- Ereaut, G. and Whiting, R. (2008) *What do we mean by 'Wellbeing'? And Why Might It Matter?* Research report no. DCSF-RW073. London: Linguistic Landscapes.
- Eriksson, M., Ghazinour, M. & Hammarström, A. Different uses of Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory in public mental health research: what is their value for guiding public mental health policy and practice?. *Soc Theory Health* **16**, 414–433 (2018).
- European Commission (2001) *A new impetus for European Youth*. [Online] Available at: <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/fc66784d-f7c5-4e8f-b47a-92ebb44f1d64> (Accessed 8th May 2020).
- Evidence. In: *Nations and Households in Economic Growth*. David, P.A. and Reder, M.W. Academic Press 89-125.
- Ferguson, I. (2007) Neoliberalism, happiness and wellbeing. *International Socialism A quarterly review of socialist theory*. Issue 117. Online, available at <http://isj.org.uk/neoliberalism-happiness-and-wellbeing/> Accessed 10th January 2017.
- Ferragina, E. and Arrigoni, A. The Rise and Fall of Social Capital: Requiem for a Theory? *Political Studies Review*, (2017) Vol 15(3), pp355-367.
- Freire, P. (1993) *PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED*. London: Penguin Books.
- Finn, J.L., Nybell, L.M., and Shook, J.J. 'Place, power, and possibility: Remaking social work with children and youth', *Children and Youth Services Review*, 35(2013) pp. 1159-1165.

- Fischer, J.A.V. (2009a) *Subjective Well-Being as Welfare Measure: Concepts and Methodology*. Paris: OECD.
- Fischer, J.A.V. (2009b) *Cross-country determinants of subjective well-being in 30 OECD countries*. Paris: OECD.
- Fleming, J. and Hudson, N. YOUNG PEOPLE AND RESEARCH, in Wood, J. and Hine, J. (Eds.) (2009) *Work with Young People Theory and Policy for Practice*. London: Sage.
- Freire, P. (1993) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London: Penguin Books.
- Fuchs, C. Neoliberalism in Britain: From Thatcherism to Cameronism, in *tripleC*, 01 March 2016, Vol.14(1), pp. 163-188.
- Funkhauser, M. (2015) The Real Purpose of Government, in *Governing*. October 2015, pp 59.
- Furlong, A., and Cartmel, F. (2007) *YOUNG PEOPLE and SOCIAL CHANGE new perspectives*, Berkshire: Open University.
- General Medical Council, (no date) *Good Medical Practice: Duties of a Doctor*. [Online] Available at: http://www.gmc-uk.org/guidance/good_medical_practice/duties_of_a_doctor.asp (Accessed: 16.10.11).
- Giorgi, A. (1970) Toward Phenomenologically Based Research in Psychology. *Journal of Phenomenology*, 1 (1).
- Gillies, D. State Education as High-Yield Investment: Human Capital Theory in European Policy Discourse, *Journal of Pedagogy*, 2011, Vol. 2(2) 224-245.
- Great Britain. *Children Act 2004*. London: The Stationary Office. Available at: http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2004/ukpga_20040031_en_1 Accessed (02.02.15)
- Greig, A. Taylor, J. and Mackay, T. (2013) *Doing Research with Children A practical guide (3rd ed.)*. London: Sage.
- Griffin, C. (2006) Representations of the Young, in Roche, J. Tucker, S. Thomson, R., and Flynn, R. *YOUTH IN SOCIETY*, London: Sage.
- Giorgi, A (1997) The theory, practice and evaluation of the phenomenological method as a qualitative research practice. *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*. Vol 28 (2) 235-260.
- Greenbank, P. (2003) The role of values in educational research. *British Educational Research Journal*. Volume 29, Issue 6 December 2003 Pages 791–801.
- Greig, A. Taylor, J. and Mackay, T. (2013) *Doing Research with Children A practical guide (3rd ed.)*. London: Sage.

- Griffin, C. Representations of the Young, in Roche, J. Tucker, S. Thomson, R. and Flynn, R. (2006) *YOUTH IN SOCIETY*. London, Sage.
- Groenewald, T. A phenomenological research design illustrated. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 3(1). (online)
www.ualberta.ca/~iiqm/backissues/3_1/html/groenewald.html (accessed 02.01.15)
- Groundwater-Smith, S. Dockett, S. and Bottrell, D. (2015) *PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE*. London: SAGE.
- Guba, E.G. and Lincoln, Y.S. (1994) Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105-117). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Hallam Centre for Community Justice (2006) Response to ‘From Punishment to Problem Solving: A New Approach to Children in Trouble’ [Online]. Available at <http://www.shu.ac.uk/assets/pdf/hccj-538.pdf> (Accessed 19 April 2012).
- Hammersley, M. and Traianou, A. (2012) *Ethics and Educational Research*, British Educational Research Association on-line resource. Online [bera.ac.uk] Last accessed (02.07.14).
- Hansen, D.M. and Crawford, M.J. (2012) ‘On Measuring Youth Work in the United States; The Role of Qualitative and Quantitative Methods’, *Youth and Policy*, 108, March 2012 [Online]. Available at <http://www.youthandpolicy.org> (Accessed 21 March 2012).
- Hanson, L. Deers, D, Lee, C. Lewin, A, and Seval, C. (2001) *Key Principles in Providing Integrated Behavioural Health Services for Young Children and Their Families: The Starting Early Starting Smart Experience*. Washington DC: Casey Family Programs and the US Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.
- Harland, K. Morgan, T. and Muldoon, O. (2005) *The Nature of Youth Work in Northern Ireland: Purpose, Contribution and Challenges*. University of Ulster and Queens University Belfast Publications.
- Hart, J., and Henn, M. Neoliberalism and the Unfolding Patterns of Young People’s Political Engagement and Participation in Contemporary Britain, in *Societies*, (2017), Vol.7(4), p.33.
- Hart, P. (2015) Attitudes towards working ‘Out-of-hours’ with Young People: Christian and Secular Perspectives. *Youth and Policy*, No. 115 pp.43-62.
- Hartas, D. (2014) *Parenting, Family Policy and Children’s Well-being in an Unequal Society, A new Culture War for Parents*. Palgrave Macmillan: Basingstoke.

- Hart, J. and Henn, M. Neoliberalism and the Unfolding Patterns of Young People's Political Engagement and Political Participation in Contemporary Britain, *Societies*, 01 November, 2017, Vol.7(4), p33.
- Harvey, J. Measures of Health and Wellbeing, in Harvey, J. and Taylor, V. (2013) *Measuring Health and Wellbeing*. London, SAGE.
- Heidegger, M. (1927) *Being and Time*. Translated by J. Stambaugh. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1996.
- Helliwell, J., and Huang, H. 'Comparing the happiness effects of real and on-line friends', *PLoS ONE*, (2013) Vol.8(9) p.e72754.
- Henderson, S., Holland, J., McGrellis, S., Sharpe, S., and Thomson, R. (2007) *Inventing adulthoods a biographical approach to youth transitions*. London: SAGE.
- Hendry, L.B. and Kloep, M. (2010) 'How universal is emerging adulthood? An empirical study', *Journal of Youth Studies*, 13(2) 169-179.
- Hendry, L., Shucksmith, J., Love, J.G. and Glendinning, A. (1993) *Young People's Leisure and Lifestyles*. London: Routledge.
- Hicks, S. Newton, J. Haynes, J. and Evans, J. (2011) *Measuring Children's and Young People's Well-being*. (online) www.ons.gov.uk Accessed 24.10.15.
- Hier, S.P. Thinking beyond moral panic: Risk, responsibility, and the politics of moralization. *Theoretical Criminology*, May 2008, Vol.12(2), pp173-190.
- Hine, J. (2009) YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIVES: TAKING A DIFFERENT VIEW, in Wood, J., and Hine, J. (eds.) *Work with Young People*, London: SAGE.
- Hoggarth, L. Boeck, T. Cartwright, I. Comfort, H. Payne, M. Tyler, M. and Wood, J. (2009) *Doers and Shapers – Young people's volunteering and engagement in public services*. Leicester, Youth Affairs Unit.
- Hoggarth, L. and Smith, D.I. (2004) *Understanding the Impact of Connexions on Young People at Risk*. Research Report 607, London: Department for Education and Skills.
- Holloway, I. (1997) *Basic concepts for qualitative research*. Oxford: Blackwell Science.
- Howard, K. and Sharp, J.A. (1983) *The Management of a Student Research Project*. Aldershot: Gower.
- Howe, D. (1994) Modernity, post modernity and social work, *British Journal of Social Work*, 24 (5): 513-32.
- Howells, M.J., Mason, S. and Donald, G.A.H. (1994) *The More Things Change, the More They Stay the Same. Planning, Policies and Participation?* [Online]. Available at:

- <http://www.youthworkwales.co.uk/Data/The%20More%20Things%20Change%20the%20more%20they%20stay%20the%20same.pdf> (Accessed April 24 2011)
- Hycner, R.H. (1999). Some guidelines for the phenomenological analysis of interview data. In A. Bryman and R.G. Burgess (Eds.), *Qualitative research* (Vol. 3, pp143-164). London: Sage.
- In Defence of Youth Work (2011) *This is Youth Work: Stories from Practice*. [Online] Available at: https://indefenceofyouthwork.files.wordpress.com/2010/11/20252-youth-stories-report-2011_4th-1.pdf Accessed 18.02.18.
- Institute for Fiscal Studies (2014) *Analysing the impact of the UK Government's welfare reforms in Wales – Stage 3 analysis*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.
- International Monetary Fund (2008) *WEO Groups and Aggregates Information Country Composition of WEO Groups*. International Monetary Fund.
www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/3008/02/weodata/groups.htm#ae accessed 27 October 2014.
- Jacob, E. (1988) Classifying qualitative research: a focus on tradition, in *Educational Researcher*, (17), 16-24.
- Jary, D. and Jary, J. (2000) *DICTIONARY of Sociology* (3rd ed.). Glasgow: Harper Collins.
- Jeffs, T. (2011) 'Running Out of Options: Re-modelling Youth Work', *Youth and Policy*, 106, May [Online]. Available at:
http://www.youthandpolicy.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=37&Itemid=53 (Accessed: 29 June 2011).
- Jeffs, T. (2013) Standing at the Crossroads - What future for youth work? *CONCEPT* [Online] Available at: <http://lac-php-live5.is.ed.ac.uk/Concept/article/view/192/166> Accessed 09.08.18.
- Jones, G. (2018) *Wellbeing of Wales 2017-18*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.
- Jones, B., and Rose, J., (2001) Early Developments of the Youth Service in Wales 1830-1917, In: R. GILCHRIST, T. JEFFS, and J. SPENCE, eds., *Essays in the History of Community and Youth Work*, Leicester: National Youth Agency. 2001.
- Jones, B., and Rose, J. (2003) 'THE YOUTH SERVICE IN WALES 1918-1939', in Gilchrist, R. Jeffs, T., and Spence, J. (eds.) *ARCHITECTS OF CHANGE Studies in the History of Community & Youth Work*, Leicester: NYA.
- Jervis, M. (2018) *Our Future: A review of Extending Entitlement*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.

- Kahneman, D. (1999). Objective happiness. In D. Kahneman, E. Diener, & N. Schwarz (Eds.), *Well-being: The foundations of hedonic psychology* (pp. 3-25). New York, NY, US: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Kaminski, G. (No) Final Comment: What I have learnt, In *Int. J. Sport Psychol.*, 2009; 40: 190-206.
- Kennedy, R. (2014) 'Neoliberalism & Youth Policy – The last thing they want is people realising they can change things' [Online] Available at: <http://www.youthpolicy.org/blog/youth-work-community-work/neoliberalism-and-youth-policy/> (Accessed 18.02.18).
- Khawaja, I, and Lerche Mórck, L. (2009) Researcher Positioning: Muslim 'Otherness' and beyond. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 6(1-2), pp. 28-45.
- Kidd, S.A. and Evans, J.D. 'Home is where You Draw Strength and Rest: The Meanings of Home for Houseless Young People', *Youth and Society*, 2011, Vol. 43(2) p.752-773.
- Kolakowski, L. An overall view of positivism, in Hammersley, M. (Ed.) (1993) *Social Research, Philosophy, Politics and Practice*, London: Sage.
- Koralek, D. Linking with Community Partners to Better Serve Children and Families. *YC Young Children*; Washington, Vol.62,Issue2. March 2007, pp10-11.
- Kvale, S. and Brinkman, S. (2009) *INTERVIEWS – Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Lavalette, M. and Pratt, A. (2001) *Social Policy: a conceptual and theoretical introduction*. (2nd ed.) London: SAGE.
- Layard, R. (2005) *Happiness: lessons from a new science*. Penguin, London: UK.
- Layard, R. (2013) *Mental Health: The New Frontier for Labour Politics*. Centre For Economic Performance Discussion Paper. [Online] <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/dp1213.pdf> (Accessed 13 April 2018'.
- Learning and Skills Improvement Service (2012) *National Occupational Standards for Youth Work*. Coventry: LSIS.
- Lerner, R.M, Bowers, E.P, Geldhof, G.J, Gestsdottir, S, and Desouza, L. 'Promoting Positive Youth Development in the Face of Contextual Changes and Challenges: The Roles of Individual Strengths and Ecological Assets', *New Directions for Youth Development*, 2012(135), pp119-128.
- Levitas, R. Pantazis, C. Fahmy, E. Gordon, D. Lloyd, E. and Patsios, D. (2007) THE MULTI-DIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION. [Online]

- Department of Sociology and School for Social Policy Townsend Centre for the International Study of Poverty and Bristol Institute for Public Affairs University of Bristol. (Accessed 18 April 2018).
- Lewis, J. and McNaughton Nicholls, C. Design Issues, in Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., McNaughton Nicholls, C. and Ormston, R. (2014) *QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PRACTICE* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- LeVasseur, J.J. (2003) The problem of bracketing in phenomenology. *Qualitative Health Research*, 13 (3), 408-420.
- Lifelong Learning United Kingdom (2008) *National Occupational Standards for Youth Work*. London: LLUK.
- Lincoln, Y. and Guba, E. (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry*, Beverley Hills, CA: Sage, in Sarantakos, S. (1997) *Social Research*. Hampshire: Palgrave.
- Lorenz, W. (2008) 'Paradigms and politics: Understanding methods paradigms in an historical context. The case of social pedagogy', *British Journal of Social Work*, 38, 625-644.
- Macintyre, D. (2014) How the Miner's Strike of 1984-85 changed Britain forever, *New Statesman*. [Online] <http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2014/06/how-miners-strike-1984-85-changed-britain-ever> (Accessed 10.06.17).
- Martin, L. (2003) *The invisible table*, Thomson Dunmore Press: South Melbourne.
- Mcaloney, K., Graham, H., Hall, J., Law, C., Platt, L., and Wardle, H. OP13 Diet and Physical Activity Levels among UK Youth. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*, Sept. 2012, Vol 66, PA6.
- Mcevoy, E., Macphail, A., and Enright, E. 'Physical Activity Experiences of Young People in an Area of Disadvantage: There's Nothing There for Big Kids, Like Us', *Sport, Education and Society*, 2016. Vol. 21(8) p1161-1175.
- McGimpsey, I. Late neoliberalism: Delineating a policy regime. *Critical Social Policy*, 2017, Vol.37(1), pp64-84.
- Mello, W. (2008) Unions, Communities and the 1984-85 Miners Strike, *Capital & Class. Science & Society*, Vol 72 (1) pp118-121.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1968) *The Visible and the Invisible*, edited by Claude Lefort. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Merton, B. (2004) *An evaluation of the Impact of Youth Work in England*, Department for Education and Skills, London.
- Miles, S. Young People, Consumer Citizenship and Protest. *Young*, 2015, Vol.23(2), pp101-115.

- Monbiot, G. (2016) Neoliberalism, the ideology at the root of all our problems. The Guardian (online) <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/apr/15/neoliberalism-ideology-problem-george-monbiot> (Accessed 05.01.17)
- Moore, J.M. Reframing the ‘Prison Works’ debate. For whom and in what ways does prison work). Reclaim Justice Network. (Online) Available at: <https://downsizingcriminaljustice.wordpress.com/2015/03/10/reframing-the-prison-works-debate-for-whom-and-in-what-ways-does-prison-work/> Accessed 14th January 2017.
- Moore, G. Cox, R, Evans, R, Hawkins, J, Litlecott, H, Long, S, and Murphy, S. School, ‘Peer and Family Relationships and Adolescent Substance Use, Subjective Wellbeing and Mental Health Symptoms in Wales: a Cross Sectional Study’, *Child Indicators Research*, Jan 2018, pp1-15.
- Moran, D. (2004) *Introduction to Phenomenology*. London: Routledge.
- Mosleh, A. A. and Golyar, L. (2009) Frankfurt School’s critical theory and a critique of modern culture, in *Philosophical Investigations*. Vol. 3(214), pp 135-148.
- Moustakas, C. (1994) *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Munford, R. and Sanders, J. ‘Negotiating and Constructing Identity: Social Work with Young People Who Experience Adversity’, Volume 45 (5), 1 July 2015, pp1564-1580.
- Mylona, S. (2015) *Children and Young People’s Well-being Monitor for Wales*. Cardiff, Welsh Government.
- National Assembly for Wales (2000) *Extending Entitlement: Supporting Young People in Wales*. Cardiff, National Assembly for Wales.
- National Assembly for Wales (2007) *Children and Young Peoples Policy*, Members Research Service: Topic Brief. Online, available at: <http://www.assembly.wales/NAfW%20Documents/tb-07-005.pdf%20-%2028072009/tb-07-005-English.pdf> (Accessed 03 March 2018).
- National Assembly for Wales, (2000) *Extending Entitlement: Support for young people in Wales, directions and guidance*. Available at: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/childrenyoungpeople/participation/extendingentitlement1/youngpeopledirection;jsessionid=K70KTb1WWqg0SbhRGXS1hyvpzGTJIG8qT341LPWScpWPJpWxKYp8!889719512?lang=en> (Accessed 12 July 2011).

- National Assembly for Wales (2016) *What type of youth service does Wales want? Report of the inquiry into Youth Work*. Cardiff, National Assembly for Wales Children, Young People and Education Committee.
- Nielsen Jones, J. Laverty, A. Millet, C. Mainous, A. Majeed, A. and Saxena, S. Rising Obesity-Related Hospital Admissions among Children and Young People in England: National Time Trends Study, *PLoS One*, June 2013, Vol.8(6), p.e.65764.
- Norris, R. (2013) *TOWARDS AN OUTCOMES AND IMPACT APPROACH FOR THE YOUTH SECTOR IN WALES* [Online] Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services, available at: www.cwvys.org.uk (Accessed 04 April 2018).
- Nuffield Foundation (2012) *Social Trends and Mental Health: Briefing Paper*. Nuffield Foundation (Online) Available at: http://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/sites/default/files/files/Changing%20Adolescence_Social%20trends%20and%20mental%20health_introducing%20the%20main%20findings.pdf Accessed 13 January 2017.
- Oates, J. (2006) Ethical Frameworks for Research with Human Participants. In Potter, S. (Ed.) *DOING POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH*. Milton Keynes: The Open University.
- Ord, J. (2009) 'Thinking the Unthinkable: Youth Work without Voluntary Participation', *Youth and Policy*, 103, pp. 39-48.
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2009) '*Doing better for Children, UK Country Highlights*', [Online]. Available at www.oecd.org/els/social/childwellbeing (Accessed 31 October 2009).
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2013) Your Better Life Index Data access: <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=BLI> Index website: <http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/>
- OECD, (2015) *Better Life Index* (online) available at www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org accessed 28.12.15.
- OECD, (2017) *How's Life in the United Kingdom*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/statistics/Better-Life-Initiative-country-note-United-Kingdom.pdf> Accessed 13 June 2018.
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2017) *PF1.6: Public spending by age of children*. [Online] Available at: http://www.oecd.org/social/family/PF1_6_Public_spending_by_age_of_children.pdf. Accessed 10.07.18.

- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2018) *PISA Results* [Online] <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisa-2015-results-in-focus.pdf> Accessed 29.07.18.
- Office for National Statistics (no date) *Why measure well-being?* [online] www.ons.gov.uk/one/guide-method/user-guidance/well-being/why-measure-well-being. Last accessed 28th October 2014.
- Office for National Statistics (2015) *Trends in the UK Economy*. (Online) Available at: <http://visual.ons.gov.uk/uk-perspectives-trends-in-the-uk-economy/> Accessed 13 January 2017.
- Office for National Statistics (2017) *Young people's well-being: 2017*. [Online] Available at www.ons.gov.uk Accessed 13 April 2018.
- Ord, J. (2009) *Thinking the Unthinkable, Youth Work Without the Voluntary Principle*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270338000> Accessed 20 April 2018.
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2007) *Measuring the Progress of Societies* World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge and Policy. Online [www.oecd.org]. Last accessed 15th September 2014.
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2010) *Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Learning: Country Practices*. Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/22/12/44600408.pdf> (Accessed: 21 July 2011).
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2011). *PF1.6: Public spending by age of children* (Online) Available at: [http://www.oecd.org/social/family/PF1_6 Public spending by age of children.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/social/family/PF1_6_Public_spending_by_age_of_children.pdf)
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2013) *Your Better Life Index* Data access: <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=BLI> Index website: <http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org/>
- Ormston, R. Spencer, L. Barnard, M. and Snape, THE FOUNDATIONS OF QUALITATIVE RESEARCH, in Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., McNaughton Nicholls, C. and Ormston, R. (2014) *QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PRACTICE* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Partelow, S. (2018) A review of the social-ecological systems framework: applications, methods, modifications, and challenges. *Ecology and Society* 23(4):36.
- PAULO (2002) *National Occupational Standards for Youth Work*. PAULO NTO.
- Payne, M. (2009) Modern Youth Work: 'Purity' or Common Cause?, in Wood, J. and Hine, J. (eds.) *Work with Young People*. London: Sage, pp 213-232.

- Pawson, R. and Tilley, N. (1997) *Realistic Evaluation*. London: Sage.
- Pearsall, J. (Ed.) (2002) *Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: OU Press.
- Pedace, L. (no date) *Child Wellbeing in England, Scotland and Wales Comparisons and variations*. Family and Parenting Institute. London: FPI.
- Peters, T.J. and Waterman, R.H. (1982) *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies* New York: Warner.
- Peterson, C. and Seligman, M.E.P. (2004) *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*. Washington DC, American Psychological Association.
- Phillips, D. and Skinner, A. (1994) *Nothing Ever Happens Round Here*. Leicester: National Youth Agency.
- Phillips, R.F. (2010) Initiatives to support disadvantaged young people: enhancing social capital and acknowledging personal capital, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 13(4), 489-504.
- Pietkiewicz, I. and Smith, J.A. (2012) A practical guide to using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis in qualitative research psychology. (translated) from *Czasopismo Psychologiczne*, 18 (2), 361-369. (online) available at www.researchgate.net Accessed 03.09.16.
- Pilkington, M. Well-being, happiness and the structural crisis of neoliberalism: an interdisciplinary analysis through the lenses of emotions. *Mind & Society*, 2016, Vol.15(2), pp. 265-280.
- Phillips, D, and Skinner, A. (1994) *Nothing Ever Happens Round Here*. Leicester: National Youth Agency.
- Piper, C. (2008) *Investing in Children, Policy, law and practice in context*. Devon: Willan Publishing.
- Pisani, A.R. Wyman, P.A. Petrova, M. Schmeelk-Cone, K. Goldston, D.B. Xia, Y. and Gould, M.S. 'Emotion Regulation Difficulties, Youth-Adult Relationships, and Suicide Attempts among High School Students in Underserved Communities', *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 2013. Vol. 42 (6) p807-820.
- Pitchford, J.M., Viner, R.M., and Hargreaves, D.S. (2016) 'Meeting Abstracts: Trends in mental health and wellbeing among children and young people in the UK: a repeated cross-sectional study, 2000-2014', *Population, Policy and Practice*, UCL Institute of Child Health, London, UK.
- Pitt, B., and Oliver, B. (2011) *Working with Children, Young People and Families*. Exeter: Learning Matters.

- Price, T. Arthur, J. Childs, A. Davies, R. Gibbon, R. Hickey, D, Hughes, R. Price, S. Walsh, H. and Webber, M. (2013) *Health of Children and Young People in Wales*. Health Promotion Wales Public Health Observatory. Carmarthen: Public Health Wales NHS Trust.
- Priest, S. (2001) *Jean-Paul Sartre: Basic Writings*. London: Routledge.
- Prilleltensky, I. and Nelson, G. (1997) 'Community psychology: reclaiming social justice' in D. Fox and I. Prilleltensky (eds.) *Critical Psychology: An introduction*. London: SAGE pp166-184.
- Principal Youth Officers Group (No date) *Position paper on Families First and Child Poverty*. [Online] Available at: <http://wlga.wales/principal-youth-officers-group-wales> Accessed 30.07.18.
- Principal Youth Officers Group (2015) The role and value of youth work in current and emerging agendas in Wales, Autumn 2015. [Online] Available at: http://www.youthworkwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/the_role_and_value_of_youth_work_to_wg_priorities_2015.pdf Accessed 16 June 2018.
- Public Health Wales (2017) *Physical inactivity costs NHS Wales £35m a year – new research*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/news/46348> Accessed 18.07.18.
- Reid, H. and Foster, C. Physical activity for children and young people. *British Journal of Sports Medicine*, Aug 2017, Vol.51(15), p1165.
- Reilly, C. (2010) 'Evaluating the Impact of Volunteering on Health and Wellbeing', Researching the Voluntary Sector: the 16th VSSN/ NCVO Conference, August 2010. Available at: http://www.ncvo-vol.org.uk/sites/default/files/UploadedFiles/NCVO/Research/Research_Conference/Reilly_0.pdf (Accessed: 10 July 2011).
- Reiners, G.M. (2012) 'Understanding the Differences between Husserl's (Descriptive) and Heidegger's (Interpretive) Phenomenological Research'. *Journal of Nursing Care*, 1 (5).
- Ridley, J, Larkins, C, Farrelly, N, Hussein, S, Austerberry, H, Manthorpe, J, Stanley, N. 'Investing in the relationship: practitioners' relationships with looked-after children and care leavers in Social Work Practices', *Child & Family Social Work*, Feb 2016, Vol.21(1), pp. 55-64.

- Ritchie, J. and Ormston, R. The Applications of Qualitative Methods to Social Research, in Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., McNaughton Nicholls, C. and Ormston, R. (2014) *QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PRACTICE* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Ritchie, J. Lewis, J. McNaughton Nicholls, C. and Ormston, R. (2014) *QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PRACTICE* (2nd ed.) Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Rodd, H., and Stewart, H. 'The Glue that Holds Our Work Together: The Role and Nature of Relationships in Youth Work', *Youth Studies Australia*, 2009, Vol.28(4), p4-10.
- Rooney, J. Holmes, J. Rose, J. Williamson, H. (1989) *SURVEY OF YOUTH WORKERS IN WALES; A background paper for the Welsh Office Seminar – 'Developments in the Youth Service in Wales'*. Cardiff, Wales Youth Work Partnership. [online]. Available at <http://www.youthworkwales.co.uk/data/Survey%20of%20Youth%20Workers%20in%20Wales.pdf> (Accessed 13 July 2011).
- Rose, J. (1997a) *Milestones in the Development of Youth Work*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.youthworkwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Milestones-in-the-Development-of-Youth-Work.pdf> (Accessed 4th May 2020).
- Rose, J. (1997b) *The Historical Development of the Youth Service Early Developments of Youth Work*, [Online]. Available at: <http://www.youthworkwales.co.uk/Data/History%20of%20Youth%20Service.pdf> (Accessed 1 October 2011).
- Rose, J. (2006) *Researching the maintained Youth Service in Wales: is it drawn in different directions*. PhD Thesis, University of Wales, Cardiff.
- Rose, J. (2017) *Extending Entitlement Revisited: The Maintained Youth Service 2002-2007 Paper Number 1 – Setting the Scene* [Online] Available at: http://www.youthworkwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/extending_entitlement_papers_number_1.pdf (Accessed 20 April 2018).
- Rose, J. (2018) *Challenges and opportunities for Youth Workers in Wales?* [Online] Available at: <http://www.youthworkwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Challenges-and-opportunities-for-Youth-Workers-in-Wales-3.pdf> Accessed 08.07.18.
- Rose, W. and Mcauley, C. (2019) Poverty and its impact on parenting in the UK: Re-defining the critical nature of the relationship through examining lived experiences in times of austerity. *Children and Youth Services Review*, Vol.97, February, 2019, pp134-141.

- Russon, J. The Self as Resolution: Heidegger, Derrida and the Intimacy of the Questions of the Meaning of Being. *Research in Phenomenology*. 38 (2008), 90-110.
- Ryan, R. M. and Deci, E.L. (2000) Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development and well-being, *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68-78.
- Samman, E. (2007) *PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING: A PROPOSAL FOR INTERNATIONALLY COMPARABLE INDICATORS*. OPHI Working Paper Series.
- Sapin, K. (2013) *Essential Skills for Youth Work Practice*. 2nd edn. London: Sage.
- Sapsford, R. (2007) *Survey Research*. London: SAGE.
- Sarantakos, S. (1998) *Social Research* (2nd ed.). Hampshire: Macmillan.
- Save the Children (no date), *Wales, Working with Families, Schools and Communities*, [Online] Available at: <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/what-we-do/uk-work/wales> (Accessed 27.01.19)
- Schenk, K. and Williamson, J. (2005) *Ethical Approaches to Gathering Information from Children and Adolescents in International Settings: Guidelines and Resources*. Washington DC: Population Council.
- Schimmel, J. (2007) Development as Happiness: The Subjective Perception of Happiness and UNDP's Analysis of Poverty, Wealth and Development. *Journal of Happiness Studies* (2009), 10: 93-111.
- Schön, D. (1992) *The Theory of Inquiry: Dewey's Legacy to Education*. Curriculum Enquiry, 22:2 (1992).
- Schoon, I, and Bartley, M. The role of human capability and resilience. In *The Psychologist*, vol 21 (1) 24-27.
- Schore, A. N. (1994) *Affect regulation and the origin of the self: The neurobiology of emotional development*. Hillsdale, New Jersey: Earlbaum.
- Sealey, C. 'Social exclusion: re-examining its conceptual relevance to tackling inequality and social injustice', *The International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, Vol. 35, Issue 9/10, (2015), pp. 600-617.
- Seers, D. (1983) *The Political Economy of Nationalism*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sercombe, H. (2010) *Youth Work Ethics*. London, SAGE.
- Shaw, S. and Barrett, G. (2006) Research governance: regulating risk and reducing harm? In *Journal of Research of the Royal Society of Medicine*. January 2006: 99 (1), 14-19.

- Siddiqi, D.M. Sexuality, rights and personhood: tensions in a transnational world. *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, 2011, Vol.11(Suppl 3), pS5-S5.
- Silverman, D. (2011) *Interpreting Qualitative Data: Methods for analysing Talk, Text and Interaction*, (4th ed.). London: Sage.
- Silverman, D. (2014) *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, (5th ed.). London: Sage.
- Singh, A. 'A study of the Role of Mckinsey's 7S Framework in Achieving Organisational Excellence', *Organization Development Journal*, Fall 2013, Vol.31(3), pp. 39-45.
- Sisk, C.L. and Foster, D.L. (2004) The neural basis of puberty and adolescence, *Nature Neuroscience*, (7) pp1040-1047, [Online]. Available at: <http://www.nature.com/neuro/journal/v7/n10/full/nn1326.html#B112> (Accessed 16 July 2011).
- Smedegaard, S; Christiansen, L; Lund-Cramer, P; Bredahl, T, and Skovgaard, T. Improving the well-being of children and youths: a randomized multicomponent, school based, physical activity intervention, *BMC Public Health*, 2016, Vol.16, pp1127-1138.
- Smith, M. (2006) Early interventions with Young Children and their Parents in the UK, in C. McAuley, P. Pecora and W. Rose (eds) *Enhancing the Well-being o Children and Families through Effective Interventions, International Evidence for Practice*. London: Jessica Kingsley.
- Smith, J.A. and Osborn, M. (2008) Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis. In J.A. Smith (Ed.) *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Methods*. London: SAGE.
- Smith, J.A., Flowers, P., and Larkin, M. (2012) *Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*. London: SAGE.
- Smith, M.K. (2007) *What future for Youth Work?* [Online]. Available at: www.rankyouthwork.org/briefings/developments_in_youth_work.pdf (Accessed 15 October 2011).
- Smith, J.A. Flowers, P. and Larkin, M. (2012) *Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis: Theory, Method and Research*, London: SAGE.
- Smith, S. (no date) *Six Features of the Human Condition: a conceptual map for competing understanding of well-being and some implications for public policy*. Paper given at WISERD Conference, (Online) available at: <https://blogs.cardiff.ac.uk/wiserd/2015/06/29/well-being-and-six-features-of-the-human-condition/> Accessed 13 June 2018.

- Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014. Available at:
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/4/pdfs/anaw20140004_en.pdf (Accessed 26 August 2016).
- Sorrell, T. Hobbes on trade, consumption and international order. In *The Monist*, vol 89 no. 2. April 2006, pp. 245-258.
- Spencer, E, Ritchie, J, Ormston, R, O'Connor, W, and Barnard, M, ANALYSIS: PRINCIPLES AND PROCESSES, in Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., McNaughton Nicholls, C. and Ormston, R. (2014) *QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PRACTICE* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Staal, A, and Jespersen, E. 'The Lived Experiences of Participating in Physical Activity among Young People with Mental Health Problems A Recovery-Oriented Perspective', *Physical Culture and Sport: Studies and Research*, 2015; 65(1) 41-50.
- Stainton-Rogers, W. (2006) Logics of Enquiry, in Potter, S. (Ed.) *DOING POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH*. London: SAGE.
- Standing Conference for Youth Work in Wales (2007) *Youth Work Curriculum Statement for Wales*. Cardiff: Wales Youth Agency.
- Standing Conference for Youth Work in Wales (2014) *Youth Work in Wales - Principles and Purposes*. Cardiff, SCYWW.
- Stanton-Salazar, R. D. (2004) 'Social capital among working-class minority students', in M. A. Gibson, P. Gándara, & J. P. Koyama (eds.) *School Connections: U.S. Mexican Youth, Peers, and School Achievement*. New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 18-38.
- StatsWales (2014) *2014-based population statistics*. [Online] Available at:
<https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Population-and-Migration/Population/Projections/National/2014-Based> Accessed on 18.02.18.
- Stewart, K. (2005) Dimensions of well-being in EU regions: do GDP and unemployment tell us all we need to know? *Social Indicators Research*, 73: 221-246.
- Stuart, K., and Maynard, L. (2015). Non-formal youth development and its impact on young people's lives: Case study – Brathay Trust, UK. *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, 7(1), 231-262. Retrieved from
<http://journals.padovauniversitypress.it/ijse/content/non-formal-youth-developmentand-its-impact-young-people%E2%80%99s-lives-case-study-%E2%80%93-brathay-trust> (11.10.18).

- Stiglitz, J.E. Sen, A. & Fitoussi, J-P. (2009) *Report by the commission on the measurement of economic performance and social progress*. (online) available at: www.stiglitzsen-fitoussi.fr/en/index.htm accessed 28.12.15.
- Stone, W., (2001) *Measuring Social Capital – towards a theoretically informed measurement framework for researching social capital in family and community life*. Melbourne, Australian Institute of Family Studies.
- Takkunen, U.M. OUTREACH YOUTH WORK: Finding invisible lonely young people. *Socialno Delo*; Vol. 53(6) December 2014, 373-376.
- Thoits, P.A., and Hewitt, L.N. (2003) ‘Volunteer work and well-being’, *Journal of Health and Social Behaviour*, 42(2), pp. 115-131.
- Thompson, N. (2006) *Anti-Discriminatory Practice*. London: Macmillan.
- Thurston, R., (2011) *2011 Children and Young People’s Wellbeing Monitor for Wales*. Cardiff, WAG.
- Towler, K. (2009) A speech on Children’s Rights in Wales. In a conference on *Children and Young People in Wales today*. University of Glamorgan Conference, Pontypridd, May 15, 2009, University of Glamorgan.
- Tracy, S.J. Qualitative Quality: Eight “Big-Tent” Criteria for Excellent Qualitative Research, *Qualitative Inquiry* 16(10) 837–851.
- Tudge, J.H.R, Morkova, I., Hatfield, B.E., and Karnik, R.B. (2009) Uses and Misuses of Bronfenbrenner’s Bioecological Theory of Human Development. *Journal of Family Theory & Review* 1 (December 2009): 198–210.
- Turner, J. ‘Being Young in the Age of Globalization: A Look at Recent Literature on Neoliberalism’s Effects on Youth’, *Social Justice*, Vol. 41(4), (2015) 8-22.
- Tymieniecka, A.T. (2003) Introduction: Phenomenology as the inspirational force of our times. In A.T. Tymieniecka (Ed), *Phenomenology world-wide. Foundations-expanding dynamicslife engagements. A guide for research and study* (pp. 1-10). London: Kluwer Academic.
- UNESCO, (2006) SYNERGIES BETWEEN FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL LEARNING, [Online]. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001460/146092E.pdf> (Accessed 3rd October 2011).
- UNICEF (2016) *Innocenti Report Card 13 Fairness for Children A league table of inequality in child well-being in rich countries*. Florence: Italy.
- UNICEF (2007) *Child Poverty in Perspective: An Overview of Child Well-being in Rich Countries*, Innocenti Report Card 7, Florence: UNICEF.

- United Nations Children's Fund (1989) *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Available at: www.unicef.org/crc/ (accessed 03.09.16).
- United Nations Children's Fund (1989) *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Available at: www.unicef.org/crc/ (Accessed 03 September 16).
- United Nations Children's Fund (2002) Evaluation Technical Notes. *Children Participating in Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) – Ethics and Your Responsibility as a Manager* [online].
www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/TechNote1_Ethics.pdf accessed 7 March 2012.
- United Nations (2005) *Standard country or Area Codes for Statistical Use*. Series M, No. 49, Rev 4. <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m9/m49regin.htm> accessed 27 October 2014.
- Vaillant, G. (2012) *Triumphs of Experience: The Men of the Harvard Grant Study*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Van Aelst, P. and Walgrave, S. (2011) 'Minimal or Massive? The Political Agenda-Setting Power of the Mass Media According to Different Methods', *The International Journal of Press/ Politics*, July 2011, 16 (3) pp. 295-313, [Online]. Available at: <http://ijp.sagepub.com/content/16/3/295.abstract> (Accessed: 1 August 2011).
- Van Hoorn, A. (2007) A SHORT INTRODUCTION TO SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING: ITS MEASUREMENT, CORRELATES AND POLICY USES. A paper presented at the international conference 'Is happiness measurable and what do those measures mean for policy?' OECD.
- Varkey Foundation (2017) *What the World's Young People Think and Feel*. [Online] <https://www.varkeyfoundation.org> (Accessed 14th May 2018).
- Vasterman, P.L.M. (2005) 'Media-Hype Self reinforcing News Waves, Journalistic Standards and the Construction of Social Problems', *European Journal of Communication*, December 2005, 20 (4) pp. 508-530, [Online]. Available at: <http://ejc.sagepub.com/content/20/4/508.short> (Accessed 1st August 2011).
- Vitus, K. Policy and identity change in youth social work: From social-interventionist to neoliberal policy paradigms. *Journal of Social Work*, Volume 17(4), pp470-490.
- Von Mises, L. (1927) *Liberalism*. The Foundation for Economic Education, Irvington, NY.
- Wales Youth Agency. (no date) *Youth Work in Wales*. Caerphilly: Wales Youth Agency [Online]. Available at <http://www.youthworkwales.co.uk/Data/Youth%20Service%20in%20Wales.PDF> (Accessed: 1 July 2011).
- Warburton, N. (2014) *PHILOSOPHY: THE CLASSICS*, London: Routledge.

- Waring, M. (2012) Finding your theoretical position, In J. Arthur, M. Waring, R. Coe and L. Hedges (Eds) *Research methods and methodologies in education*. London: SAGE, pp15-19.
- Watling Neal, J. and Neal, Z.P. Nested or Networked? Future Directions for Ecological Systems Theory. *Social Development*, (2013), Vol 22, No.4, 722-737.
- Webster, S. Lewis, J and Brown, A. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH, in Ritchie, J. Lewis, J, McNaughton Nicholls, C. and Ormston, R. (Eds.) (2014) *QUALITATIVE RESEARCH PRACTICE A GUIDE FOR SOCIAL SCIENCE STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS*. Los Angeles, SAGE.
- Welsh Assembly Government (2007) *Young people, youth work, Youth Service*. Cardiff: Welsh Assembly Government.
- Welsh Assembly Government. (2008) *Children and Young People's Well-being Monitor for Wales*. Cardiff: WAG [Online]. Available at http://wales.gov.uk/docrepos/40382/40382313/293077/1266940/2765056/Monitor_Eng.pdf;jsessionid=TGFnTFYPQvVk5Gv3QPVKydVyGPc4tzFQfT2yFn2JpFvGsDL9GNLv!-212523789?lang=en (Accessed: 25 June 2011).
- Welsh Government (2008) *Children and Young People's Well-being Monitor for Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.
- Welsh Government (2011) *Children and Young People's Well-being Monitor for Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.
- Welsh Government (2013) *Youth Engagement and Progression Framework*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.
- Welsh Government (2014) *National Youth Work Strategy for Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.
- Welsh Government (no date) *Children's Rights Scheme 2014* [online]. www.assemblywales.org/bus-home/bus-business-fourth-assembly-laid-docs/gen-Id9732-e.pdf?langoption=3&ttl=GEEN-LD9732%20-%20Cgukdren's%20Rights%Scheme%2014 accessed 4th August 2014.
- Welsh Government (2014) *The National Youth Work Strategy for Wales, 2014-2018*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.
- Welsh Government (no date) *Rights of Children and Young Persons Measure* [online]. www.wales.gov.uk accessed 14 September 2014.
- Welsh Government. (2017) *Youth Work*. [Online] Available at: <https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/youth-services/?lang=en> Accessed 16.07.18.

- Welsh Government (2018) *Youth Work*, [Online] Available at: <https://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/youth-services/?lang=en> Accessed 30.07.18.
- Welsh Government (2015a) *Youth Work Annual Statistics Report* (online) <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/youth-services/?lang=en> accessed 7th September 2016.
- Welsh Government (2015b) *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act, 2015*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.
- Welsh Government (2016) *Youth Work*. [Online] Available at: <http://gov.wales/statistics-and-research/youth-services/?tab=previous&lang=en> (Accessed 03 March 2018).
- Welsh Government (2017) *Youth Work in Wales 2016-17: Statistical First Release*. [Online] Available at: <http://gov.wales/docs/statistics/2017/171024-youth-work-2016-17-en.pdf> (Accessed 12 April 2018).
- Welsh Government, (no date) *Youth Work – Best Practice*. [Online] <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/skillsandtraining/youth-work/best-practice/?lang=en> (Accessed 12 April 2018).
- Welsh Government (2018) *Information Pack for Interim Youth Work Board Members*. (Online) Available at: <https://cymru-wales.tal.net/vx/mobile-0/appcentre-3/brand-2/candidate/so/pm/1/pl/8/opp/4820-Appointment-of-Member-Interim-Youth-Work-Board/en-GB> Accessed 18.11.18.
- Welsh Government (2019a) *Youth Work Strategy for Wales*. [Online] Available at <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/youth-work-strategy-for-wales.pdf> (Accessed 1st May 2020).
- Welsh Government (2019b) *Implementation of the Youth Work Strategy for Wales*. [Online] Available at: <http://www.youthworkwales.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/implementation-of-the-youth-work-strategy.pdf> (Accessed 4th May 2020).
- Welsh Local Government Association (no date) *Youth Service* [online]. www.wlga.gov.uk accessed 3rd July 2014.
- Welsh Local Government Association, (no date) *Youth Service*. [Online] Available at: <http://wlga.wales/youth-service> Accessed 12.07.18.
- Wetz, J (2010) Schools Need a nurturing culture, *Community Care*, 20 May, 26.
- Wheal, A. (2004) *ADOLESCENCE Positive Approaches for Working with Young People*, Lyme Regis: RHP.
- Whitelaw, S, Teuton, J, Swift, J, and Scobie, G. The physical activity – mental wellbeing association in young people: A case study in dealing with a complex public health

- topic using a 'realistic evaluation' framework. *Mental Health and Physical Activity*, 2010, Vol.3(2), pp. 61-66.
- Wicht, A., and Ludwig-Mayerhofer, W. 'The impact of neighbourhoods and schools on young people's occupational aspirations', *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, December 2014, Vol.85(3), pp. 298-308.
- Williams, D. (2013) *Is there a Problem with the Youth Service in Wales?* University of Wales Trinity Saint David [Online]. Available at <http://youthworkwales.co.uk> (Accessed: 8th November 2013).
- Williams, D. (2016) *Report in relation to a contract to develop recommendations for Welsh Government on how voluntary sector and local authorities can improve partnership working*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.
- Williams, R. (2005) *Formation: Who's bringing up our children?* Citizen organising Foundation lecture, Queen Mary University of London, Mile End. [Online]. Available at <http://anglicancommunion.org/acns/digest> (Accessed 21 March 2012).
- Williamson, H. (1999) *Disaffected Youth: background research, political recognition and policy development*. Wales Youth Agency Newslines, Caerphilly: Wales Youth Agency.
- Williamson, H. (2012) For God's sake, tie your ropes together: the (recent) history of youth work in Wales – Political betrayal, professional infighting and practice inertia, in Coussée, F., Verschelden, G., Van de Walle, T., Medlinska, and Williamson, H. (eds.) *The history of youth work in Europe relevance for youth policy today, Vol. 2*. Strasbourg, Council of Europe, [Online]. Available at http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/documents/EKCYP/Youth Policy/docs/Youth Work/Research/YK Youth Work_vol_2.pdf (Accessed: 1 October 2013).
- Willis, J.W. (2007) *Foundations of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Wilson, S. 'Digital technologies, children and young people's relationships and self-care', *Children's Geographies*, 2016, Vol.14(3), p. 282.
- Winding, T.N. and Andersen, J.H. 'Socioeconomic differences in school dropout among young adults: the role of social relations', *BMC Public Health*, 2015. Volume 15: 1054, p1-11.
- Wiseman, J. and Brasher, K. (2008) Community Wellbeing in an Unwell World: Trends, Challenges and Possibilities. *Journal of Public Health Policy*. 29, 353-366.

- World Economic Forum (2017) The world's 10 biggest economies in 2017 [Online]
Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/03/worlds-biggest-economies-in-2017/> (Accessed 18 April 2018).
- Wrexham Glyndwr University (2017) *Review of the Impact of the National Youth Work Strategy for Wales 2014-18*. [Online] Available at:
<https://beta.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-04/180316-review-of-the-impact-of-the-national-youth-work-strategy-for-wales-2014-2018.pdf> Accessed 10.08.18.
- Wright, J. and Macdonald, D. (2010) *Young People, Physical Activity and the Everyday*. London: Routledge.
- Wylie, T (2010) Youth Work in a Cold Climate, *Youth and Policy*, 105, pp 1-8 [Online]. Available at
http://www.youthandpolicy.org/images/stories/journal105/wylie_youth_work_in_a_cold_climate.pdf (Accessed: 02 May 2011).
- Wylie, T (2003) *The NYA Guide to Youth Work and Youth Services*, Leicester: National Youth Agency.
- Wylie, T. (2016) *Developing Youth Work in Wales*. Cardiff: Welsh Government.
- Yardley, L. (2008) Dilemmas in qualitative health research. *Psychology & Health*, 15, 215-228.
- Youth Work in Wales Review Group, (2018) *Youth Work in Wales: Principles and Purposes*. Youth Work in Wales Review Group, Cardiff.
- Young, J. (2011) Moral panics and the transgressive other. *Crime, Media Culture*. Vol. 7(3) 245-258.
- Young, K. (1999) *The Art of Youth Work* (2nd ed.). Dorset: Russell House Publishing.
- Zelic, T. (2007) *On the phenomenology of the Life-World*. [online] New York, Columbia University. Available at www.hrca.hr accessed 22.02.15.
- Zick, C. D. (2010) 'The shifting balance of adolescent time use', *Youth & Society*, 41(4), pp569-596.
- Zirbel, E.L. (2007) *Teaching to Promote Deep Understanding and Instigate Conceptual Change*, 2007 AAS/AAPT Joint Meeting, American Astronomical Society Meeting 209, #234.03; *Bulletin of the American Astronomical Society*, Vol. 38, p.1220 [Online]. Available at: <http://adsabs.harvard.edu/abs/2006AAS...20923403Z> (Accessed 15 April 2011).
- Zubulake, D.M. (2017) 'Building Blocks of Professionalism: Values, Principles, and Ethics in Youth Work', *Journal of Youth Development*. Vol 12(1) 9-17.

Zwozdiak-Myers, P. (2007) Approaches to research, in Zwozdiak-Myers, P. (ed)
Childhood and Youth Studies. Exeter: Learning Matters.

Appendix 1

A list of Values of Youth Work established by an expert group and consultation in the development of Youth Work National Occupational Standards during 2007-08.

- Participation and active involvement
Young people choose to be involved, not least because they want to relax, meet friends make new relationships, to have fun, and to find support,
The work starts from where young people are in relation to their own values, views and principles, as well as their own personal and social space,
It seeks to go beyond where young people start, to widen their horizons, promote participation and invite social commitment, in particular by encouraging them to be critical and creative in their responses to their experience and the world around them,
- Equity, diversity and inclusion:
It treats young people with respect, valuing each individual and their differences, and promoting the acceptance and understanding of others, whilst challenging oppressive behaviour and ideas,
It respects and values individual differences by supporting and strengthening young people's belief in themselves, and their capacity to grow and to change through a supportive group environment,
It is underpinned by the principles of equity, diversity and interdependence.
- Partnership with young people and others
It recognises, respects and is actively responsive to the wider networks of peers, communities, families and cultures which are important to young people, and through these networks seeks to help young people to achieve stronger relationships and collective identities, through the promotion of inclusivity,
It works in partnership with young people and other agencies which contribute to young people's social, educational and personal development,
It recognises the young person as a partner in a learning process, complementing formal education, promoting their access to learning opportunities which enable them to fulfil their potential,
- Personal, social and political development:
It is concerned with how young people feel, and not just with what they know and can do,
It is concerned with facilitating and empowering the voice of young people, encouraging and enabling them to influence the environment in which they live
It safeguards the welfare of young people, and provides them with a safe environment in which to explore their values, beliefs, ideas and issues

These values underpin and are to be reflected within the requirements of the relevant standards.

Appendix 2

Good Medical Practice: Duties of a doctor

The duties of a doctor registered with the General Medical Council

Patients must be able to trust doctors with their lives and health. To justify that trust you must show respect for human life and you must:

Make the care of your patient your first concern

Protect and promote the health of patients and the public

Provide a good standard of practice and care

Keep your professional knowledge and skills up to date

Recognise and work within the limits of your competence

Work with colleagues in the ways that best serve patients' interests

Treat patients as individuals and respect their dignity

Treat patients politely and considerately

Respect patients' right to confidentiality

Work in partnership with patients

Listen to patients and respond to their concerns and preferences

Give patients the information they want or need in a way they can understand

Respect patients' right to reach decisions with you about their treatment and care

Support patients in caring for themselves to improve and maintain their health

Be honest and open and act with integrity

Act without delay if you have good reason to believe that you or a colleague may be putting patients at risk

Never discriminate unfairly against patients or colleagues

Never abuse your patients' trust in you or the public's trust in the profession.

You are personally accountable for your professional practice and must always be prepared to justify your decisions and actions.